

John Thompson's Easiest Piano Course

PART ONE

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FOREWORD

PURPOSE

This Course is designed to present the easiest possible approach to Piano Playing.

Part One is devoted to developing fluency in *reading by note*, solving a problem that still seems to rate as "Musical Enemy, Number One" with most young students.

The Work Sheets together with the Reading Aloud Exercises, appearing frequently, afford plenty of drill even for the backward student.

SCOPE

The range covered in Part One is purposely limited. Only five notes up and five notes down from Middle C are presented and Time Values do not go beyond Crotchets. This makes it possible to include many examples in the form of Review Work and obviates the necessity of using supplementary material. In short, each book of the Course is complete in itself and contains its own Writing Exercises, Sight Reading Drills, Review Work and (in later books) Technical Studies.

ACCOMPANIMENTS

Accompaniments for teacher or parent are supplied with most of the examples. They have been carefully composed to make the little pieces sound as much as possible like fragments from larger compositions. Valuable in several ways, they not only make it possible to play in various keys, avoiding the deadly monotony of C major, but their use imposes strict Time and sharp Rhythm, especially when they are played with somewhat vigorous accents, thus helping the pupil to "feel" the rhythm from the very beginning.

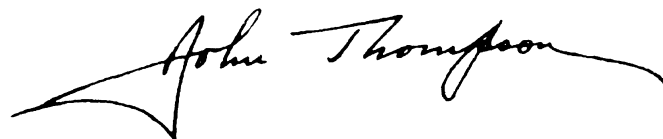
GRADING

The Books in this Course do not represent any certain grade. They simply follow in proper sequence as Part One, Part Two, Part Three, etc. Nor are the Lessons measured page by page. Some pupils will master several pages per lesson—others only one. The Course progresses "Point by Point" rather than "Lesson by Lesson," and it is left to the teacher (who, after all, is the only one qualified) to decide how much or how little each pupil can absorb in one lesson.

PART TWO

Part Two proceeds from the exact point reached at the end of Part One. New Notes, Time-Values and Rudiments are presented. Technique also begins in Part Two—first in the form of simple Finger Drills and later, more extended technical figures. Part Two remains in what is generally classified as Preparatory Grade.

The prime objective of the entire Course is to show *how easily, thoroughly, entertainingly and musically*—rather than *how fast*—each pupil can progress.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John Thompson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial 'J' and a long, horizontal flourish extending to the right.

THE PIANO KEYBOARD

There are WHITE KEYS and BLACK KEYS on the Piano Keyboard.

The WHITE KEYS are named



Recite the letters of the Musical Alphabet several times.

The BLACK KEYS are grouped in TWOS and THREES.

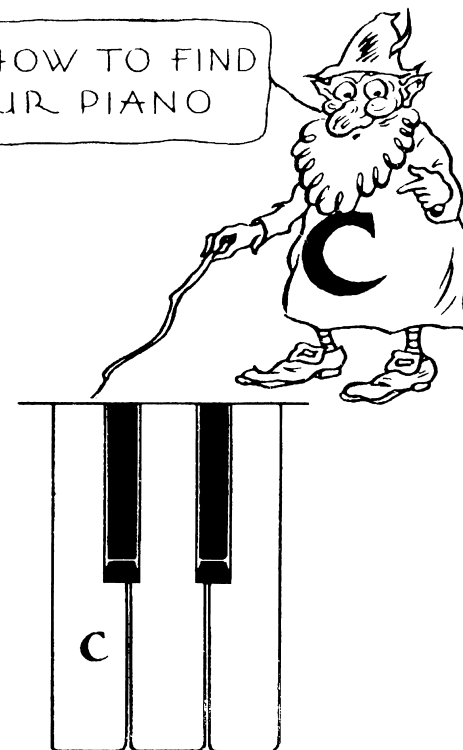
Touch all the groups of TWO BLACK KEYS on your piano.

C is found to the left of the TWO BLACK KEYS.

Letter all the C's you can find on the Keyboard Chart, next page.

Now, on your piano, PLAY all the C's you can find—using the thumb.

THIS IS HOW TO FIND
C ON YOUR PIANO



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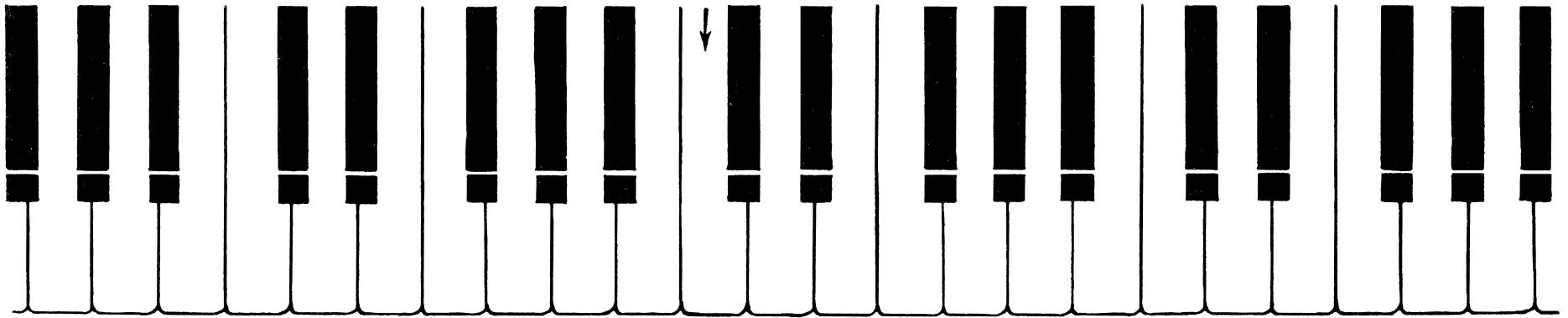
Printed in England

KEYBOARD CHART

5

(A section of the Keyboard)

MIDDLE
C
↓

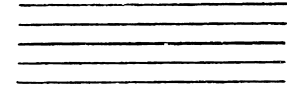


THIS IS A PICTURE OF PART OF
YOUR KEYBOARD ~ AS YOU
LEARN THE NAME OF EACH NEW
KEY, TURN BACK TO THIS PAGE
AND MARK **ALL** THE KEYS HAVING
THE SAME NAME.

MIDDLE C ON THE MUSIC

Music is written on the LINES and SPACES of the STAFF.

The Staff



The NOTES on the Music tell us which KEYS to play.

There are different kinds of Notes, but first we shall learn the SEMIBREVE.

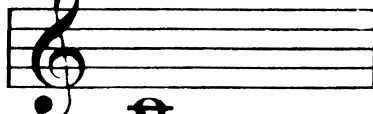
A SEMIBREVE looks like this, 

It is held for FOUR COUNTS.

Clef Signs

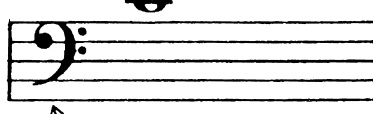


Treble Clef sign



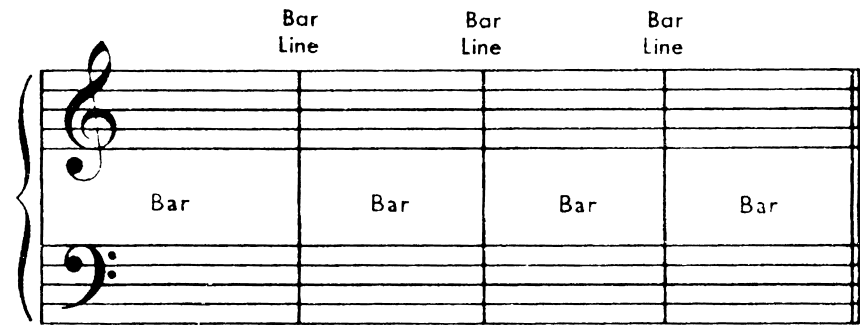
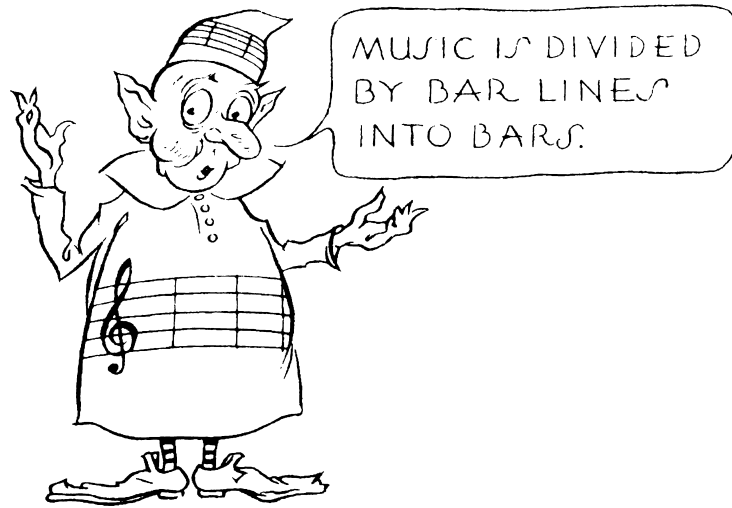
This is how MIDDLE C looks in the Treble.
It is written as a SEMIBREVE, and gets *four counts*.
It is played by the RIGHT HAND thumb.
Play it and count FOUR.

Bass Clef sign



This is how MIDDLE C looks in the Bass.
Written as a SEMIBREVE, it gets *four counts*.
It is played by the LEFT HAND thumb.
Play it and count FOUR.



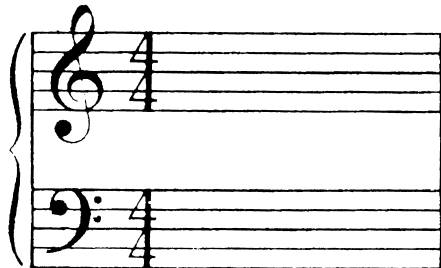


The figures after the Clef Signs tell us how to count.

In this book we need only read the *top* figure.

It shows how many counts to each bar.

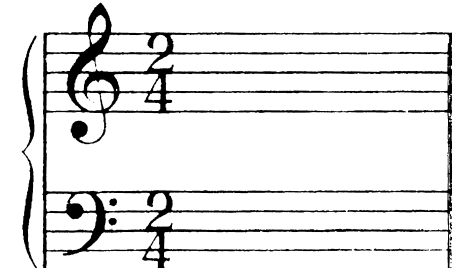
Count 4 to
each bar



Count 3 to
each bar



Count 2 to
each bar



Left Hand

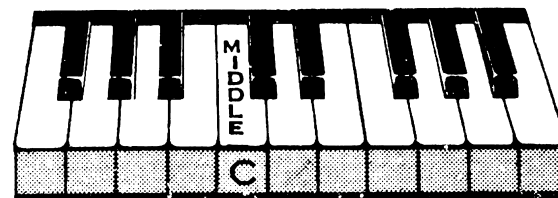
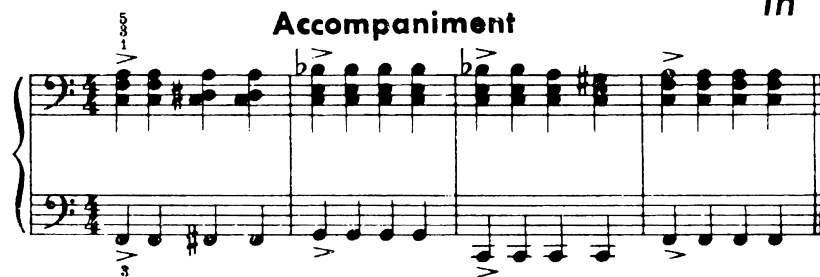
Each finger has a number. The thumbs are number 1.



Right Hand

Middle C as a Semibreve

In the Treble

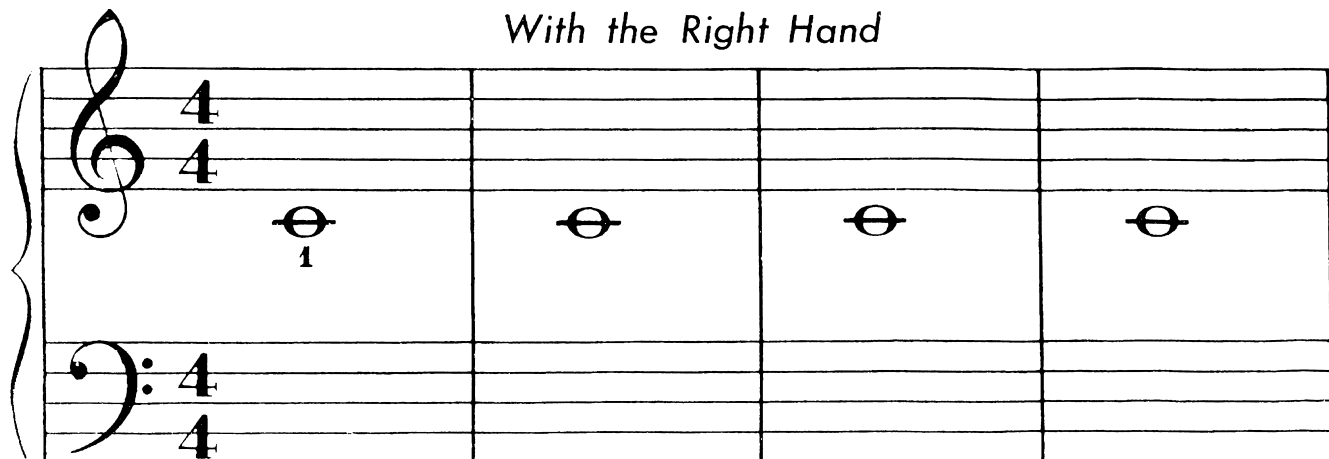


PLAY WITH RIGHT HAND THUMB
COUNT FOUR TO EACH NOTE



Let's Play

With the Right Hand

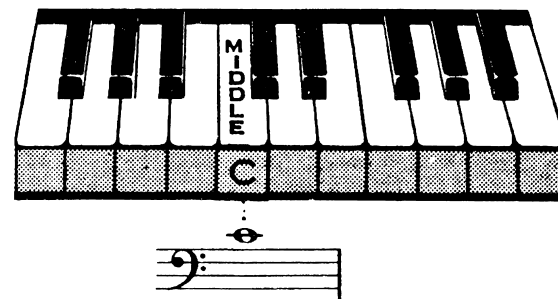


Middle C as a Semibreve

9

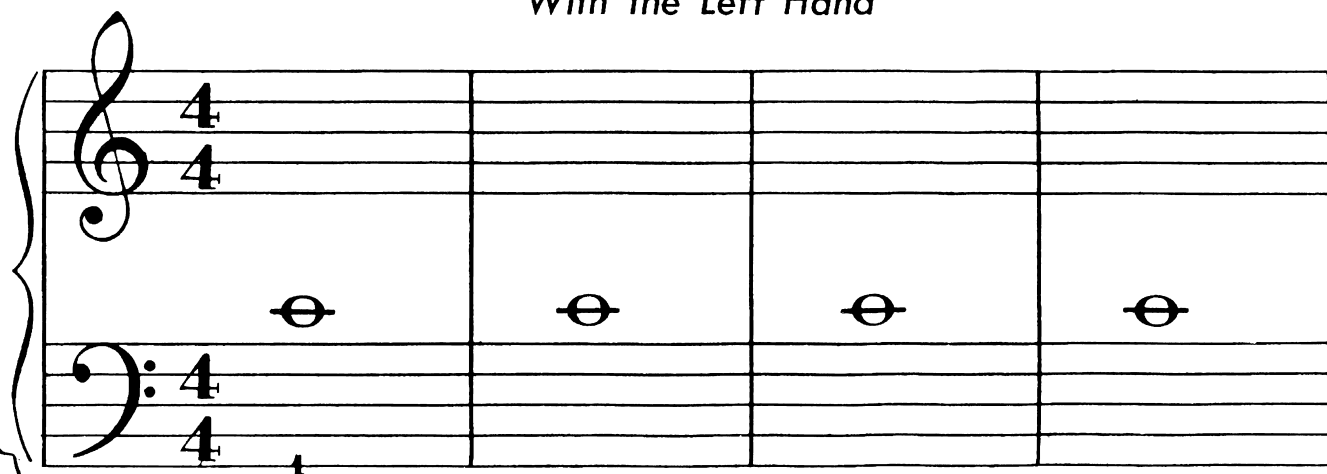
In the Bass

Accompaniment



Let's Play

With the Left Hand



PLAY WITH
LEFT HAND THUMB,
COUNT FOUR
TO EACH NOTE

Middle C in Minims

When a Note has an open head and a stem, like this, ( or ) it is called a MINIM and gets two counts.

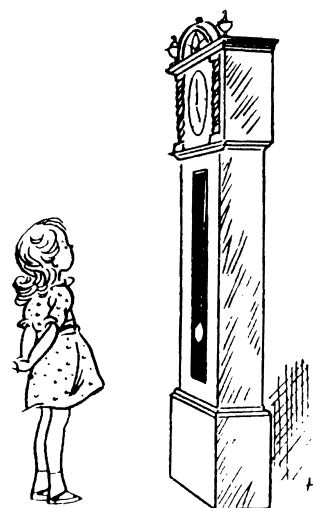
Play the following, counting TWO to each note—"ONE, TWO" to the first note and "THREE, FOUR" to the second note of each bar.



COUNT FOUR TO EACH BAR.

Grandfather's Clock

Accompaniment



Middle C in Crotchets

A CROTCHET looks like this ( or ) and gets one count.

FOUR COUNTS
TO EACH
BAR.



Moccasin Dance

Accompaniment





Mark the Time Values of the following notes, using 1 for Crotchets, 2 for Minims and 4 for Semibreves.

1

1 2

Make Minims of the following by adding stems.
Stems Up

2

Stems Down

Change the following into Crotchets by filling in the heads and adding stems when necessary.

3

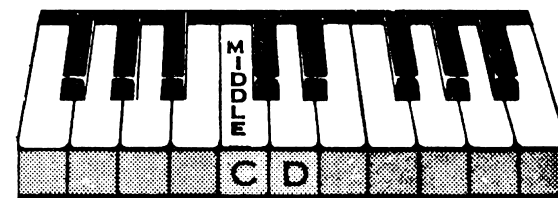
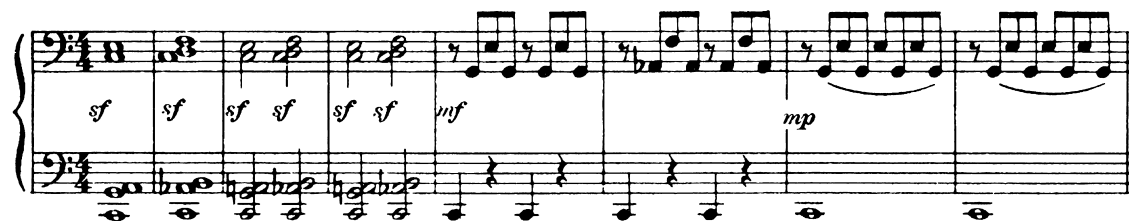
Write Middle C in each Clef.

4

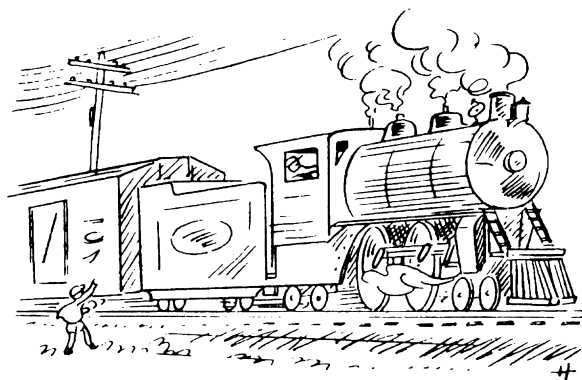
Semibreve Two Minims Four Crotchets Two Minims Four Crotchets Semibreve

Accompaniment

13



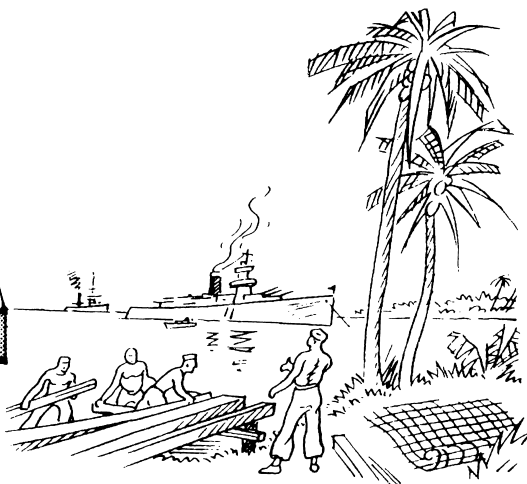
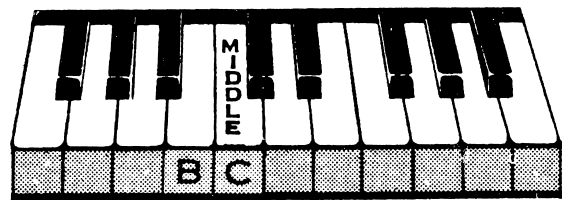
The Train



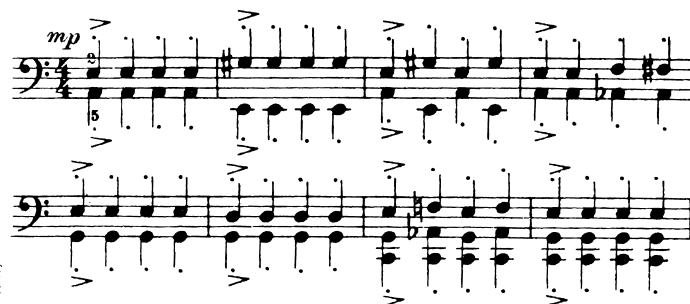
TURN TO THE WORK SHEET
ON PAGE 15 AND DO
EXERCISES 1 AND 2

Note to Teacher

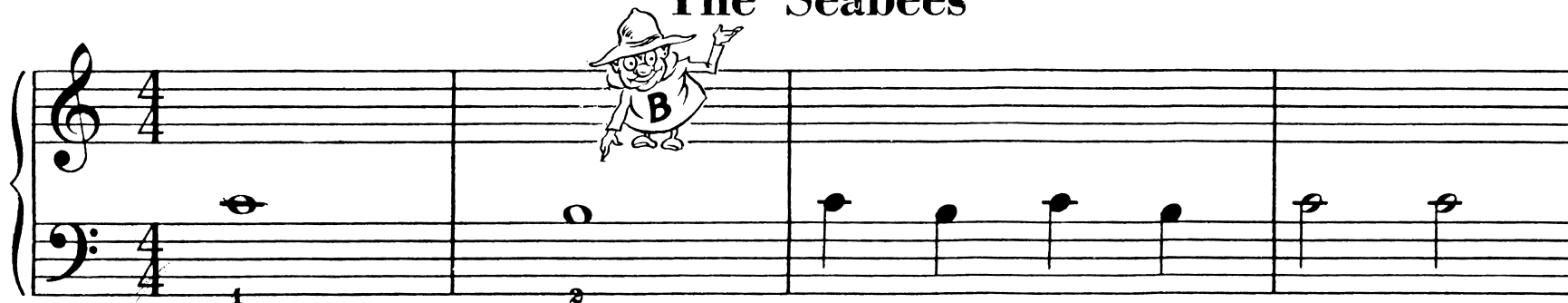
From this point on, be sure to stress
the importance of accenting the first
count of each bar.



Accompaniment



The Seabees



DO WRITING EXERCISES
3, 4 AND 5
ON PAGE 15 ✓

SEABÉES: A descriptive word-play on the U.S. Navy's CONSTRUCTION BATTALION who are busy as bees when tackling a difficult task.



Write the letter names under the notes.

1

C _ _ _ _ _

Write the new note (D) as indicated.

2

Semibreve Two Minims Four Crotchets

Write the letter names under the notes.

3

C _ _ _ _ _

Write the new note (B) as indicated.

4

Semibreve Two Minims Four Crotchets

In the following exercise, first draw the Bar Lines where they belong. (note Time Signature).

Next write the letter names of the notes.

Finally, mark the Time Values—using 1 for a Crotchet, 2 for a Minim and 4 for a Semibreve.

5

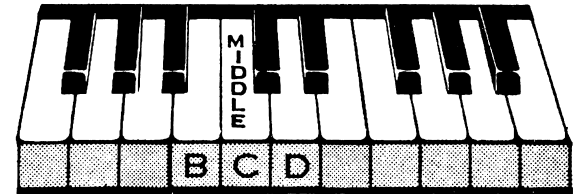
Letter Names C _ _ _ _ _

Time Values 2 _ _ _ _ _

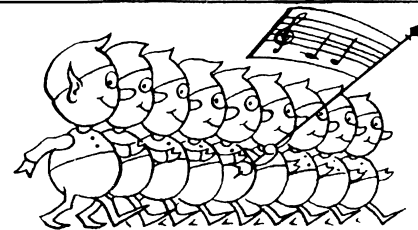
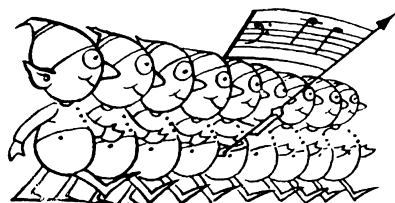
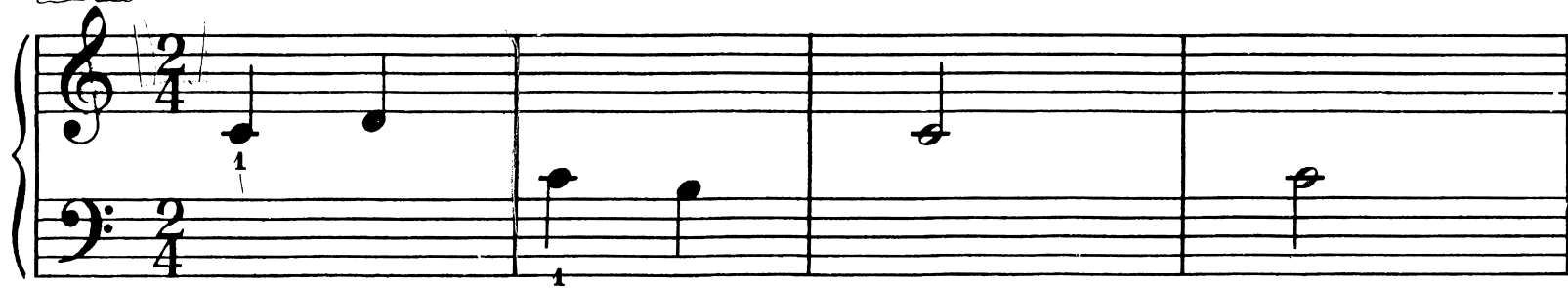
Accompaniment



TWO-FOUR



March of the Gnomes



THREE-FOUR and The Dotted Minim

The dotted minim.

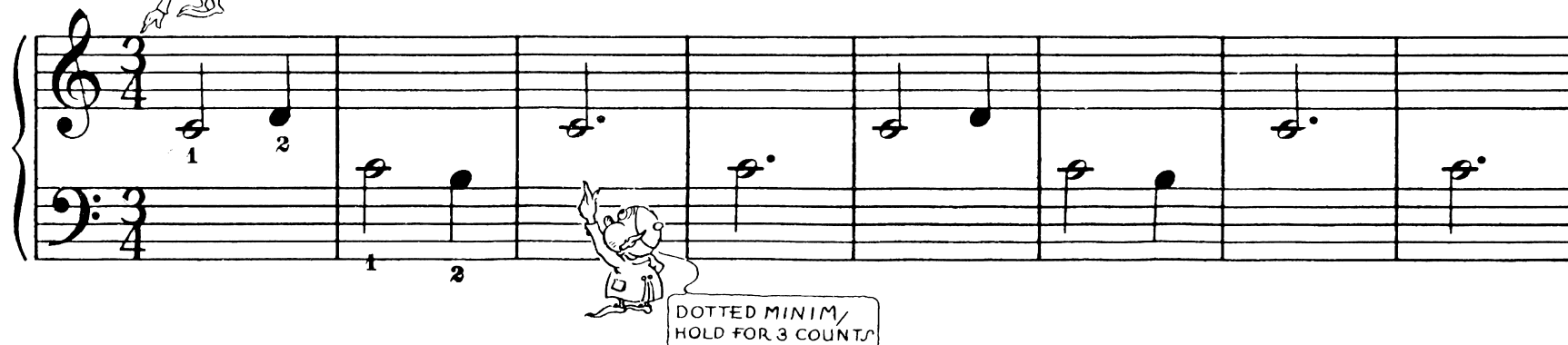
looks like this (♩· or ♩·)

and is held for 3 counts.



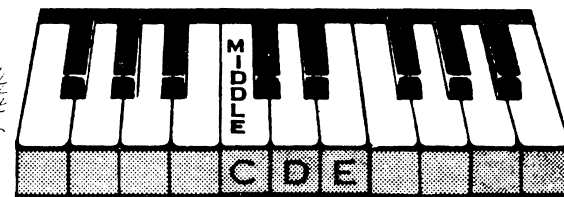
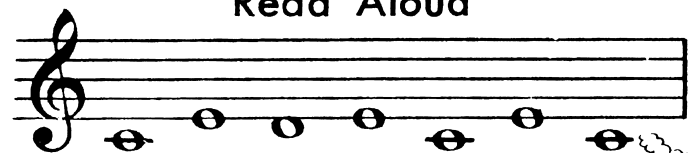
COUNT 3 TO
EACH BAR.

Dance of the Gnomes



See the importance of correct counting? These are the same notes you played in "March of the Gnomes" but they make a new piece when you count 3 to each bar.

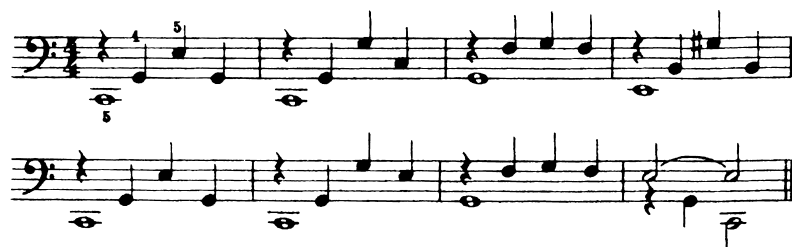
Read Aloud



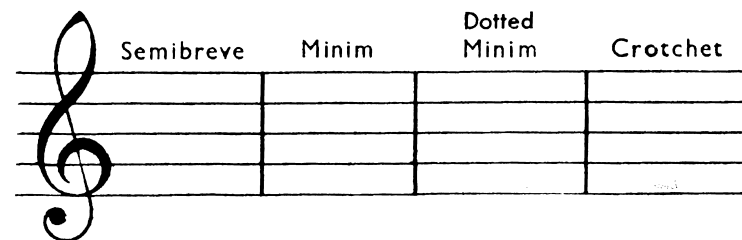
Mary Had a Little Lamb



Accompaniment



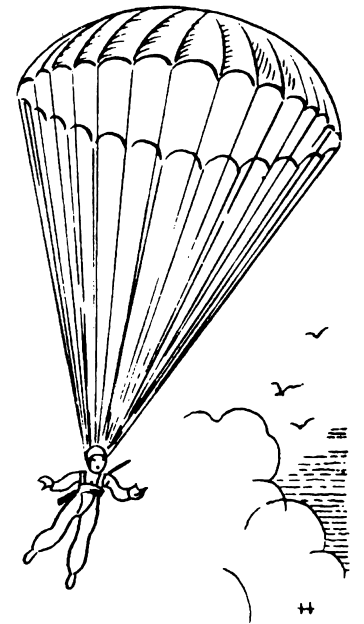
Write the new note (E) below.



New Note

Accompaniment

The Paratrooper

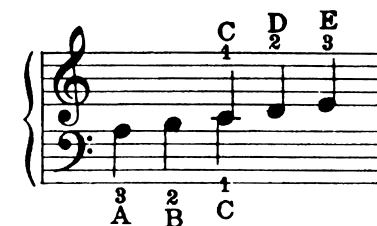
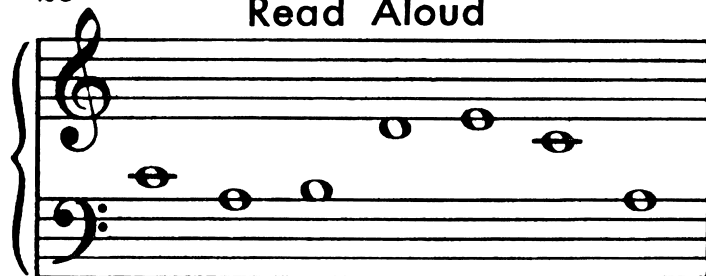


Read Aloud

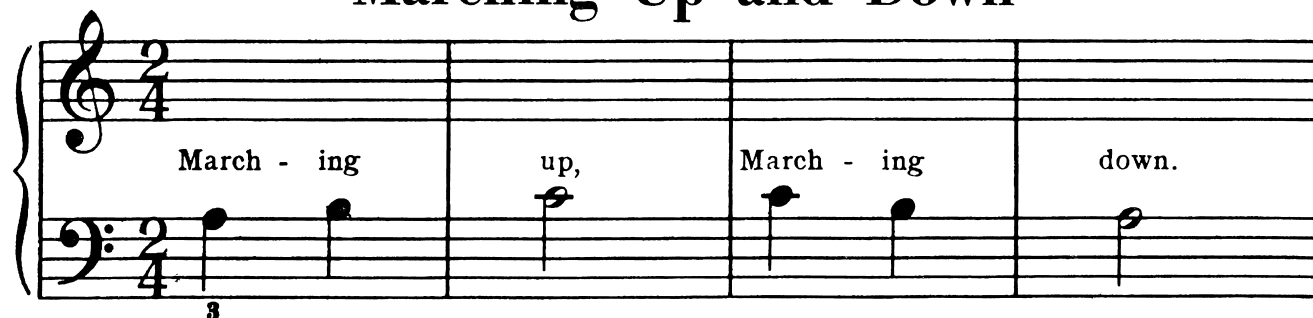
Write the new note (A) below.

Semibreve Minim Dotted Minim Crotchet

Read Aloud



Marching Up and Down

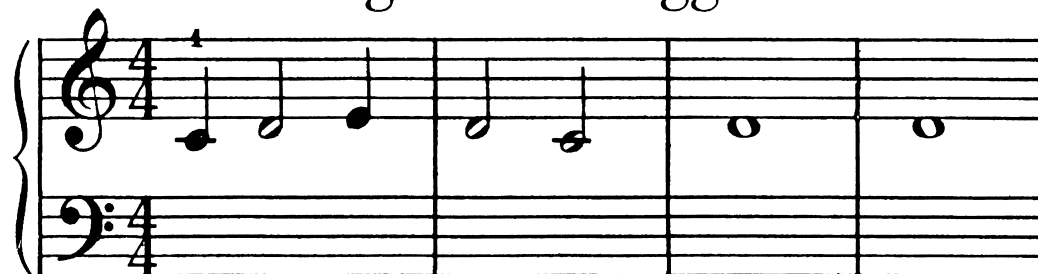


Accompaniment



Rag-Time Raggles

21



Accompaniment



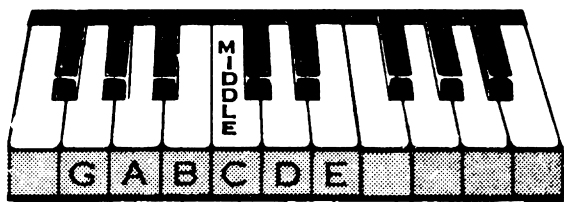
Work Sheet

FIRST, LOOK AT THE TIME SIGNATURES
NEXT, DRAW BAR LINES IN THEIR
PROPER PLACES – THEN, WRITE THE
LETTER-NAMES UNDER THE NOTES



Handwriting practice sheet for musical notation. It consists of six staves, each with a time signature and a sequence of notes. Below each staff is a dashed line for writing letter names.

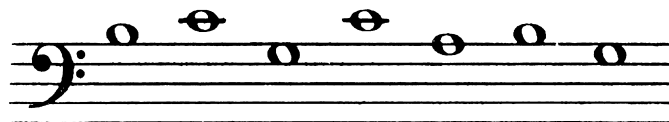
- Staff 1: Treble clef, 2/4 time signature. Notes: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4.
- Staff 2: Treble clef, 3/4 time signature. Notes: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4.
- Staff 3: Treble clef, 4/4 time signature. Notes: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4.
- Staff 4: Bass clef, 2/4 time signature. Notes: C3, D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4, B3, A3, G3, F3, E3, D3, C3.
- Staff 5: Bass clef, 3/4 time signature. Notes: C3, D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4, B3, A3, G3, F3, E3, D3, C3.
- Staff 6: Bass clef, 4/4 time signature. Notes: C3, D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4, B3, A3, G3, F3, E3, D3, C3.



New Note

Read Aloud

23

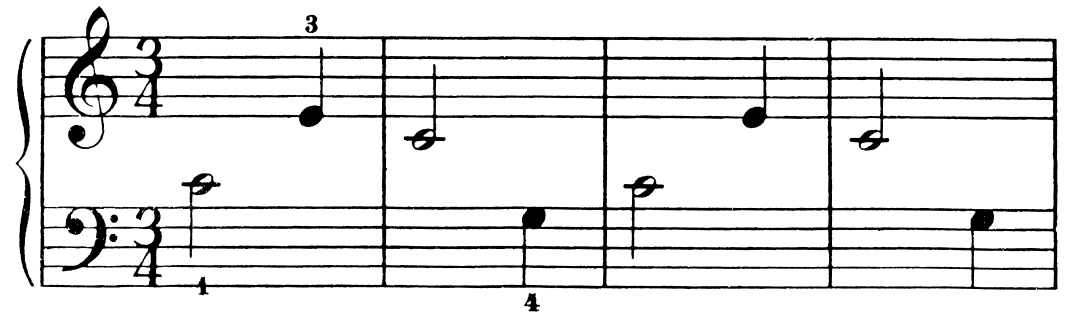
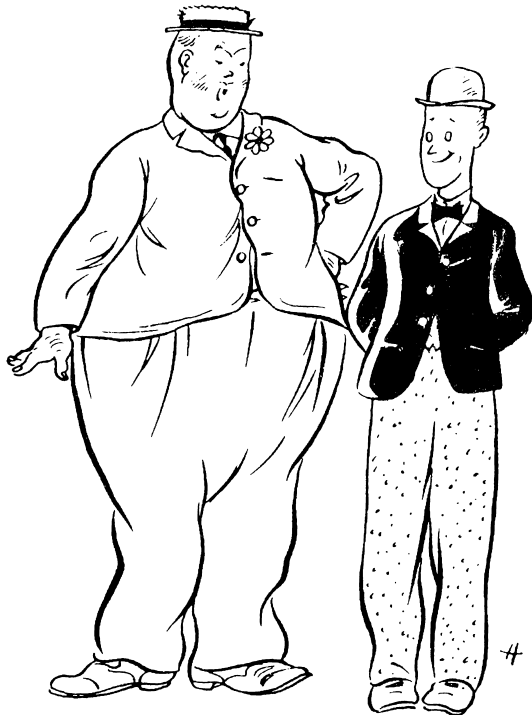


The Chimes



Write the new note (G) below.

Funny Faces



Read Aloud

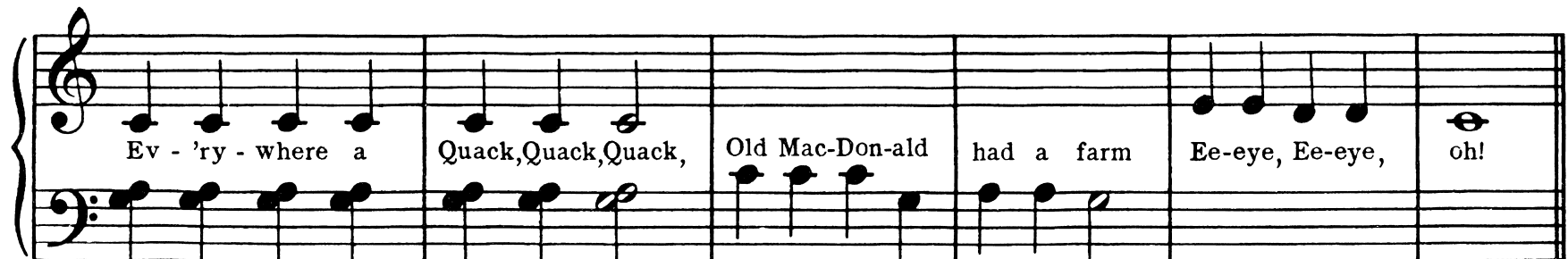
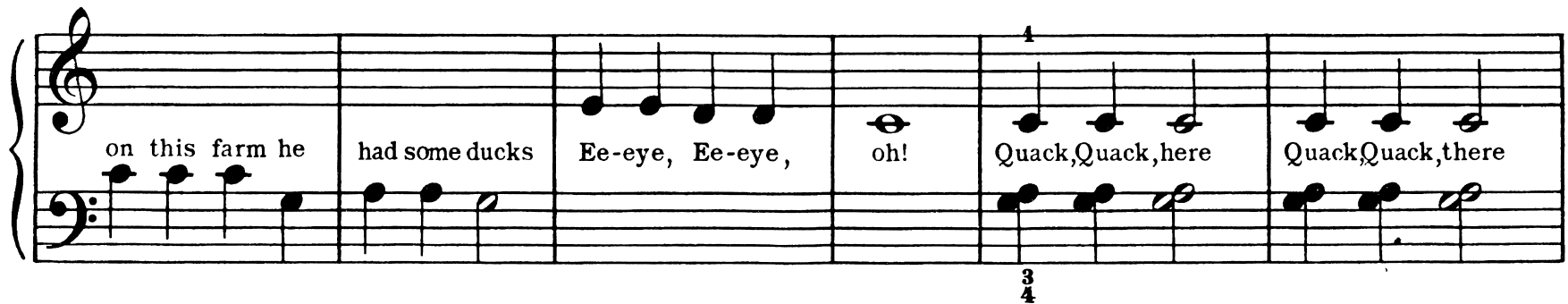
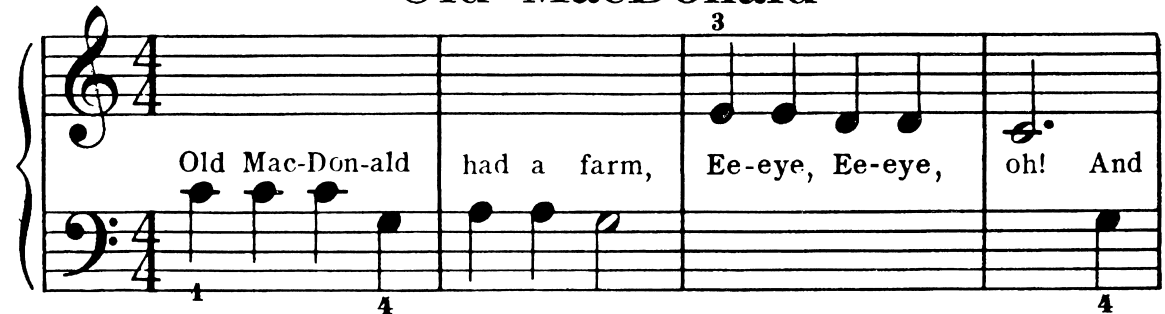
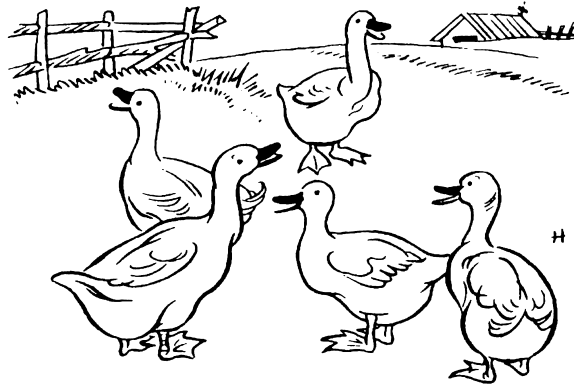


Read Aloud

25



Old MacDonald

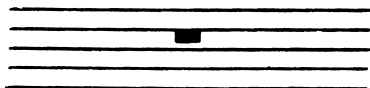


RESTS

RESTS are signs of silence. Each kind of Note has a Rest Sign of equal value.



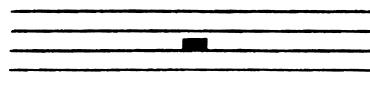
SEMIBREVE



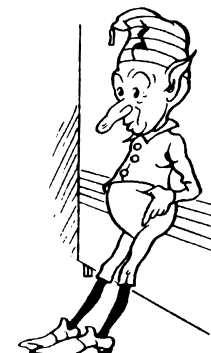
A whole bar's rest



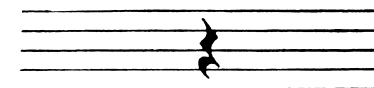
MINIM



Gets 2 counts



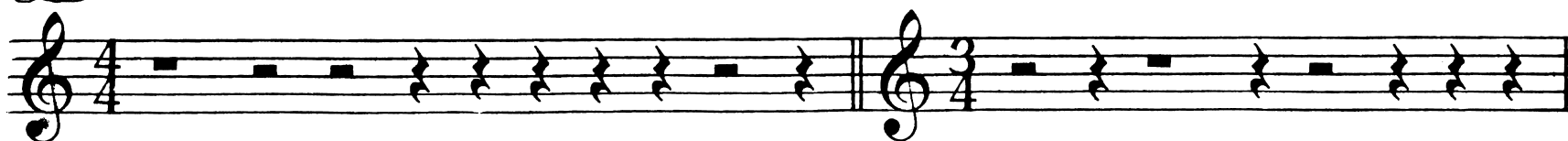
CROTCHET



Gets 1 count



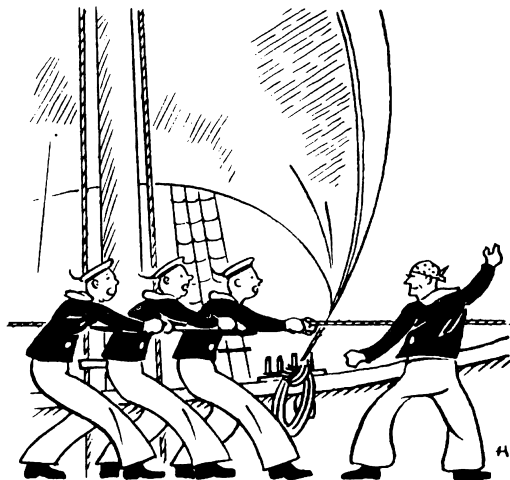
DRAW THE BAR LINES IN THE FOLLOWING
EXAMPLE, SO THAT EACH BAR
WILL HAVE THE NUMBER OF SILENT
COUNTS SHOWN IN THE TIME SIGNATURE.



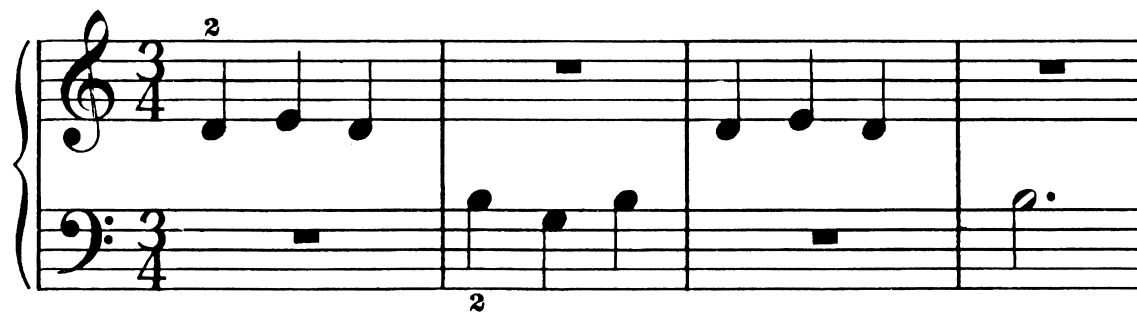
Accompaniment to

"BLOW THE MAN DOWN" (next page)



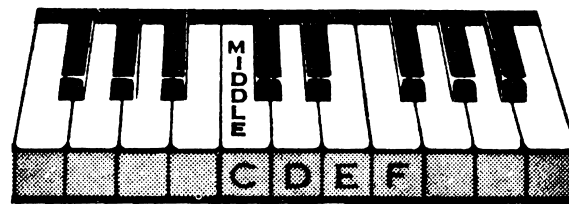
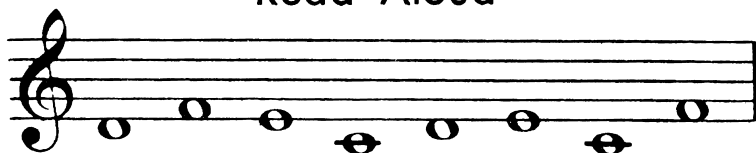


Blow the Man Down

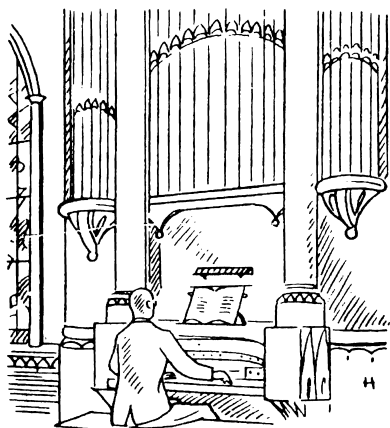


See Accompaniment on opposite page.

Read Aloud



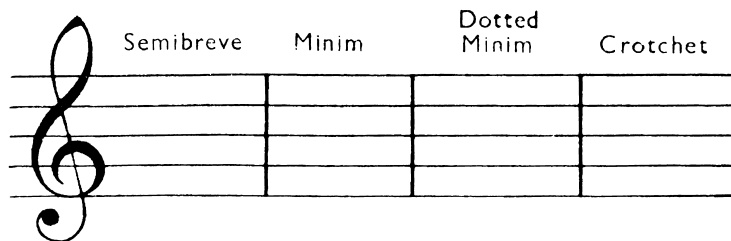
The Church Organ



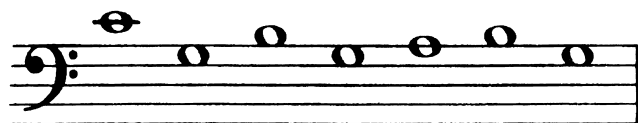
Accompaniment



Write the new note (F) below.



Read Aloud



Read Aloud



Yankee Doodle

Yan - kee Doo - dle came to town a - rid - ing on a po - ny, They

stuck a feath - er in his hat and called him Mac - a - ro - ni.

Carry Me Back to Old Virginny

James A. Bland

3

Car - ry me back to old Vir - gin - ny,

3

Detailed description: This block contains the first system of musical notation for the song. It features a grand staff with a treble and bass clef. The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The melody is written in the treble clef, starting with a triplet of eighth notes. The lyrics 'Car - ry me back to old Vir - gin - ny,' are written below the treble staff. The bass staff contains a simple accompaniment line. A '3' is written above the first measure and below the last measure of the system.



There's where the cot - ton and the corn and 'ta - toes grow, There's where the birds war - ble

Detailed description: This block contains the second system of musical notation. It continues the melody from the first system. The lyrics 'There's where the cot - ton and the corn and 'ta - toes grow, There's where the birds war - ble' are written below the treble staff. The bass staff continues the accompaniment.

sweet in the spring-time, There's where the old dar-key's heart am longed to go.

Detailed description: This block contains the third system of musical notation, which concludes the song. The lyrics 'sweet in the spring-time, There's where the old dar-key's heart am longed to go.' are written below the treble staff. The bass staff continues the accompaniment. The system ends with a double bar line.

Accompaniment

Detailed description: This block contains the accompaniment for the song, written in the bass clef. It includes various musical notations such as triplets, chords, and fingerings (e.g., 1, 2, 3, 4, 5). The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The accompaniment is designed to be played along with the vocal melody.



THE TIE



When two notes are tied together, the second note is not struck but held for its full value.

The Old Cotton Picker

4 3 2 Tie

Pick - in' cot-ton, I've not for - got-ten, The hours I've spent in the sun.

4 3

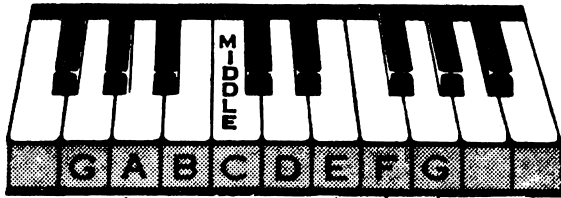
3

Bend - in' o - ver, you're not in clo-ver, The work is no - bod - y's fun.

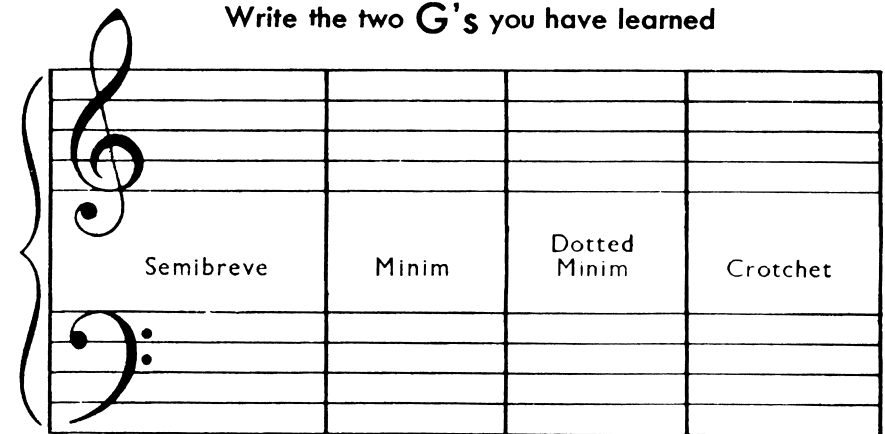
Accompaniment

R. H. 5 1 5 2 4 3 4 1 5 1 5 2 4 1

L. H. 2 1 2 3 2 6

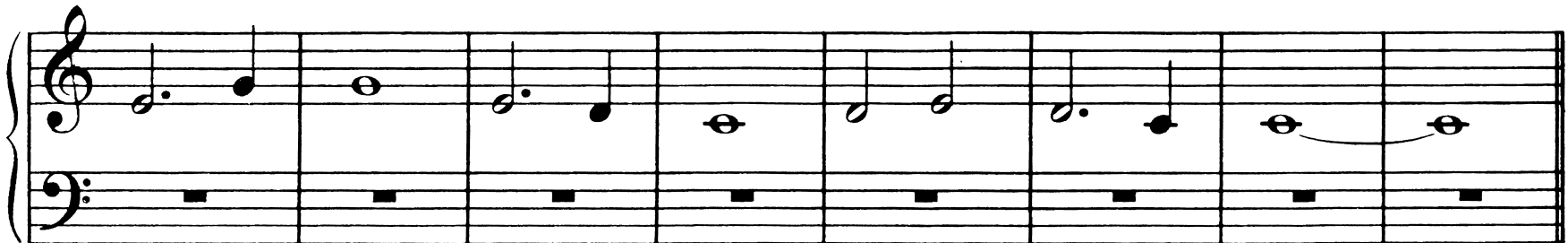


Write the two G's you have learned



Theme from "New World" Symphony

Anton Dvořák



Accompaniment

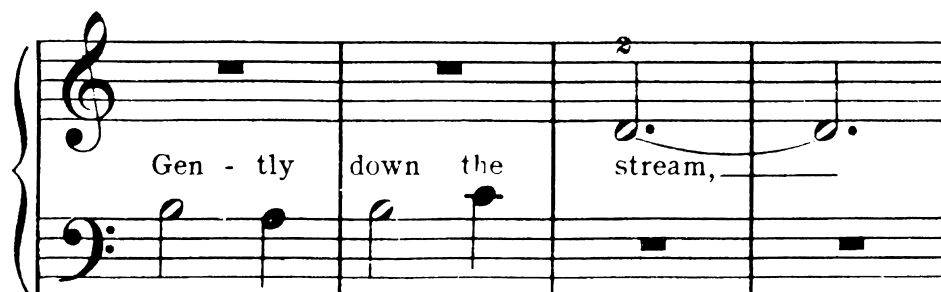
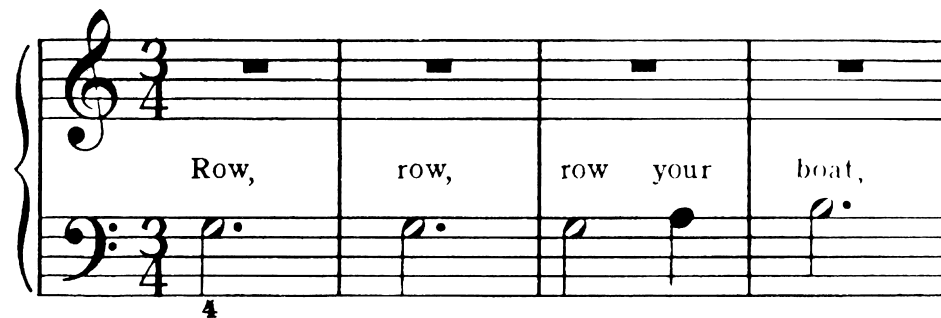


Bugles!



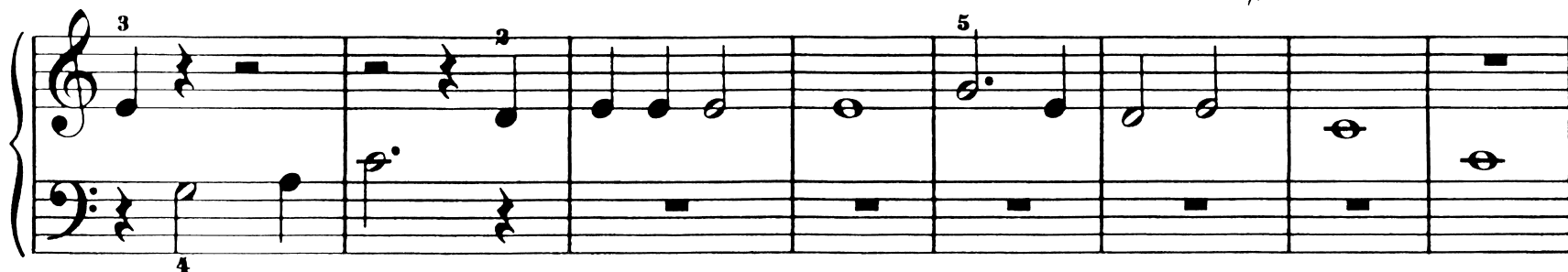


Row, Row



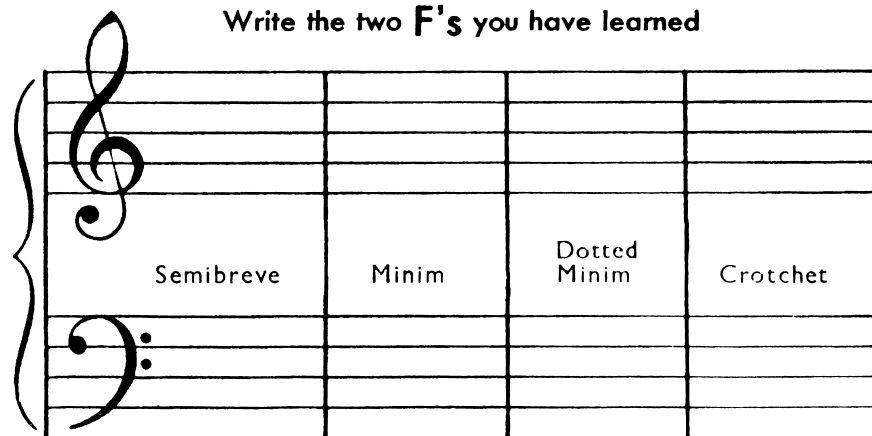
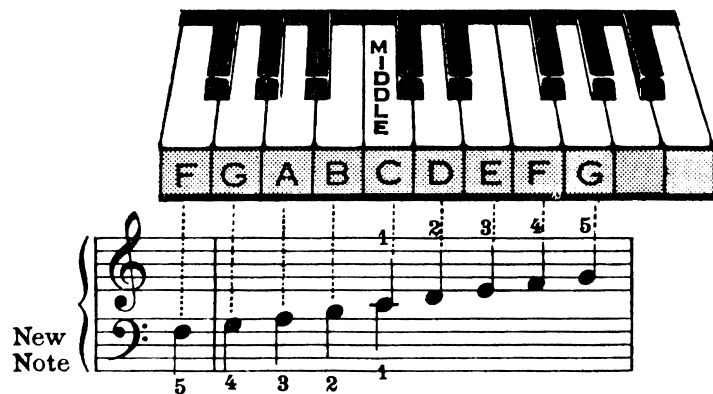
Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen

Spiritual

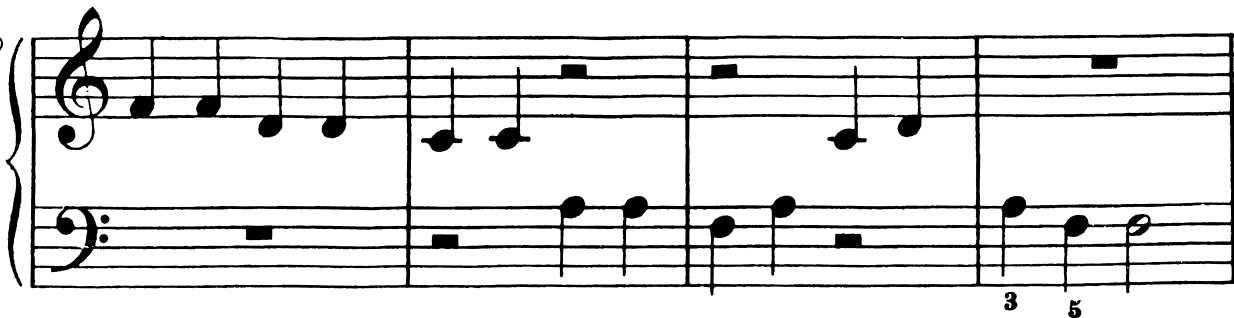
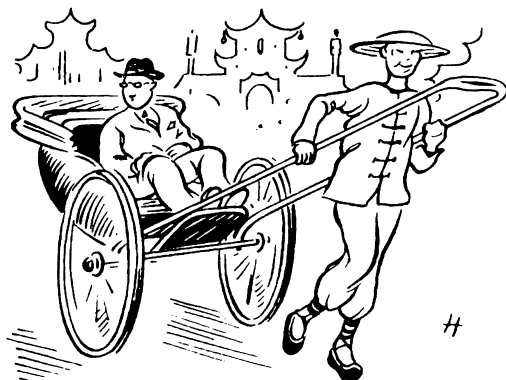
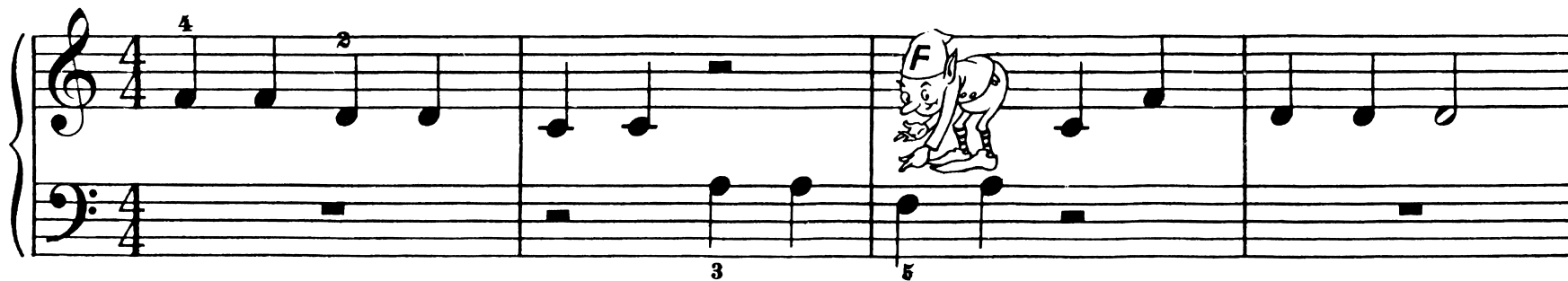


Accompaniment



Write the two **F**'s you have learned

In a Rickshaw





The Banjo Picker

Adapted from
Stephen Foster

First system of musical notation (4/4 time). The treble staff contains a melody starting on a whole note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, and a half note G5. The bass staff contains a bass line starting on a whole note G2, followed by quarter notes A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F#3, G3, and a half note G3. Fingering numbers 4, 2, 5, 3, 1 are written below the bass staff notes.

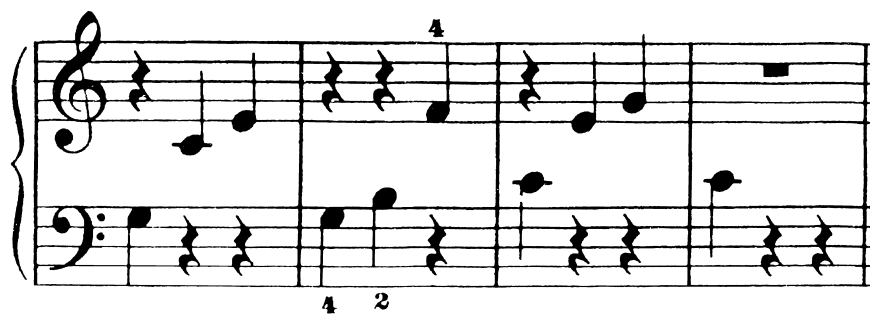
Second system of musical notation (4/4 time). The treble staff continues the melody with a whole note G5, followed by quarter notes A5, B5, C6, D6, E6, F#6, G6, and a half note G6. The bass staff continues the bass line with a whole note G3, followed by quarter notes A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F#4, G4, and a half note G4. A fingering number 3 is written below the first bass note.

Third system of musical notation (4/4 time). The treble staff continues the melody with a whole note G6, followed by quarter notes A6, B6, C7, D7, E7, F#7, G7, and a half note G7. The bass staff continues the bass line with a whole note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, and a half note G5.

Accompaniment

Accompaniment musical notation (4/4 time). The first staff shows a treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a 4/2 time signature. It contains a melody starting on a whole note Bb4, followed by quarter notes C5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, A5, Bb5, and a half note Bb5. The second staff shows a treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a 4/4 time signature. It contains a melody starting on a whole note Bb4, followed by quarter notes C5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, A5, Bb5, and a half note Bb5. The first staff has fingering numbers 4, 2, 5, 8 written above the notes.

Princess Waltz



Accompaniment

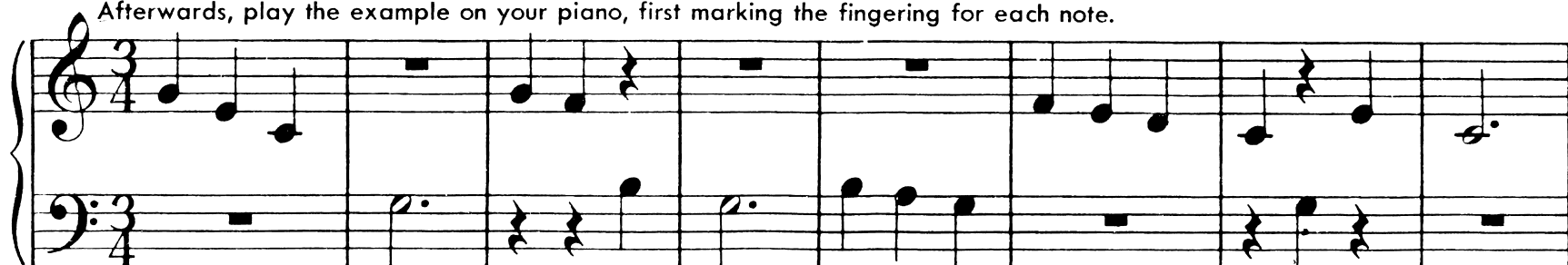




(Write letter names)

Clap the time (one clap to each count) while reciting the letter-names of the notes.

Afterwards, play the example on your piano, first marking the fingering for each note.



Clap the time and recite the notes as above.

Mark the fingering, then play on the piano.



Certificate of Merit

This certifies that

.....

has successfully completed
PART ONE
OF
John Thompson's
EASIEST PIANO COURSE
and is eligible for promotion to
PART TWO

.....
Teacher

Date