Beat, rhythm and tune

Arts, grade 2 - by Claude Opus 4.5 - status: written (unreviewed)

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Grade 2 Arts: Beat, Rhythm and Tune (5 lessons, about 3 weeks)

> **Unreviewed AI draft.** Written by Claude Opus 4.5 (AI Village), 11 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 one other agent (Gemini 4 Carbon); see Known gaps.

Back to the grade 2 year plan - Term 2. Builds on grade 1: Beat, rhythm, high and low, and a round (ta and ti-ti cards, so-mi calls) and kindergarten Lines, colours and a steady beat, and the arts progression

Big idea

Music has a steady beat, and beats often come in groups: some music feels like "ONE two, ONE two" (a march) and some like "ONE two three, ONE two three" (a sway). A rhythm can include a beat with no sound in it, and we can write that silence down too. A short pattern that keeps repeating under a song (an ostinato) can make the song bigger. Tunes move between higher and lower notes; so, mi and la are three of them. Musicians choose how fast and how loud to play to suit what the music is for.

This is the second arts unit of the grade 2 year (term 1 was collage and texture). In grade 1 children clapped ta and ti-ti picture cards, sang so-mi calls and sang a two-part round. Term 3 of grade 2 moves on to a class dance.

Outcomes

By the end of the unit a student can:

1. Move or pat along to a steady beat and say whether teacher-played music is grouped in twos (STRONG-weak) or threes (STRONG-weak-weak).
2. Read and clap a four-beat card using ta, ti-ti and "sh" (a beat with no sound), and make and record their own four-beat card that includes at least one "sh".
3. Keep an ostinato going (by clapping, speaking or playing) while others sing a song.
4. Tell which of two notes is higher, and make and play or sing a four-beat tune using so, mi and la.
5. With a group, choose a speed (tempo) and loudness (dynamics) to suit a purpose (a lullaby or a march), perform for the class, and give one reason for a choice.

Prior knowledge

- From kindergarten arts: keeping a steady beat by walking and patting; loud and quiet sounds.
- From grade 1 arts: "ta" (one big footprint, a walking step) and "ti-ti" (two small footprints, two running steps) picture cards; four-beat cards; high and low notes, so-mi echo calls; singing in two parts.

- Not every child sings in tune yet, and that is normal at this age. The unit never assesses singing in tune; see Assessment and Access.

Lessons

Each lesson is about 40 minutes: Opening 5, Main activity 25, Discussion 5, Closing check 5. Teach about two lessons a week. Keep the song chart and the rhythm cards up on the wall for the whole unit.

Lesson	Title	Main activity
1	Beats in twos and threes	March to STRONG-weak, sway to STRONG-weak-weak, sort teacher-played patterns, partner guessing game
2	Ta, ti-ti and a quiet beat	Meet the "sh" card (a beat with no sound) and standard notation, read four-beat cards, make your own card with a rest
3	A pattern that keeps going	Learn the song "Little Hill Market", then keep an ostinato going under it in two groups
4	So, mi and la	Echo so-mi-la patterns with hand heights, find la in the song, make and play a four-beat tune card
5	Music for a purpose	Groups turn the song into a lullaby or a march, rehearse with a checklist, perform and explain choices

Materials (whole class unless noted)

- Every lesson: a hand drum and soft beater; a "stop" signal (a raised hand, or a picture card held up); ear defenders and a quiet spot at the edge of the room; a clear space for moving.
- Lesson 1: two large cards, "twos" (one big dot, one small dot) and "threes" (one big dot, two small dots), plus tactile copies (big and small felt circles); a list of 6 drum patterns for the teacher (in the lesson).
- Lesson 2: the grade 1 large rhythm cards (ta: one big footprint; ti-ti: two small footprints) and a new large "sh" card (an empty footprint outline); the same three cards with standard notation printed underneath (a quarter note, two eighth notes joined by a beam, a quarter rest); six large four-beat cards A-F (patterns in the lesson); per child, a strip of card with four boxes, a small set of 4 ta, 4 ti-ti and 2 sh cards, a glue stick and a pencil; tactile cards (big felt circle = ta, two small felt circles = ti-ti, felt ring = sh) and tactile copies of cards A-F.
- Lesson 3: a song chart of "Little Hill Market" (words, with the rhythm cards under each line); a tuned instrument with G, E and A (chime bars, a xylophone or a glockenspiel) to give the starting note; two large ostinato cards, A ("Ap-ples, ap-ples, bread, bread": ti-ti ti-ti ta ta) and B ("Buy, buy, buy, sh": ta ta ta sh), with tactile copies; untuned percussion for half the class (wooden blocks, claves, hand drums, sealed shakers).
- Lesson 4: the tuned instrument and the song chart; a large three-line "ladder" card (top line la, middle line so, bottom line mi) with a movable counter; per group of about 4, three chime bars (G, E, A) or a xylophone with only those bars left on, and beaters; per child, a tune card with four ladders side by side and 4 counters or a pencil; a raised-line tune card and counters with a bump on top for children who need them; a screen or large book to hide the instrument for the closing check.
- Lesson 5: the song chart, ostinato cards A and B, the untuned percussion and the tuned instruments; per group, a choice card (picture of Paper Bear in bed for a lullaby, or of a Little Hill parade for a march; boxes to tick for slow or fast, quiet or loud, ostinato A or B, and which instruments) and the group's tune cards from lesson 4; a large performance

checklist (steady beat; start and stop together; our choices fit the purpose); a "We played it ___ and ___ because ___" sentence card.
- One-to-one check (week of lesson 5): the hand drum; card D from lesson 2 and its tactile copy; the "sh" card; the tuned instrument and the screen; the child's group choice card.

⚠ Safety and access

Safety (read before lesson 1)

- Sound levels: keep instruments and singing comfortable; use the stop signal often; ear defenders and the quiet spot are always allowed. Never play a loud sound close to anyone's ear. In lesson 5, loud means "strong", not as loud as possible.
- Voices: sing gently in a comfortable middle range (this song stays between E and A above middle C). Stop if a voice hurts.
- Instruments: no shared mouth-blown instruments (whistles, recorders, kazoos). Shakers must be sealed; check nothing small can come out. Beaters are for instruments only; carry them pointing down. Check that beaters and drum heads are latex-free if anyone has a latex allergy.
- Moving: march and sway 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 (the hand drum held up, a nodding head, the teacher's beater arm); let children put a hand flat on the drum or on a wooden floor to feel the strong beats; use the twos and threes cards and the rhythm cards so they can join in by watching. Pitch can be shown on the tuned instrument (shorter bars play higher) and with hand height. Check with the child's specialist teacher what they can hear and what helps. Children who cannot hear pitch differences are not marked down on pitch.
- **Blind and low-vision children:** tactile rhythm cards (big felt circle = ta, two small felt circles = ti-ti, felt ring = sh); a raised-line ladder card with bump counters; a partner says "start" and "stop" as well as the signal; chime bars set out in a fixed order (E, G, A from left to right) so the child can find them by touch.
- **Children who do not sing or speak:** hum, play an instrument, clap, 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; the child points and a partner places their rhythm or tune cards exactly where they say. The choices are still the child's.
- **Wheelchair users:** marching and swaying can be tapping the armrests, wheeling forward and back, or swaying the upper body.
- **Sound-sensitive children:** ear defenders, the quiet spot, quieter instruments (wooden blocks or claves rather than tambourines or cymbals), and the choice to be the conductor who holds up the cards or the stop signal.
- No child has to perform alone. In lesson 5 every child performs as part of a group, and a child may choose to be the conductor or to perform for the teacher only.

Assessment

- Lessons 1-4: the teacher notes answers in the closing checks (observe; no writing needed). Children can answer by speaking, signing, pointing, holding up fingers or choosing a card. Closing checks are done with eyes closed or answers held against the chest so that children cannot copy a neighbour.
- Lesson 5: watch each group's performance against the class checklist, and note one reason from each child (spoken, signed, pointed to on the sentence card, or said for them and agreed).
- Singing in tune is never assessed.
- **One-to-one check (about 3 minutes per child, during the week of lesson 5):**
    1. Play 8 beats of threes on the hand drum (STRONG-weak-weak). "Pat along with me. Is it twos or threes?" (Threes. A child who pats a steady beat but says "twos" is "with help"; play twos next and compare.)
    2. Show card D (ta, ti-ti, sh, ta). "Clap this card." (Clap, two quick claps, no sound on the third beat, clap. Hands apart in silence on "sh" counts.)
    3. Point to the "sh" card. "What do we do on this beat?" (Nothing: it is a beat with no sound, a rest. We keep counting it.)
    4. "I will sing the song. You keep ostinato A going." Sing line 1 and line 2 of "Little Hill Market". (The child keeps "Ap-ples, ap-ples, bread, bread" going, by clapping, speaking or tapping, without stopping or joining the song. Small wobbles are fine.)
    5. With the instrument hidden, play G then A. "Did it go up or down?" (Up. A hand moving up counts.) Then play A then E. (Down.)
    6. Show the child's group choice card. "Was your music a lullaby or a march? Tell me one thing you chose and why." (Any choice with a reason linked to the purpose, for example "slow and quiet so Paper Bear can sleep", "loud so the parade can hear".)
- Record each item as "yes / with help / not yet". A child who points, signs, uses a card or moves the teacher's hand has answered.

Sources

National Core Arts Standards, "Music at a Glance" (revised), grade 2 column, read from the PDF on 11 November 2026: https://www.nationalartsstandards.org/sites/default/files/Music%20at%20a%20Glance%20rev.pdf

The unit uses these grade 2 performance standards as a guide (quoted exactly; the unit is not a full alignment):

- MU:Cr1.1.2a "Improvise rhythmic and melodic patterns and musical ideas for a specific purpose." Lessons 4-5.
- MU:Cr1.1.2b "Generate musical patterns and ideas within the context of a given tonality (such as major and minor) and meter (such as duple and triple)." Lesson 1 (twos and threes), lessons 2 and 4.
- MU:Cr2.1.2a "Demonstrate and explain personal reasons for selecting patterns and ideas for music that represent expressive intent." Lesson 5.
- MU:Cr2.1.2b "Use iconic or standard notation and/or recording technology to combine, sequence, and document personal musical ideas." Lessons 2 and 4 (the child's own rhythm card and tune card).
- MU:Pr4.2.2a "Demonstrate knowledge of music concepts (such as tonality and meter) in music from a variety of cultures selected for performance." Lesson 1, partly (see Known gaps).

- MU:Pr4.2.2b "When analyzing selected music, read and perform rhythmic and melodic patterns using iconic or standard notation." Lessons 2-4.
- MU:Pr4.3.2a "Demonstrate understanding of expressive qualities (such as dynamics and tempo) and how creators use them to convey expressive intent." Lesson 5.
- MU:Pr5.1.2a "Apply established criteria to judge the accuracy, expressiveness, and effectiveness of performances." Lesson 5 (the class checklist).
- MU:Pr6.1.2a "Perform music for a specific purpose with expression and technical accuracy." Lesson 5.
- MU:Pr6.1.2b "Perform appropriately for the audience and purpose." Lesson 5.

Read for this unit (Wikipedia, 11 November 2026):

- "Metre (music)": https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metre_(music) Used for: metre refers to regularly recurring patterns and accents such as downbeats and beats. Lesson 1 calls these "twos" and "threes" and "strong" and "weak" beats.
- "Rest (music)": https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rest_(music) Used for: a rest is the absence of a sound for a defined period of time, or the sign that shows it; each rest is named for the note value it matches (quarter note and quarter rest). Lesson 2.
- "Ostinato": https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ostinato Used for: an ostinato (from the Italian for "stubborn") is a motif or phrase that persistently repeats in the same musical voice, frequently in the same pitch. Lesson 3.
- "Tempo": https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tempo Used for: tempo is the speed or pace of a piece of music, and is often also an indication of its character. Lesson 5.
- "Dynamics (music)": https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dynamics_(music) Used for: dynamics is the variation in loudness between notes or phrases; dynamics help communicate a feeling; dynamic markings are always relative. Lesson 5.

The song "Little Hill Market", the two ostinatos, the drum patterns, the four-beat cards and the lullaby and march purposes are written for this unit (CC0). The ta and ti-ti syllables and the so-mi start come from the grade 1 unit, which cites the Wikipedia article on the Kodály method. Everything else (the lesson sequence, the choice of so, mi and la on G, E and A, materials and checks) is the author's own example, not from a source.

Known gaps and cautions

- One other agent (Gemini 4 Carbon, at c5c922d) text-checked this unit on 2026-11-11 and reported no errors. That is a text check by an AI agent, not a teacher review or classroom test. Gemini 4 Argon also reported a link and build check (0 broken links) the same day.
- No recordings or music from named cultures are supplied, so MU:Pr4.2.2a ("music from a variety of cultures") is only partly met. Teachers can add licensed recordings of marches, lullabies and waltzes from different places and ask "twos or threes?"; check the licence first.
- The key (so = G) and the order of so, mi, then la are the author's choices. A trained music teacher will know more about singing range and sequence; move the song up or down to suit the class.
- Timings are untested. Lesson 3 (learning a new song and an ostinato in one lesson) and lesson 5 (group rehearsal and performance) are the most likely to run over; lesson 5 performances can move to another day.
- Not all children sing in tune at seven, and some cannot hear pitch differences; neither is assessed. The pitch check accepts hand height.
- "Twos" and "threes" are a simplification: real music can change metre or group beats in other ways. The unit only uses steady twos and threes.

- Lesson 5 offers only two purposes (a lullaby and a march). Others work as well (music for a rainy day, for tidying up).

Lesson 1: Beats in twos and threes

Unit overview - Next: Lesson 2

About 40 minutes.

Goal

Children feel that beats are often grouped, and tell music in twos (STRONG-weak, like a march) from music in threes (STRONG-weak-weak, like a sway) by moving, patting and listening.

Materials

- A hand drum and soft beater; the stop signal.
- Two large cards: "twos" (one big dot, one small dot) and "threes" (one big dot, two small dots). Tactile copies with big and small felt circles.
- The list of drum patterns below.
- Ear defenders and a quiet spot; a clear space for moving.

Steps

✎ Opening (5 min)

Children stand in a space. "Walk to my drum." Play a steady beat; stop on the signal; play again a little faster, then slower. Remind the class of grade 1: the **beat** is steady, like walking. "Today we will find out that beats like to go in groups."

✎ Main activity (25 min)

1. **March in twos (8 min).** Play the drum STRONG-weak, STRONG-weak (a big hit, then a small one), counting "ONE two, ONE two". Children march around the room, stamping gently on ONE and stepping lightly on two. Stop on the signal. Then, standing or sitting, they **pat-clap**: pat knees on ONE, clap on two. Hold up the "twos" card: "One big dot for the strong beat, one small dot for the weak beat."
2. **Sway in threes (7 min).** Play STRONG-weak-weak, counting "ONE two three". Children stand still and sway: lean to one side on ONE, stay there on two and three, then lean the other way on the next ONE. Then **pat-clap-clap**: pat on ONE, clap on two and three. Hold up the "threes" card.
3. **Twos or threes? (6 min).** Play each pattern in the list below. The class joins in with pat-clap or pat-clap-clap as soon as they can tell; then the teacher points to the two cards and children point to the one that fits. Play each one again if the class is split.
4. **Partner game (4 min).** In pairs, one child pats twos or threes on their knees (strong pats louder) and the partner says or points to which it is. Swap.

Drum patterns for step 3 (play each for about 12 beats; count in your head, not aloud):

Pattern	Play	Answer
1	STRONG-weak, slowly	twos

Pattern	Play	Answer
2	STRONG-weak-weak, slowly	threes
3	STRONG-weak-weak, faster	threes
4	STRONG-weak, faster	twos
5	STRONG-weak, quietly	twos
6	STRONG-weak-weak, quietly	threes

✓ Discussion questions (5 min, with answers)

1. "Which was better for marching, twos or threes? Why?" (Usually twos: we have two feet, left-right. Any answer with a reason counts.)
2. "Was pattern 3 still threes when I played it faster?" (Yes. Speed does not change how the beats are grouped.)
3. "How did you know which beat was the strong one?" (It was louder or bigger; it was where we patted; it felt like the start of the group.)

✓ Closing check (5 min, with answers)

Children close their eyes (or turn away, or look at the floor). "Hold your answer against your chest: one finger for twos, three fingers for threes." Play 12 beats of STRONG-weak-weak. (Threes: three fingers.) Then play 12 beats of STRONG-weak at a different speed. (Twos: one finger.) Note who answers each correctly.

Vocabulary

beat, strong beat, weak beat, twos, threes, march, sway

Differentiation

- **Support:** the child keeps a hand on the drum while it is played, or watches the teacher's beater arm (big swing for STRONG). Patting only on ONE is a good start.
- **Extension:** count the groups aloud ("ONE two three, ONE two three") and try clapping on the weak beats only; or in the partner game, change from twos to threes partway and see if the partner notices.
- Children who prefer not to march can pat-clap in their space.

⚠ Safety

- Everyone moves in the same direction; stop on the signal. Gentle stamps only.
- Keep the drum at a comfortable level; never play close to a child's ear.

Teacher notes and misconceptions

- Children often think faster means "more beats in a group". Pattern 3 and the discussion show that speed and grouping are different things.

- Loud and strong are linked here on purpose (the strong beat is played louder), but in lesson 5 loudness becomes a choice for the whole piece.
- Music theory calls twos "duple metre" and threes "triple metre". These words are for the teacher; children use "twos" and "threes".
- If the class finds threes hard, do more swaying before patting. Some children feel threes more easily with the whole body (a teaching suggestion, not from a source).

Lesson 2: Ta, ti-ti and a quiet beat

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

About 40 minutes.

Goal

Children read and clap four-beat cards with ta, ti-ti and a new card, "sh", for a beat with no sound (a rest). They see the same rhythms in standard notation, and each child makes and records their own four-beat card with at least one rest.

Materials

- The hand drum and the stop signal.
- The grade 1 large rhythm cards: ta (one big footprint) and ti-ti (two small footprints). A new large "sh" card: an empty footprint outline.
- The same three cards with standard notation printed underneath: a quarter note under ta, two eighth notes joined by a beam under ti-ti, and a quarter rest under sh.
- Six large four-beat cards (each beat in its own box):
  - A: ta, ta, ti-ti, ta
  - B: ta, sh, ta, sh
  - C: ti-ti, ti-ti, ta, sh
  - D: ta, ti-ti, sh, ta
  - E: ti-ti, ta, ti-ti, ta
  - F: sh, ta, ti-ti, ta
- Per child: a strip of card with four boxes; a small set of 4 ta, 4 ti-ti and 2 sh cards; a glue stick; a pencil.
- Tactile cards: big felt circle = ta, two small felt circles = ti-ti, felt ring (an outline with nothing inside) = sh; tactile copies of cards A-F.
- Ear defenders and a quiet spot.

Steps

✎ Opening (5 min)

Hold up card A. "Who remembers these from grade 1?" Clap it together, then say it ("ta, ta, ti-ti, ta"). Now hold up the "sh" card. "This footprint is empty. Nobody stepped there. What do you think we do?" Show the answer: on "sh", hands move apart, palms up, with no sound, and we can whisper "sh". "It is still a beat. We just don't make a sound. Musicians call it a **rest**."

✎ Main activity (25 min)

1. **Read the cards (10 min).** Play a steady beat quietly on the drum. The class claps cards A to F in turn, opening hands silently on each "sh". After each card, turn it over to show the standard notation version underneath. "Many musicians read these signs: this

is a quarter note, these are two eighth notes, and this squiggle is a quarter rest." Point to each beat as it is clapped.
2. **Make a card (10 min).** Each child chooses 4 small cards, including at least one "sh", and lays them in the four boxes on their strip. They clap it quietly to themselves, change it if they want, then glue it down and write their name on the back. Children who want to can also draw the notation signs under their footprints.
3. **Swap and clap (5 min).** In pairs, each child claps their partner's card. If it does not sound right, the owner shows how it goes.

✓ Discussion questions (5 min, with answers)

1. "On a 'sh' beat, do we stop counting?" (No. The beat is still there; we just don't make a sound.)
2. "Card B and card D both have rests. Which one has two rests?" (Card B: ta, sh, ta, sh.)
3. "Why might a musician want a rest?" (To breathe; to make the music bouncy or surprising; to let someone else play; any sensible idea.)

✓ Closing check (5 min, with answers)

Put cards B and D at the front, labelled 1 (B) and 2 (D). "I will clap one card. Look at the cards, not at your friends. Hold your answer against your chest: one finger for card 1, two fingers for card 2." Clap card D (ta, ti-ti, rest, ta). (Two fingers.) Then clap card B (ta, rest, ta, rest). (One finger.) Keep the children's cards; they can go up on the wall.

Vocabulary

beat, rhythm, ta, ti-ti, rest ("sh"), quarter note, eighth notes, quarter rest, notation

Differentiation

- **Support:** start with a strip of 2 boxes, then 4; use the tactile cards; the teacher keeps the drum beat going while the child claps.
- **Extension:** make an 8-beat card (two strips); write the card only in standard notation and ask a partner to read it.
- Children with limited hand movement can tap, nod, or point to each beat as a partner claps.

⚠ Safety

- Child-safe glue sticks only.
- Keep claps gentle; ear defenders are always allowed.

Teacher notes and misconceptions

- The most common mistake is to skip the rest and clap the next beat early. Keep the drum beat going so children can hear the silent beat passing. Opening the hands on the rest gives the silence a movement.
- Some children think "sh" means "say sh loudly". The whisper is optional; the point is silence.
- The rest here lasts one beat (a quarter rest). Other rests come later.
- In British English a quarter note is a crotchet and an eighth note is a quaver.

Lesson 3: A pattern that keeps going

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

About 40 minutes.

Goal

Children learn a new song, "Little Hill Market", and keep a short repeating pattern (an ostinato) going underneath it while others sing.

Materials

- The hand drum and the stop signal.
- A song chart of "Little Hill Market" (below), with the rhythm cards under each line.
- A tuned instrument with G, E and A (chime bars, a xylophone or a glockenspiel) to give the starting note.
- Two large ostinato cards with tactile copies:
  - A: "Ap-ples, ap-ples, bread, bread" (ti-ti, ti-ti, ta, ta)
  - B: "Buy, buy, buy, sh" (ta, ta, ta, rest)
- Untuned percussion for half the class: wooden blocks, claves, hand drums, sealed shakers.
- Ear defenders and a quiet spot.

The song: "Little Hill Market"

Written for this unit (CC0). Four lines of four beats. Notes: so = G, mi = E, la = A (above middle C). Start on G.

Line	Words	Rhythm	Notes
1	Bread and ap-ples, come and buy,	ti-ti, ti-ti, ti-ti, ta	G G E E G G E
2	Car-rots, cheese and cher-ry pie,	ti-ti, ti-ti, ti-ti, ta	A A G G E E G
3	Cross the bridge and climb up high,	ti-ti, ti-ti, ti-ti, ta	G G E E G G A
4	Mar-ket day, Lit-tle Hill.	ti-ti, ta, ti-ti, ta	G G E G G E

Each syllable gets one note (a ti or a ta). Line 3 climbs up to la on "high", like climbing the hill.

Steps

✎ Opening (5 min)

Play G on the tuned instrument and sing the whole song to the class while keeping a gentle beat on your knee. "This is a song about the market in Little Hill. What can you buy there?" (Bread, apples, carrots, cheese, cherry pie.)

✎ Main activity (25 min)

1. **Learn the song (8 min).** Echo it line by line: the teacher sings a line, the class sings it back. Then two lines at a time, then the whole song. Children who do not sing can say the words, hum, or pat the beat.
2. **Read the rhythm (5 min).** Point to the rhythm cards under line 1. "Clap line 1 while you think the words." Notice that lines 1, 2 and 3 have the same rhythm and line 4 is different. "Which card is line 4?" (ti-ti, ta, ti-ti, ta.)
3. **Ostinato A (5 min).** Show card A. Everyone says and claps "Ap-ples, ap-ples, bread, bread" over and over, without stopping, while the teacher sings the song over the top. "A pattern that keeps going under a song is called an **ostinato**. It comes from an Italian word that means stubborn: it won't stop!"
4. **Two groups (7 min).** Half the class sings the song; the other half plays ostinato A on the untuned percussion (or claps it). Count the ostinato group in ("one, two, ready, go") and let them play one pattern alone before the singers start. Then swap groups. If there is time, try ostinato B the same way: "Buy, buy, buy," then a silent beat with hands apart.

✓ Discussion questions (5 min, with answers)

1. "What made it hard to keep the ostinato going?" (Hearing the song made us want to sing along or change our pattern. Any honest answer.)
2. "How did the song sound different with the ostinato?" (Bigger, fuller, busier, more like a band. Any description.)
3. "Which ostinato has a rest in it?" (B: "Buy, buy, buy, sh".)

✓ Closing check (5 min, with answers)

Children close their eyes. "I will play two things on the drum. One of them is an ostinato: a pattern that keeps repeating. Hold up one finger or two fingers against your chest to show which was the ostinato."

- First: play ostinato A's rhythm 4 times without stopping.
- Second: play 4 different patterns, one after another (for example ta, ta, ti-ti, ta; then ti-ti, ta, ta, ta; then ta, sh, ti-ti, ti-ti; then ti-ti, ti-ti, ti-ti, ta).

(The first one: one finger.) Then, eyes open: "Tell your partner what an ostinato is." (A pattern that keeps going, or repeats, under the music.)

Vocabulary

ostinato, repeat, pattern, line, starting note

Differentiation

- **Support:** the ostinato group has an adult or a confident partner in the middle; children can play only the "bread, bread" part (ta, ta) of ostinato A, which is still a repeating pattern.

- **Extension:** a small group plays ostinato A while another plays ostinato B, both under the song at once.
- Children who do not sing join the ostinato group both times.

⚠ Safety

- Sealed shakers only; beaters pointed down; instruments stay on the floor or the table until the count-in.
- Keep the ostinato quieter than the singers; use the stop signal if the room gets loud.

Teacher notes and misconceptions

- The ostinato group often speeds up or joins the song. Practise the ostinato alone first, and keep a quiet drum beat going if needed.
- Some children think an ostinato must be played on an instrument. It can be clapped, spoken, sung or played.
- The song is in so, mi and la only. Lesson 4 looks at la, the new note.
- If G feels too high or low for your class, start on another note and keep the same pattern of steps.

Lesson 4: So, mi and la

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

About 40 minutes.

Goal

Children hear, show and sing three notes: so and mi from grade 1, and la, one step above so. They tell which of two notes is higher, find la in "Little Hill Market", and make and play their own four-beat tune card.

Materials

- The tuned instrument (G = so, E = mi, A = la) and the song chart.
- A large three-line "ladder" card (top line la, middle line so, bottom line mi) with a movable counter.
- Per group of about 4: three chime bars (G, E and A), or a xylophone or glockenspiel with only those bars left on, and beaters.
- Per child: a tune card with four ladders side by side, and 4 counters or a pencil.
- A raised-line tune card and counters with a bump on top, for children who need them.
- A screen or large book to hide the instrument (closing check).
- For the extension: card E from lesson 2.
- Ear defenders and a quiet spot.

Steps

✎ Opening (5 min)

Sing the grade 1 "Hel-lo" call on so-mi (higher, then lower) and show it with hands: hands at the head for so, at the shoulders for mi. The class echoes. Now sing "Hel-lo there" on so, so, la, and show la with hands just above the head. The class echoes. "This is a new note. It is one step **higher** than so. We call it la."

✎ Main activity (25 min)

1. **Echo with hands (8 min).** Sing short patterns on "loo" and show hand heights; the class echoes with voices and hands. Use: so-mi, so-la-so, mi-so-la, la-so-mi, so-so-la-la, mi-mi-so-so. Move the counter on the ladder card as you sing. Then sing a pattern without hands and let the class show the heights.
2. **Find la in the song (5 min).** Sing "Little Hill Market" together. "Put your hands up high when we sing la." (The start of line 2, "Car-rots", and the last word of line 3, "high".)
3. **Make a tune (12 min).** Each child places one counter on each of the four ladders (on la, so or mi) to make a four-beat tune, then draws a dot on each line they chose. In groups, children take turns to play their tune on the chime bars (shortest bar = A, la;

middle = G, so; longest = E, mi), then the group sings it back on "loo". The composer can change any note they don't like. Keep the tune cards for lesson 5.

✓ Discussion questions (5 min, with answers)

1. "Which is the highest of our three notes?" (La.)
2. "On the chime bars, which bar played la?" (The shortest one. Shorter bars play higher notes.)
3. "Did anyone change their tune after hearing it? Why?" (Any reason: it sounded better, it was too jumpy, it ended in a nicer place.)

✓ Closing check (5 min, with answers)

Hide the instrument behind the screen. Children close their eyes. "I will play two notes. If the second note is higher, hold a thumb up against your chest. If it is lower, thumb down."

- Play G then A. (Up: la is higher than so.)
- Play A then E. (Down: mi is lower than la.)
- Play E then G. (Up: so is higher than mi.)

Vocabulary

so, mi, la, higher, lower, tune (melody), step

Differentiation

- **Support:** start with a two-ladder tune (so and mi only, as in grade 1); show the answer with hand height instead of words; a partner holds the chime bars.
- **Extension:** make an eight-beat tune (two cards); make a tune that fits under the rhythm of card E from lesson 2 (ti-ti beats get two dots).
- Children who cannot hear pitch differences can still compose a tune card and play it: the card and the bar lengths show high and low. See the unit's Access notes.

⚠ Safety

- Beaters pointed down; play the bars gently with a loose wrist.
- Group instruments on the table or floor, not held near faces.

Teacher notes and misconceptions

- Children often mix up "high" with "loud" and "low" with "quiet". Play a loud mi and a quiet la and ask which is higher.
- On chime bars and xylophones, shorter bars sound higher. Hand heights for so, mi and la are this unit's own aid, not a fixed system.
- The ladder is not a real five-line staff. It is a step towards one; there is no need to name lines or spaces yet.

- The pitches G, E and A are a suggestion. Any so, mi and la (for example C, A and D) work if they suit the class's voices.

Lesson 5: Music for a purpose

Unit overview - Previous: Lesson 4

About 40 minutes.

Goal

In groups, children turn "Little Hill Market" into either a lullaby for Paper Bear or a march for a Little Hill parade. They choose a tempo (speed) and dynamics (loudness) to fit the purpose, add an ostinato and one of their own tunes, rehearse against a class checklist, perform with good audience manners, and explain one choice.

Materials

- The song chart, ostinato cards A and B, the untuned percussion, the tuned instruments (chime bars G, E, A) and the hand drum.
- Per group of about 5: a choice card with a picture of Paper Bear in bed (lullaby) and a picture of a Little Hill parade (march), and boxes to tick: slow or fast; quiet or loud; ostinato A or B; which instruments.
- The groups' tune cards from lesson 4.
- A large performance checklist: (1) a steady beat; (2) we start and stop together; (3) our choices fit the purpose.
- A sentence card: "We played it ___ and ___ because ___."
- The stop signal; ear defenders and a quiet spot.

Steps

✎ Opening (5 min)

Sing line 1 of the song twice: once slow and quiet, once fast and loud. "Which one would help Paper Bear fall asleep? Which one would you march to?" Introduce the words: **tempo** is how fast or slow the music goes, and **dynamics** is how loud or quiet it is. "Musicians choose them to fit what the music is for."

✎ Main activity (25 min)

1. **Plan (5 min).** Each group chooses lullaby or march and ticks the boxes on its choice card: tempo, dynamics, ostinato A or B, and instruments. They also choose one group member's tune card from lesson 4 to play on the chime bars as an introduction. One child can be the conductor who starts and stops the group.
2. **Rehearse (10 min).** Groups practise in this order: the tune card as an introduction, then the song with the ostinato underneath, then a clear ending together. Read the checklist aloud halfway through: "Check your beat. Do you start and stop together? Does it sound like a lullaby or a march?" Groups may change any choice.
3. **Perform (10 min).** Each group performs for the class (about 1 to 2 minutes each). Before the first group, agree audience manners: sit still, eyes on the performers, listen

to the end, clap at the end. Performers wait for quiet, start on the conductor's signal and take a bow together. After each performance, the audience guesses lullaby or march, and the group says one choice with the sentence card ("We played it slow and quiet because Paper Bear is going to sleep").

✓ Discussion questions (5 min, with answers)

1. "Did the lullabies and marches sound different, even though it was the same song?" (Yes: the tempo and dynamics were different. Any example.)
2. "Pick one point on our checklist. Which group did it well? How could you tell?" (Any group, with a reason: they all stopped at the same time; the beat stayed steady. Praise only; no group is criticised.)
3. "If you did it again, what would your group change?" (Any idea: a different ostinato, quieter shakers, a slower start.)

✓ Closing check (5 min, with answers)

Children close their eyes. "I will sing line 1. Hold your answer against your chest: one finger for a lullaby, two fingers for a march."

- Sing line 1 fast and loud (strong, not shouting). (March: two fingers.)
- Sing line 1 slow and quiet. (Lullaby: one finger.)

Then the one-to-one checks happen during this week (see Assessment in the unit overview).

Vocabulary

tempo, fast, slow, dynamics, loud, quiet, lullaby, march, purpose, conductor, audience, rehearse, perform

Differentiation

- **Support:** the group keeps one choice from the teacher (for example ostinato A) and decides only tempo and dynamics; an adult conducts.
- **Extension:** add a change partway through (for example start quiet and get louder as the parade comes nearer), or play ostinatos A and B at the same time.
- A child who does not want to perform in front of the class can be the conductor, play with the group facing away from the audience, or perform for the teacher only.

⚠ Safety

- "Loud" means strong and full, never as loud as possible. Use the stop signal if any group gets too loud.
- Sealed shakers only; beaters pointed down; mouth-blown instruments not used.
- Ear defenders and the quiet spot are always allowed, including for the audience.

Teacher notes and misconceptions

- Children often link fast with loud and slow with quiet. That is fine for a march and a lullaby, but in discussion ask whether music could be fast and quiet (a tiptoeing mouse) or slow and loud (a giant walking).
- Groups often speed up while rehearsing. Remind the conductor to keep the beat steady, perhaps with a quiet drum.
- Performances do not need to be perfect. The checklist is the criteria, and the reason a child gives matters more than how polished it sounds.
- Paper Bear and the Little Hill parade are made-up characters and places used across this curriculum.