

INTRO – BUILDING A RHYTHMIC FOUNDATION

Greetings everyone! We're going to start off this morning with something old, something new, something borrowed – and hopefully we won't feel blue!

I have curated some of my favorite lessons for you from the last ten years of Artie & Denise symposia and this first video collage includes segments from Orlando FL, Dallas TX, Herndon VA and Las Vegas NV. Be sure to refer to the Session #1 handout I've included for you, which has lots of detailed instructions. In addition to that handout, there are 5 PowerPoint presentations embedded in these lessons and ready for you to download and use with your students.

There is also a set of 27 rhythm flash cards that are downloadable, if that is something that would be helpful to you. One of my colleagues, Chris Burns, created the flashcards and allows me to share them with you. There is one outlier in the set – a 5/4 rhythm – so you can either delete that one or have the students figure out which one needs to be “voted off the island!” It's one big PDF file, so have your card stock ready before you hit print! 😊

All of my introductory scripts for my sessions (*like the one I'm delivering right now*) are available for you to download. Ideally, it would be nice if you had them printed out and ready to refer to, as you watch each of my clinics.

My first session is titled: BUILDING A RHYTHMIC FOUNDATION

Beat competency - and a basic understanding of rhythmic subdivision - provide a strong foundation for growing proficient young musicians and future music readers. The lesson selections and delivery models for this session are all very-child appealing and lots of fun in the classroom. For your kiddos **and** you! 😊

The first video segment you'll see is my variation on a **Chair Rhythm Lesson** that Jim Solomon designed - and graciously lets me share with music educators. Jim was one of my Orff instructors and I share his love of “all-things-percussion.” Please check out his publications for some lessons your students will love. The Chair Rhythm Activity is my “first-week-of-school “go-to-lesson” for beat, and rhythmic subdivision. I have extended the lesson quite a bit over the years.

This lesson, in its original form, uses 4 chairs full of students, then adds partners to those chairs to illustrate subdivision. Although that's not feasible today, for health reasons - hopefully it will work some time again in the future - but you could teach this lesson online to your students using 4 chairs in your home, and stuffed toys to represent the “people notes”. Other objects might also work such as legos or other game pieces,

silverware, kitchen utensils, pictures the children draw of their friends, or print out of their favorite characters. Whatever you want to use to represent sounds on each beat, there are a lot of fun choices.

When you get back into your classroom you could do a lot of this lesson with the chairs being social-distanced and use a combination of real kiddos and stuffed toys or other items they could hold - to add more sounds to each beat. This video has some hilarious moments – just like with real kids – but please know that the lady and gentleman sharing one chair are dear friends . . . or it might look questionable. Haha!

Other lessons included in this first video are:

- **A body percussion piece called “Sevens”** which can easily be taught online or in a “push-in” classroom situation. For a nice extension, you can encourage the students to create their own new section to share with you and their classmates. If you’re “Distance Learning” it would be fun for them to make a video of themselves teaching their new body percussion variations.
- There will be a short example of one of my students’ favorite lessons – **Poison . . . Rhythm!**
- There is a note value drawing lesson, called **Noteman**, which is done on paper, then can be transferred to a school “sidewalk-chalk” art display in the future. If taught online, children can use paper and markers for the lesson and then recreate their Notemen or Notewomen with chalk on the family driveway. This is easy to teach online since all the children need are pencil and paper. (or crayons or markers!)
- Next up is my **Pipe Cleaner Note Gallery Lesson**, which is very special when done with background music, and the teacher not speaking, but only making sounds to illustrate the note lengths. I’m sure many students don’t get to visit craft stores – where they could purchase pipe cleaners – so this one will probably have to wait until you’re back in your classrooms, or pushing into the grade-level classrooms. You can buy the pipe cleaners in bulk online.

- I came from a family of voracious readers and I love using children's literature in my music room. The next lesson in this *Rhythmic Foundation* session utilizes the book **Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day!** This book is a perennial favorite, probably because we all - young and old – have had many days like this! And there is a LOT to be taught in this lesson which uses four non-pitched percussion timbres. If you are teaching remotely, students could find four plastic bowls or buckets to use for their four sounds and strike the bowls with large serving spoons. They would play all the parts, rather than just performing with one section.

The last two lessons in this session come from my **Percussion Parade book**. It contains 27 lessons for **BODY PERCUSSION, NON-PITCHED PERCUSSION, DRUMS, AND NON-TRADITIONAL PERCUSSION - LIKE PLASTIC PLATES AND KICKBALLS**. The lessons run the gamut from lots of introductory-type lessons for your primary students - to quite challenging pieces for your older kids.

- The first lesson from the Percussion Parade book is **Old Brass Wagon**, which begins with singing, moves into audiation, then body percussion, and then transfers to non-pitched percussion. This lesson was at the end of a symposium day and I was moving very quickly to get through things. With children, be sure not to skip any of the steps, but present each segment in its entirety. **(At this point I should warn you – I talk too fast. Way too fast! Probably because for 37 years I taught 1200 students a week, with very few classes a year to teach the extensive curriculum. So I have always felt quite a sense of urgency . . . and talk too fast. So just hit rewind if you missed something! 😊)**
- We'll finish this presentation - *Building a Rhythmic Foundation* - with a **kickball routine to the old pop tune called "Popcorn."** Don't tell your kids how old this piece is – they think it's a cool new techno piece. It focuses on Form and Note Values. You could easily modify this lesson to be taught online by skipping the short passing portion of the routine in the B Section. Each student, instead of passing the ball to their neighbor, can just repeat the part where they roll the kickball around their leg – and not pass it on to the child next to them. Students at home could use a kickball, basketball, tennis ball or perhaps – a beach ball. You can download the original version of this piece, or the version titled "Popcorn Re-Recorded."

I hope you enjoy . . . Building a Rhythmic Foundation!