Making Connections:  
Keeping the Fundamentals FUN with Manipulatives  
Kris VerSteegt

As Kodaly-inspired teachers, we believe in sound before sight before theory. We also believe in making learning joyful and playful every step of the way. This session aims to demonstrate to you how you can playfully practice theory without sacrificing joy.

<table>
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<th>Salute--duration</th>
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| Students are in groups of three.* A deck of cards—with whole, dotted half, half, quarter, and eighth notes on them—is face down in the center of the play area. Two students, without looking at the card, stick a card (face out) to their foreheads. The third student adds up the beat duration that the two notes have together (as if they were tied to one another). The third student speaks their combined duration aloud. Students one and two, who can only see each other’s card (not their own), must subtract to discover what card is on his/her own head. Positions rotate, and play continues.  
*This game can also be played with just two people. In that case, one child has a card on his/her forehead and one card is face up next to the deck. |

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<th>StackAttack!--&quot;Real names&quot; for rhythmic values (quarter, eighth, etc.)</th>
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| Students, in groups of two, sit across from one another. A deck of StackAttack cards is divided evenly between the two students. They each flip cards one at a time, stopping whenever they both show the same card (similar to War). Then, the first person to correctly name the item on the card keeps both players’ piles of upturned cards. The object is to be end up with the most cards (or all the cards).  
I have StackAttack decks for musical symbols, key signatures*, and dynamic markings** too.  
*The key signature set also has “Major/minor” cards. Play begins as usual, but when an M/m card is turned, players must switch from Major keys to minor keys or vice versa. Just leave these cards out until your advanced students are ready for them!  
**The dynamic markings set also has “Italian/English” cards. Play begins as usual, but when an I/E card is turned, players must switch from Italian to English or vice versa. |

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<tr>
<th>Clef Cards--absolute pitch names (I also have blue bass clef cards for my piano/low brass players)</th>
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| **ION (It's only natural!)** To train abecedarian order:  
- As each new card from the deck is turned, two students race to name the natural note which is one step higher. Winner keeps the card. A more challenging version is to name the natural note a step lower.  
To train intervals:  
- As each new card from the deck is turned, two students race to name the natural note a specified interval higher. Winner keeps the card. A more challenging version is to name the natural note a specified interval lower.  
If your advanced or secondary students are ready for major/minor intervals, simply add cards with accidentals to your clef card decks. Those cards are also helpful to train the circle of fifths.  
**Treble Trouble** |
|------------------|
| Two students play this board game in which they begin with five Clef Cards. On each turn, a student may either move to the next space (provided they have a Clef Card of that same APN), or draw and discard. First student to reach fine wins.  
You could also use a six-sided dice with A, B, D, E, F, or G written on each side for Treble Trouble. For this variant, the student will roll the dice and move to the next note of that APN on the gameboard on each of his/her turns. First student to reach fine wins.  
*Blank dice and game tokens are available at your teacher store. |

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<th>Solfege Snakes—solfege reading</th>
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| Each chunk has solfege names in one segment, and a staff with known, rhythmless solfege notated on it in the other segment. Students are in groups of two. One student starts from the head, the other from the tail, and they build the snake by matching the solfege names of one card to the notated pitches. When they meet in the middle and need each other, the snake has been completed correctly. When finished, the snake is sung by all.  
A suggested sequence for the snake:  
Grade 1: s,ms; sls; slm; ssm; msl; mss; mms; ssl  
Grade 2: mrd; drm; drm;md; dsd; ssd; smd; dms; ddr  
Grade 3: mrd; drm; drd; ds; s,d; sl,d; dl,d; dl,s; s,dm; s md  
Grade 4: sfmrd; sdrmf; sdrmd; s l,d; dl,s,d; dd,s,d; sfm; mfs; drm; mrd; dsd  
Grade 5: sl,t,d; dt,l,s; s,drm; drmf; drms; mfs; sfld; d'tls; lsfm; fmrd |

* This is a different version of the Snake game, involving solfege names and rhythmic values.

kris.versteegt@ankenyschools.org
**Dice Dictation KLR**—connecting short/long duration to notation and practicing drawing

Materials you will need:
- 5 dice for each group (blank dice are available online or at your local teacher store.)

  - **4 dice** (lettering on each die must be a different color), **1 die** with two K (keep) sides, two L (left) sides, and two R (right) sides.

A set of unifix cubes for every child (hopefully in the same colors you used to decorate your dice.)

To play: One child rolls all five dice. All children build their unifix cubes to match the pattern indicated by the 4 dice. All say and show pattern with rhythm arms and syllables. Dice are passed to a new roller according to the KLR dice.

*Third grade: each of the four dice has two sides \( \cdot \), \( \bar{\cdot} \), and one side \( \cdot \). Fifth grade dice have one side each \( \cdot \), \( \bar{\cdot} \), \( \bar{\cdot} \), \( \bar{\cdot} \), \( \bar{\cdot} \), and \( \cdot \).*

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**Syllabication**—connecting syllables to rhythm

Using icons of varying subject matter, and beat-long cards with corresponding words or syllables, students put words in order and then assign \( \cdot \) for one syllable beats and \( \bar{\cdot} \) for two syllable beats.

*Icons can also be arranged to show melodic contour.*

Individual or 2-person sets of these songs also work well:

- Lucy Locket
- Baa, Baa Black Sheep
- Frog in the Mill Pond
- Apple Tree
- Twinkle, Twinkle

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**Maestro**—instrument classification

Students are in groups of 4. Each group has a deck of cards.

The entire deck is dealt, even if cards are unevenly divided amongst group members.

On each person's turn, s/he asks the person on his/her left for a family of instruments they would like to fill. That person must forfeit ALL the cards of that family to the asker. Should that person have no cards representing that family, s/he invites the asker to draw one (without peeking) from his/her hand.

When a family is complete those cards are removed from one's hand and placed face-up in the middle of the play area. Thus, it is no longer acceptable to ask for that family! *I included five of each family in this game for consistency's sake--feel free to make your own choices about what to include.*

At the end of the game, only the maestro remains unmatched. At that time, the student holding the maestro is the winner.

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**Pitch Puzzle**—absolute pitch names (I also have blue bass clef ones for my piano/low brass players)

*Blank puzzles are available online or through your local teacher store.*

The basic idea is that the bumps “point” toward the pitch on the staff.

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**That Was Easy**—absolute pitch names (I also have blue bass clef ones for my piano/low brass players)

Each student is given a card (with a word to discover using absolute pitch names) and a packet of foam letters.

To discover the word, they place a foam letter on the card underneath each note. When finished, they quietly say the word to themselves. (If it doesn’t spell a word, it is not correct). Then each student cleans off his/her card, stands up, and goes and hits the “Easy” button. Then they sit down in someone else’s spot, complete that card, and so on.

Some possible words are: ACE, ADD, ADDED, BABE, BAD, BAG, BAGGED, BE, BED, BEAD, BEE, BEEF, BEG, CAB, CAFÉ, CAGE, CAGED, DAB, DAD, DEAD, DEAF, DEED, EDGE, EGG, FADE, FADED, FED, FEED, GAB, GAG, GAGGED.

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**Rotato Potato**—practice writing and creating rhythmic patterns

*Materials: 10 sets unifix cubes, 10 sets cards, 10 vis a vis pens, 10 wipe-off sheets, (10 Mr. Potato Heads are optional)*

Students are in groups of 4

One student arranges cards to make a rhythm pattern. (Cards are color coded for content by grade-level)

One student makes unifix cubes match that pattern.

One student writes down the pattern made on the wipe off sheet with the vis a vis pen.

One student adds a piece to the Potato Head

When all are finished, all say and show the rhythm pattern (as a group). Then they all say “ROTA POTATO!” signifying that the jobs are rotating.

Rotation is Cubes (A), Cards (B), Write (C), Potato Head (D)

If you leave this game for a substitute, consider one large circle with materials distributed in a ABCD pattern around the circle.

*This game can be made more challenging by requiring the first student to improvise a spoken 4-beat pattern aloud before spelling the pattern with the cards.*
Circle Signs--audiation and solfege contour
Rainbow colored circles with handsigns on one side and solfege on the other.
Use these circles to have your student’s take dictation, design motives, indicate contour, etc.
Colored cardstocks are available from your scrapbook store.
do: pink 
ti: dusty pink 
l: lilac 
so: blue 
fa: green 
mi: yellow 
re: orange 
do: red 
ti: hot pink 
l: purple 
so: dark blue

Dominotes—absolute pitch names (I also have blue bass clef ones for my piano/low brass players)
S are divided into groups of two and given a pack of Dominotes.
One dominote is placed in the center to build beginning building. Students take turns placing dominotes as shown.

To increase difficulty, I also have snake-head shaped starter pieces which force students to look for the note on the staff rather than the pitch name. That game is called "Pitch Vipers".
This game can be played like traditional dominoes as well, but my students prefer the stair-step method.

Melody Mix Up of Dance Josey (a.k.a. Chicken on a Fence Post)—for melodic reading and
one print source for this song is 150 American Folk Songs by Peter Erdei, ed.
Make up measure long cards JUMBO size from a known song.
Mix them up. Have a student hold each or place on chalk tray. Read them rhythmically and in solfege as they are arranged.
Have another student suggest two cards (people) that need to switch places. Read them as they are.
Keep switching until song is discovered, then play game.

Chicken on a Fence Post

Game: Students are divided into two unequal groups. The smaller group forms a smaller circle around a toy chicken and joins hands. The larger group forms a larger circle around the smaller circle and joins hands. Two adjacent students on each circle are designated as "gates" and will raise their joined hands on the word "Hello". Two students are selected at random to wait outside the circle until the song ends, and will race each other to the chicken on the word "O". When the song begins, the outside circle walks CW and the inside circle walks CCW. On the word "Hello" all stop walking and the students who are serving as gates raise their joined hands. On the word "O," the racers enter through the gates and race to the center. The first student to reach the chicken is the winner of the round. Play continues with two new racers each time.
Make 7 copies of this. Draw in As on 1 copy, Bs on the next and so on. Then, make as many copies of each set of 7 originals as you would like. I recommend using several different colors of paper to keep your decks separate.