

# Hearing the Notes on the Page: Helping Students Develop Music Literacy

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## I. Music/Language Parallels

- Decoding vs. Comprehension
- Sequential Learning
- Emergent Literacy
- Importance of Vocabulary!

## II. Building Musical “Vocabulary”

- Being exposed to a wide variety of music (tonalities, meters, styles, etc.)
- Echoing tonal patterns & rhythm patterns

### The Big Grey Shark

David Lurie

Musical notation for 'The Big Grey Shark' in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is written on a treble clef staff. The lyrics are: 'The big grey shark loves to swim and sing. When he's hun - gry he'll sing an - y - thing!'. Roman numerals I and VII are placed above the notes corresponding to the lyrics 'The big grey shark' and 'sing an - y - thing!' respectively.

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- Developing sense of context
  - Tonal: resting tone, chord roots (“Big Grey Shark”)
  - Rhythmic: macrobeat/microbeat

### Love Somebody





Traditional

Musical notation for 'Love Somebody' in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is written on a treble clef staff. The lyrics are: 'Love some - bo - dy, yes I do. Love some - bo - dy, yes I do. Love some - bo - dy, yes I do. Love some - bo - dy, but I won't tell who.' Roman numerals I and V are placed above the notes corresponding to the lyrics 'Love some - bo - dy, yes I do.' and 'Love some - bo - dy, but I won't tell who.' respectively.

- Familiarity with tonal/rhythm solfege
  - Rhythmic: patterns and macro/micro with rhythm syllables, label meter
  - Tonal: patterns and resting tone with solfege, label tonality and harmonic function
- Creating/improvising!
  - “Big Grey Shark”

### III. Informal Notation Awareness

- Experimental “reading”: Exposure to song/chant notation
  - “Sally Go Round the Sun” (Jump Right In 1)

Sally go 'round the sun.   
 Sally go 'round the moon.   
 Sally go 'round the chimney-top   
 Every afternoon! 

- Experimental “reading”: Exposure to pattern notation
  - “Little Wind” (Jump Right In 1)

**Little Wind**

Kate Greenaway Ruth Stapp

Lit - tle wind, blow on the hill - top; Lit - tle wind, blow down the plain;  
 Lit - tle wind, blow up the sun - shine; Lit - tle wind, blow off the rain.

**Little Wind**



- "Donkeys Love Carrots" (Jump Right In 2)
- "A Shake" (Beth Bolton)

**A Shake**

In swing style Beth Bolton

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- Experimental "writing"

#### IV. Pattern Reading/Writing

- Read familiar rhythm patterns → *generalize to unfamiliar*
  - "Love Somebody" - choose patterns to read for introduction/interlude/coda
  - "Valentine" ("You Will Never Find Me"-Jump Right In 1)

#### You Will Never Find Me (Valentine)

Beth M. Bolton

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\*\*Rhythm pattern game "stolen" from Yael Rothfeld, Ann Arbor Public Schools.

- Enrhythmic pattern match game
- Write familiar rhythm patterns → *generalize to unfamiliar*
  - copy, write from memory, dictation (with/without syllables)
- Read familiar tonal patterns → *generalize to unfamiliar*
  - Kodály hand staff
  - "Love Somebody"
  - "Valentine"

- Write familiar tonal patterns → *generalize to unfamiliar*
  - copy, write from memory, dictation (with/without syllables)
- More ideas for pattern reading/writing practice:
  - pattern card sets
  - pattern bingo game
  - “Notation Notebook”
    - \*\*Idea “stolen” from Jennifer Bailey, Farmington Public Schools.
- Find/read familiar patterns in the context of a song or chant

## Biddy, Biddy

Jamaican



Bid - dy, Bid - dy, hol' fas' los' my gold ring, Car-ry me to Lon - don come back a-gain.



Bid-dy, Bid-dy, hol' fas' mas - ter gold ring, Car-ry me to Lon - don come back a-gain.

- “Kookaburra”, “Alley-Alley-O” (Jump Right In 4)

## V. Putting It All Together!

- Reading whole songs
  - Mystery Song!
- Writing whole songs
  - “Hot Cross Buns”
  - “Are You Sleeping?”
  - “Paw-Paw Patch”
- Composing melodies/accompaniments
  - “Oats, Peas, Beans” accompaniment
  - “Bow Belinda” partner song
- Theoretical Understanding

## Two Final Reminders...

- ♪ Sound before sight, and always connect the “sight” to the “sound!”
- ♪ Don’t tell them more than they need to know at that point in time!

## Resources

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\*\*Contact Beth at bolton.beth@gmail.com
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