

Title: Boomwhackers & Notation**Level:** Grades 6 - 7 (Intermediate levels)**Connection to a Culminating Activity:**

This lesson will help students recall how to read basic treble and bass clef notes, as well as remind them of how to count in basic (4/4, 3/4, 2/4) time signatures. It will introduce them to playing as an ensemble.

Overall Expectation:C1. Creating and Performing

Apply the creative process to create and perform music for a variety of purposes, using the elements and techniques of music

C2. Reflecting, Responding, and Analyzing

Apply the critical analysis process to communicate their feelings, ideas, and understandings in response to a variety of music and musical experiences.

Specific Expectation:

C1.1: Play from musical notation, unison music and music in two or more parts

C1.4: Use the tools and techniques of musicianship in musical performances

C1.5: Demonstrate an understanding of standard and other musical notation through performance and composition

C2.3: Identify and give examples of their strengths and areas for improvement as musical performers. Interpreters and audience members

Note that the above two headings are based on terminology in the Ontario Arts Curriculum 2010 (Revised), and educators from different areas should adapt or vary those descriptions as necessary.

Learning Objectives:

Students will be able to play a short piece using Boomwhackers in an ensemble-like setting. They will be able to read basic notation, and count and follow along in basic time-signatures.

Success Criteria:

"I know I've got it when" I can follow along with the ensemble, and understand where my notes fall on the staff.

"I know I've got it when" I can count in my head, keeping track of the time signature, and play at the correct time.

Prior Student Knowledge Required:

- Students should have a basic understanding of note names, and where they fall on the clefs / staves (this should not be the first time they are reading music)
- Students should be aware and actively thinking about instrument care and handling
- Students should have a basic understanding on how to read music

Class Materials:

- Two or three full sets of diatonic boomwhackers (enough for the class)
- One (if possible) set of chromatic boomwhackers
- White board and white board markers
- Projector

Outline of Lesson

This lesson will span over 2 classes (it could be expanded to 3 if incorporating a more advanced “group work” segment. The first class (50 minutes) will begin with 20 minutes of review, followed by 10 minutes of practicing knowledge and ending with 20 minutes of applying knowledge to the instruments. The second class (50 minutes) will begin with 15 minutes of review from class one, and 35 minutes of ensemble work. The option for a 3rd class would invite students to create their own pieces (in groups), and teach and perform them to the class. See “Optional class three” for more details.

This is a COVID-friendly lesson that doesn’t involve any use of wind instruments, or sharing of materials. It focuses on learning the fundamentals of music concepts, and engages the class as an ensemble to learn and play together. There is an option to add a composition and student-led teaching opportunity for more advanced or eager learners.

Class One: Review and Intro to Boomwhackers

Instruction #1 → Review of Notation (~20 minutes)

Slide 3

Start class with a treble and bass clef projected onto the white board (with a 4/4 time signature drawn in).

Teacher Prompt:

- “What do you remember about reading music?”
- “Which clef are we in? What are they called?”
- “How are notes drawn? Which way do stems go?”
- *As they are answering start to write the notes of a C Major scale in the staff
- “What are the rhymes to remember the notes?”
- “How do we remember note names?”

This conversation will help students think and recall knowledge they may have learned from various sources about reading music. You may get some fun rhymes you’ve never heard of before!

Instruction #2 Practice Knowledge (~10 min.)

Write out some notes on the staves and have the class figure out what they are. First do some as a class, going through all the steps to figure out what the note is. Then do a few where they have to figure them out.

Instruction #3 Apply knowledge to Boomwhackers (~20 min.)

Hand out 1-2 (availability dependent) Boomwhackers to each student.

*Remind them of instrument safety and not to whack other classmates.

Use a C Major scale and allow students to play their note(s) at the right time. It could be helpful to write the letter names under the notes on the white board, so that they can follow along.

Moving onto **Slides 4-7**, try playing some of the basic pieces as a class. It's helpful to play them “sing-along” style, where you point to which note they are on as a class, while staying in time.

If the class is understanding and doing well, you can try using Frère Jacques (**found on slide 8**) to play in a round. Use this piece to introduce playing in an ensemble and highlight the importance of counting in your head. *The double '*' symbol indicates the entrance of the next voice in the round.*

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Class Two: Ensemble work

Instruction #1 Review from last class (~15 min.)
Slide 9

Start by using **Slide 9** to recall how to read notes on the staff. Remind them of what to look for before reading music (time signature, key signature, clef). Quickly review the rhymes for note names. Allow them time to figure some of the notes out on their own.

Instruction #2 Ensemble work (~35 min.)
Slides 10-12

You may begin by playing Frère Jacques from **slide 8** if you would like to recall the techniques and important points for playing in a group. If not you can try Balafon, the short three part piece found on **slide 10**. Once they have the hang of playing together you can attempt to play Bach's Prelude No. 1, Ave Maria found on **slide 11**.

If you are satisfied with their playing or if they would like to continue to play challenging songs in a group, see **slide 12** for "Karaoke-style" Youtube videos from *Musicnation* (for a fun end to the class).

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***Optional Class Three: Composition and Teaching**

Instruction #1 Preparations (~25 min.)

In this stage, students will be split into groups (be aware that each group needs at least one of each note name boomwhacker, or students can double up and use two instruments). They are to create a 4 bar melody in 4/4 using

the knowledge they've acquired from previous classes. They will write down their music on paper using notation, and practice it as a group.

Instruction #2 Performance & Teaching (~25 min.)

Groups will now take 5 minutes to teach their composition to the class (allowing the whole class to play together), and end their showcase by performing the work as an individual group (to see how they wanted it to sound).

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