

## Lesson plan 3: Game to notation on a stave

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### Learning objective:

- To work with a three line, and then five-line stave
  - To understand that 'note heads' (blobs) can go on the line of the stave or in the space between the lines
  - To show the tone-set **me – ray – doh (m-r-d)** on a stave
  - To compose using m-r-d on a stave
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### Key vocabulary

*Stave*: The five parallel lines upon which notation is written

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## Using human notation as a tool to teach the beginnings of written notation

Remember the Top Tip from the last session:

### **Top Tip!**

*When we begin to work with pitch in stave notation, we remove the rhythm. We concentrate only on the blobs (note heads) to begin with.*

- Display the photo of human notation showing the pitch levels for the *response* phrase
- Encourage the children to read the human notation and sing the response to solfa (singing names)
- Explain to the children that they are now reading music!
- Ask children to retrieve the three pieces of string and 'blobs' from their music packs (see image below of music pack contents)



- Draw three 'string like' parallel, horizontal lines on the board. Ask the children to lay their three lengths of string out on their table like yours on the board.
- Either use blu tack to stick one of the blobs onto the bottom drawn line, or draw a solid 'blob' on this line (make sure the line is running through the middle of this 'blob.' Write a 'd' for *doh*, next to the bottom line.  
*Explain to the children that this blob represents **doh**.*
- Ask the children to place a blob on their bottom length of string
- Stick/draw another blob on the next line up, but further along, so the note heads are not directly above each other.  
*Explain to the children that this blob represents **me**.*
- Ask the children to place a blob on their middle length of string

- Stick/draw another blob in the *space* between these two lines, (further along, so the note heads are not directly above each other).

*Explain to the children that this blob in the space between the two lines represents **ray**.*

- Ask the children to place a blob in the space between the bottom and middle strings
- **Pair work** – Still displaying the human notation photo, ask children to use the blobs and strings to show the pitch levels of the Essequibo River *response* with **doh** starting on a line
- Repeat this whole exercise, but with **doh** starting in the space between the two bottom lines

*Explain to the children that **doh** and **me** are placed on adjacent lines or adjacent spaces, and that **ray** is placed between them.*

- Ask your children to show you where to place **me** and **ray** on your lines according to the above rule
- **Pair work** – Still displaying the human notation photo, ask children to use the blobs and strings to show the pitch levels of the Essequibo River *response* with **doh** starting in a space
- **Composition** – Children take it in turns to move the blobs up and down on then strings to create a new melody. Can their partner read and perform it back to them?
- **5-line stave** – Draw five straight, horizontal, parallel lines on the board

- Ask your more musically experienced children if they can explain what they will often find at the beginning of this stave. They may tell you about the treble clef or bass clef that they have been using in instrumental lessons.

*Explain to these experienced children that you are purposefully not putting a clef at the beginning of the stave because you would like the freedom to start your **doh** anywhere on the stave.*

- You create a simple, short melody using **m-r-d** by drawing the blobs on the stave using the rule above
- Give the children the **doh** starting pitch and encourage them to immediately read and sight sing your composition straight from the stave
- Repeat with different short compositions – perhaps some of your children would like the opportunity to compose on your stave
- **CHALLENGE!** - You could then add 'sticks' to your blobs to create rhythm. Can they read and sight sing this?


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### Next steps

- Repeat all of these steps with single phrases from other **m-r-d** songs (some are provided below)
  - Perform children's compositions on pitched percussion instruments
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Other m-r-d songs:

## Have you ever, ever?

TYPE: : UK ACTION SONG	TONESET: m-r-d	TRACK: 26
		
2 ... short-legged life / sailor / wife ...	4 ... one-legged life / sailor / wife ...	
3 ... cross-legged life / sailor / wife ...	5 ... bow-legged life / sailor / wife ...	

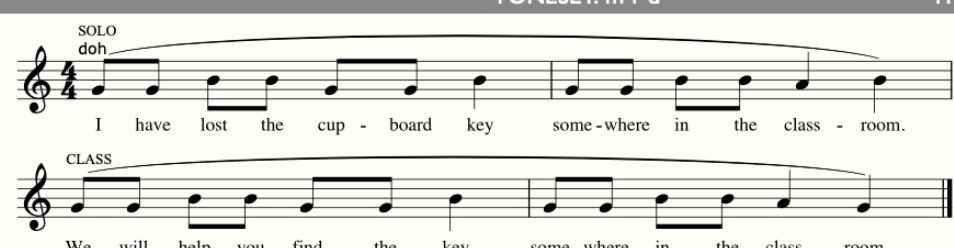
### DESCRIPTION OF GAME, ACTION OR ACTIVITY

The children perform the following actions independently of each other. On the notes with pause signs they drum with fast alternating hand slaps on the knees; they then alternately slap with both hands on the knees and handclap to the pulse. For each 'long-legged' they show hands wide apart vertically to suggest 'long' followed by further alternating hand claps and knee-slaps. This sequence is repeated several times. In subsequent verses the hands and arms are appropriately used to suggest 'short-legged', 'cross-legged', 'one-legged' and 'bow-legged'.

For a different kind of experience, children are asked to sing and perform the actions, but on reaching each 'long-legged' it is 'sung' by the Thinking Voice.

## I have lost the cupboard key

TYPE: TONESET: m-r-d TRACK: 36



**SOLO**  
doh  
I have lost the cup - board key some - where in the class - room.

**CLASS**  
We will help you find the key some - where in the class - room.


### DESCRIPTION OF GAME, ACTION OR ACTIVITY

One child leaves the room and another then hides the key. The first child returns and is guided by the class in finding the key, singing the second phrase more quietly when she is far from the key and louder as she gets nearer to it. The song is repeated as often as is necessary for the 'seeker' to find the key or the search is abandoned.

Singing Development: The children are being asked to show vocal control and an ability to sing with variations of dynamic. They are asked not to lose their Singing Voices – that is, to avoid the extremes of whispering or shouting. For this activity it might be better if the class stands.

## One for the mouse

TYPE: UK RHYME TONESET: m-r-d TRACK: 49



me \*  
One for the mouse, One for the crow, One will rot, while the o - ther one will grow.

### DESCRIPTION OF GAME, ACTION OR ACTIVITY

This very simple melody invites several interesting possibilities for singing in two-part canon.

- Using the melody as written the second voice enters two beats after the first.
- Invert the pitch of the melody, ie start on F doh [d r r m / F G G A etc.] and the second voice enters two beats after the first. Initially sing to singing names [sol-fa].

## Suo gân

TYPE: WELSH LULLABY

TONESSET: m-r-d

TRACK: 67



doh  
 Su - o - gân, do not weep. Su - o - gân, go to sleep.  
 Su - o - gân, have no fear. Su - o - gân, Mo - ther's near.

2. Suo gân, from above,  
 Suo gân, song of love;  
 Suo gân, blessed morn,  
 Suo gân, Christ is born.

3. Suo gân, Eastern Star,  
 Suo gân, from afar;  
 Suo gân, shepherds sing,  
 Suo gân, newborn King.

### DESCRIPTION OF GAME, ACTION OR ACTIVITY

The song's title simply means lullaby (*suo* = lull; *gân* = song).

The additional verses might make this song a useful Nativity song or Christmas concert item.

Singing Development: Ask the children to sing gently and with a smooth, swaying feel. They should try to make each singing sound connect to another like beads close together on a necklace: this is *legato* singing.

The word 'suo gân' is pronounced 'see-o gahn'