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A study of musical rudiments for grades four, five, and six

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A STUDY OF MUSICAL RUDIMENTS FOR GRADES FOUR, FIVE, AND SIX

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MUSICAL RUDIMENTS

I. INTRODUCTION

In a rational study of music there are many basic rudiments that must be learned. These basic rudiments are important because they lead to a clear understanding of the language of music. It is true that many people enjoy music without knowing these rudiments; however, they are limited to learning by imitation or are destined to be listeners only. "Those people who are interested in music for all the children," says Myers, "want them to 'love' it (emotional response), and to 'know something about it' (intellectual response)."[1] Intellectual response, of course, is determined by musical rudiment knowledge. The study of musical rudiments will help the performer achieve a more satisfactory role in whatever he attempts to do and will help the listener gain a fuller understanding of the music he hears.

The problem then is: To what extent are musical rudiments being taught in elementary grades four, five, and

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[1] Louise Kifer Myers, Teaching Children Music in the Elementary School (New York: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1950), p. 22.

six so that students will be able to participate to their maximum in musical activities, whether it be as a performer or as a listener.

Three schools were selected by the elementary music consultant of the Stockton Unified School District for the purpose of determining this extent, the selection being made on the basis that each offered a different cross-section of the community. During the course of research two hundred sixth grade pupils were given a musical rudiment test, and the teachers of the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades, in these particular schools, filled out a questionnaire and were personally interviewed by the writer. The evaluation of the results of the rudiment tests reflects the musical learnings of the pupils, while the evaluation of the teacher interviews and questionnaires reflects the teacher's musical background and also points out the type of music course that has been available to pupils during their fourth, fifth, and sixth grades.

At the present time there appear to be two general attitudes toward the study of musical rudiments in grades four, five, and six--pro and con. Principals, music supervisors, music consultants, music teachers, and classroom teachers debate the pro and con attitudes with seemingly valid arguments.

Those who say no to the study of rudiments argue that musical rudiment study at this age stamps out the natural

love for song and that little or no time should be spent on these fundamentals. Generally speaking, the theory here is that first the child must learn to love music and then he will willfully learn the rudiments of the musical language. The question here is, how is it possible for a love of music to develop before an understanding exists? Also, how much can this "no fundamental" type of teaching, with a method such as rote or imitation, do for elementary students in the development of a love for music? Perkins has this to say in connection with this thought:

> Learning to sing songs by rote only cannot do much toward the cultivation of independence. Rote singers must constantly be led . . . Children should be taught to read and sing at sight just as soon as their progress indicates they are prepared for so doing. The first work in sight singing then goes hand in hand with rote singing.[2]

Those who say yes to the study of rudiments believe the skill and knowledge acquired will increase the children's appreciation of music and add to the pleasure of participation in musical activities. Accordingly, students given a thorough course in rudiments will undoubtedly enjoy musical participation, and chances are they will be capable members of the groups they join. Also, the 1951 Music Educators National Report supports this position:

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[2] Clella Lester Perkins, How to Teach Music to Children (Chicago: Hall and McCreary Co., 1936), p. 21.

> Progressive mastery over the characteristic elements of music, its tonal and rhythmical relationships, its media and structures, must be provided for by deliberate planning if the child is to gain independent control of this meaningful language.[3]

The object of this thesis is to discuss musical rudiments and their importance, to demonstrate to what extent these rudiments are being taught in the selected Stockton schools and to inquire into the musical background and musical attitudes of the teachers of the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades of these particular schools.

II. RUDIMENTS AND READING MUSIC

Rudiments. Listed in Appendix A are the symbols or rudiments of music with which this thesis is concerned. A working knowledge of these rudiments is needed in order to develop a note-reading ability. Reading music is a skill that must be developed as other elementary skills are developed with planned procedures progressing from the simple to the complex. There is no easy formula for this project, as one can see by looking at the rudiment chart, but there can be a beneficial outcome if students and teachers alike will master these symbols and their meaning.

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[3] Music Educators National Conference, Music in the Elementary School (Chicago: Music Educator National Conference, 1951), p. 13.

To comprehend a language one must understand its symbols. Music itself is a language with symbols of pitch, duration, and dynamics. (This thesis will be concerned with pitch and duration symbols only.) Pitch symbols determine at what level, high, medium, or low, a tone will sound, and duration symbols determine how long that tone will last. "One of the automatic responses needed for note-reading ability," writes Myers, "is the recognition of music symbols."[4] To stress this need for symbol recognition, let us explore the mental action that takes place and the rudiment knowledge needed when a student reads the two measures of music quoted in Figure 1.

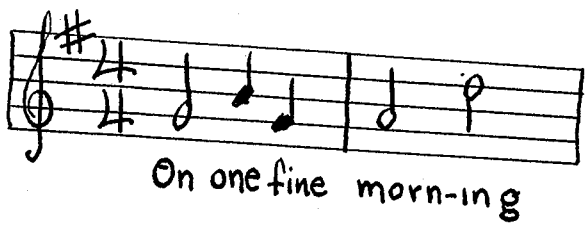

FIGURE 1

TWO MEASURES OF MUSIC TO READ

Reading music. The steps described here are approximations of the mental actions of a singer using a music-reading

[4] Myers, loc. cit.

method while determining the pitches of the notes in Figure 1. The method described is not the only one, but it is workable in a classroom situation. The correct note reading method is debatable; however, either the letter, number, or syllable method (see Figure 2 below) can be employed.

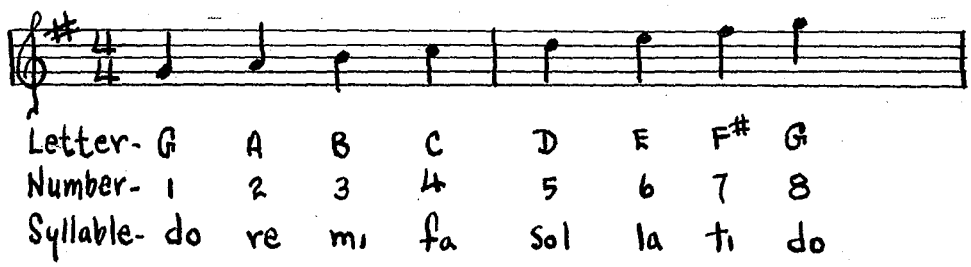

FIGURE 2

THREE METHODS FOR NOTE READING

The first action is to recognize the key signature as "G" major and the first note as "do" or "one", the first tone of the "G" major scale. The learning behind these thoughts are as follows: knowledge of the clef sign, names of all lines and spaces of the staff, and recognition of the key signature. (Figure 3 and also see Chart A in the appendix).

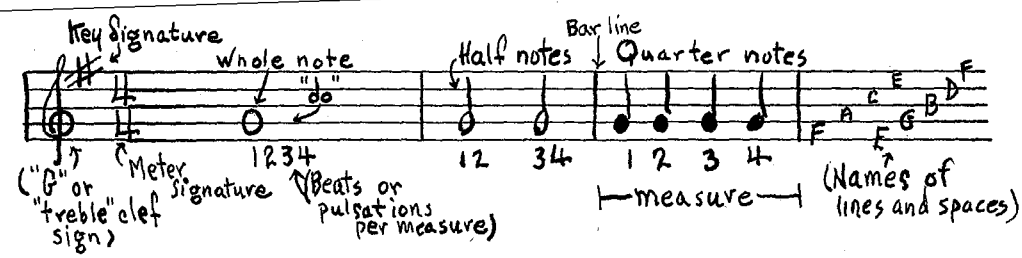

FIGURE 3

OTHER MUSICAL RUDIMENTS NEEDED FOR NOTE-READING ABILITY

The second mental action is to note the meter signature of 4/4 and know its meaning. Also, needed here is the knowledge of note values and bar lines (Figure 3).

The third step is the actual singing, a combination of mental and physical action. With the aid of a pitch pipe or piano to establish the first tone, the vocalist sings the pitches while pronouncing the words. Behind this action we have another combination of past learnings--knowing intervals and how to produce them vocally and being able to combine all of these mental operations (steps one, two, and three) while singing (Figure 4). The routine of the instrumentalist is

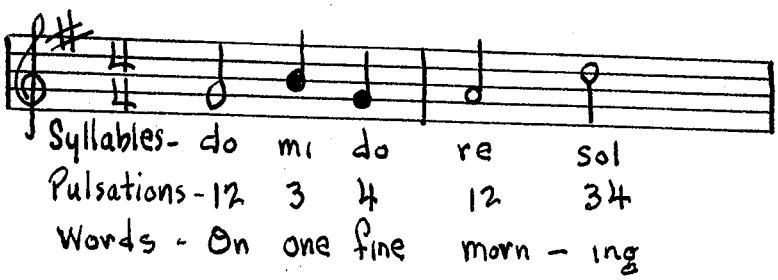

FIGURE 4

READING MUSIC

the same, except for his method of tone production. It is true, too, that certain finger locations or combinations and slide positions give a fair guarantee of accuracy; however, good instrumental playing, like good singing, requires the accurate hearing of tones or intervals.

Purpose of rudiments. The language of music is complicated, and to the beginning student, it is a jumbled mass of foreign symbols. It takes concentration, patience, and time to cover even the minimum number of rudiments needed for beginning note-reading. These, like the rudiments of spelling and arithmetic, should be started when the student is young, thus preparing a firm foundation for later musical endeavors. Murcell says:

> The work of the first six grades usually centers about the reading of the musical score. This is entirely proper, for reading music, as we have already remarked, is a very basic skill, and the traditional concern of the grades is with the fundamentals.[5]

The elementary student who aspires to join a musical organization either in the lower grades or the secondary school will need a background of rudiments in order that he may participate to his capacity. To expect students to learn basic musical rudiments after they join choirs or instrumental groups is an open invitation to the students' defeat and frustration. Rudiment study is the preparation for participation and appreciation, and to neglect this phase of musical education will result in numerous defeats which in turn lead to disinterest. Murcell says this about the need for technical learning:

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[5]James L. Murcell, Principles of Musical Education (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1927), p. 139.

And though the children never develop (and probably they never should) the showy technical stunts, they are being given a basis from which rapid progress can be made . . . All in all, then, the tendency to divorce technique from musicianship is false and fatal.[6]

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[6] Ibid., p. 146.

CHAPTER II

TEACHER INTERVIEW AND QUESTIONNAIRE

I. INTRODUCTION

In the elementary schools of the Stockton Unified School District the classroom teacher is required to teach music. This fact makes the classroom teacher important, from the standpoint of this study, since she determines what music is to be taught to the majority of the elementary school students. (The exceptions are those students who take advantage of the music classes offered outside the regular classroom or study privately on their own.) Naturally, under the self-contained classroom situation the teacher's musical attitude, background, and ability have a direct bearing on the success of her music course. As Glenn and Lowry states: "The teacher must create the atmosphere in which the students are to experience their heightened sensitiveness. Unless the teacher loves music, the possibility of creating the proper atmosphere is lessened."[1] The musical life of the teacher outside of the classroom reflects her love for, or interest in, the subject and is well worth consideration in a study of this type.

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[1] Mabelle Glenn and Margaret Lowry, Music Appreciation for Every Child (New York: Silver Burdett Co., 1935), Intro. pp. XI.

Teacher preparedness in this special field, then, is another very important point to be investigated. Myers says, "The teacher needs skills, too: To sing artistically, to read music, to record music, to teach and select materials, and to play the piano."[2] The 1951 report of the Music Educators National Conference states that one of the weaknesses of the self-contained classroom is that few teachers are proficient in all special subjects.[3] This criticism, of course, is aimed at music as well as other special fields and seems worth examining here.

II. CONTENT

A copy of the teacher questionnaire can be found in Appendix B. The first question of the five main questions indicates the grade level of the teachers and the amount of time given to music instruction. Part two shows the parts of musical theory that are taught by the teachers. Part three investigates the teachers' musical abilities and interests. Part four is in the main a question aimed at the musical attitude of the teachers. Part five was added for teacher suggestions and advice.

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[2] Louise Kifer Myers, Teaching Children Music in the Elementary School (New York: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1950) p. 400.

[3] Music Educators National Conference, Music in the Elementary School (Chicago: Music Educators National Conference, 1951).

III. RESULTS

The results indicate that the teachers interviewed are distributed fairly evenly among the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades as shown in Table I. It should be noted that Table I indicates that four teachers have combination classes which, as in other subjects, presents added course planning problems. If any effort is made to provide a music course progressing from grade to grade, a combination of two classes would surely upset the plan.

TABLE I

GRADE LEVEL OF TEACHERS INTERVIEWED

Grade	No. of Teachers
Fourth	8
Fourth and Fifth (Combination)	1
Fifth	6
Fifth and Sixth (Combination)	3
Sixth	5

The next point to be considered is the number of minutes allotted for the music course. There is a variance of time from forty to one hundred twenty minutes per week, which indicates a lack of consistent administrative policy regarding class time for music. Music Educators National Conference of 1947 recommends one hundred minutes of classroom

music per week.[4] As revealed in Table II, twenty of the teachers teach less than this recommended time.

TABLE II

MINUTES ALLOTTED FOR CLASSROOM MUSIC

Minutes	No. of Teachers	Minutes	No. of Teachers
40	1	80	5
50	4	90	3
60	4	100	2
75	3	120	1

Closely connected to the minutes per week is the rate occurrence per week. Here too, we find a lack of consistency in planning. One teacher had music only once per week while five employed music every day. Seven of the twenty-three had music two times per week and eight others had three lessons per week. The remaining two teachers had music twice per week. Apparently each teacher plans the amount of music to be taught and the rate of occurrence per week. As the results indicate, there are several different ideas on this.

Under the next section we find the parts of musical theory that are being taught by the teachers interviewed. (See Table III on page 14.) When noting that no one item is taught in all classrooms, we again see a great difference

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[4] Music Educators National Conference, Music Education Source Book (Chicago: Music Educators National Conference, 1947), p. XII.

TABLE III

NUMBER OF TEACHERS WHO
TAUGHT A PARTICULAR MUSICAL RUDIMENT TO THEIR CLASS

Rudiment	No. of Teachers
Treble clef sign	17
Bass clef sign	9
Treble staff lines and spaces	17
Bass staff lines and spaces	2
Sharp sign	8
Flat sign	8
Natural sign	3
Whole note	9
Quarter note	6
Eighth note	1
4/4 meter signature	13
3/4 meter signature	11
2/4 meter signature	8
6/8 meter signature	4
C major key signature	13
G major key signature	6
D major key signature	5
A major key signature	4
F major key signature	4
B-flat major key signature	3
E-flat major key signature	3
C-minor key signature	1

exists in teachers' conceptions of what is important and what is not important. Table III quite definitely points out that musical rudiments are not in general use in these particular classrooms. For example, less than half of the teachers teach note values; yet without this knowledge there can be no note reading ability.

The next pagt of the questionnaire includes the types of class activities that can be employed. (See Table IV on page 15.) Considering the few rudiments taught in these

classrooms, it's surprising that any of these class activities are attempted. To teach musical symbols that are not usable in the present situation does seem senseless, but teachers with little ability in this subject have no other choice. "Theoretical knowledge," says Bauman, "is valid only if it supports tonal experience."[5]

Table V touches on the musical ability and background of the teacher. (It is noteworthy here, in connection with the pianistic ability of the teachers, that some of the pianos that were supposedly available were located in

TABLE IV

MUSICAL CLASS ACTIVITIES EMPLOYED BY TEACHERS

Class Activity	No. of Teachers
Construction and sound of major scale	8
Construction and sound of minor scale	1
Interval study (singing)	5
Interval study (listening)	3
Note-reading by the syllable method	6
Note-reading by the number method	3
Note-reading by the letter method	23
Class singing	23
once per week	2
twice per week	5
three times per week	6
four times per week	3
five times per week	7

[5]Alvin Bauman, Elementary Musicianship (New York: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1947), Preface p. V.

cafetoriums where lunch, gym classes, instrumental classes, and auditorium programs are also scheduled.) The teachers that felt they had a certain degree of singing ability were not very confident, and many added, "I sing only with the class and not as a song leader or soloist."

TABLE V

TEACHERS' BACKGROUND AND ABILITY IN MUSIC

Ability	No. of Teachers	Background	No. of Teachers
Pianistic	13	College Training Sufficient . .	9
Singing	20	Insufficient .	14

As seen in Table V a majority of the teachers felt they were not properly prepared for teaching elementary classroom music. A few realized this need and supplemented their regular music courses with private study. Generally speaking, the teachers expressed the opinion that too many "special" abilities are required for classroom work--art, music, and science, to mention a few.

Investigation indicates that few of the teachers have musical interests outside of the school. The lack of singing ability is verified in Table VI when we see that only one participates in a choral organization. The entire result reveals very little interest in musical participation of any sort.

TABLE VI

TEACHERS' MUSICAL INTERESTS

Interest	No. of Teachers	Interest	No. of Teachers
Choir members	1	Collect records	17
Member of "Concert Series" .	1	popular . . .	4
Member of "Friends of Chamber Music"	3	semi-classic	12
		classical . .	13

The need for rudiment study was felt necessary by a majority of the teachers when we see that fifteen answered yes and eight answered no. Twenty-two of the teachers felt the need for a special music teacher to handle the technical parts of music, note-reading, voice culture, and choral direction. With the exception of one teacher, music specialists would be very welcome in these particular schools. An added comment from many was that music courses would gain a new importance for students if taught by a special music teacher, since students often regard music as a period of relaxation and do not give it the serious thought that it needs.

IV. INDICATIONS

The music class is a problem for most of the teachers interviewed. To say this is generally true among classroom teachers appears to be a safe assumption, as these interviewed

are average teachers. This group of teachers is surely an example of teachers found in practically any school system.

A shortcoming that is very evident here is the lack of musical training of the teacher. Accordingly, the teacher will teach what she can do herself, whether it be singing, note reading, rhythm study, or any other parts of the music course. Dykema and Cundiff have this to say:

> Training courses for prospective teachers involve so many subjects and the time allotted to music is so slight that it is difficult for students to gain the needed power in music unless they enter upon their teacher training with some previous training in music.[6]

Added to this the 1951 Music Educators National Conference report says:

> Unfortunately, the curricula of teacher-training institutions are so crowded with requirements that the average teacher has little opportunity to gain an enthusiasm or deep appreciation for music.[7]

Certainly, some type of arrangement is needed at teacher-training institutions to insure every prospective teacher of this special preparation. If there is not ample time, then those persons should not attempt to teach the course in our public schools, and arrangements should be made for special instructors.

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[6]Peter W. Dykema and Hannah M. Cundiff, New School Handbook (Boston: C. C. Birchard and Co., 1939), p. 1.

[7]Music Educators National Conference, Music in the Elementary School (Chicago: Music Educators National Conference, 1951), p. 10.

CHAPTER III

PUPIL MUSICAL RUDIMENT TEST

I. INTRODUCTION

A musical rudiment test was given to two hundred sixth grade pupils from the three elementary schools chosen for research. Twenty-five minutes was allotted for the test, and this proved to be ample time. The pupils were tested in groups of approximately thirty in their regular classrooms, with no attempt to divide them according to mental or musical ability. The objectives of the test were: first, find out what rudiment knowledge was known by the sixth grade pupils in these particular schools; second, gather information that could be compared with the teacher interview and questionnaire results; third, use the test results as a guide to estimate what musical capabilities the test group possesses and to compare that with what is desirable at elementary school level.

II. CONTENT

The test material can be divided into two general categories--identification of music symbols and understanding of music symbols (See Appendix C). The music symbols employed in this test are considered to be quite basic and within the grasp of fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students.

Typical musical signs, lines and space names, note values, meter signatures, key signatures, scale constructions, note-reading methods, and familiar song identification, cover the eight parts of the test. Where it appeared necessary examples were given to insure complete understanding of the questions. It should also be stated the test results were divided into three categories: first, the total number of correct answers; second, the total number of correct answers from the group of pupils (76) that were supplementing their classroom music instruction with extra group or private instruction; third, the total number of correct answers from pupils (124) who studied music only in the classroom.

III. RESULTS

The first point for consideration is the identification of musical signs. These signs are as common to musical scores as are periods and question marks to pages from books. The five signs used are listed on Table VII with the number of correct answers under each student category.

In reading music the student must be able to identify these basic signs in order to start properly and proceed correctly. The flat, sharp, and natural signs determine the actual sound of the melody, and not to know the meaning of these signs would make accurate note-reading an impossibility. Similarly, the meaning of the lines and spaces is of importance here. Table VIII presents the results.

TABLE VII

NUMBER OF PUPILS GIVING CORRECT ANSWERS TO SIGN IDENTIFICATION

Sign	Pupils total correct	Pupils with extra training	Pupils classroom trained
Treble clef . . .	113	60	53
Bass clef	92	59	33
Flat	102	71	31
Sharp	98	71	27
Natural	41	34	7

TABLE VIII

NUMBER OF PUPILS NAMING LINES AND SPACES OF TREBLE AND BASS STAFFS

Staff	Pupils total correct	Pupils with extra training	Pupils classroom trained
Treble	70	42	28
Bass	21	17	4

As in the previous case, this knowledge serves its purpose in the music reading process. Reading instrumental music requires a thorough understanding of lines and spaces because certain finger combinations represent notes and are located on certain spaces of the treble clef staff. In vocal music it is possible to use the interval of syllable reading method, omitting the letter names; however, in understanding key signatures, finding "do" of a scale, or realizing the effects of flat, sharp, and natural signs, the knowledge of lines and space names is essential.

Note values were tested under two situations--4/4 meter and 6/8 meter. These results are listed under Table IX. As expected 4/4 meter was understood by a larger number than was the 6/8 meter.

The understanding of the two numbers making a meter signature was known by less than twenty-five per cent of the tested group. Table X shows these results.

TABLE IX

NUMBER OF PUPILS UNDERSTANDING METER SIGNATURE NUMBERS

Meter signature	Pupils total correct	Pupils with extra training	Pupils class-room trained
4/4 meter	47	32	15
3/4 meter	43	29	14
2/4 meter	42	28	14
6/8 meter	34	25	9

Key signature testing, too, brought very few correct answers. For example, forty-two of the entire two hundred could identify "C" major, one of the most common and frequently used keys in early theory lessons. As stated previously in Chapter I, when explaining the note-reading process, knowledge of key signatures has a very essential function. Table XI shows the results of key signature identification and indicates very little knowledge about this part of the rudimental course.

Scale construction results give evidence that this particular phase of theory work has been practically omitted.

TABLE X

NUMBER OF CORRECT ANSWERS INVOLVING THE IDENTIFICATION OF NOTE VALUES UNDER 4/4 METER AND 6/8 METER

Meter and note	Pupils total correct	Pupils with extra training	Pupils class-room trained
4/4 meter			
whole	84	58	26
quarter	82	55	27
eighth	52	40	12
dotted quarter	33	30	3
dotted eighth .	68	47	21
6/8 meter			
half	22	14	8
quarter	25	18	7
eighth	30	19	11
dotted half . .	13	11	2
quarter tied to eighth . .	20	15	5

TABLE XI

NUMBER OF CORRECT ANSWERS UNDER IDENTIFICATION OF KEY SIGNATURES

Key signature (major)	Pupils total correct	Pupils with extra training	Pupils class-room trained
C	42	30	12
G	38	28	10
D	29	18	11
A	21	16	5
F	28	21	7
B-flat . .	28	18	10
E-flat . .	19	14	5

A great majority of correct answers are credited to the pupils with musical training beyond classroom music. This is probably due to the fact that instrumental instruction

usually includes the learning of major and minor scales. Table XII gives these results.

XII

NUMBER OF PUPILS WHO COULD CONSTRUCT MAJOR AND MINOR SCALES

Scale	Pupils total correct	Pupils with extra training	Pupils classroom trained
Major	25	18	7
Minor	1	1	0

The results obtained under the note-reading section of the test point out that letter name recognition is far ahead of syllable or number name recognition. (Instrumental students undoubtedly contribute mainly to this result.) Obvious here, too, is the fact that most teachers are not teaching note-reading methods, and the ones that are are not doing a very thorough job. In this section there were ten notes to identify by naming the syllable, number, and letter name. These results can be seen in Table XIII.

The last part of the test was a problem in identification of two melodies with only the first few measures of notes given as a clue. "America" and "The Star Spangled Banner" were used since these songs surely can be considered familiar to all school children. The results, however, indicate a somewhat different picture as seen in Table XIV.

TABLE XIII

NUMBER OF PUPILS GIVING CORRECT IDENTIFICATION TO SYLLABLE, NUMBER, AND LETTER NAMES OF NOTE EXAMPLES

Total notes	Syllable	Number	Letter	Total notes	Syllable	Number	Letter
10	24	46	24	5	2	5	3
9	11	14	5	4	4	2	1
8	1	1	4	3	4	3	2
7	8	4	8	2	13	5	4
6	5	3	2	1	9	5	4
				0	138	107	140

TABLE XIV

NUMBER OF PUPILS IDENTIFYING TWO FAMILIAR MELODIES

	Pupils total correct	Pupils with extra training	Pupils class-room trained
America	46	39	7
The Star Spangled Banner . . .	41	33	8

IV. INDICATIONS

Judging the amount of knowledge retained by the students and observing the school time allotted for music, one can obviously see that in many classrooms more time is needed if retention is to be improved. Perhaps music instruction two or three times a week is not enough, especially when theoretical studies are encountered. Also, there appears to be a lack of thoroughness in teaching when one observes the

test results. In the teacher questionnaires and interviews there are indications that many parts of musical theory are covered; however, test results do not agree with this. Test results surely indicate that in the regular classroom music period very little, if any, attempt is being made to give thorough instruction in the rudiments of music. The majority of these pupils are not properly equipped for musical participation, for they are not familiar with the most common music symbols. As a result, many of the future choir members will be faced with rote learning, many of the future instrumentalists with the added chore of learning note reading while learning an instrument, and many of the future listeners with very little knowledge of what they are hearing. Is this what is meant when we read: "a joyful experience in music is the responsibility of every school system to all of its pupils"?[1]

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[1] Stockton Unified School District, Curriculum Bulletin No. 72 (Stockton, California, June 1956), p. 93.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY

I. EFFECTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The results of the musical rudiment test, Chapter III, make it evident that these pupils are not receiving a very thorough course in musical rudiments. They are not prepared for musical participation in the schools or the community. The teachers' questionnaire results, Chapter II, further indicates that the teaching of musical rudiments is not only inadequate but also lacks any logical planning. The effects of such circumstances can better be explained if consideration is given to the different roles of the persons involved--the pupil, the teacher, and the administrator. Finally, important here is the effect upon the community.

The pupil. During the elementary grades of four, five, and six, pupils have an opportunity to study some type of music, instrumental, vocal, or classroom. Generally speaking, instrumental programs are well organized, giving opportunity to interested pupils for lessons on practically every instrument. Special instrumental teachers travel from one school to another, training prospective band and orchestra members for future musical participation. Elementary school choirs are organized in most schools and afford an opportunity

for interested vocalists. Noteworthy here is the fact that while music specialists handle the instrumental instruction, the vocal groups are directed by persons primarily trained for classroom teaching. These teachers have their regular classroom duties and during brief periods before or after school they attempt to organize singing groups. In two of the three schools visited, choirs were organized and were meeting during the winter months, November-April, two times per week for a total of sixty minutes rehearsal time. This, of course, is not a very adequate choral schedule. If pupils do not learn musical rudiments during their regular classroom music period, it is doubtful if much singing other than rote singing could take place under such circumstances. Rote learning for only sixty minutes a week will produce little completed choral work during any school year.

For the pupils of these particular schools there are two distinct disadvantages: one, the limited choir training program; two, the inadequate instruction in musical rudiments which in turn makes every musical attempt (instrumental study, vocal participation, and music listening), a more difficult project. As if, for example, violin technique is not enough to learn without the added chore of learning basic musical rudiments? It is no wonder that often students start instruments with great enthusiasm but soon quit, defeated by the many problems that are encountered. Classroom musical

rudiment instruction could help combat the note-reading obstacle, and surely more pupils would succeed in whatever musical endeavor they attempted.

Lack of musical background works adversely in one other way. Because pupils feel inadequate in this special subject, they are many times reluctant to volunteer for participation activities. Another danger similar to this is that if hours of drill are needed to learn simple three or four part songs, many will give up in despair. Those who can read music get bored, and those who cannot, think the project too difficult. Learning to sing a song part without the employment of a note-reading method is a drudgery, to say the least. By the time a song is ready for performance, it is often "worn out" because of the many repetitions needed in order to achieve an acceptable degree of perfection.

The pupil's role then is a difficult one when we consider just how well he is prepared for the musical opportunities that are available to him.

The teacher. Teachers face the problem of teaching a course in which natural talent--singing ability--is an important feature. Those who possess this talent, and who also possess note-reading ability, should have no problem whatsoever, provided sensible plans, objectives, and procedures are employed. Those who cannot sing must cover the sections of the music course that do not require vocal leadership.

Granted, this will be a limited course, but it is better than nothing at all.

In addition to the general problem of lack of talent, teachers in these particular schools have little musical help available. Principals are usually ex-classroom teachers and trained in a similar manner as that of the teacher. Also, when considering help from the elementary music consultant, it must be noted that in the system under study the consultant had charge of all elementary schools in a city of 85,000 people.

The classroom teacher then has the responsibility of providing to the students a musical course that often she does not know herself and does not have the ability to teach.

The administrator. The content and objectives of the music course are the responsibilities of the school administration. Principals, curriculum consultants, or what have you, guided by music supervisors, should plan a music course and then make sure it is followed. It is the direct responsibility of the administrators of our schools to insure that a well-rounded musical education, including musical rudiments, be given to each pupil. Yet it is difficult to believe this is being done, for the results of the teacher questionnaires and rudiment tests indicate quite the opposite. Overall objectives appear to differ; procedures are certainly unlike, and the outcome, generally speaking, is very inadequate.

The community. There are far-reaching effects which are surely felt in the community musical organizations. Lack of musical knowledge and understanding means fewer volunteers and fewer capable members for many community musical organizations that exist or can exist. Closely connected here, too, is the problem of getting public support for musical activities when little knowledge or interest of the subject is present. In the overall picture, a community that provides little musical training in its schools will in turn, unless some miracle is performed, have poor community support for musical activities.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

There are four recommendations that should be mentioned at this time. They are: special music teachers for elementary grades four, five, and six; more musical guidance for the classroom teacher; a school music philosophy that includes thorough musical rudiment learning during grades four, five, and six; and more specialized musical training for the teacher-trainee.

There is a great need for music specialists in our elementary classrooms. Besides classroom teaching, a specialist could direct choral groups, lead assembly singing, and advise teachers. One specialist could teach effectively in as many as five schools. If this were done, each

school would receive up to six hours of assistance with its music program. This time could be divided however needed.

This, of course, is only one example and may or may not be the ideal one, but it would guarantee a better organized and guided elementary school music program. Most classroom teachers need a closer contact with a qualified music teacher. There is a need for classroom demonstrations, outlines which include class work sheets and music-teaching procedures with detailed lesson plans telling how to teach music theory. A list of objectives is not enough. There should be procedures showing how to reach these objectives. To those teachers who possess little or no natural musical talent, teaching note-reading is a difficult task. Their problems can be reduced if sensible lesson plans and special guidance are available.

Our school music philosophy must include the learning of musical rudiments. One of the resolutions adopted by the Music Educators National Conference of 1946 reads thus: "A well-rounded program of music activities in the elementary school includes singing, listening, creating, playing, rhythmic expression, dramatizations, and music reading."[1] Of course, the phrase "music reading" implies the learning of musical rudiments. To what extent music-reading is

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[1] Music Educators National Conference, Music Education Source Book (Chicago: Music Educators National Conference, 1947), p. XII.

developed is determined by the teachers; however, a well defined philosophy aimed directly at this objective will in turn produce better results.

If teachers are expected to teach classroom music, then it is only sensible that college training courses equip them with the necessary technique for the job. As found in Chapter II, many of the teachers interviewed felt that their college musical preparation was insufficient for what is expected of them in the classroom. Teachers entering the elementary field should study voice and piano privately, learning sufficient vocal and piano techniques to enable them to sing with students and play simple melodies on the piano. The piano experience would insure note-reading knowledge, while the voice studies would develop the needed confidence many teachers need for classroom song leading.

III. IN CONCLUSION

Having a pleasant experience while studying music is perhaps the most misinterpreted statement involving music education today. This philosophy, when it is misinterpreted, has been the major reason for the "no rudiment" teaching, which appears to be the primary method employed in the schools studied. The following quote is from a report submitted in 1837 to the School Board of Boston, Massachusetts, by a special committee appointed by the Board to consider a

petition relative to introducing instruction in vocal music into the Boston Public Schools, and perhaps it summarizes our present problem:

> Let vocal music, in this respect, be treated like the other branches of instruction. As many probably would be found to excel in music as in arithmetic, writing, or any of the regular studies, and no more. All cannot be orators, nor all poets, but shall we not, therefore, teach the elements of grammar, which orators and poets in common with all others use? It should never be forgotten that the power of understanding and appreciating music may be acquired, where power of excelling in it is found wanting.[2]

As stated previously, the skill and knowledge acquired through rudiment study will increase the children's appreciation of music and will add to the pleasure of participation in musical activities.

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[2]Percy A. Scholes, Music Appreciation Its History and Technics (New York: M. Witmark and Sons, 1935), Introduction V.

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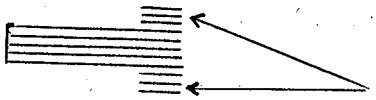
APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

MUSICAL RUDIMENTS

I. The STAFF consists of five horizontal parallel lines and four spaces between.

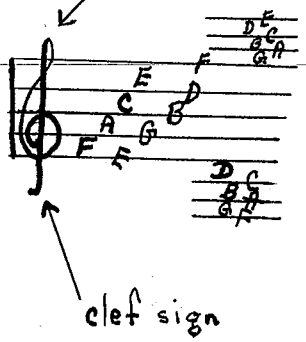


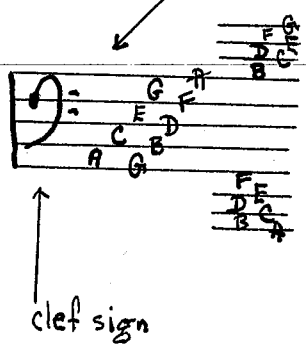
LEDGER LINES indicate pitches of tones higher and lower than the regular staff.

II. A CLEF SIGN positively determines the pitch of a tone represented by a given note. LETTER NAMES are given for all lines and spaces.

"G" clef or "Treble" clef sign fixes the pitch "G" on the second line.

"F" clef or "Bass" clef fixes the pitch on the fourth line.





III. NOTES and RESTS are musical symbols that indicate the duration of sound and silence. A DOT is used beside a note (on the right, after the note) to increase its duration (value) one-half; in other words, a dot beside a note adds one-half of the note's value to the note.

Whole note = 𝅝

Half note = 𝅗𝅥

Dotted half = 𝅗𝅥.

Quarter note = ♩

Dotted quarter = ♩.

Whole rest = 𝄻

Half rest = 𝄼

Quarter rest = 𝄽

Eighth rest = 𝄾

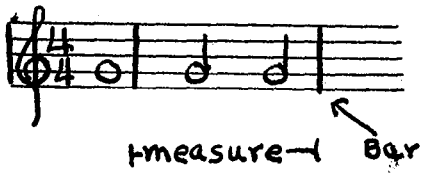
Sixteenth rest = 𝄿

Eighth note = ♪

Dotted eighth = ♪.

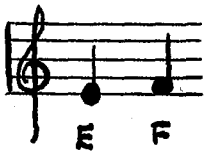
Sixteenth note = 𝅘𝅥𝅯

IV. BARS indicate the principal accent and divide the music into measures.

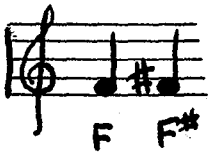


V. A SCALE is a series or succession of tones arranged in a definite order consisting of whole-steps and/or half-steps. A HALF-STEP is the distance from a given tone to the next higher or lower tone. (A DIATONIC half-step is one in which two staff degrees are involved. A CHROMATIC half-step is one which is on the same line or in the same space). A WHOLE-STEP is two half-steps.

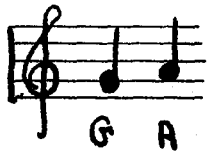
Diatonic half-step



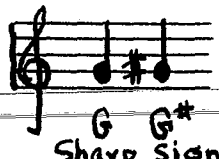
Chromatic half-step



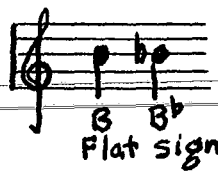
whole-step



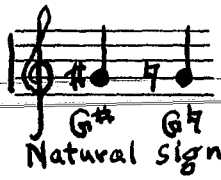
CHROMATIC SIGNS are related to scales in that they indicate the raising and lowering of pitches. A SHARP SIGN (#) is placed before (at the left of) a note to raise the pitch of a tone a half-step, retaining the same letter name. A FLAT SIGN (♭) is placed before a note to lower the pitch of a tone a half-step, retaining the same letter name. A NATURAL SIGN (♮) or cancel sign is placed before a note to restore the note to its original pitch: it cancels the effect of the sharp or flat previously used.



Sharp sign

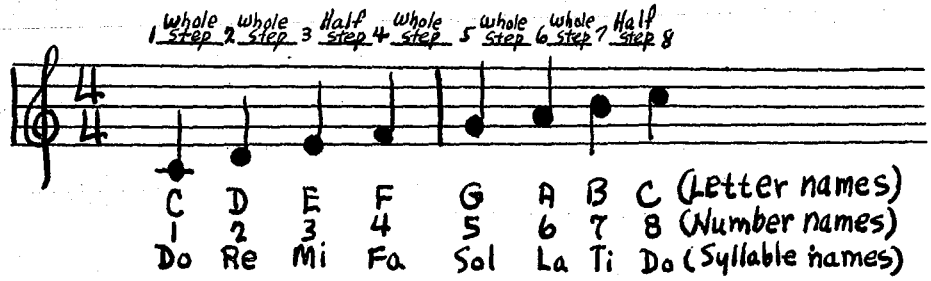


Flat sign



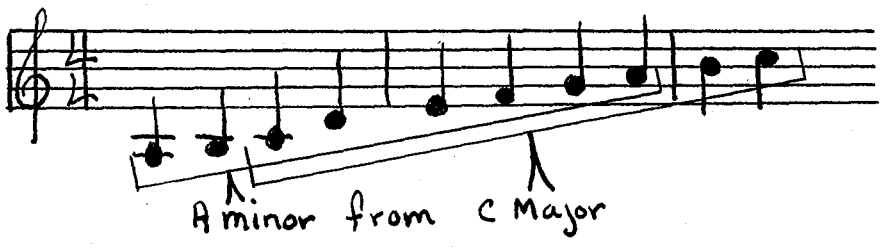
Natural sign

A MAJOR SCALE is a series or succession of tones in a definite pattern consisting of whole-steps and half-steps. These tones have LETTER-NAMES, NUMBER-NAMES, and SYLLABLE-NAMES.

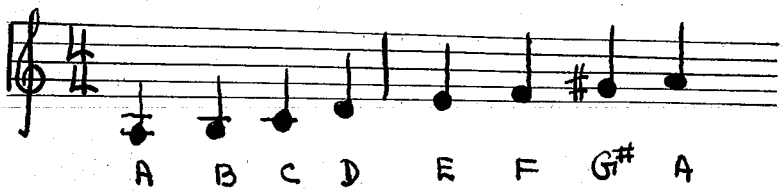


A MINOR SCALE is a series or succession of tones in a definite pattern with the same number of tones as the major scale. The minor scale has a definite relationship to the major scale in that it maybbegin on the sixth tone of a given major scale, in which case the key signature of both scales will be the same. This type is called the RELATIVE MINOR. The TONIC MINOR scale begins on the same tone as a given major, in which case the key signature will be the same as that of the major three half-steps above.

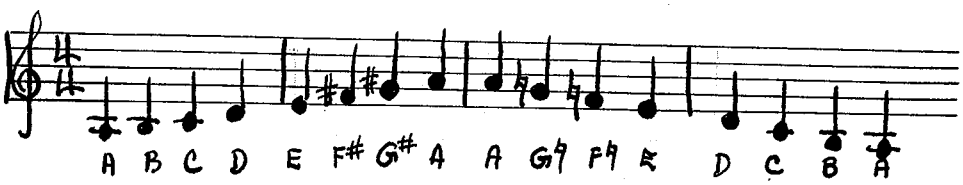
A PURE MINOR or natural minor is made up of the same tones of its relative major.



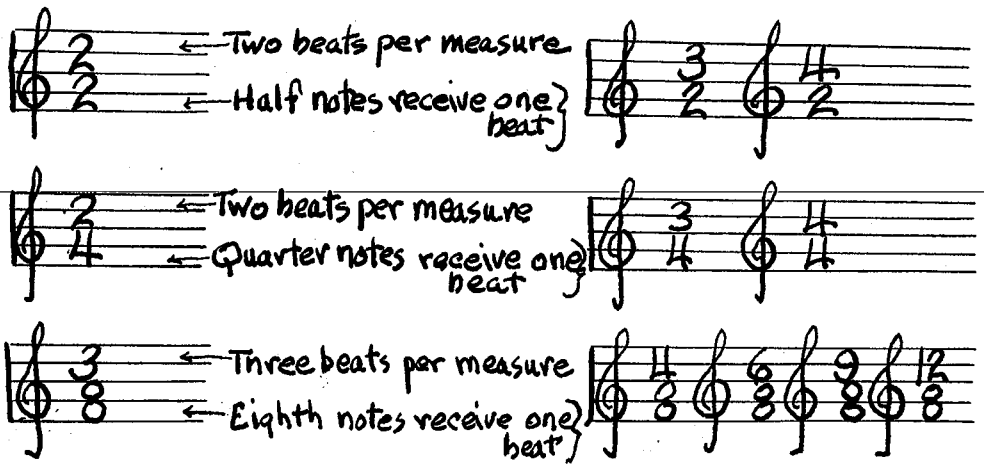
A HARMONIC MINOR has a raised seventh tone.



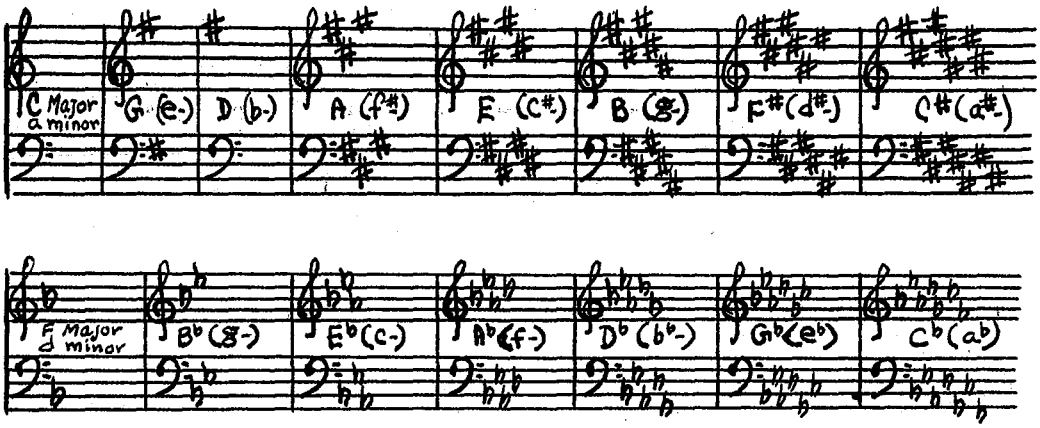
A MELODIC MINOR has a raised sixth and seventh tone while ascending and the notes of a pure minor scale when descending.



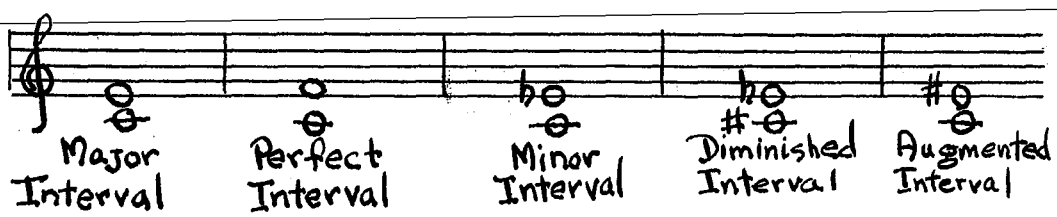
VI. METER is the grouping of notes according to a definite number of regularly recurring beats or pulses. Meter governs the number of beats in a measure. METER SIGNATURES are two numbers indicating the beats or pulsations per measure (top number) and the type of note receiving one beat (bottom number).



VII. KEY SIGNATURES are sharps or flats indicating a certain key or scale. A KEY is a family of tones grouped about a central tone, and each having a definite relationship with this central tone.



VIII. An INTERVAL in music is the distance from one note to another on the staff, or the difference in pitch between two tones when sounded. A MAJOR interval is when the upper tone is found in (belongs to) the key (scale) of the lower tone, and if its number name is 2nd, 3rd, 6th, or 7th. An interval is PERFECT if the upper tone belongs to the scale of the lower note, and if its number name is prime (one), 4th, 5th, or 8th. A MINOR interval is a half-step smaller than a major interval. A DIMINISHED interval is a half-step smaller than a minor interval. An AUGMENTED interval is a half-step larger than a major interval.



APPENDIX B

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE AND INTERVIEW

1. Grade you teach _____. Minutes of music per week _____. How often do you have a music period _____.

2. Check from the list below the parts of musical theory your class has covered. (Check only the ones that are well learned by the majority of the class).

   a) Treble Clef sign _____. Bass Clef sign _____.
   b) Names of lines and spaces:
      Treble staff _____.
      Bass staff _____.
   c) Signs: Sharp _____ Flat _____ Natural _____
   d) Note values: Whole _____ Half _____ Quarter _____
      Eighth _____ Dotted Half _____ Dotted Quarter _____
   e) Rests: Whole _____ Half _____ Quarter _____
   f) Meter Signature: $\frac{4}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{2}{4}$ $\frac{6}{8}$ Other _____
   g) Key Signature (Major) C__G__D__A__F__B-flat__ E-flat__A-flat__ Other___
   h) Key Signature (Minor) a__e__b__g__c__Other___
   i) Scales: (Construction of, and Sound of)
      Major _____ Minor _____
   j) Note Reading:
      Syllable _____
      Number _____
      Letter _____
   k) Interval Study:
      Singing Exercises _____
      Listening Exercises _____
   l) Class Singing _____
      Every day _____ Every music period _____ Other _____

   List any other rudiments below.

3. Do you play the piano_____. (Is there a piano available for your music period _____). Do you sing _____. Are you a member of a choir (Church or Community) _____. Are you a member of the local Community Concert Organization _____. Are you a member of the "Friends of Chamber Music" _____. Do you have or collect records _____ (Popular _____ classical _____ Semi-classical _____). Did your college training sufficiently prepare you for teaching music in the elementary school _____.

4. Is there an opportunity for the talented and interested students of your school to participate in a special choir _____. If so, how often do they rehearse _____. Do you feel the study of musical rudiments is necessary at this age _____. Do you feel a need for special vocal teachers in elementary schools _____. (To teach all ___ or _____ of the music). Do you think elementary schools should have special choirs _____.

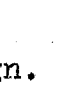
5. Add below any suggestions, complaints, etc.

APPENDIX C

MUSICAL RUDIMENT TEST

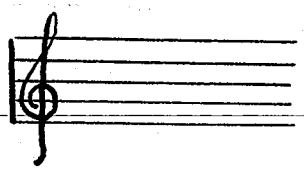
Name _____ Grade _____ Age _____
Have you ever studied music outside of the regular classroom music? _____ If so, what kind (what instrument)? _____
How long? _____

TEST:

1) a) This  is a _____ clef sign. b) This  is a _____ clef sign. c) This (♭) is a _____ sign.

d) This (♯) is a _____ sign. e) This (♮) is a _____ sign.

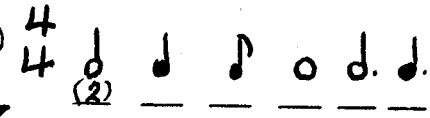
2) Name the lines and spaces in the staves below.

a) 

b) 

3) Using the blank below the note give the count value (number of beats) it receives.

Example

a) 

b) 

4) Explain the following signatures (both numbers).

a) 4/4

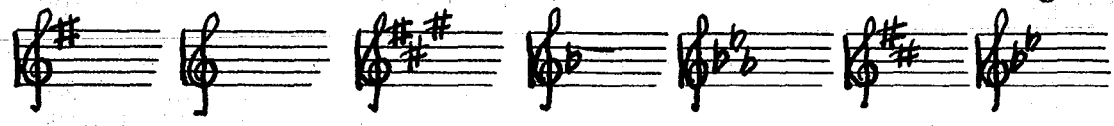
b) 3/4

c) 2/4

d) 6/8

5) Name the following (major) key signatures and put answers below the examples.

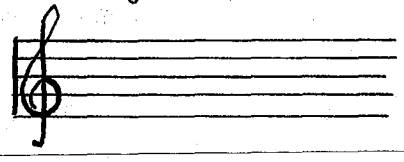
a) b) c) d) e) f) g)



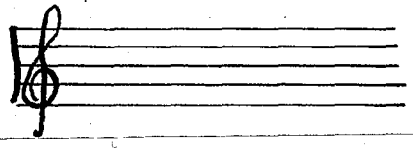
___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___

6) On the staff below construct a major scale (a) and a minor (any type) (b).

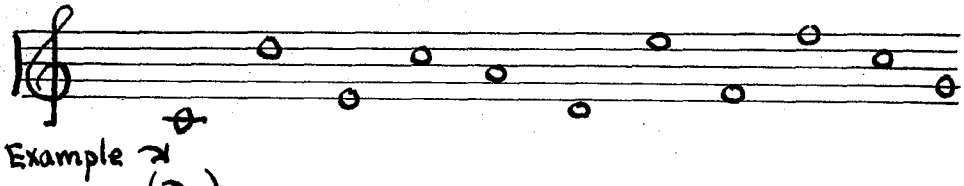
major scale



minor scale



7) Fill in the blanks below as indicated.



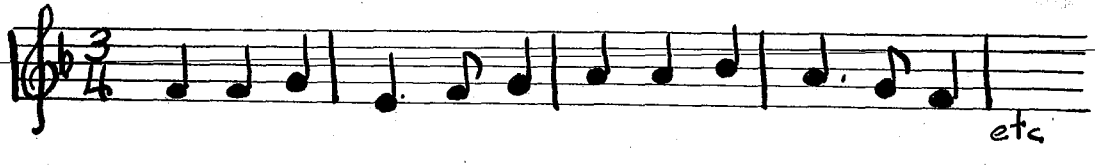
Example ↘

Syllable names (Do) ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___

Letter names (C) ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___

Number names (1) ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___

8) Identify the below melodies:



Name _____

Name _____