

**Curriculum objective**

- To understand and explore how music is created through appropriate musical notations.
- To create and compose music.

**Lesson objectives**

- To perform with a steady pulse and a correct number of beats and rests.
- To compose and notate simple rhythm patterns.

**Resources**

Printable sheet 'Rhythm grids' enlarged or onscreen; printable sheet 'Blank rhythm grids', one per child.

**Vocabulary**

rhythm, steady beat, patterns, tempo, slow, fast .

# Playing rhythm patterns

## Introduction

- A couple of the activities in this year introduce the concept of 'beat'. This is simply a constant pulse that underpins the music: if you can clap along at a steady pace to a piece of music, you are probably 'clapping the beat'.
- A rhythm grid is essentially a table that contains dots indicating different rhythm patterns. It is read horizontally from left to right, and each box represents the same length of time (e.g. one beat). For example, the grid below represents a steady beat:

•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

In this next grid, the second and third notes should be played twice as fast as the first note:

•	• •	•	• •	•	• •	•	• •
---	-----	---	-----	---	-----	---	-----

Rests can also be included in the grid:

•	• •		•	•	• •		•
---	-----	--	---	---	-----	--	---

## Whole-class work or Group work

- Project the 'Rhythm grids' sheet onto a screen. Make sure that the children are seated so that they all can clearly see the display. Demonstrate clapping eight steady beats as shown in 'Rhythm grid 1'. Ask the class to copy this beat. They start clapping when you have counted '1, 2, 3, 4' at a slow, steady pace. Repeat the process at different tempos.
- Move on to clapping Rhythm Grid 2. The class might find it helpful if, during the first run through, you recite the following as you clap:

1 | 2 & | 3 | 4 & | 5 | 6 & | 7 | 8 & |

- Again repeat at different tempos
- Move on to clapping Rhythm Grid 3. The class might find it helpful if, during the first run through, you recite the following as you clap:

1 | 2 & | rest | 4 | 5 | 6 & | rest | 8 |

- It is a good idea to have a physical gesture for the rest. Suggest a single forward shake with hands clasped together. Again repeat at different tempos

## Independent work

- Ask the children to compose their own rhythm patterns, incorporating silent beats, and notate these using the printable sheet 'Blank rhythm grids'.

**Differentiation**

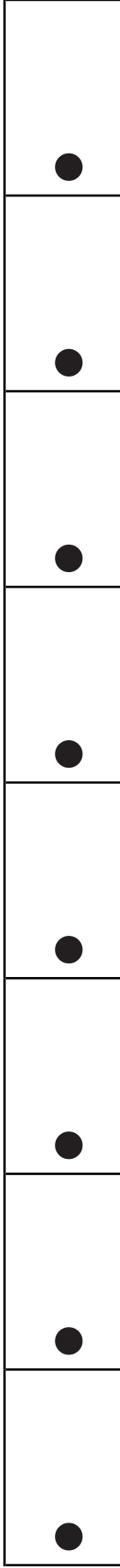
- Challenge: children can try playing their patterns on instruments. In small groups, they might combine these to create extended pieces.

## Review

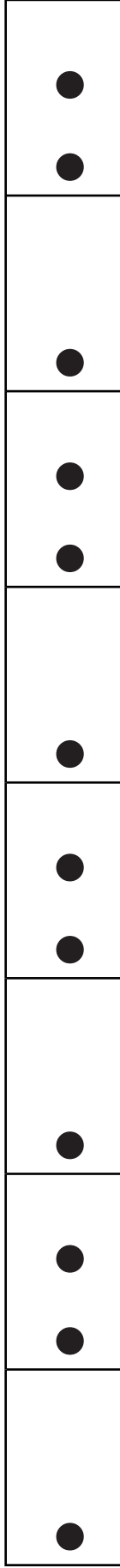
- Note which of the children can perform these rhythms confidently and accurately. Also, identify any children who can write and accurately perform more complex patterns.

# Rhythm grids

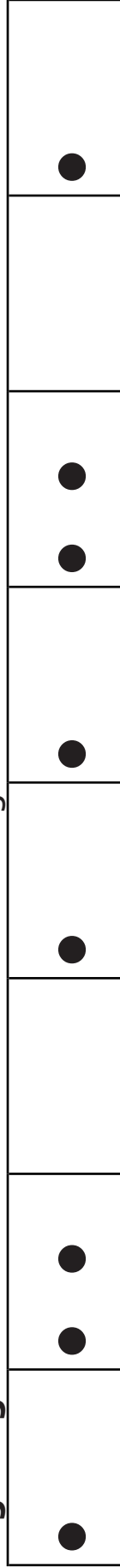
**Rhythm grid 1:** a steady beat or pulse. Do this slowly at first. Then try at different speeds.



**Rhythm grid 2:** in this grid, the second and third notes should be played twice as fast as the first note:



**Rhythm grid 3:** rests can also be included in the grid:



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Blank rhythm grids

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

**Curriculum objective**

- To understand and explore how music is created through appropriate musical notations.
- To understand and explore the interrelated dimensions (duration).

**Lesson objectives**

- To perform from notation that indicates long and short rhythms.

**Resources**

Paper; pens; tuned classroom percussion; keyboards (optional); voices.

**Vocabulary**

long, short, duration, high, low, pitch, notation.

## Working with graphic notation

### Introduction

- In this lesson, children perform from simple notation that uses different symbols to represent long and short notes. For example, a rectangle = long note; square = short note. These musical 'scores' could also incorporate rests.

### Whole-class work

- Introduce very simple graphic notation that can be used to indicate rhythm and pitch. An example might look like this:



- Explain how the system works:

*'This notation is read from left to right. Here the bottom row represents a low pitch and the top row a high pitch. A rectangle represents a long note while a square represents a short note. Blank boxes can be used to indicate rests.'*

- Now ask a volunteer to come to the front of the class to perform the piece above on any instrument which has at least two pitches. Ask the class to comment on the accuracy of the performance. Ask for other volunteers to try this out with other instruments or to try performing using their voice. Create further examples for the children to try out.

### Paired work

- Organise the children into pairs to create similar patterns that they notate on paper, using the conventions described above. Next, ask them to select an appropriate instrument which is capable of making both long/short sounds and high/low sounds. Some instruments will not be suitable - for example, a two-tone woodblock can make high and low sounds, but can only make sounds of short duration; with other instruments, such as a glockenspiel, a damping technique should be employed to create sounds of shorter duration.

### Differentiation

- Challenge/Support: prepare graphic notations of varying levels of activity for the children to perform.
- Challenge: ask children to loop the rhythm patterns to provide an accompaniment for a recorded piece of music.

### Assessment

Consider:

- Can the children perform these patterns confidently and accurately at different tempos?
- Can they manage to play more complex patterns?