

# Standard 1

## Aims

Students at Standard 1 should aim to:

- maintain a steady beat using body percussion, tuned and untuned instruments along with a song or musical piece
- play in groups at different times with and without a beat
- add instruments to songs to create variations
- consider in what order and at what dynamic (loud or soft) to perform the song or work.

## Beat

Creating arrangements for class groups can be a very simple process, starting with the use of beat. All simple songs and pieces of recorded music can provide opportunities for students to use body percussion or instruments to play on the first beat of each bar.

In 4/4 time, have children start with beat 1.

1a.  $\frac{4}{4}$  1 2 3 4 1 2 3 4 |

Children: >

In 3/4 time have children play on beat 1 or the first of each group of 3.

1b.  $\frac{3}{4}$  1 2 3 1 2 3 |

Children: >

In 6/8 time have children play on beat 1 or the first of each group of 3.

1c.  $\frac{6}{8}$  1 + a 2 + a 1 + a 2 + a

1 2 3 4 5 6 1 2 3 4 5 6 |

Children: >

There needs to be a lot of repetition at this stage, using body percussion (clap, patsch [knee pat], stamp etc) and movement around the room to reinforce the beat.

In the early stages, these actions and sounds should be modelled by the teacher.

Use many simple, well known songs e.g. *Twinkle, Twinkle, Old MacDonald, Kookaburra Sits ...* to practise making sounds on the beat.

An arrangement can become more interesting and challenging by adding the off beat. By physically separating groups in the classroom, it will be possible to add the off beat.

In 4/4 (2/4) time have one group of children play beats 1 and 3.

	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	
2.	$\frac{4}{4}$ ↓ ×	↓ ×	↓ ×	↓ ×	↓ ×	↓ ×	↓ ×	↓ ×	
Children:	>	↘	>	↘	>	↘	>	↘	

Have another group of children on the opposite side of the room play on beats 2 and 4.

	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	
3.	$\frac{4}{4}$ ↓ ×	↓ ×	↓ ×	↓ ×	↓ ×	↓ ×	↓ ×	↓ ×	
Children:	↘	>	↘	>	↘	>	↘	>	

Start by using body percussion, e.g. 1 + 3 = patsch and 2 + 4 = hand clap.

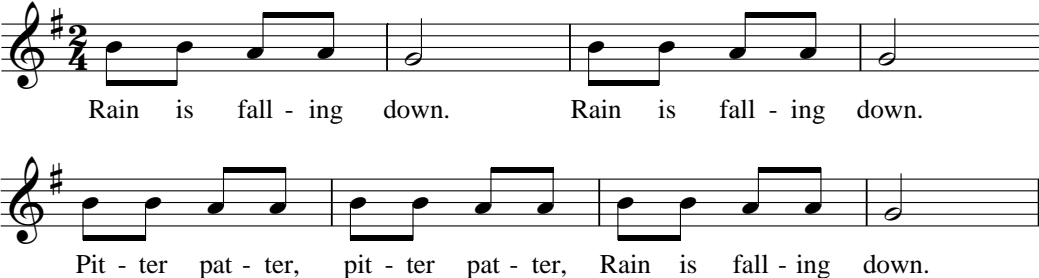
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	
4.	$\frac{4}{4}$ ↓ ×	↓ ×	↓ ×	↓ ×	↓ ×	↓ ×	↓ ×	↓ ×	
Group 1	>	↘	>	↘	>	↘	>	↘	
Group 2	↘	>	↘	>	↘	>	↘	>	

Make sure the groups swap roles to experience both on and off beat work.

## Beat / No Beat

Untuned percussion instruments can be used in songs and musical works in a free, non-beat form. A simple example of this is: *Rain is Falling Down*, from **Catch a Song**:

Rain Is Falling Down

5. 

Students who are allocated phrases 1, 2 and 4 sing 'Rain is falling down' using **rain maker, maracas** or simple home made **shakers** (yowie containers filled with rice are very good) to depict the rain falling.

This can be in free time and not on the beat.

**Clavés, castanets, wood blocks, chopsticks** etc. could then be used for phrase 3, 'Pitter patter', depicting the raindrops falling. Again this could be in free time or in beat.

Introduce the students to beat and no beat. They may choose a combination of both in their arrangement.

## Design

Introducing students to design creates an ideal opportunity to add musical instruments to the arrangement.

At this stage (Standard 1), recommend particular instruments for the students to play on the 'strong' and 'weak' beats:

e.g. beats 1 and 3 (strong) – **drums, tambours, clavés, guiros**

and beats 2 and 4 (weak) – **tambourines, bells, maracas, clavés.**

		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	
6.	$\frac{4}{4}$	↓ x	↓ x	↓ x	↓ x	↓ x	↓ x	↓ x	↓ x	
Group 1 (Strong beats) drums, tambours, claves, guiros.	>	↻	>	↻	>	↻	>	↻	>	
Group 2 (Weak beats) tambourines, bells, maracas, claves.	↻	>	↻	>	↻	>	↻	>		

It is more difficult to use instruments that ring, such as **triangles** and **cymbals**, than steady beat instruments. It is hard to discern between the beats because the instruments ring through the bar.

One suggestion for the **cymbal** is to put it on the ground and hit it with a **drum stick** (or chopstick). This creates an effect like a **high hat** and is most effective on beats 2 and 4.

The **triangle** is effective on beat 1 only. This is quite a challenge but worth trying. The ringing instruments allow a perfect opportunity to discuss long and short sounds.

Use different body percussion for different verses as this provides a ready made arrangement to use.

The students could also suggest sounds (body percussion etc.) to use. This gives them ownership of the arrangement and an understanding of different sounds.

A simple arrangement of *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star* could include:

- 1) singing
- 2) singing with clapping beats 1 and 3
- 3) sing and pat on the back beat 1 and 3
- 4) clap beat only
- 5) sing, clap beat 1, pat on the back beat 3.

7.

Clap.  
Patsch etc.

Instruments can easily be included in many songs to create a variation to the original song. This is known as 'arranging'.

For example, *If you're happy and you know it clap your hands* could easily be 'If you're happy and you know it play the drum.'

The students could maintain the beat on the drum for that verse. In subsequent verses other instruments would be used.

Select the order by simply singing a different instrument in the first line. The students with those instruments then join in on the beat (this also promotes instrument recognition). Alternatively the students or teacher could decide the order of instruments to be used (arranging).

Some other songs that work very well with this concept are:

*Aiken Drum*, **Catch a Song** – 'And he played upon his ...'

*Dinah*, **Catch a Song** – 'Playing on the old ...'

*Let Everyone Clap Hands*, **Merrily, Merrily** – 'Let everyone play ...'

Please look in the references section for more examples.

## Pitch

Tuned percussion instruments (**xylophones, marimbas, glockenspiels, chime bars** etc.) are a further possibility at Standard 1.

Many songs use only one or two chords and the simplest form of melodic arrangement would use chord notes played on the first beat of each bar or beats 1 and 3 in 4/4 time. The chord names are usually written above the music.

There are lots of songs that work well with only one chord; for example, *Pick a Bale of Cotton*, ***Catch a Song*** and *Kookaburra Sits ...* in ***Upbeat Guitar***.

**Pick A Bale Of Cotton**

8a. G

Jump down, turn - a - round, pick a bale of cot - ton.

Jump down, turn - a - round, pick a bale a day.

Chorus

Oh! law - dy! pick a bale of cot - ton.

Oh! law - dy! pick a bale a day.

Play G ♪ G ♪ throughout.

## Kookaburra

8b. D

Kook - a - bur - ra sits on an old gum tree. \_\_\_\_\_

mer - ry mer - ry king of the bush is he. \_\_\_\_\_

Laugh, kook - a - bur - ra, laugh, kook - a - bur - ra

gay your life must be.

Play D  $\frac{1}{2}$  D  $\frac{1}{2}$  throughout.

The students could play these notes:

G for *Pick a Bale of Cotton* or D for *Kookaburra Sits ...*

on beats 1 and 3 for these songs.

**Chime bars** are an ideal instrument as each student can be given a specific note to play.

**Marimbas, xylophones** could have bars removed (two hands to remove a bar) to allow easy access to the required note.

The arrangement can now add tuned and untuned instruments and body percussion in combination.

## Putting it together

Here are some suggestions to keep your arrangements workable.

Use strong sounding, non-ringing instruments (**drums** etc.) on beats 1 and 3 (1 in 3/4 time).

		1	2	3	4		1	2	3	4	
9.	$\frac{4}{4}$	↓ x	↓ x	↓ x	↓ x		↓ x	↓ x	↓ x	↓ x	
Drums, Woodblocks etc.		>	⌘	>	⌘		>	⌘	>	⌘	

Keep tuned percussion on 1 and 3 (1 in 3/4 time).

		1	2	3	4		1	2	3	4	
10.	$\frac{4}{4}$	↓ x	↓ x	↓ x	↓ x		↓ x	↓ x	↓ x	↓ x	
Drums, Woodblocks etc.		⌘	>	⌘	>		⌘	>	⌘	>	

	1	2	3	4		1	2	3	4
	G	⌘	G	⌘	G	⌘	G	⌘	G

Don't have too many groups.

If possible have teacher or leader maintain beat on **piano / guitar / tambour**.

Record arrangements (cassette or digital) to give students a chance to hear themselves. This will assist in developing their skills, give them ideas for the future and give the teacher a guide to assessing the students' developing capabilities.

## Suggested references and further examples

### ***Catch a Song***

An excellent early childhood publication giving many ideas for arranging.

### *Click Clack*

6/8 piece

Key F

2 beats per bar

### *Clocks*

4/4 piece

Key C

beat vs. rhythm

### *Aiken Drum*

2/4 piece

Key F

replace 'ladle' with an instrument

### *Dinah*

2/4 piece

Key F

replace banjo with other instruments

### *Old MacDonald*

4/4 piece

Key G

one chord

version in ***Upbeat Guitar*** is the variation *Old MacDonald has a band*

### *March, March Soldiers:*

2/4 piece

In G, but works better in C. Suggestions include to:

- add instruments suggested in song
- have 'marching band'
- use recorder for trumpet
- use drum for boom at end.

### ***Merrily Merrily***

CD available

### *Let Every One Clap Hands*

6/8 piece

Key D

Substitute an instrument for clapping e.g. 'Let everyone play the Tambourine' or students could play on the beat or on the clap notes only.

*Jumping Land*  
4/4 piece  
Key C  
'I belong to *clavé* land' etc.

*If You're Happy and You Know it*  
further arrangement ideas in ***Marimbas For Little Kids***

*I am a Fine Musician*  
4/4 time  
Key G  
substitute other instruments and sounds

*Throw it Out the Window*  
6/8 time  
also in ***2000 ABC Songbook***  
two groups: one plays G note; one plays D note

***Mrs Macaroni***

*Can You Tell Me*  
simple accompanying patterns

*Mary Wore a Red Dress*  
simple accompanying patterns

## **Other Resources**

***Bop in the Bath***

***Rainbows, Trees and Tambourines***

***Upbeat Guitar***

***Jingle with a Ball***

***Swing Things***

***Music Savers Books 1, 2, 3 & 4***

***Okki Tokki Unga***

***ABC Songbooks***

***Jam Songbooks***