

ARTS • BASED SKILLS & STRATEGIES

• middle school •
• elementary •

title **Body Percussion Patterns**

skill



dance



music

about the strategy

Body percussion (snap, clap, pat, stamp, and other sounds) can be combined into simple patterns that are great fun for students, while building reading, coordination, and listening skills. This activity is popular at every level, and can be simplified or made more complex to meet different ability levels within a group.

visual

Representing sounds graphically

auditory

Combining various body percussion tone colors

kinesthetic

Combining body percussion actions

instructional steps

objective Students create and write body percussion patterns.

materials Blank drawing paper
Markers

procedure

1. Identifying

- Echo four beat clapping patterns.
- Echo four beat snapping, patting, and stamping patterns (below second grade, use tapping shoulders in place of snapping).
- Echo four beat patterns that combine two or more levels (e.g., clap, clap, snap, snap).
- Identify the four basic body percussion sounds as snap, clap, pat, and stamp.

2. Creating and Writing

- Try out different combinations until each student finds a pattern s/he likes.
- Echo each child's pattern.
- Write the patterns on separate pieces of paper, with the student's name.

Body Percussion Patterns

instructional steps

procedure

For example:

• Two levels:

Stephen Amboise

snap _____ x _____ x _____

clap _____ x _____ x _____

• Three levels:

LaShawna Green

clap _____ x _____

pat _____ x _____ x _____

stamp _____ x _____

• Four levels:

Ansel Adamowitz

snap _____ x _____

clap _____ x _____

pat _____ x _____

stamp _____ x _____

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instructional steps

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3. Compiling

- Compile the pages into a book and bind them at the top or side.
- Perform the book, one page at a time

4. Combining

- Combine the patterns to make longer pieces, including any of the following possibilities:
 - Put one pattern after the other.
 - Put four patterns one after the other and rearrange to find the most satisfying possibility.
 - Transfer the patterns to unpitched instruments (e.g., snap = finger cymbals/triangles, clap = wood blocks/sticks, pat = scrapers/shakers, stamp = drums).
 - Layer the patterns with small groups, each performing a different pattern. Patterns can be added in and then stopped one at a time to create a crescendo and decrescendo (getting louder then getting softer).

Body Percussion Patterns

strategy for curricular connections



mathematics

- The patterns are in sets of four beats. Practice multiplication in fours by repeating the pattern four times, then determining the number of beats
- Create other problems to play and then solve, such as: “Play Eric’s pattern three times, then Sally’s pattern twice.” How many beats did you play? How many sets of four did you play? How many more patterns do you need to play to make a 32 beat piece?”



language arts

- Assign different patterns to represent characters in a story. Tell or read the story, playing the character pattern each time the name is heard.
- Use selected patterns to create an accompaniment to a metered poem such as “Humpty Dumpty” (primary), “Hair Seal” from Alaskan Mother Goose (intermediate), “The Jabberwocky” from Alice in Wonderland (middle/high school).



music

- Use the patterns to create ostinato accompaniments to songs or listening selections. Extend the patterns to 8 beats as soon as possible.
- Use the patterns as “questions,” and have students create or improvise “answers” of the same length.



visual arts

- Use different shapes and/or colors to represent the body percussion sounds (e.g., snap = yellow triangles, clap = brown rectangles, pat = green lightning bolts, stamp = red circles). Construct and perform patterns, and transfer to unpitched instruments.



dance

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theatre

- Have students perform their patterns expressing an attitude or mood. How can your pattern reflect anger? Sadness? Joy? Pride?

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Body Percussion Patterns

multiple intelligences target



verbal • linguistic



interpersonal



musical



visual • spatial



bodily • kinesthetic



intrapersonal

adaptations

to simplify

- Use only one or two body percussion sounds at a time. Stick to the steady beat – one sound on each beat.