Eurhythmics in the Piano Studio

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What is Dalcroze and Eurhythmics?

- Dalcroze, a French philosopher, believed that the basics for musical development are contained in the body, along with the core of all musical art: in human emotion – these can be achieved through eurhythmics.
- Through participation in simple exercises and activities, the student learns to combine music and movement to develop both rhythm and dynamics, and thus play more musically.
- **Dalcroze Eurhythmics** is a process for awakening, developing and refining innate musicality through rhythmic movement, ear-training and improvisation.
- Although within the area of Dalcroze teacher training these subjects are taught separately, they are usually intertwined and incorporated within each lesson, as Jaques-Dalcroze himself intended.

Giving meaning and form to sound

- Movement requires both space and time punctuated by a beginning and an end. “A properly executed rhythm requires complete mastery of movements in relation to energy, space, and time.”

- The child learns to feel the music, not just hear it with the ears, but sense it through the being. Aural sensations are realized through muscular sensations.

- *Muscles were made for movement, and rhythm is movement. It is impossible to conceive a rhythm without thinking of a body in motion.*

  –Emile Jacques-Dalcroze

Music as a full-body experience

- In Dalcroze's system, music is a full-body experience, and all rhythms and movements of music can be physically experienced, and not just intellectually understood.
- Eurhythmics uses the body as the interpreter of musical rhythm.
- Dalcroze contends that "a child's body possesses instinctively the essential element of rhythm, which is a sense of time."
  - The beats of the heart convey a clear sense of time,
  - Breathing offers a division of time, and thus measure,
  - Walking a model of measure and division of time into equal parts.
  - Thus, walking is a natural beginning to the child's initiation into rhythm.

Giving space and time to rhythm

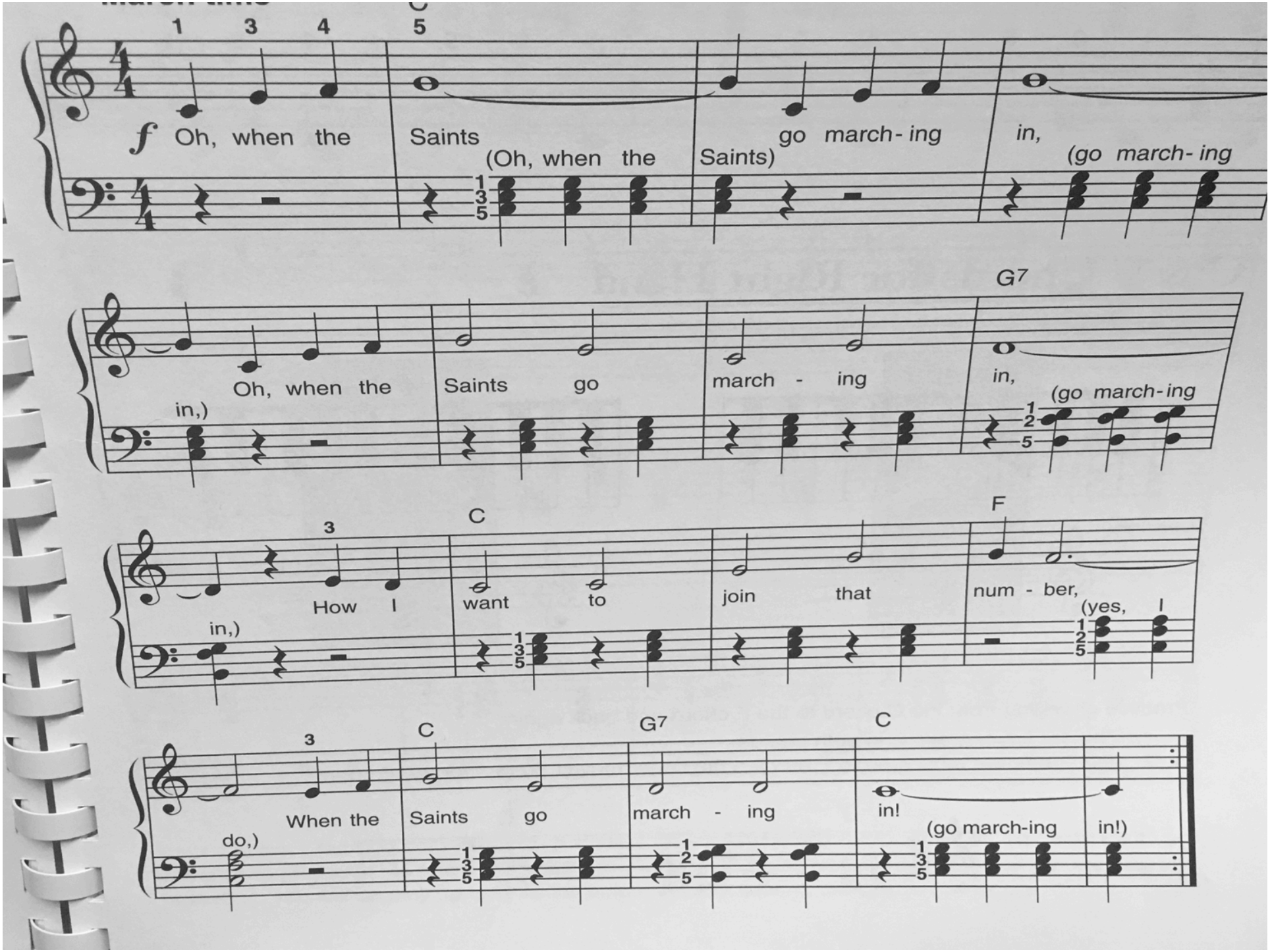
- It is rhythm that gives meaning and form to sounds, and ultimately musical nuances, such as loud and soft, fast and slow, and legato and staccato.
- These sounds are realized through "habituating muscles to contract and relax … communications should be established between the mind that conceives and analyzes and the body that executes."

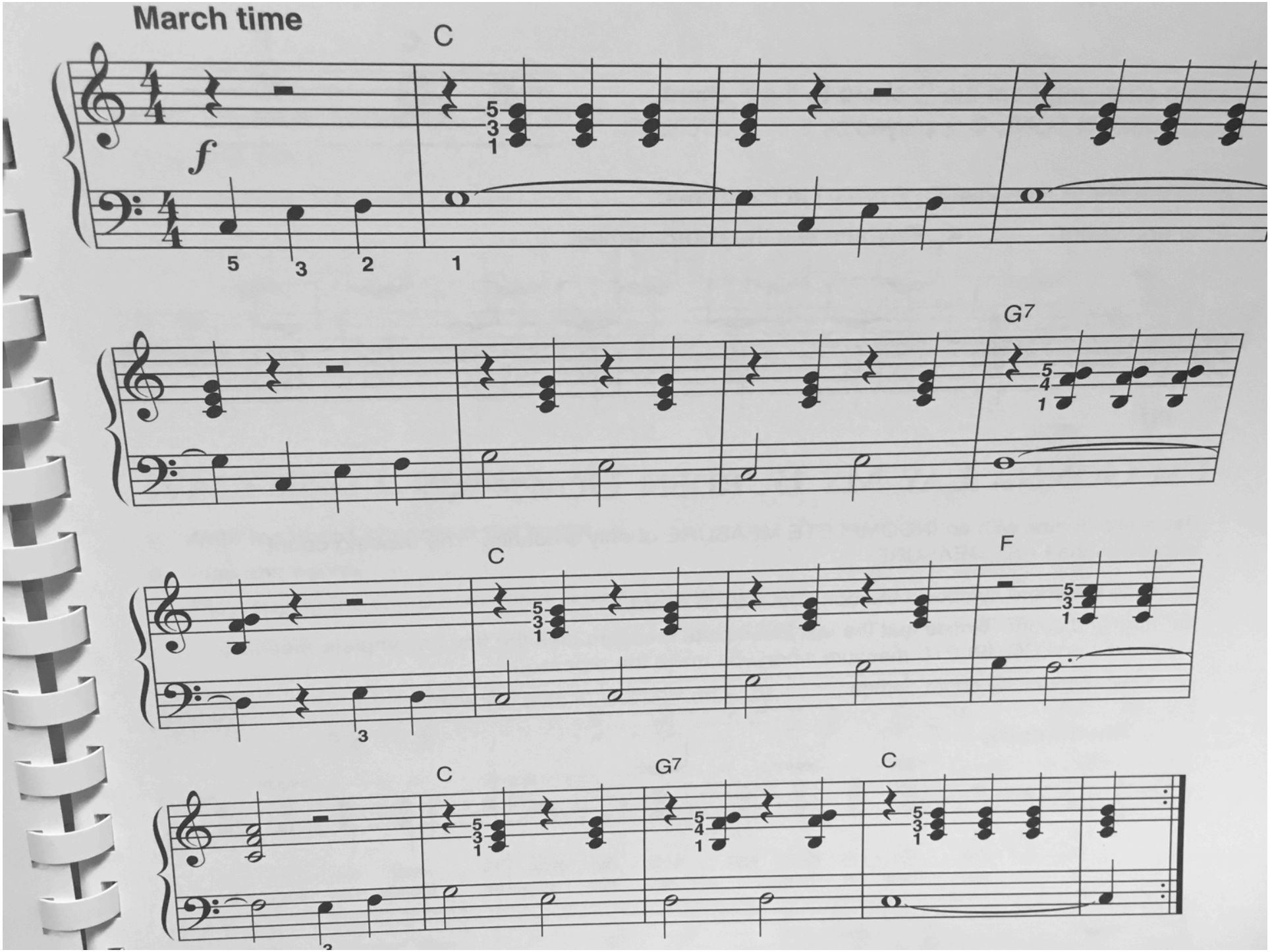
Why Dalcroze?

- Movement (eurhythmics) Experiential Learning
- Ear-training
- Solfege
- Improvisation (teacher & student)
- Social Interaction

Oh When the Saints

- Objective: Independent playing in two hands
- Put one rhythm in the feet and one in the hands
- Switch


1 3 4
C
5
f Oh, when the Saints go march-ing in,
(Oh, when the Saints)
(go march-ing
Oh, when the Saints go march - ing in,
in,)
G7
(go march-ing
3
C
How I want to join that num - ber,
in,)
F
(yes, I
3
C
G7
C
When the Saints go march - ing in!
do,)
(go march-ing in!)


March time
C
f
5 3 2 1
G7
C
F
C
G7
C

Blow the Man Down

- Objective: Playing dotted rhythms against steady beat
- Put one rhythm in the feet and one in the hands
- Switch

Come all ye young

f

3rd 3rd

sea, Sing- ing "Way! Hey! Blow the man

3rd

down!" And please pay at - ten - tion and lis - ten to

me; Give us some time to blow the man down!

ritardando

3rd

The Blue Danube Waltz

- Objective: Learning the metrical feeling of a Waltz (in 3)
- S experience moving to waltz while T plays
  - Long– short – short

The Blue Danube Waltz

Johann Strauss, Jr.
arr. by James Bastien

Tempo di valse

p

cresc.

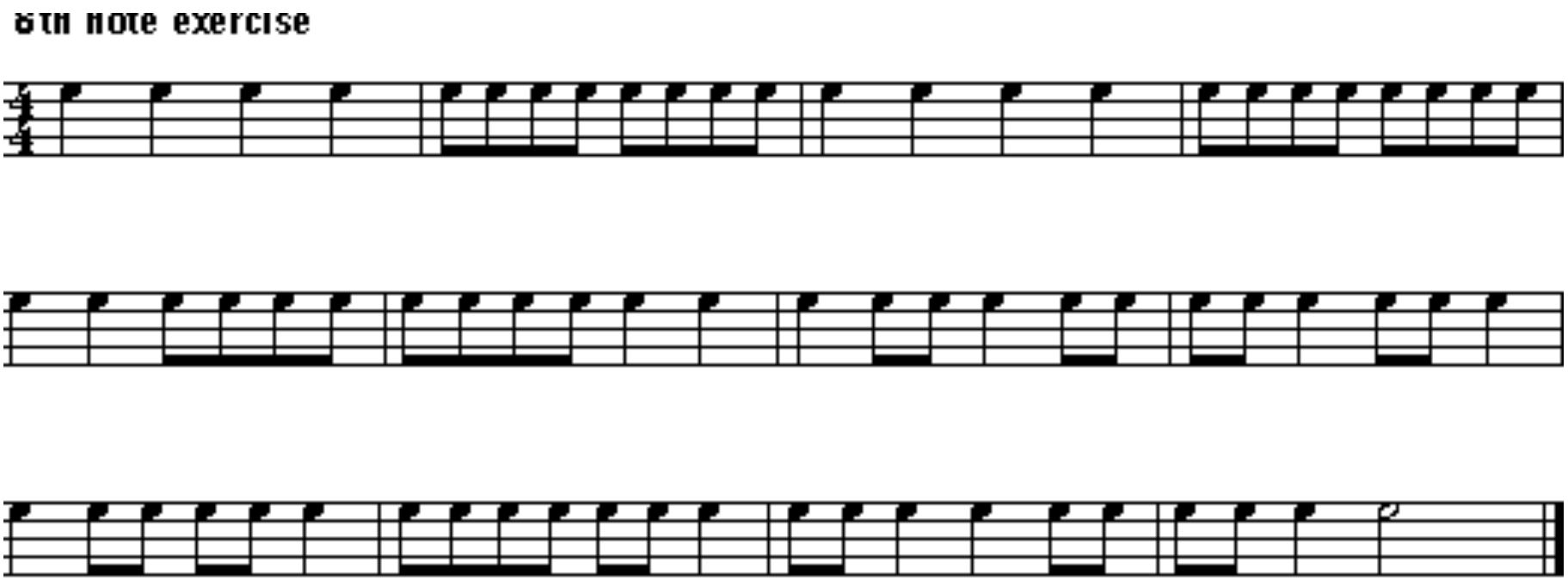
cresc. sempre

f

Using Rhythm Instruments to 8th note instruction

- 2 instruments with contrasting sounds
  - 1 – quarter note instrument
  - 1 – eighth note instrument
  - Play through rhythm

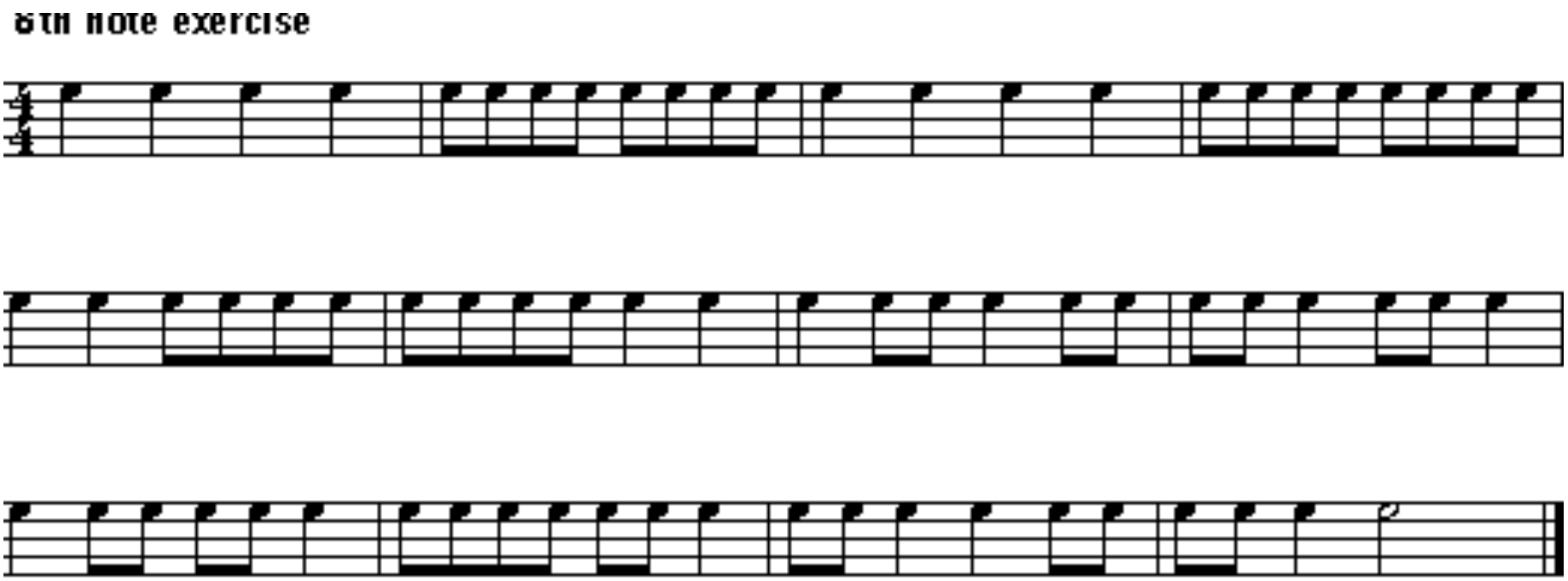
Using Rhythm Instruments to 8th note instruction



Using Rhythm Instruments to 8th note instruction

- S instrument – T instrument
  - One plays quarter and one plays eighth
    - Switch

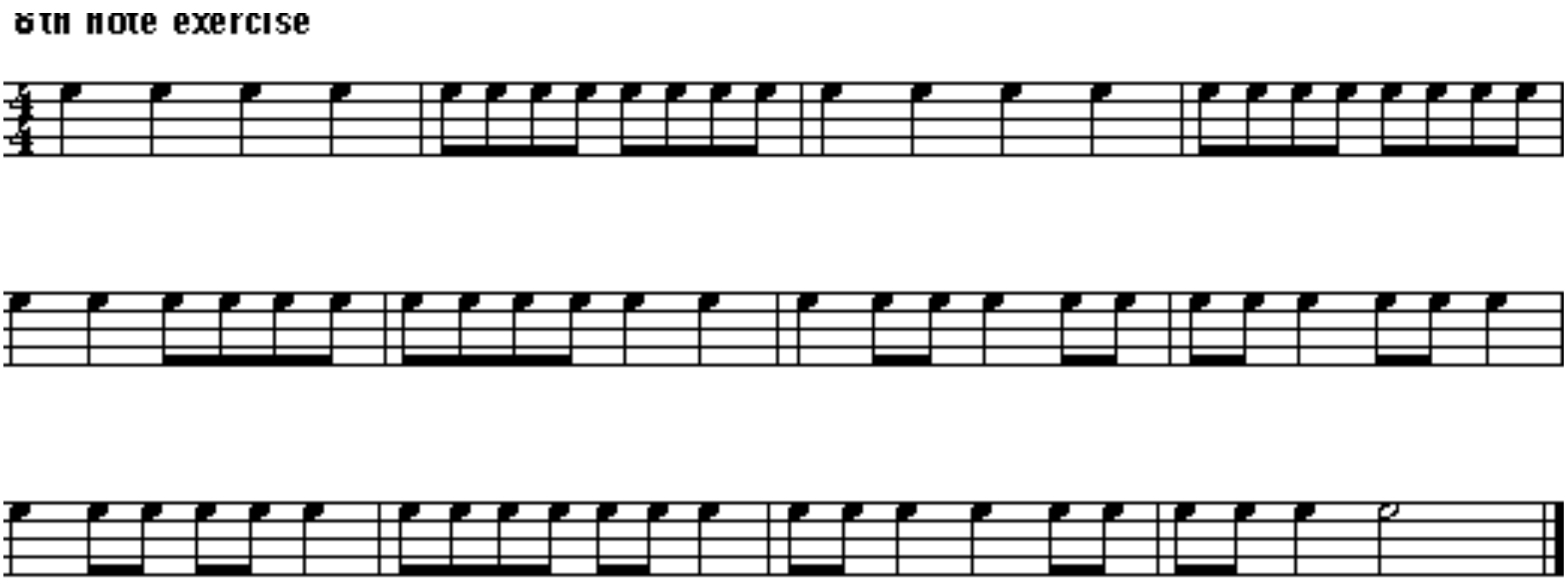
Using Rhythm Instruments to 8th note instruction



Using Rhythm Instruments to 8th note instruction

- Give S shaker instrument
  - How many ways can you play it?
    - Above head
    - Behind back
    - Side-to-side
    - Low to the ground
- Choose 2 ways – one for eighth and one for quarter

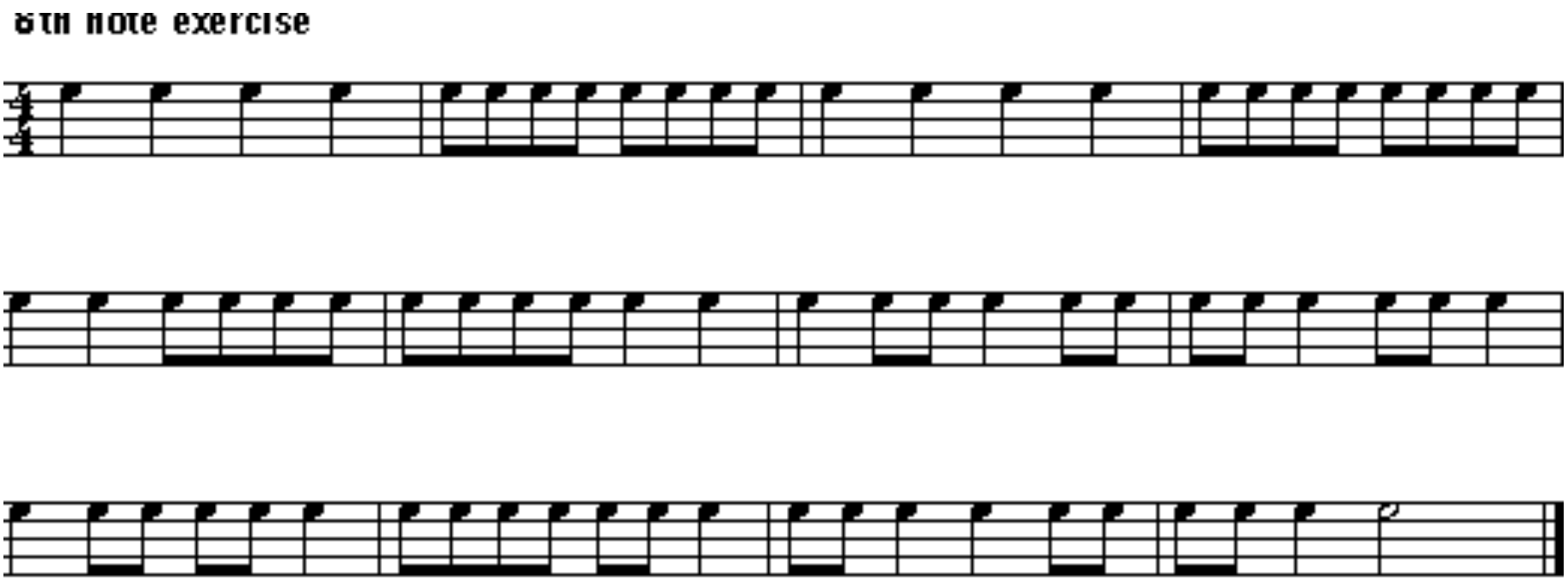
Using Rhythm Instruments to 8th note instruction



Using Rhythm Instruments to 8th note instruction

- Give S drum sticks and an instrument that can be tapped
  - One hand eighth, one hand quarter
    - Switch hands

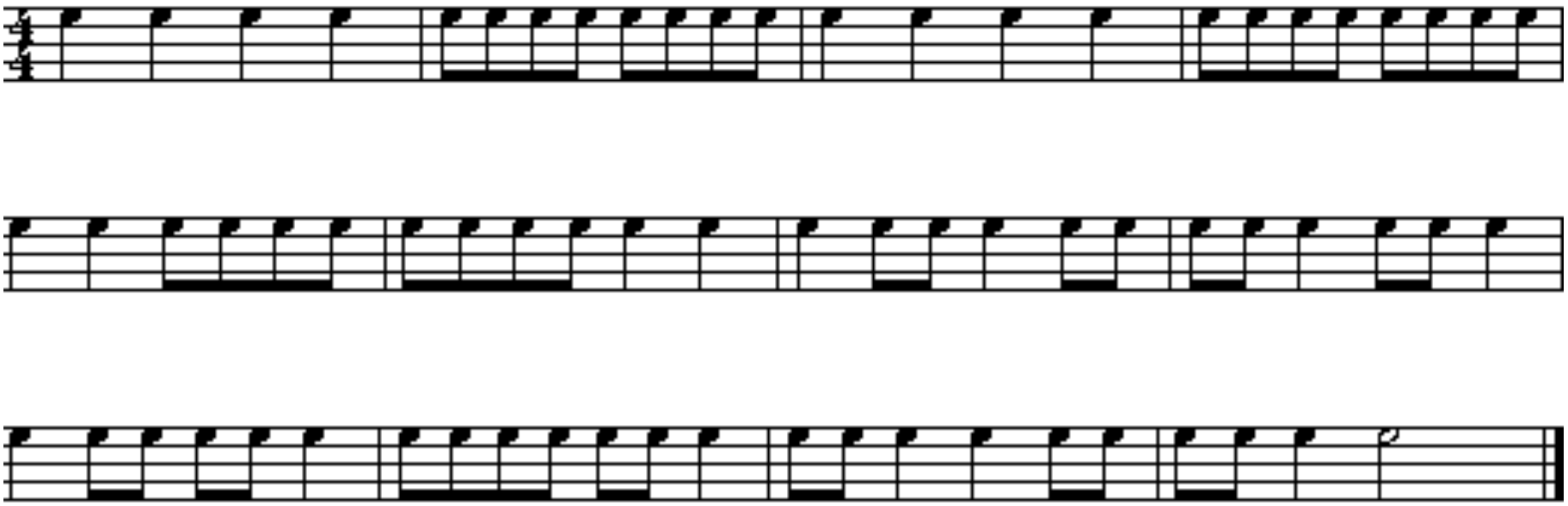
Using Rhythm Instruments to 8th note instruction



Using Rhythm Instruments to 8th note instruction

- Give S two instruments and divide rhythm into measures
  - S practice rhythm, each instrument
  - Change instruments each bar line

8th note exercise



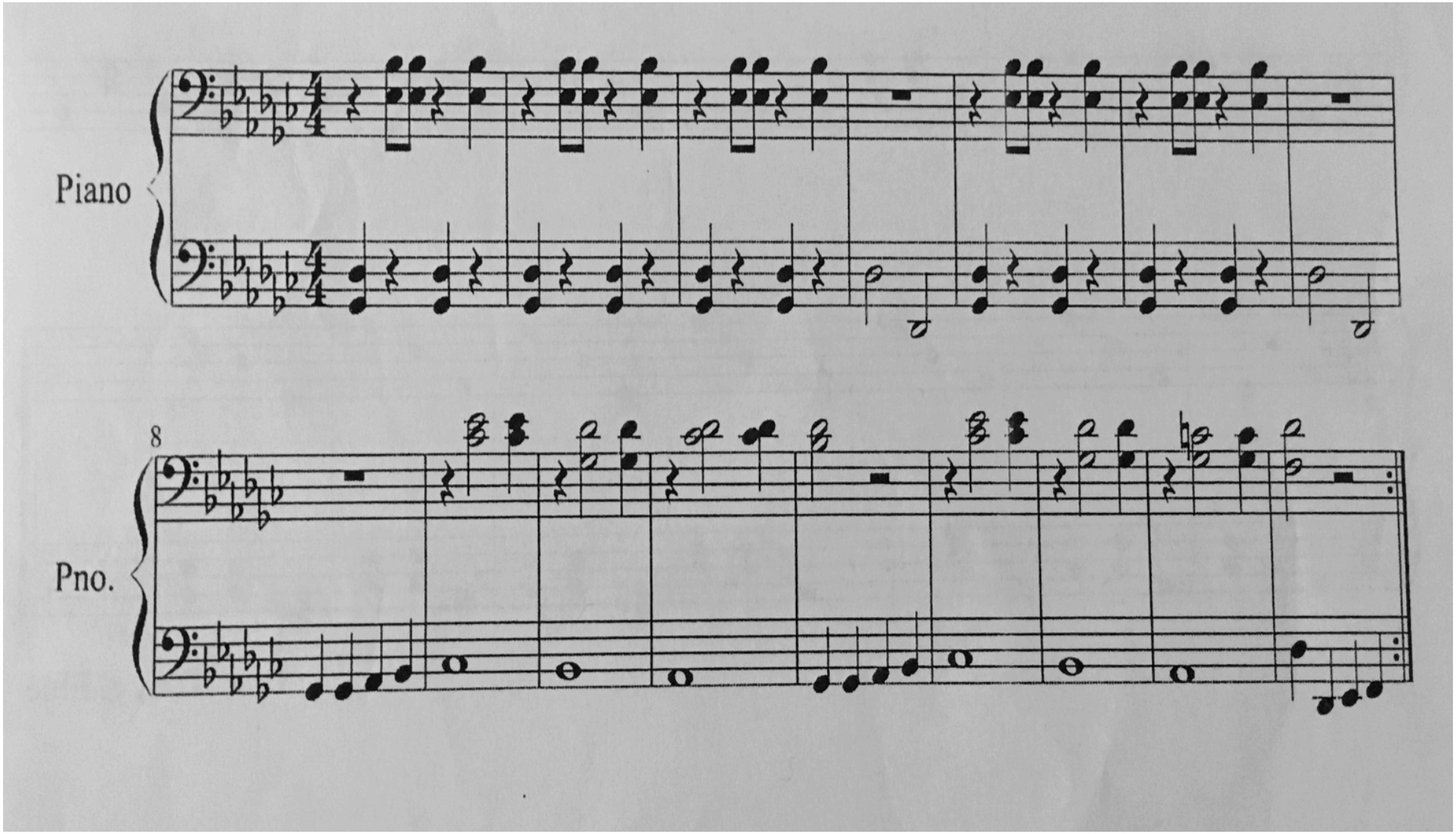
Improvisation

- In Dalcroze, improvisation is used heavily through voice, movement, piano playing, etc.
- It begins with pentatonic and whole tone scale improvisation before moving on to chromatic scales or the modes.

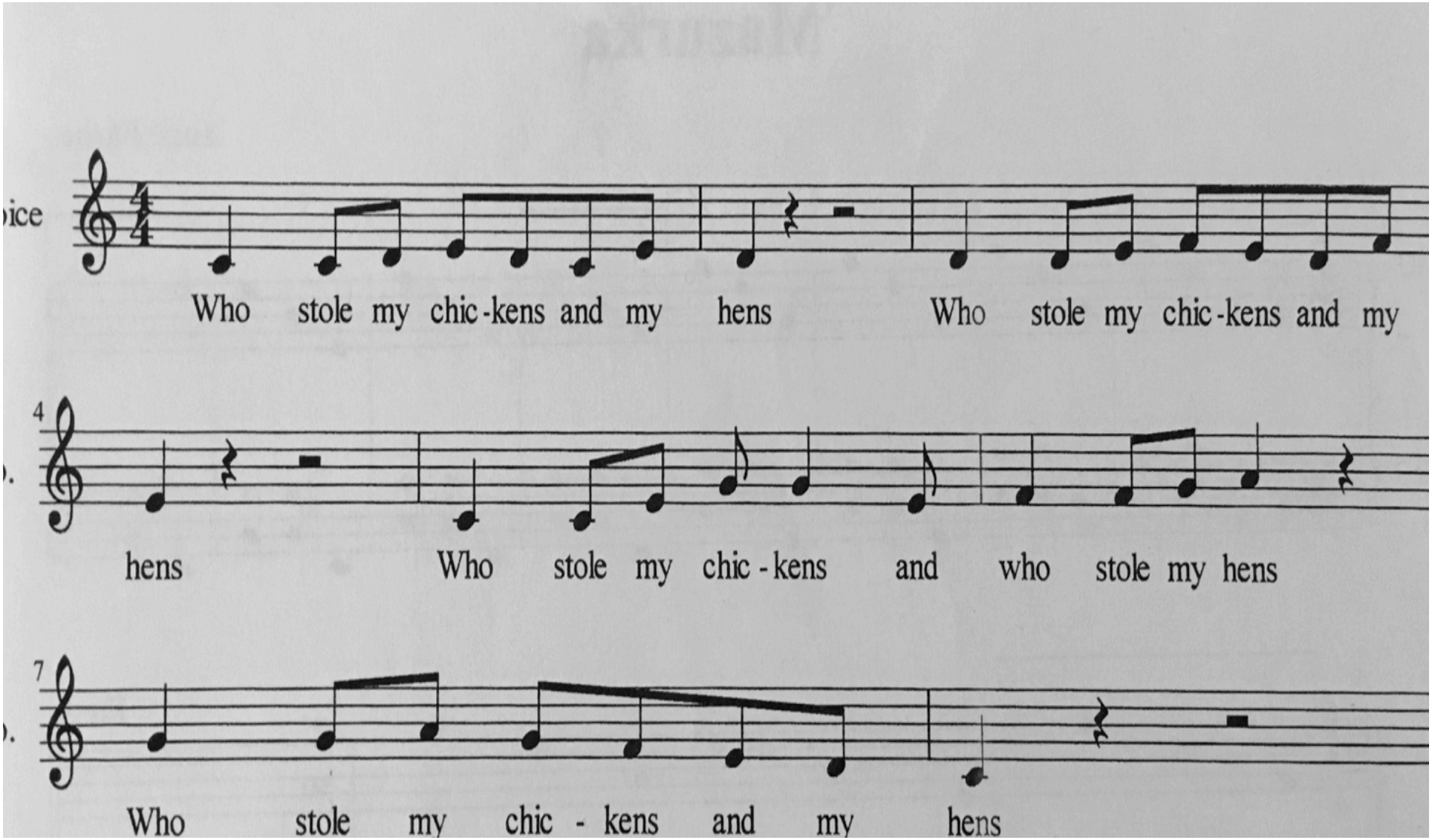
Improvisation

- Black Key Accompaniment
- Who stole my Chickens?
- Mazurka
- Spooky – C-D-Eb-F-G

Black Key Improv

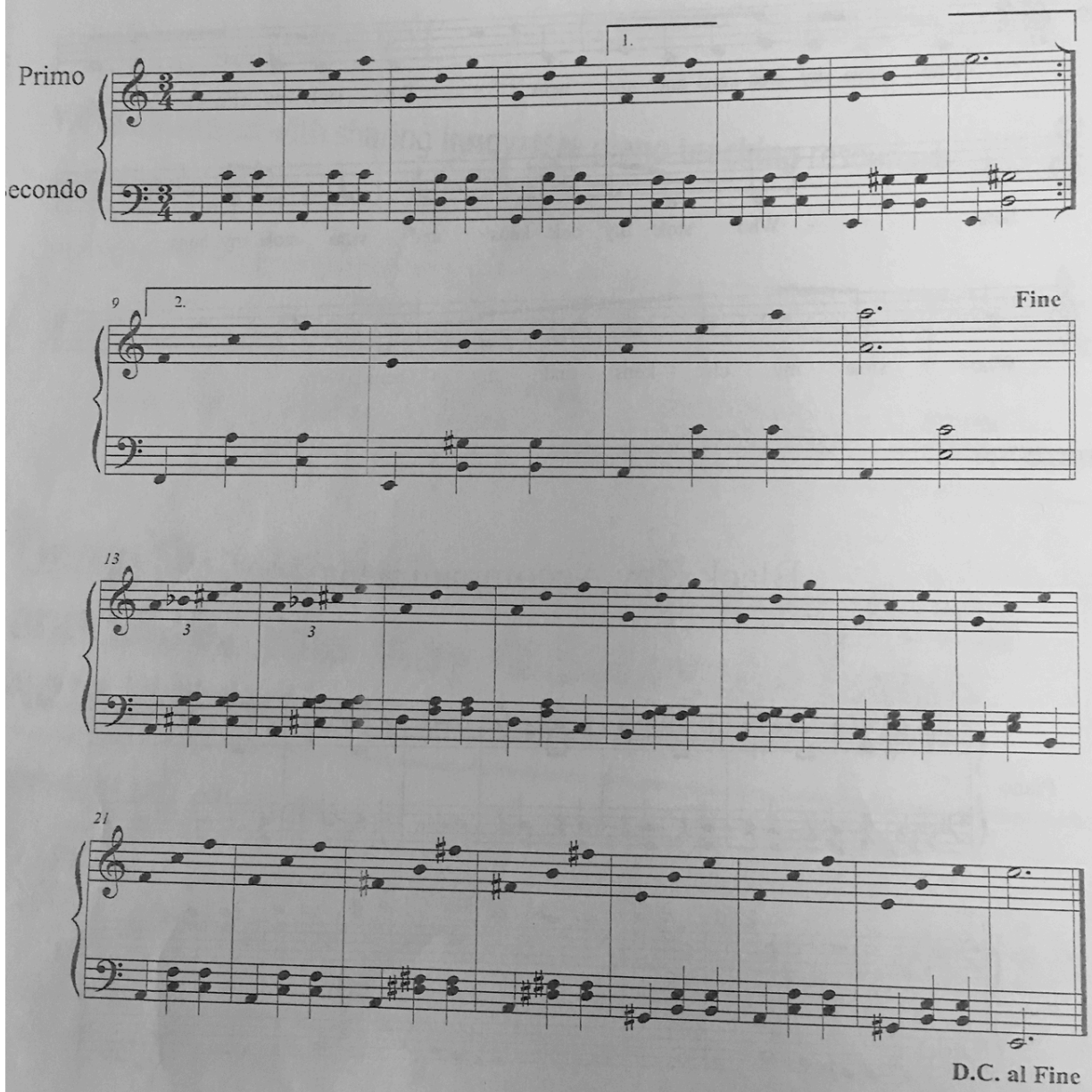


Who Stole My Chickens and My Hens?

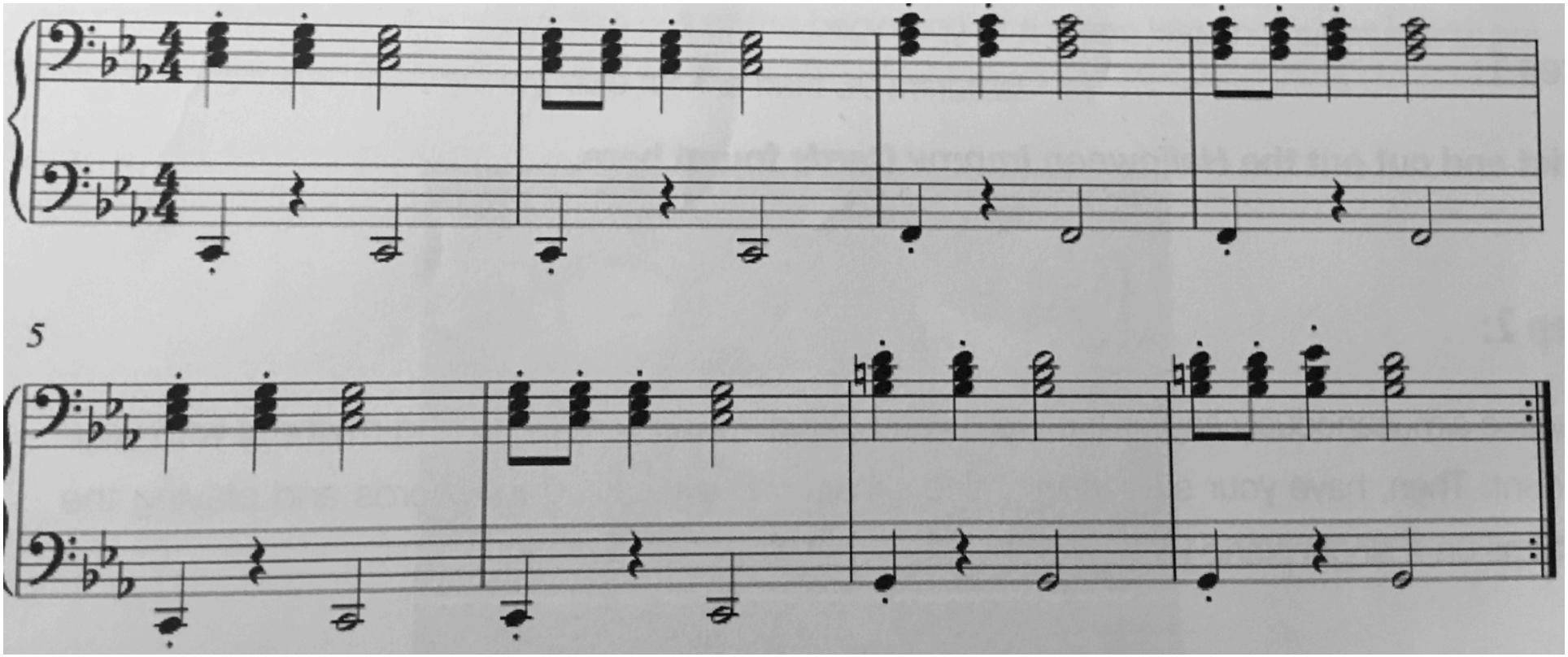


Mazurka

Anne Farber



Spooky Sounds



Solfege

- Dalcroze used the fixed Do system of solfege.
- He also used something called the do-to-do scale in order to keep every key within his students' vocal range.
- Every scale goes from C to C with the correct time signature, and the student must find the tonic.

The Merry Farmer

- Objective: differentiate melodic line between two hands
- Identify and Sing melody using solfege syllables
- Sing and play melody using solfege
  - T add accompaniment
  - S add accompaniment

The Merry Farmer

Robert Schumann
arr. by James Bastien

Moderato

mf

“Cosmic Whole Note”

- Students listen to a slow pulse
  - (> 6 beats per minute)subdivide the space between sounds
  - predict when the next pulse sounds by clapping or moving

Experiential Learning

- Dalcroze's hope was not that his students would say, "I know," but "I experienced."
- The games help students experience musical concepts and therefore gain nuance.

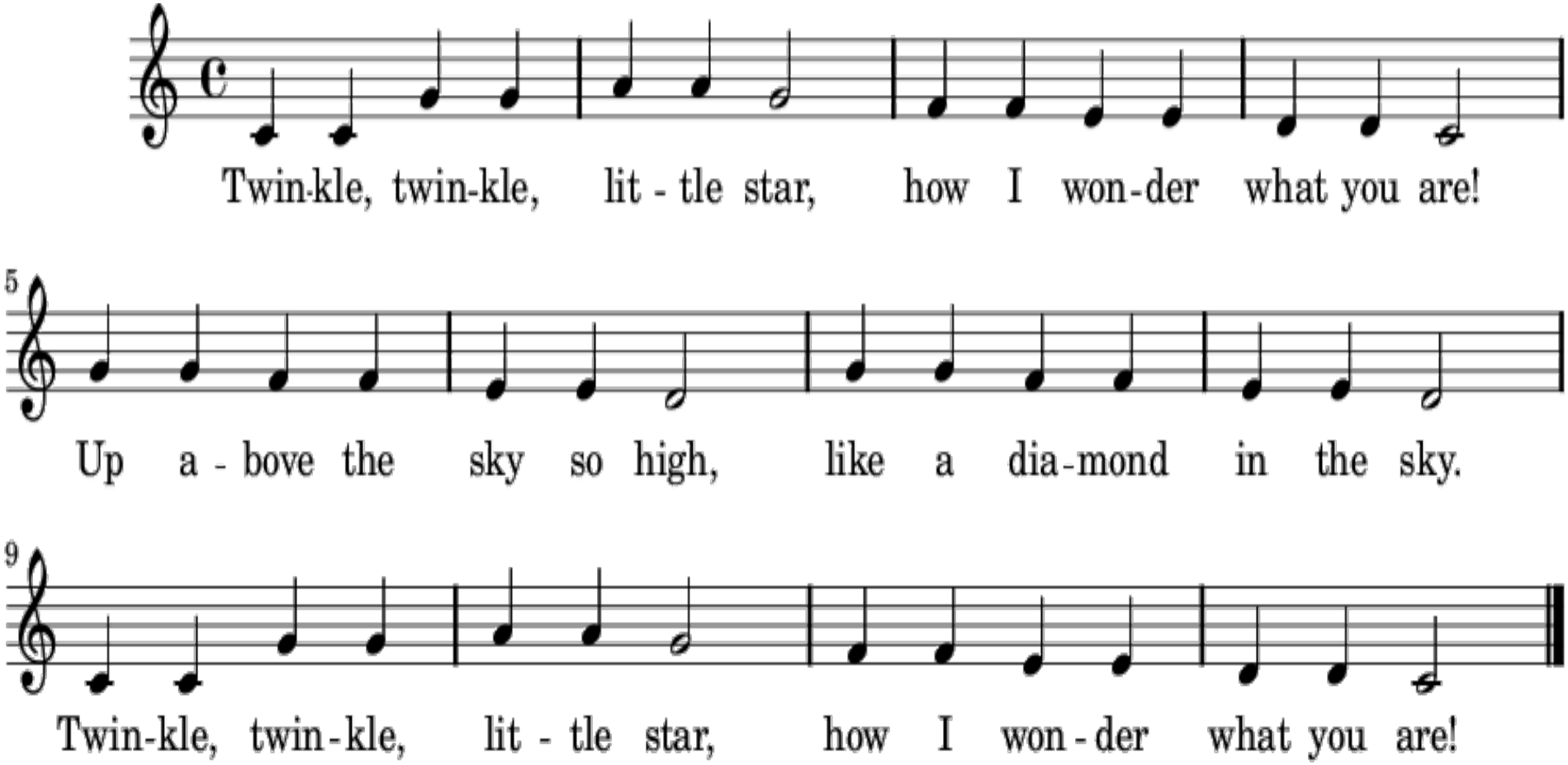
Games

- As the teacher improvises using a simple tune such as “Are You Sleeping?” students listen carefully and respond.
  - When students hear high sounds, they must clap along and when they hear low sounds, they must stamp their feet.
- Canon-style of rhythm clapbacks. After clapping, the next step is to sing back a melody in canon.
  - This is a good exercise as the student must be able to listen and remember to a new measure as they are singing the previous measure.

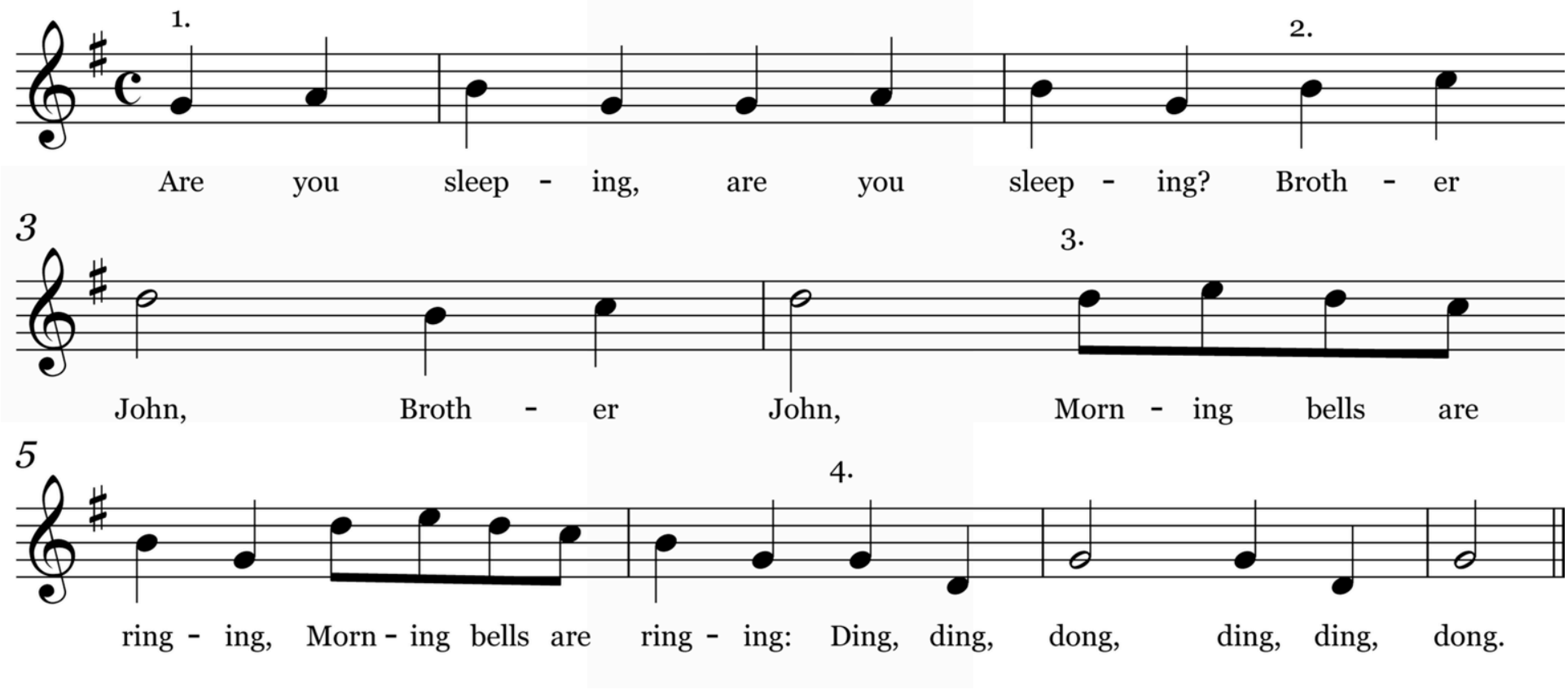
Melodic Harmonization

- Take simple melodies and create harmonization
  - Begin by using simple progressions
    - I V
    - I IV V
    - I vi IV V

Twinkle Twinkle



Are You Sleeping?



Rhythmic Units

Simple Meter (Binary Beats)

beat 2-8 boo-ma-chic-ka half whole

boo-ma-chic boo-chic-ka boo-ma-ka boo-ka ma-chic-ka

three bead-8 8-beat-8 tri-o-lay

Compound Meter (Ternary Beats)

run-ning-and beat skip and am-ster-dam half whole jimmyjimmyjimmy

run jimmy run run jimmyjimmy sy-nap skip jimmy du-plet

Questions?

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