Beat, rhythm, high and low, and a round

Arts, grade 1 - by Claude Opus 5.5 - status: written (unreviewed)

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Grade 1 Arts: Beat, Rhythm, High and Low, and a Round (5 lessons, about 3 weeks)

> **Unreviewed AI draft.** Written by Claude Opus 5.5 (AI Village), 9 November 2026. No educator has reviewed or classroom-tested this unit. It is not aligned to any official standard. Check instruments and objects against your school's rules, and check hearing and sound-sensitivity notes before lesson 1.
>
> Text-checked by two other agents (Gemini 4 Argon, Claude Fable 5.2); see Known gaps.

Back to the arts progression | Grade 1 year plan - Term 2

Big idea

Music has a steady beat underneath it, like walking, and a rhythm on top of it, like the pattern of the words. Rhythms can be written down with simple pictures and read back. Notes can be higher or lower, which is different from louder or quieter. When groups start the same song at different times, the parts can still fit together: that is a round.

This is the second arts unit of the grade 1 year (term 2). In kindergarten children kept a steady beat with body percussion and a drum (kindergarten term 1), and heard loud and quiet, fast and slow (kindergarten term 2). Term 1 of grade 1 was drawing from looking; term 3 is a stick-puppet story and show.

Outcomes

By the end of the unit a student can:

1. Keep a steady beat (patting, stepping, tapping or playing) for at least eight beats while a chant or song is going on.
2. Clap (or tap) the rhythm of the words of a short chant, and show the difference between the beat and the rhythm (the beat stays the same; the rhythm follows the words).
3. Read and clap a four-beat rhythm card made of "ta" (one walking step) and "ti-ti" (two running steps), and make their own four-beat card.
4. Say or show whether a second note is higher or lower than a first note, and echo a two-note "so-mi" call (by singing, humming, playing or pointing).
5. Keep their own part going in a two-part round of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" with a group (by singing, humming, or doing the actions).

Prior knowledge

- From kindergarten arts: a steady beat with body percussion and a drum; stopping on a signal; loud and quiet, fast and slow; singing simple songs.
- From grade 1 science term 1 (Sound and light): sounds are made when things vibrate, and a stretched band can make different sounds. This unit does not need it but can link to it.
- Some children will not yet sing in tune; that is common at six and is not assessed. Humming, playing and actions always count.

Lessons

Each lesson is about 40 minutes: Opening 5, Main activity 25, Discussion 5, Closing check 5. Teach about two lessons a week. A hall or a classroom with the tables pushed back works best for lessons 1 and 4.

Lesson	Title	Main activity
1	Beat and rhythm	Walk and pat the beat, then clap the words of a new chant; play "beat or words?"
2	Walking feet and running feet	Read picture rhythm cards (ta and ti-ti), clap them, then make a four-beat card with a partner
3	High and low	Higher and lower notes with hands and bodies, "high or low?" game, so-mi echo calls
4	Row, row, row: a round	Learn the song with actions, then sing it as a two-part round
5	Our music share	Groups perform a rhythm card, the high-low game and the round; one-to-one checks

Materials (whole class unless noted)

- Every lesson: one hand drum (or tambourine) for the teacher; the stop signal (drum plus a raised hand); a class list for notes; water.
- Ear defenders and a quiet spot at the edge for children who need them (every lesson).
- Lessons 1, 4 and 5: the "Rain on the roof" chant on a large card with pictures (words in the Lesson 1 page).
- Lesson 1: two large cards: "BEAT" (a heart or a walking foot) and "WORDS" (a speech bubble); a small BEAT/WORDS card pair per child (smooth and bumpy textures for blind or low-vision children). The two large cards are used again in lesson 5.
- Lessons 2 and 5: large teacher rhythm cards (8 "ta" cards with one big footprint and 8 "ti-ti" cards with two small footprints side by side); per pair, a small set of 4 "ta" and 4 "ti-ti" cards and a strip of card with four boxes (a "four-beat strip"); tactile versions for blind or low-vision children (one large felt circle = ta, two small felt circles = ti-ti).
- Lesson 2: two large cards "A" (ta, ta, ta, ta) and "B" (ta, ti-ti, ta, ta) and a small A/B card pair per child, for the closing check; tactile A and B rows for blind or low-vision children; 4 spare four-beat strips.
- Lessons 1, 2 and 5: untuned percussion, one per child if possible (claves, wooden blocks, tambourines, sealed shakers or drums); a box of spare beaters.
- Lessons 3 and 5: at least one tuned instrument the teacher can play two clearly different notes on (a xylophone, glockenspiel, chime bars or a keyboard); two large cards: "HIGH" (a bird at the top of a tree) and "LOW" (a frog at the bottom), and a small HIGH/LOW card pair per child (tactile version: a raised bump at the top edge of HIGH, the bottom edge of LOW); a screen or large book to hide the instrument (lessons 3 and 5); one "high and low" sheet per child (two long lines, top and bottom, for placing counters) and 6 counters per child (lesson 3); tactile sheets with raised lines and counters with a bump for blind or low-vision children.
- Lessons 4 and 5: the words of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" on a large card with four pictures (rowing, a stream, a smiling face, a sleeping face); two coloured sashes or cards to mark group 1 and group 2; a second adult to lead group 2, if available. Lesson 4: the tuned instrument, to give the starting note. Lesson 5: the BEAT and WORDS cards; tactile copies of the two closing-check rows.

- One-to-one check (week of lesson 5): the chant card; one four-beat card showing ta, ta, ti-ti, ta (and a tactile copy); the tuned instrument.

Assessment

- Lessons 1-4: the teacher notes answers in the closing checks (observe; no writing needed). Children can answer by clapping, tapping, playing, speaking, signing, pointing or choosing a card.
- Lesson 2 (pairs build a strip) and lesson 5 step 1: the teacher notes who makes their own four-beat card or strip (the making part of outcome 3), by placing cards, pointing or telling a partner where each card goes.
- Lesson 5: groups perform; the teacher notes who keeps a part going in the round (outcome 5) by singing, humming or doing the actions.
- **One-to-one check (about 4 minutes per child, during the week of lesson 5; about 100 minutes for 25 children, so plan extra time outside the five lessons):**
    1. The teacher says the "Rain on the roof" chant. "Pat the beat while I say it." (A steady pat for about eight beats; speeding up a little counts if it stays steady.)
    2. "Now clap the words." (Claps that follow the words rather than the beat; for example, "splash in the pud-dle" gets more claps than "rain on the roof".)
    3. Show a four-beat card (ta, ta, ti-ti, ta). "Clap this card." (Three single claps and one quick pair in the third place; saying "ta ta ti-ti ta" also counts.)
    4. Play a low note, then a high note on the tuned instrument (well apart), out of the child's sight unless their route is watching. "Was the second note higher or lower?" Then the other way round. (Higher, then lower; pointing up or down counts.)
    5. Sing or play a so-mi call ("Hel-lo"). "Echo me." (Two notes, the second lower than the first; humming, playing the two bars, or showing high-then-low with a hand counts.)
- Record each item as "yes / with help / not yet". A child who points, signs, uses a card or plays an instrument has answered. Singing in tune is not marked.

⚠ Safety (read before lesson 1)

- Sound levels: keep instruments and singing comfortable; use the stop signal often; ear defenders and a quiet spot are always allowed. Never play a loud sound close to anyone's ear.
- Voices: sing gently. High notes are not shouting or squeaking; stop if a voice hurts.
- Instruments: no shared mouth-blown instruments (whistles, recorders) in this unit. Shakers must be sealed; check nothing small can come out. Beaters are for instruments only; carry them pointing down.
- Moving: walk in the same direction around the space; stop on the signal; leave space for wheelchairs and walking frames.

Access and taking part

- **Deaf and hard-of-hearing children:** show the beat with a big visible movement (a hand drum held up, a nodding head, a light switched slowly on and off on the beat, only after checking the class's medical notes); let children put a hand on the drum to feel the beat; use the BEAT and WORDS cards and the HIGH and LOW cards so they can join in by watching. Pitch can be shown on the tuned instrument (which end plays the high notes)

and with hand height. Check with the child's specialist teacher what they can hear and what helps.
- **Blind and low-vision children:** tactile rhythm cards (large felt circle = ta, two small felt circles = ti-ti); a raised-line or tactile high-and-low sheet (counters with a bump on the top line); a partner says "start" and "stop" as well as the signal.
- **Children who do not sing or speak:** hum, play an instrument, do the actions, point to cards, sign, or use their communication device. Singing alone is never required.
- **Children with limited hand movement:** pat with elbows or feet, nod, or tap with one finger; a beater with a thick grip; a partner holds the instrument.
- **Wheelchair users:** "walking" the beat can be tapping the armrests or wheeling; actions in "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" can be done seated.
- **Sound-sensitive children:** ear defenders, the quiet spot, quieter instruments (wooden blocks rather than tambourines), and the choice to be the conductor who holds up the cards.

Sources

Read for this unit (Wikipedia, 9 November 2026):

- "Kodály method": https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kod%C3%A1ly_method Used for: the method introduces concepts through listening, singing and movement before notation; the first rhythms taught are quarter notes and eighth notes, which are familiar to children as the rhythms of walking and running; quarter notes are spoken as "ta" and eighth-note pairs as "ti-ti" (some places use "te-te"); rhythmic movement such as walking, running and clapping helps children take in rhythm; revised Kodály exercises begin with the minor third, "mi-so". Lessons 2 and 3 use these ideas with pictures (walking feet and running feet) instead of notation.
- "Pitch (music)": https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pitch_(music) Used for: pitch is the quality that lets us judge sounds as "higher" and "lower" in a melody; it is one property of a musical sound alongside duration, loudness and timbre. Lesson 3 keeps "high/low" separate from "loud/quiet".
- "Round (music)": https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Round_(music) Used for: in a round, several voices sing exactly the same melody but start at different times, and the parts fit together; it is one of the easiest forms of part singing because everyone learns only one line; "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" is a well-known children's round for four voices. This unit uses only two parts.
- "Row, Row, Row Your Boat": https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Row,_Row,_Row_Your_Boat Used for: the words were first printed in 1852, and the modern tune was first printed with the words in 1881, so the song is old enough to be in the public domain. (Check your own country's rules if you plan to publish recordings.)
- The "Rain on the roof" chant and the "Hel-lo" call are written for this unit (CC0).
- This repository's arts progression (grade 1: "tell pulse from rhythm (clap the beat, then clap the words); sing high and low notes") and the grade 1 year plan term 2 arts cell.

Known gaps and cautions

- Text-checked by Gemini 4 Argon on 9 November 2026 at 0eca0f5 (text only): links, timings, song provenance and access routes were reported clean; two notes (making a four-beat card was not assessed, and lesson 5 pointed "below" to a check that is in this overview) fixed in b7acbdf, which Argon also diff-checked the same day (see PEERCHECKS.md). This is a peer check by an AI agent, not an educator review.

- Second text check by Claude Fable 5.2 on 9 November 2026 at 2c4e1ba (text only; the Wikipedia citations were not re-checked): 11 notes, covering closing checks that could be passed by watching, the chant not fitting ta/ti-ti cards, naming an example so-mi pair, a starting note for the round, the one-adult round, tactile routes for board checks, the flashing-light suggestion, spare strips and the time the one-to-one check takes. All 11 were fixed in 30708fd, which Claude Fable 5.2 also diff-checked the same day (see PEERCHECKS.md). Three optional points from that re-check (screening the lesson 5 pitch question, plainer "an example" wording, drawing strips only for pairs who want to keep them) were fixed in 252e724, which Claude Fable 5.2 also re-checked the same day.
- No official music standard was read for this unit; the content comes from the grade 1 year plan, the arts progression and the Wikipedia articles above, which are drafts and summaries.
- The unit borrows the Kodály rhythm syllables and the so-mi starting interval but is not a Kodály course; a trained music teacher will know far more about sequence and singing range.
- Pitch is described only as "higher" and "lower". Children who cannot hear pitch differences are not marked down; see Access.
- The grade 4 music unit also uses rounds; this unit uses only two parts and one well-known song so grade 4 can build on it.
- Pacing and vocabulary load are untested estimates; a qualified local educator should review the unit before classroom use.
- The order of lessons, the activities and the timings are my choice, not taken from a source.

Lesson 1: Beat and rhythm

Unit overview - Next: Lesson 2

Goal: Children keep a steady beat while saying a chant, clap the rhythm of the words, and tell the beat and the words apart.

Length: about 40 minutes.

Materials

- One hand drum (or tambourine) for the teacher; the stop signal (drum plus a raised hand).
- The "Rain on the roof" chant on a large card, with a picture for each line (rain on a roof, rain on a road, a puddle splash, a toad).
- Two large cards: "BEAT" (a heart or a walking foot) and "WORDS" (a speech bubble). A small BEAT/WORDS card pair per child for the closing check.
- Untuned percussion, one per child if possible (claves, wooden blocks, tambourines, sealed shakers or drums).
- Ear defenders and a quiet spot at the edge for children who need them.
- Water. A class list for notes.

Steps

✎ Opening (5 min)

Children walk around the space while the teacher plays a steady drum beat; they stop on the stop signal. "Walk to my drum." Play a little faster, then slower; children keep in time. "That steady sound, like walking or a heartbeat, is the **beat**. We met it in kindergarten." Show the BEAT card.

✎ Main activity (25 min)

1. **Learn the chant (5 min).** Sitting in a circle. Show the chant card and say it; children echo one line at a time, then say it all together:

   Rain on the **roof** and **rain** on the **road**,
   Splash in the **pud**-dle, **hop** goes the **toad**.

(The bold words fall on the beat: four beats in each line.)

1. **Pat the beat (5 min).** Say the chant again while everyone pats their knees on the beat (the bold words). Then pat the beat while saying the chant in a whisper, then only "thinking" the words. "The beat keeps going the same, steady, steady."
2. **Clap the words (5 min).** "Now clap every bit of every word." Say the chant slowly, clapping each syllable: "Rain-on-the-roof..." Show the WORDS card. "That pattern of the words is the **rhythm**. Is it the same as the beat?" (No: some claps are quick and close together, and "splash in the pud-dle" has more claps than "rain on the roof".)
3. **Beat or words? (5 min).** The teacher holds up BEAT or WORDS while the class says the chant; children pat the beat or clap the words to match. Switch cards in the middle

of a line once children are ready. A child can take the conductor's turn holding up the cards.

4. **Two groups (5 min).** Hand out instruments (instruments stay on the floor until the signal). Half the class plays the beat on their instruments while the other half claps the words; everyone says the chant. Stop signal, swap, repeat. Instruments down on the floor on the signal.

✓ Discussion questions (5 min, with answers)

- "What is the difference between the beat and the rhythm of the words?" (Answer guide: the beat stays steady, like walking; the rhythm follows the words, so some sounds are quick and some are slow.)
- "Which line had more claps: 'rain on the roof' or 'splash in the puddle'?" (Answer guide: "splash in the puddle", five claps against four.)
- "Can you think of something else with a steady beat?" (Answer guide: a clock ticking, walking, a heartbeat, a dripping tap; any steady sound.)

✓ Closing check (5 min, with answers)

Each child has a small BEAT card and a WORDS card. The teacher says the chant and plays the hand drum, either on the beat or on the words, using the same drum both times so the pattern of sounds is the only clue (deaf and hard-of-hearing children watch or feel the drum, so for them the clue is the pattern of movements); children hold up the card that matches. Do it four times, mixing the order. (Answer guide: the card matches what the teacher did. Note on the class list who chooses correctly most times.)

Vocabulary

beat, steady, rhythm, chant, words, pat, clap

Differentiation

- Support: pat the beat with a partner's hand on top; say only the last word of each line; watch the teacher's drum.
- Stretch: pat the beat with one hand and tap the words with the other hand on the other knee; lead the "beat or words?" game.
- Deaf and hard-of-hearing children: watch the drum and the BEAT/WORDS cards; put a hand on the drum to feel the beat; the chant card shows each line.
- Blind and low-vision children: a partner says "start" and "stop" with the signal; BEAT and WORDS cards with different textures (smooth and bumpy).
- Children who do not speak: pat, clap or play while others say the chant, or point to the picture for each line.
- Wheelchair users: in the opening, wheel or tap the armrests on the beat.

⚠ Safety

- Walk in one direction in the opening; leave space for wheelchairs and walking frames; stop on the signal.
- Instruments stay on the floor until the signal; no playing near anyone's ear; ear defenders and the quiet spot are always allowed.

Teacher notes

- Many six-year-olds speed up as they get excited; keep the drum steady and slow down rather than stopping them.
- The chant is written for this unit (CC0). Any short chant or rhyme the class knows can be used instead.
- Keep the words "beat" and "rhythm" in the same meaning all unit: beat = the steady pulse, rhythm = the pattern of the words (or notes).

Lesson 2: Walking feet and running feet

Unit overview - Previous: Lesson 1 - Next: Lesson 3

Goal: Children read and clap picture rhythm cards ("ta" and "ti-ti") and make their own four-beat rhythm with a partner.

Length: about 40 minutes.

Materials

- One hand drum for the teacher; the stop signal (drum plus a raised hand).
- Large teacher rhythm cards: 8 "ta" cards (one big footprint) and 8 "ti-ti" cards (two small footprints side by side), with a way to stick them to the board in a row of four.
- Per pair: 4 "ta" cards and 4 "ti-ti" cards (small copies) and one "four-beat strip" (a strip of card with four boxes).
- Tactile versions for blind or low-vision children: one large felt circle = ta, two small felt circles = ti-ti, on card the same size as the small cards.
- Untuned percussion, one per child if possible (claves, wooden blocks, tambourines, sealed shakers or drums).
- Two large cards labelled "A" and "B" with a four-beat rhythm on each, for the closing check (A: ta, ta, ta, ta; B: ta, ti-ti, ta, ta), and a small A/B card pair per child. For blind or low-vision children, the A and B rows laid out in tactile cards at their place (and the two rows used in step 2).
- 4 spare four-beat strips (for the stretch and for lesson 5).
- Ear defenders and a quiet spot. Water. A class list for notes.

Steps

✎ Opening (5 min)

Standing in a space. The teacher plays a steady drum beat: children walk on the spot, one step for each beat, saying "ta". Then the teacher plays two quick, even sounds in each beat: children do two quick tiptoe steps on the spot, saying "ti-ti". Switch between the two. "Walking feet: ta. Running feet: ti-ti. The beat stays the same speed; ti-ti just fits two sounds into one beat."

✎ Main activity (25 min)

1. **Meet the cards (5 min).** Sitting facing the board. Show a "ta" card (one big footprint: one sound in a beat) and a "ti-ti" card (two small footprints: two sounds in one beat). Stick four cards in a row: ta, ta, ti-ti, ta. Point to each card on the beat while the class claps and says it. Repeat with two or three more rows.
2. **Which did I clap? (5 min).** Put two rows on the board. Clap one of them; children point to the row they heard (blind or low-vision children feel the two rows in tactile cards at their place). A child can take the clapper's turn.
3. **Make your own (8 min).** In pairs, children choose any four cards and lay them in the boxes of their four-beat strip. They clap and say it together, then try it on instruments

(instruments on the floor until the signal). "Can you clap it the same way twice?" If a pair wants to keep their strip, the teacher draws its four cards on the class list (one big or two small footprints per box) so they can play it again in lesson 5; other pairs make a new strip then.

4. **Play and echo (7 min).** Several pairs play their strip for the class; the class claps it back. The teacher keeps a soft steady beat on the drum underneath if it helps.

✓ Discussion questions (5 min, with answers)

- "How many sounds are there in a ta card? In a ti-ti card?" (Answer guide: one; two.)
- "If all four boxes have ti-ti, how many claps is that?" (Answer guide: eight.) "If all four have ta?" (Answer guide: four.)
- "Can you think of a word that sounds like ta, and one that sounds like ti-ti?" (Answer guide: any one-syllable word for ta, such as "bear" or "rain"; any two-syllable word said evenly for ti-ti, such as "rab-bit" or "pud-dle".)

✓ Closing check (5 min, with answers)

Show cards A and B on the board. The teacher claps one of them; each child holds up A or B (blind or low-vision children touch their tactile A or B row). Do it three times (for example A, B, B). (Answer guide: A is four even claps; B has a quick pair in the second place. Note on the class list who chooses correctly.)

Vocabulary

ta, ti-ti, rhythm card, beat, four-beat, read, echo

Differentiation

- Support: use only ta cards and one ti-ti card; clap with a partner; point to each card while the teacher claps.
- Stretch: make two strips (use a spare strip) and play them one after the other (eight beats); play your strip while a partner keeps the beat.
- Deaf and hard-of-hearing children: watch the teacher point to each card; feel the drum; the footprint pictures show one or two sounds.
- Blind and low-vision children: tactile cards (one large felt circle = ta, two small = ti-ti); feel along the strip while clapping.
- Children who do not speak: clap or tap without saying "ta"; point to the card they heard.
- Children with limited hand movement: tap with one finger, nod, or tap feet; a partner lays the cards as the child chooses.

⚠ Safety

- Tiptoe steps on the spot only; no running around the room.
- Instruments stay on the floor until the signal; no playing near anyone's ear; ear defenders and the quiet spot are always allowed.

Teacher notes

- "Ta" and "ti-ti" are the rhythm syllables used in the Kodály method (some places say "te-te"); see the README Sources. Use whichever your school already uses.
- The footprint pictures stand in for notation; staff notation comes in later grades.
- The "Rain on the roof" chant from lesson 1 has beats with three sounds ("Rain on the" is three sounds in one beat), so it cannot be written with ta and ti-ti cards. Do not use it for card reading.
- Some children will clap ti-ti as two slow claps; keep the drum beat going so they hear the two sounds fit inside one beat.

Lesson 3: High and low

Unit overview - Previous: Lesson 2 - Next: Lesson 4

Goal: Children say or show whether a note is higher or lower than another, tell high and low apart from loud and quiet, and echo a two-note "so-mi" call.

Length: about 40 minutes.

Materials

- One tuned instrument the teacher can play two clearly different notes on (a xylophone, glockenspiel, chime bars or a keyboard), with a beater if needed.
- One hand drum; the stop signal (drum plus a raised hand).
- Two large cards: "HIGH" (a bird at the top of a tree) and "LOW" (a frog at the bottom). A small HIGH/LOW card pair per child (for blind or low-vision children, the HIGH card has a raised bump at the top edge and the LOW card a bump at the bottom edge).
- A screen or large book to hide the instrument during the closing check.
- One "high and low" sheet per child (two long lines, one at the top and one at the bottom) and 6 counters per child; tactile sheets for blind or low-vision children (raised top and bottom lines, counters with a bump).
- Ear defenders and a quiet spot. Water. A class list for notes.

Steps

✎ Opening (5 min)

Sitting. "In kindergarten we heard loud and quiet." Play one note on the tuned instrument loudly, then the same note quietly: "Loud, quiet. Same note." Then play a low note and a high note at the same loudness: "These are different in another way: one is low, one is high." Show the HIGH and LOW cards. "High and low is not the same as loud and quiet."

✎ Main activity (25 min)

1. **Hands up, hands down (6 min).** Standing or seated. The teacher plays a note, then a second note. If the second note is higher, children reach up high; if it is lower, they reach down low (or move one hand up or down). Start with notes far apart, then closer together.
2. **High or low? (5 min).** The teacher plays one very high or very low note; children hold up HIGH or LOW. A child can take a turn playing the instrument while the class answers (the teacher shows which end plays the high notes).
3. **Counters on the lines (7 min).** Each child has a high-and-low sheet and counters. The teacher plays three notes, one at a time, each clearly high or low; for each note children put a counter on the top line (high) or the bottom line (low), left to right. Check together, clear, and play another three.
4. **So-mi echo (7 min).** The teacher sings "Hel-lo" on two notes, the first higher and the second lower (so-mi), showing the notes with a hand (hand higher on "Hel", lower on "lo"). On a xylophone with letters, G then E works (an example, not from a source; any

two bars that far apart will do). Children echo with voices and hands. Then the teacher sings "Hel-lo, Ma-ya" or another name in the same two notes (a one-syllable name goes on the low note, "Hel-lo, Sam"; for a longer name, sing the first part high and the rest low, "Hel-lo, Ka-ta-lin"), and that child (if they want) echoes "Hel-lo" back, or plays the two notes, or shows high-then-low with a hand.

✓ Discussion questions (5 min, with answers)

- "Is a high note always a loud note?" (Answer guide: no; a high note can be quiet and a low note can be loud.)
- "In our 'Hel-lo' call, was the first note higher or lower than the second?" (Answer guide: higher.)
- "Which end of our instrument plays the high notes?" (Answer guide: whichever end it is on the class instrument; children point to it.)

✓ Closing check (5 min, with answers)

The teacher plays four pairs of notes behind a screen or large book, so the clue is the sound, not which end is played (children whose route is watching the instrument, see the README Access section, still see it); after each pair, children point up if the second note was higher and down if it was lower. Use, for example: low then high; high then low; high then low; low then high. (Answer guide: up, down, down, up. Note on the class list who points correctly most times.)

Vocabulary

high, low, higher, lower, note, pitch (teacher's word), echo

Differentiation

- Support: keep the two notes far apart; a partner points with the child; use the HIGH and LOW cards instead of reaching.
- Stretch: notes closer together; play your own high-low pattern of three notes for a partner to place on their sheet.
- Deaf and hard-of-hearing children: watch the teacher's hand height and the instrument (which end is played); check with the child's specialist teacher what pitch differences they can hear. They are not marked down for pitch they cannot hear.
- Blind and low-vision children: tactile sheet; a partner says "first note", "second note"; reach up and down in their own space.
- Children who do not sing or speak: echo the call by humming, playing the two notes or moving a hand; point to HIGH or LOW.
- Children with limited arm movement: show high and low with eyes, head or one finger, or by choosing a card.

⚠ Safety

- Sing gently; high notes are not shouting or squeaking.

- Play the instrument at a comfortable volume; ear defenders and the quiet spot are always allowed.
- Counters stay on the sheet (check the class list for children who still mouth small objects; use larger counters if so).

Teacher notes

- The Kodály method starts singing with the two notes "so" and "mi" (a minor third); see the README Sources. Children do not need these names. On a lettered xylophone, G then E is one pair that far apart (with C as "do", G is "so" and E is "mi"); this is an example, not from a source.
- "Pitch" is the teacher's word for how high or low a note is; children can use "high" and "low".
- If the instrument is quiet, keep the room very still; if it is loud, play gently. The point is high and low, not loud and quiet.

Lesson 4: Row, row, row: a round

Unit overview - Previous: Lesson 3 - Next: Lesson 5

Goal: Children learn "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" with actions, then keep their own part going while it is sung as a two-part round.

Length: about 40 minutes.

Materials

- One hand drum; the stop signal (drum plus a raised hand).
- The "Rain on the roof" chant card (from lesson 1) for the warm-up.
- The words of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" on a large card with four pictures: rowing arms, a stream, a smiling face, a sleeping face.
- Two coloured sashes or cards to mark group 1 and group 2 (enough for every child, or a coloured card for each group to sit by).
- The tuned instrument from lesson 3, to give the starting note.
- A second adult if available, to lead group 2.
- Ear defenders and a quiet spot. Water. A class list for notes.

Steps

✎ Opening (5 min)

Standing. Say the "Rain on the roof" chant while patting the beat. Then a gentle voice warm-up: a soft "ooo" sliding from low to high and back down ("like a car going up a hill and down again"), hands following the sound. "Gentle voices: no shouting."

✎ Main activity (25 min)

1. **Learn the song (7 min).** Show the song card. Sing it line by line; children echo each line with its action:

   Row, row, row your boat, (rowing arms)
   Gently down the stream. (hand making a wave)
   Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily, (big smile, hands swaying)
   Life is but a dream. (hands together under a cheek, eyes closed)

1. **All together (3 min).** Sing it twice with actions, patting the beat on knees the second time.
2. **Teacher sings the second part (5 min).** "Now I'll start the same song later than you. Keep going with your part, whatever you hear." The class sings; when they reach "Gently down the stream", the teacher starts "Row, row, row your boat". Do it twice. "Were we singing the same song? Did it still fit?"
3. **Two groups (10 min).** Split the class into group 1 and group 2 (mark with sashes or cards), sitting apart, each with an adult leader if possible. With one adult, the teacher sits with group 2 and brings it in, since group 1 needs no cue. Before each group starts,

the leader gives the starting note (plays it on the tuned instrument or sings the first "Row"), so both groups start on the same note. Group 1 starts; group 2 starts when group 1 reaches "Gently down the stream". Each group sings the song twice through and then stops, so group 2 finishes on its own. Do it, swap which group starts, and do it again. Actions help everyone keep their place.

✓ Discussion questions (5 min, with answers)

- "Were both groups singing the same song?" (Answer guide: yes, the same words and tune, but starting at different times.)
- "What helped you keep your own part going?" (Answer guide: listening to my own group, doing the actions, watching our leader, putting a hand over one ear; any helpful idea.)
- "What happened at the end?" (Answer guide: group 1 finished first; group 2 finished on its own.)

✓ Closing check (5 min, with answers)

The class sings the round once more in its two groups, with a child as group leader if someone wants to. (Answer guide: watch who keeps their own part going by singing, humming or doing the actions, even when the other group is on a different line; note them on the class list.)

Vocabulary

round, part, group, start, together, actions, gently

Differentiation

- Support: sit next to the adult leader; do the actions only; sing the song in unison until the round feels easy.
- Stretch: three groups (the third starts when the second reaches "Gently down the stream"); a child leads a group.
- Deaf and hard-of-hearing children: follow the song card and the actions; the adult leader points to each picture as the group sings it.
- Blind and low-vision children: sit next to the adult leader; a gentle tap on the shoulder to start.
- Children who do not sing or speak: do the actions, hum, or sign the words; this is keeping a part going.
- Wheelchair users and children with limited movement: actions can be done seated or with one hand, eyes or head.

⚠ Safety

- Gentle voices; stop if a voice hurts; water available.
- Groups sit apart, but not so far that children cannot see their leader.

- Ear defenders and the quiet spot are always allowed; a round can be loud when both groups sing.

Teacher notes

- "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" is a well-known children's round for up to four voices; the words were printed in 1852 and the modern tune in 1881 (see the README Sources). This unit uses two parts.
- Bringing the second group in when the first reaches "Gently down the stream" is my choice for this unit, not taken from a source. If the parts do not fit with your class's tune, try a different starting point.
- If two groups fall apart, go back to the teacher singing the second part against the whole class; that is still a round.

Lesson 5: Our music share

Unit overview - Previous: Lesson 4

Goal: Children perform a rhythm card, the high-low game and the round for the class, say one thing they liked about another group's music, and finish the unit with a one-to-one check.

Length: about 40 minutes (one-to-one checks happen during the week).

Materials

- One hand drum; the stop signal (drum plus a raised hand).
- The "Rain on the roof" chant card (from lesson 1).
- Large teacher rhythm cards (8 "ta", 8 "ti-ti"); per pair, the 4 "ta" and 4 "ti-ti" cards and a four-beat strip from lesson 2 (a second strip, from the lesson 2 spares, for pairs trying the stretch); tactile versions.
- Untuned percussion, one per child if possible.
- The two large BEAT and WORDS cards (from lesson 1).
- The tuned instrument from lesson 3 and a screen or large book to hide it during the closing check.
- For blind or low-vision children, the two closing-check rows laid out in tactile cards at their place.
- One tuned instrument (as in lesson 3); the large HIGH and LOW cards and a small HIGH/LOW pair per child.
- The "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" song card and the group 1 / group 2 sashes or cards (from lesson 4).
- For the one-to-one check: the chant card, one four-beat card showing ta, ta, ti-ti, ta (and a tactile copy), and the tuned instrument.
- Ear defenders and a quiet spot. Water. A class list for notes.

Steps

✎ Opening (5 min)

Standing. Walk to the drum beat and stop on the signal (as in lesson 1). Then pat the beat to the chant, and clap the words: "Beat or words?" with the teacher calling which and holding up the BEAT or WORDS card.

✎ Main activity (25 min)

1. **Rhythm cards (10 min).** Pairs make a new four-beat strip (or play the one from lesson 2, if the teacher drew it on the class list) and practise for two minutes. Pairs then play their strip on instruments for the class, one after another; the class claps each one back. Pairs who would rather not play alone play together with another pair, or the teacher plays it with them.
2. **High or low? (5 min).** Children take turns as the player: they play one high or one low note on the tuned instrument, and the class holds up HIGH or LOW.

3. **The round (5 min).** Group 1 and group 2 sing "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" as a round with actions, then swap who starts.
4. **I liked... because... (5 min).** Children say, sign or point to show one thing they liked about another pair's or group's music and why ("I liked their rhythm because it had three ti-tis"). Sharing is opt-in; a thumbs-up for the class counts.

✓ Discussion questions (5 min, with answers)

- "What is the difference between the beat and the rhythm?" (Answer guide: the beat is steady like walking; the rhythm follows the words or the cards.)
- "What did you find easiest, and what was hardest?" (Answer guide: any honest answer.)
- "How could we use a round again?" (Answer guide: sing another round, play the beat while others sing; any sensible idea.)

✓ Closing check (5 min, with answers)

The teacher claps two four-beat rows from the board, one at a time; the class says or points to which row it was (blind or low-vision children touch the matching tactile row). Then the teacher plays two notes behind the screen or large book (unless a child's route is watching): "Up or down?" (Answer guide: the row clapped; up if the second note is higher, down if lower. Note who answers on the class list; the full check is the one-to-one check in the unit overview (README Assessment section).)

Vocabulary

beat, rhythm, ta, ti-ti, high, low, round, perform, audience

Differentiation

- Support: play a rhythm strip with the teacher; join the round with the actions only.
- Stretch: play an eight-beat rhythm (two strips); lead a group in the round; play a three-note high-low pattern for the class.
- Deaf and hard-of-hearing, blind and low-vision children, and children who do not sing or speak: use the same routes as lessons 1-4 (cards, actions, tactile cards, a partner, an instrument).
- Children who do not want to perform: play with the whole class, or show the teacher only.

⚠ Safety

- Instruments stay on the floor until the signal; no playing near anyone's ear.
- Gentle voices; ear defenders and the quiet spot are always allowed.

Teacher notes

- One-to-one check: see the README Assessment section (about 4 minutes per child, during the week; that is about 100 minutes for 25 children, so plan extra time outside

the five lessons). It covers outcomes 1-4 (making their own four-beat card is noted during step 1 above and lesson 2); outcome 5 (keeping a part in the round) is noted during the group round in lesson 4 and step 3 above.

- Keep comments on what children did ("You kept the beat steady all the way through"), not on talent or on singing in tune.