

MUSIC FUNDAMENTALS: What is STEADY BEAT?

Age Range: Elementary

Learning Objective: Students will identify and respond to steady beat through active movement.

ENGAGE students

MOVE. Choose a song or chant from your classroom repertoire. While singing or chanting,

have students demonstrate the steady beat by tapping their heads, knees,

stomping, clapping, or jumping.

EXPLORE sounds

EXPLAIN. "Music has a steady beat – a heartbeat that pulses underneath. When we listen to

music, we often tap our foot, bob our head, or dance to the steady beat."

MOVE. Listen to <u>Jump in the Line</u> by Harry Belafonte. Depending on your space, have

students shake, jump, clap, or stomp along with the beat.

EXPLAIN. "Beats can be split up into smaller sounds, or they can be held longer to make

longer sounds."

CLAP. "Let's try this clapping experiment. First, let's clap four steady beats."

CLAP CLAP CLAP

"Let's cut that beat in half and double the claps."

clap-clap clap-clap clap-clap clap-clap "Now let's make the beats bigger by making them longer."

CLAP ---- (hold) CLAP---- (hold)

EXPLAIN. "In music, these sounds can be stacked on top of each other. Rhythms fit inside

each other, sort of like Russian nesting dolls." (Show this image.)

MOVE. Listen to <u>Jump in the Line</u> again and try each kind of rhythm. For older groups, split

the group and try two at once.

EXTEND learning

Choose one or both activities to extend learning.

LISTEN. Dance, step, or move to these songs: <u>Twistin' Matilda</u> and or <u>Hang on Sloopy.</u>

MOVE. Use a theme to show beat and rhythm. Choose a short rhythm ostinato for

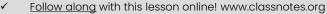
students to move to. If possible, use a classroom instrument to play the rhythm while students move. Eventually, switch the ostinato. Ask students to pick the next

rhythm pattern. **Theme Examples:**

• WINTER: Stomp in snow (quarter notes), throw snowballs (eighth notes), glide on skates (half or whole note)

• BASKETBALL: Pass (quarter), Dribble (eighth notes), Shooooot (half or whole)

• DANCE: Kick (quarter), Tip Toe (eighth), Spin (half or whole)



Broken link? Need help adapting a lesson? Contact <u>Katie Condon</u>, education specialist



