

# Rhythmic Notation Unit Plan

## Summary

**Title:** Introducing Rhythmic Notation

**Teacher:** Francis Jaramillo

**Grade Level:** 3rd grade

**Related State Standards:** State standards are addressed during each individual lesson plan as well as attached at the end of the unit plan.

**Rationale Statement:** Students are introduced to rhythmic notation, firstly through participation in an echoing drum circle, then through symbols, and finally through actual notation. Participating in the drum circle will help to build ensemble experience, as well as foster creativity. The students will build on rhythmic skills and learn basic rhythmic patterns. Learning to read music through symbols and eventually through notation, will not only help the students to better their understanding of rhythm and musical notation, but will also engage their higher-order thinking skills, which in turn will also assist in learning other subject areas such as english and mathematics.

## **Learning Objectives**

Echo rhythmic patterns through clapping

Gain basic skills in percussion (hand drums, bass drums, boom whackers, tambourines)

Echo rhythmic patterns through percussive instruments

Gain ensemble experience

Gain leadership experience

Engage creativity

Identify, read and perform basic rhythm patterns through symbols

Identify, read and perform rhythmic notation (quarter notes and eighth notes)

# Lesson Plan #1

## “Listen to the Drum Pt. 1”

**Francis Jaramillo**

**Allendale Elementary - 3rd Grade**

**Content:** Group activity, echoing of chant and rhythms through clapping and percussion.

**Standards:** 1) Apply skills and knowledge to perform in the arts. 2) Apply skills and knowledge to create in the arts.

**Objectives:** 1) Students will be able to perform basic rhythmic patterns in correct time. 2) Students will develop ensemble and leadership skills.

**Materials Needed:** Bass drum, bongos, sound shapes, and any percussive instrument. Teacher will need the chant with the accompanying rhythm patterns (attached at the end of the unit plan).

**Classroom Setting:** Group activity with opportunities for individuals to lead the class.

**Prior Knowledge:** Students will have had prior experience with echoing chants and rhythmic patterns.

### **Development of the Lesson:**

**Lesson Preparation:** Set up the percussive instruments so that you can easily pass them out when the time comes.

**Introduction:** Tell the class that we will be performing basic rhythmic patterns through an echo chant and if all goes well, we will all get to play instruments in a drum circle.

### **Methods and Procedures:**

Have the students echo you one line at a time. Be sure to include the clapping with the chant.

Echoes are in Italics:

(2x) Listen to the drums. *Listen to the Drums.*

(2x) Big Drums. *Big Drums.* Little Drums. *Little drums.*

Listen to the drums. *Listen to the drums.*

Repeat this step until the students are familiar with the patterns.

For students experiencing difficulty, you may need to slow down the rhythm or even have another student model the correct chant and rhythm patterns.

When students are able to perform the echos correctly, have the whole class lead and you echo them. This will help to build their confidence.

After the students have had their chance to lead, then you lead again and introduce the rhythmic patterns that they are to echo after the last "Listen to the drums."

The echoed rhythmic patterns should be a total of 8 measures, alternating measures between the teacher and the class. The teacher may improvise the rhythms but be sure to stick with quarter notes and eighth notes. Examples include: 4 quarter notes, 8 eighth notes and 2 quarter notes, 2 eighths/quarter/2 eighths/quarter, etc.

End the back and forth clapping with a final, "Listen to the drums."

After performing the chant as many times as necessary to develop familiarity and confidence in the piece, you can perform your chant and accompanying rhythm part on the bass drum.

When the students are used to the chant with the percussion instrument, you can pass out the sound shapes, bongos, and any percussive instruments that you have.

Perform the piece again with all the percussion involved.

**Closure:** Let the class know that they just learned some basic rhythm patterns, they learned how to follow a conductor, they learned to lead, and gained some percussion skills. Tell that that next time we meet, we will be learning how to write some of these basic patterns.

**Assessment/Evaluation:** Students will be assessed on their ability to follow the instructor through echoing, as well as correct rhythmic performance, and participation. Students struggling with the mentioned criteria will receive check marks indicating that they will need extra attention in strengthening their weaknesses. Check marks may be removed once a student can demonstrate the skill correctly.

## Lesson Plan #2

### “Listen to the Drums Pt. 2 (Easter Edition)”

**Francis Jaramillo**

**Allendale Elementary - 3rd Grade**

**Content:** Group activity, echoing of chant and rhythms through clapping and percussion, applying symbols to indicate rhythm patterns.

**Standards:** 1) Apply skills and knowledge to perform in the arts. 2) Apply skills and knowledge to create in the arts. 3) Analyze, describe and evaluate works of art.

**Objectives:** 1) Students will be able to perform basic rhythmic patterns in correct time. 2) Students will develop ensemble and leadership skills. 3) Students will be able to read, perform, and identify rhythmic patterns through symbols.

**Materials Needed:** Bass drum, bongos, sound shapes, and any percussive instrument. Teacher will need a dry erase board, dry erase markers, and the chant with the accompanying rhythms (attached at the end of the unit plan).

**Classroom Setting:** Group activity with opportunities for individuals to lead the class.

**Prior Knowledge:** Students will have had prior experience with echoing chants and rhythmic patterns.

### **Development of the Lesson:**

**Lesson Preparation:** Set up the percussive instruments so that you can easily pass them out when the time comes.

**Introduction:** Tell the class that we will be performing “Listen to the Drums” again and that this time, we will learn how to relate these rhythms to symbols.

### **Methods and Procedures:**

Do a review of “Listen to the drums” with only clapping. No instruments yet.

Perform the song a couple times, addressing some incorrect performances by slowing down the tempo and even asking individual volunteers to model the correct performance for the rest of the class. Having students model the activity for their fellow classmates can greatly help struggling students.

Tell the class that now that they are able to perform some basic rhythm patterns, it is time to learn how apply these patterns to symbols and since we are so close to easter, we will be using “eggs” and “bunnies.”

Draw an egg or write the word “egg” on the board. Demonstrate to the class how we will be using this symbol to represent a beat. Say the word “egg” and clap once as you are saying it. Have the class do the same. Explain that we are clapping the syllables of the word.

Draw 4 eggs on the board. Demonstrate it to the class as in the previous step, performing the 4 “egg” pattern as 4 quarter notes. Have the class perform the rhythm.

Draw a bunny or write the word “bunny” on the board. Repeat the previous steps but this time performing the “bunny” pattern as eighth notes.

Erase the patterns and then draw a variation within a 4/4 measure.  
Ex. Bunny, bunny, egg, egg.

Perform the rhythm and then have the class perform it.

Write 3 or more different variations.  
Ex. Bunny, egg, bunny, egg.  
Ex. Egg, Egg, Egg, Egg.  
Etc.

Number the variations, 1-4 or more if you include them.

Without telling the class which one, pick one of the variations to perform, asking students to raise their hand if they know which rhythm it is that you performed. Students are to identify the rhythms by stating the designated number.

Ask for volunteers to do the same. Have the volunteer stand up, pick a rhythm without telling anyone which one he or she picked, and perform it. Students are to raise their hand if they know which rhythm was performed.

Perform “Listen to the drums.” If time permits, perform the piece with the percussion instruments.

**Closure:** Congratulate the class on a job well done. Tell them that they just learned to perform rhythms by reading symbols. Let them know that the next time we meet, we will learn to read some real rhythmic notation and even get a chance to get some students to lead the class in the drum circle.

**Assessment/Evaluation:** Students will be assessed on their ability to follow the instructor through echoing, as well as correct rhythmic identification, reading, performance, and

participation. Students struggling with the mentioned criteria will receive check marks indicating that they will need extra attention in strengthening their weaknesses. Check marks may be removed once a student can demonstrate the skill correctly.

## Lesson Plan #3

### “Listen to the Drums Pt. 3”

**Francis Jaramillo**

**Allendale Elementary - 3rd Grade**

**Content:** Group activity, echoing of chant and rhythms through clapping and percussion, reading and performing rhythmic notation, and developing ensemble and leadership skills.

**Standards:** 1) Apply skills and knowledge to perform in the arts. 2) Apply skills and knowledge to create in the arts. 3) Analyze, describe and evaluate works of art.

**Objectives:** 1) Students will be able to perform basic rhythmic patterns in correct time. 2) Students will develop ensemble and leadership skills. 3) Students will be able to read, perform, and identify rhythmic notation (quarter notes and eighth notes).

**Materials Needed:** Bass drum, bongos, sound shapes, and any percussive instrument. Teacher will need a dry erase board, dry erase markers, and the chant with the accompanying rhythms (attached at the end of the unit plan).

**Classroom Setting:** Group activity with opportunities for individuals to lead the class.

**Prior Knowledge:** Students will have had prior experience with echoing chants and rhythmic patterns.

#### **Development of the Lesson:**

**Lesson Preparation:** Set up the percussive instruments so that you can easily pass them out when the time comes. Draw 4 variations of the “egg” and “bunny” rhythms from the previous class. Number the variations, 1-4. Above each “egg” and “bunny,” draw the corresponding rhythmic value (quarter notes or eighth notes).

**Introduction:** Tell the class that we will be learning real rhythmic notation using the symbols that we used in the previous class or classes. Let them know that individuals will have an opportunity to lead the class in “Listen to the Drums” as well.

#### **Methods/Procedures:**

Have the class clap the variations.

Without telling the class which one, pick one of the variations to perform, asking students to raise their hand if they know which rhythm it is that you performed. Students are to identify

the rhythms by stating the designated number.

Ask for volunteers to do the same. Have the volunteer stand up, pick a rhythm without telling anyone which one he or she picked, and perform it. Students are to raise their hand if they know which rhythm was performed.

Ask the class if they can still perform and identify the rhythms if you erased the “eggs” and “bunnies.”

Erase the “eggs” and “bunnies” and repeat the previous steps from the beginning of the lesson.

Perform “Listen to the Drums.” Ask for volunteers to lead the class. When the drum echoing begins, the student may create their own rhythm pattern or pick one of the patterns that we just previously worked on.

**Closure:** Congratulate the class on taking their first steps in being able to read, identify and perform rhythmic notation.

**Assessment/Evaluation:** Students will be assessed on their ability to follow the instructor through echoing, as well as correct rhythmic identification, reading, performance, and participation. Students struggling with the mentioned criteria will receive check marks indicating that they will need extra attention in strengthening their weaknesses. Check marks may be removed once a student can demonstrate the skill correctly.