

9-11-2009

Reading Music-ABC's, 123's, Do Re Mi's [6th grade]

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UNDERSTANDING BY DESIGN

Unit Cover Page

Unit Title: **Reading Music-ABC's, 123's, Do Re Mi's**

Grade Level: 6

Subject/Topic Area(s): Choir/Introduction to Notation

Designed By: Jessica Koppe, MAT '07

Time Frame: 4 weeks, 45 minute class periods

School District: NISD, San Antonio, TX

School: Luna Middle School

School Address and Phone: 200 N. Groesenbacher, San Antonio, TX 78253 (210) 397-5353

Includes the following symbols and vocabulary:

Notation, Score, **Rhythm**, (Time Signature, Stem, Flag, Beam, Rest, Eighth, Quarter, Half, Whole, Common Time, Note Value, Barline, Measure, Double Bar Line), **Pitch**, (Staff, Treble Clef, Lines, Spaces, Note Body, Steps, Skips, Key Signature, Tonic, Scale, Do, Re Mi, Fa Sol, La, Ti)

Brief Summary of Unit (Including curricular context and unit goals):

In this unit, students will get an introduction to reading music at the middle school level in choir. This unit is theory intensive and meant to help students strengthen their basic music reading skills to provide a strong foundation for the ensemble and its ability to do more difficult music. This unit is not preparing students for a concert, so it may need to be spread out depending on the school's needs and required performances. Activities are meant to keep students engaged in theory. By the end of the unit, students will be able to sing a major scale using solfege and Curwin hand-signs; as well as identify and explain select symbols and vocabulary relating to pitch and rhythm, sight-read, notate, create, and evaluate select musical passages. We will cover sixteenth, eighth, quarter, half, dotted half, and whole notes and rests. We also introduce the staff, letter names, and step-wise motion in the Key of C Major. Students will get some basic understanding for reading music and have a better understanding of why the skill is useful.

Unit: Reading Music-ABC's, 123's, Do Re Mi's
Grade: 6

Stage 1: Desired Results

Content Standards (TEKS)

- (6.1) Perception.**
 (B) standard terminology in explaining intervals, music notation,
(6.3) Creative expression/performance.
 (A) sight-read simple music in treble and/or other clefs in various keys and meters;
 (B) use standard symbols to notate meter, rhythm, pitch
(6.4) Creative expression/performance.
 (A/B) create/arrange rhythmic and melodic phrases

Understandings

Students will understand that...

- Written music is used for many purposes.
 - Reading music makes for a more efficient choir rehearsal.
 - Improved reading/writing skills allow you to work on more challenging music.
 - Music reading/writing skills can be used in many career lines.
- Good readers learn multiple strategies to interpret and perform music.

Essential Questions

- Why do we read and write musical notation?
- How do we read and write musical notation?
 - What is the score telling us?
 - What strategies can I use to read or interpret the musical notation?
 - What context clues are there and what meaning do they have?

Knowledge

Students will know...

- Symbols and vocabulary for basic notation of rhythm including measures and the note values, note parts and names of eighth, quarter, half, dotted half, and whole notes and rests. (See attachment)
- Symbols and vocabulary for basic notation of pitch including the staff and the notes in the key of C Major using treble clef. (See attachment)

Skills

Students will be able to...

- Sing a Major scale using solfege and Curwin hand-signs.
- Identify and explain select symbols and vocabulary relating to pitch and rhythm.
- Sight-read select musical passages aloud.
- Notate select musical passages using correct symbols and notations after hearing it.
- Make comparisons between select passages of music.
- Create or arrange a short musical passage using select rhythms and pitches.
- Evaluate the accuracy of a performance of a select piece of music in relation to what is written.

Stage 2: Assessment Evidence

Performance Task:

Students will be asked to act as a composer, specifically someone who writes commercial jingles. Students will be assigned a company and a product, and must make an attempt to convince the company to buy their tune. In their final presentation students may perform live or may play a recording of their work. Students must also accurately notate their jingle. Students will do this project alone, but may seek out peer feedback. Presentations will be done at the end!

Other evidence:

(quizzes, tests, academic prompts, self-assessments, etc.

note – these are usually included where appropriate in Stage 3 as well)

- Pre-test on vocabulary and symbols
- Informal group discussion
- Venn Diagram
- Notate melody (ET)
- Informal independent practice
- Quiz (mid-point)
- Create/Perform your own melody/harmony
- Post Test- on vocabulary, symbols and sight reading

Stage 3: Learning Activities

(Steps taken to get students to answer Stage 1 questions and complete performance task)

Day 1: Unit Introduction: Why do we read music? How do we read music?

Materials: Survey, sticky notes, note cards, Rhythm and Pitch posters, overhead and blank sheets

- (1) Students will complete a survey about their current thoughts on reading music. Students will then be moved into groups. Be sure that students know each other's names and ask them to number off (1,2,3).
- (1) In their groups ask the students to share their thoughts on the question **“How do you think reading music might be useful?”** Next allow student “1” from each group come and add the group's favorite answer to the overhead. Allow time for comments and questions.
- (2) Next hand the students two different colored sticky notes. One color is representative of rhythm and the other of pitch. Ask the students to write something they know about each category including a symbol, a word, or a fact. Next allow student “2” from each group come and add the group's favorite answer to a “what we know about rhythm” poster. Allow time for comments and questions. Allow student “3” from each group to add to the pitch poster: discuss.
- (3) Present a Strategy poster. **Throughout the unit, students should be encouraged to raise their hand and suggest sight-reading strategies that they have figured out. Add them daily, weekly, or however often you come up with them!**
- (4) Exit Ticket: Before students leave have the students fill out a note card with the following information:
 - Back: Name
 - Front: (1) Write a compliment about the work of each person in your group today, (2) Write a question that you want to learn the answer to before the end of this unit.

Day 2: Pre-Assessment and Review of Prior Knowledge

Materials: Pre-test, "Doe, a Deer" lyrics, Venn Diagram

- (1) Have the students take the "Pre-test" to find out more specifically what prior knowledge individuals are coming in with. Remind the students that this test is not taken for a grade.
- (2) Post the words of Sound of Music's "Doe, a Deer" for the class to see. Teach the song by rote (encouraging hand signs and good vocal sound). Practice singing the scale and the song.
- (3) Reflect about how the scale is a pattern used in reading and writing many songs. Compare and contrast using a Venn diagram how the musical scale is like the alphabet.
- (4) Exit Ticket: Before students leave they must turn in their Venn diagrams and must sing a scale (using hand signs) alone or in a group of three.

Day 3: I need a Quarter! Quarter Notes and Rests

Materials: Quarter Notes Worksheet, Visual of warm-up 25A (The Choral Warm-up Collection)

- (1) Have the students work with a partner. Each pair will receive a set of papers. Students will begin by matching words, symbols and definitions. Students will become familiar with the following symbols and vocabulary: **Notation, Score, Rhythm, Beat, Note Value, Stem, Note Body, Quarter Note, Quarter Rest.**
- (2) Students will practice drawing quarter notes and quarter rests and answer a series of questions.
- (3) Students will practice singing and clapping a series of rhythms (labeled with pitched) aloud.
- (4) Present the students with a visual of warm-up number 25A from "The Choral Warm-up Collection" (Albrecht), which has the students sing the names of note values while building a scale. Ask the students to begin singing. Most students may struggle. Then ask the students to turn their paper over and listen to you sing it before repeating it back to you. Some students will still struggle. Finally, ask the students to look at the paper and listen before repeating it back to you. Discuss some of the following questions as a class: **Which way do you learn fastest: Hearing the melody, seeing the melody, or hearing and seeing? Why do you think that method works so well? Do you think that your fastest method might change in the future? Why might seeing eventually be the fastest method? Is it possible to hear music in your head without hearing it aloud?**
- (5) Exit Ticket: Before students can leave they must notate (write down what they hear) a rhythm using quarter notes and rests and turn it in.

Day 4: The Measure

Materials: Measure Worksheet, Board and writing tools

- (1) Have a long rhythmic passage labeled with pitches written on the board and ask the students to begin looking through it silently. Ask the students to chant and clap the passage. Introduce the **measure**, the **barline**, the **double barline**, and **time signature**. Ask the students to try again and ask them if it was easier or harder the second time.
- (2) Introduce your preferred method of counting quarter notes and rests. Allow the students to practice writing barlines in the appropriate places and saying and clapping aloud.
- (3) Have a Relay Race. Divide the class into teams and have the person at the front of the line correctly say and clap a rhythmic passage before going to the end of the line. If necessary you can allow students to ask for help, but they must be able to perform the rhythm on their own. The team that takes the shortest time to get through the line wins.
- (4) Exit Ticket: Students must turn in their guided/independence practice sheets from that day.

Day 5: Eighth Notes and Rests

Materials: Money graphic, Eight Note Worksheets, Paper or small whiteboards

- (1) Present a "money" graphic to the students. Four quarters fit into a dollar just as four quarter notes fit into a common time measure. The dollar represents a common time measure and in this case you are keeping the pulse with quarters. **Eighth Notes** would be represented by cutting the quarter in half

(You need both to complete a beat).

- (2) In pairs have the students complete the packet relating to eighth notes, including matching terms, symbols, and meanings of the following vocabulary: **Beam, Flag, Eighth Note, Eighth Rest**. Students will also draw the symbols and answer a series of questions.
- (3) **Numbered Heads:** Pairs will combine to make groups of four and number off (1,2,3,4). When a question or task arises, the teacher will call out a number and that student must be able to perform the task to get the points. Students will hear a rhythmic passage and notate it as a group. **Round one:** groups will earn points by having a representative write the passage. **Round two:** groups will earn points by having a rep. perform or repeat the passage. **Round three:** points are earned by sight-reading a passage. **Bonus round/Tie Breaker:** one student must sight-read a passage while another student writes down what the first student performed. If necessary, this game can be paused and continued on another day.
- (4) **Exit Ticket:** Students must turn in written work.

Day 6: The Staff- Climb the Alphabet Ladder

Materials: The Staff Worksheet

- (1) Present the students with the “hand staff.” Ask students to hold their hands up in front of their body with their thumbs up and their pinkies down. This represents the **staff**. Show the students the **lines** and **spaces, starting with “line 1” on the bottom**. Explain to the students that we will be working with **steps** and not **skips**. Have them practice finding steps up and down and find repeating notes.
- (2) Review the musical alphabet (A-G) and present a pneumonic device for remembering the **Treble Clef** letter names. In order to become more familiar with the staff, students will list or create their own pneumonic devices for remembering the lines and spaces. Then have the students work with a partner and share ideas. Allow time to present new ideas to the class.
- (3) Students will practice finding lines, spaces, letter names, skips, and steps with their partner.
- (4) **Exit Ticket:** Before students can leave they must give you their favorite device (written or orally)

Day 7: The Natural Scale

Materials: Piano or visual, “Doe a Deer” score, Tickets (“talking chips”)

- (1) After reviewing the hand staff, draw a C Major scale on the board. Demonstrate on the piano how the scale in the **Key of C Major** uses only white keys. As a group label the **letter names** and **solfege** names of each note in the scale. We call “Do” the tonic: it is the home base of the scale. “C” is “Do” in the Key of C Major.
- (2) Pass out the score for Sound of Music’s “Doe, a Deer” in the key of C. Have the students look over it. Review the song and practice the scale up and down. Try having the students practice following your hand signs to sing up or down.
- (3) Using talking chips ask the students to answer a series of questions. Every student gets a talking chip. Once they have used their turn they must turn in the chip and they cannot answer again. Possible questions might be:
 - How many quarter notes are there in measure 10?
 - What note does the word “re” sound? Is it a “re” or something else?
 - Do the pitches used for the sentence about each note stay on the matching note, or do they move around?
 - If you run out of questions and still have students left, have some of the remaining students come up with questions and allow other remaining students come up with answers.
- (4) **Exit Ticket:** No one must have a talking chip left.

Day 8: Mapping a Song: Review Day

Materials: Posters and notecards(saved from the 1st day)

- (1) Students will do a series of activities to review some of the knowledge and skills learned in this unit.
- (2) Take out the posters you created on the first day. Ask the students to come up with information they could add about rhythm and pitch at this point in the unit. Hand back the note cards with goal questions on them from day one. Have they reached their goal yet?
- (3) Exit Ticket: Students must revise or make a new question about something they would still like to learn before the end of the unit. If there is room they may use the same note card.

Day 9: Buffer Day and Quiz

Materials: Quiz

Day 10: Musical Math

Materials: "Oh Music" Score, paper

- (1) Introduce "Oh Music" by rote, but allow the students to follow the score. Since the song is in the Key of G, it can be used later as an introduction to the new key. Today, however, we are focused on rhythms. After singing, allow the students to search for quarter and eighth notes/rests (already familiar with).
- (2) With partners, allow the students to search for other types of notes and rests. Discuss the note values and symbols of [Half, Dotted Half, and Whole Notes and Rests](#).
- (3) Ask each pair to write a 4-beat measure. Help the students compile these measures on the board. Read the new passage as a class.
- (4) Exit Ticket: Show the students a note or rest and have them name it and tell you its value.

Day 11: Faster!

Materials: 16th Note Worksheet

- (1) On the board, show the students the variety of ways to write eighth notes, reviewing the terms beam and flag. Review how you must count the note bodies to know how many eighth notes you have. Review that you can fit two sounds into one beat in common time.
- (2) What if we want faster notes? Present [Sixteenth note/rest, Double Beam, Double Flag](#).
- (3) Allow some group practice in reading these rhythms aloud.
- (4) Present how eighth and sixteenth notes can be moving or repeated: show some examples.
- (5) Allow students silent individual practice in writing counts.
- (6) In groups of three, the students will read a rhythm from their individual practice aloud while the other two must figure out which passage they heard. After a set time limit, ask the students to go back to their seats so that you can read the passages together as a class.
- (7) Exit Ticket: 3-2-1-Have the students write down 3 comparisons between eighth notes and sixteenth notes, 2 questions they still have about reading/writing rhythms and pitch, and draw 1 sixteenth note.

Day 12: Composition

Materials: Composition Worksheet

- (1) Show the students on the board how they can improvise a rhythm or pitch if the other aspect is given already. Practice as a group.
- (2) Students will receive some blank templates to help them improvise and compose today. Template will have suggested rhythms or pitches in order to allow students to compose the other aspect. Some of the pitch templates should have the potential to be put together to sing in harmony.
- (3) Students begin by doing some individual work.
- (4) Checks that the students have done their work and allow them to share their work in groups of 2 or 3. They should work together to be able to perform at least one of the compositions for the teacher.
- (5) Exit ticket: Students must turn in written work and have already performed for the teacher with their group. And answer the question: **How is notation helping you with your composition?**

Day 13: Post-test and Sight-reading exam

Materials: Test, RAFT project

- (1) Students will take a written test. Once the students finish, allow them to begin the sight-reading exam (whether they record in a practice room or sing for you.)
- (2) When students are finished, allow them to start reading the final project.

Day 14: Prep Day- Final Assessment

Materials: project paper and rubric

- (1) Review the procedures and the rubric for the performance project. Play several examples of commercial jingles to help the students get ideas.
- (2) Remind the students that this is an individual project. Allow the students to begin work, and encourage them to ask for help if they need it.
- (3) The last part of class, allow students to share in groups of 4 what they picked and what they've done so far. Each group should pick at least one project's progress to share with the class and explain what they liked about that student's work so far.
- (4) Exit Ticket: students must turn in what work they have completed thus far.

Day 15: Final Prep. day-performance Assessments

- (1) Return students work and allow individual time to work. During the last portion of the class, allow students to get into groups and discuss their progress. Each group should pick someone new to show off to the class. Any work that still needs to be done should be taken home for completion.

Day 16: Present and peer-evaluate Performance Assessments

Materials: Peer and Self Evaluation Forms

- (1) Presentations begin. Presentations can be performed for the entire class or can be done for a smaller group (perhaps the teacher calls up 5-8 students at a time, while the rest of the class is working on another assignment.) Students must self-evaluate and peer evaluate, so it may be helpful to assign students to certain peers.

Day 17: Present and peer-evaluate Performance Assessments

- (1) Presentations continue.
- (2) Collect all final work, self-evaluations, and peer-evaluations
- (3) Use extra time to congratulate individual students and allow for positive verbal peer feedback.

Day 18: Buffer Day and Closing

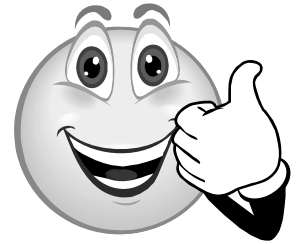
Materials: Work from the first day of unit

- (1) Post select student work.
- (2) Reanalyze posters, brainstorming, and questions from the first day of the unit.
- (3) **Discuss how being able to read/write music will help the composer. Discuss ideas of what other kinds of jobs people might need to read and write music for. Create a list and allow the kids some ownership of inventing future projects!**




NAME _____



Reading Music Survey!!

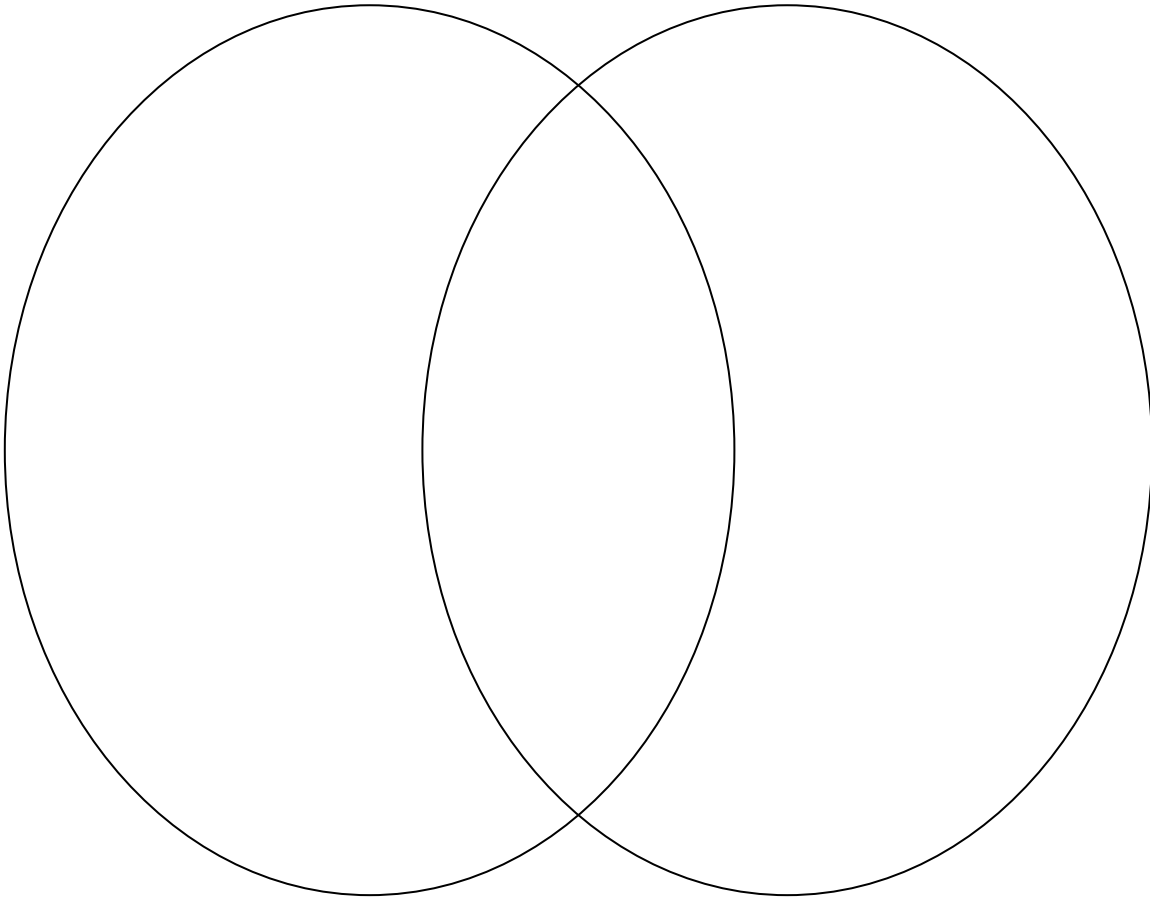


Rate your-self on these things:

	That's Me! 	Sort of ... 	No way! 	I answered "No Way!" Here's Why:
I am excited about learning to read music.				
I think I will be good at reading music.				
I think I have a good singing voice.				
I am willing to try new things.				
I already know my hand signs (Do, Re, Mi, etc.)				
I think reading music is important.				
Please answer the following question: How do you think reading music might be useful?				

Name: _____

Venn Diagram: Compare and Contrast





Name: _____

Reading Music-ABC's, 123's, Do Re Mi's End of Unit Project Rubric!

	A	B	Not complete
Performance and notation consistency	What I hear is exactly what I see. You have a good grasp of notation and how to make the sound come alive.	What I hear and what I see mostly match. There may have been a few small mistakes in either the performance, but overall you've got the idea.	Several parts of the performance and the notation do not match up.
Accuracy of notation	Notation is easy to read and accurate according to the writing techniques learned.	Notation has a few mistakes but it is pretty clear that you understand the basics.	Notation is hard to read or doesn't match the presentation of the tune.
Creativity	You used a variety of rhythms and pitches in your melody. It is clear that you really thought out your lyrics and made a good attempt at being useful to your advertizing company. I'll buy it!	Your tune would work for your company and you used some notes and pitches. It's clear that you understand the concept of composing and notating.	Your tune may not work well for your company or it seems that you could go more in depth with your tune.
Performance Quality	The performance was energizing and convincing. You stayed in tune and used full voice. You conveyed your message well through singing and body language. Posture was great and diction was clear. You were well prepared and you have made a great impression on your clients.	You got through the performance. Though accurate, it is not clear whether you are proud of your performance. Some of the performance qualities may not have been to your fullest potential.	The performance is lacking, either in preparation, vocal technique, or in stage presence.

Name _____

Reading Music-ABC's, 123's, Do Re Mi's Peer Evaluation

Please evaluate two people in your class. You will be graded on the depth of your writing here and NOT on what anyone says about you!

Dear _____,

I liked these three things about your presentation:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

I think that you can improve on the following thing:

- 1.

Dear _____,

I liked these three things about your presentation:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

I think that you can improve on the following thing:

- 1.

Pretend you are part of an advertising company. Which 5 jingles would you buy?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Tell me about your discussion group (fill out the table):

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I felt comfortable sharing with my group.				
My group tried to help me feel comfortable sharing.				
My group gave me some compliments.				
My group gave me ideas about what I could add or change				
Tell me anything else that would help me understand how your group did:				

Name: _____

Reading Music-ABC's, 123's, Do Re Mi's

Self Evaluation

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I understand how to use the musical notation.				
I understand how to read the musical notation.				
I stayed on task.				
I asked for help when I needed it.				
I tried to help people in my group feel comfortable in sharing.				
I gave other group members compliments.				
I gave other group members ideas of what to change or add.				
I liked my final song.				
I was successful in thinking of a tune.				
I was successful in writing down my tune.				
This project was challenging.				
I feel that I am now ready to try reading/writing more challenging music.				
I felt like I had plenty of time to get my work done.				
I felt like I had a good environment to work in.				
Tell me anything else that would help me understand how you did or how you felt during this project. If you "disagree" or "strongly disagree," please help me understand why.				