

Tin Whistle & Music Theory

Week 10

MUSIC THEORY (~15 minutes)

1. Review previous weeks.

Pass out blank staff paper and ask students to draw: treble clef, time signature, quarter notes, half notes, & whole notes. Add correct bar lines.

Display sheet music; clap the rhythm together.

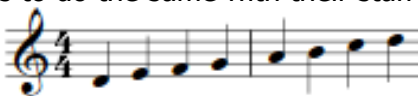
Review treble clef note names. Ask if anybody knows what we call it when you write notes on the staff in alphabetical order. This will transition to the Week 10 theory lesson...

2. Explain a scale

Remind students that the musical alphabet is made up of 7 letters: A - G, repeating forever. A musical scale is also made up of the 7 notes. To complete the scale, we repeat the first note, but one octave higher. A scale is 8 notes long.

Note: most students, young and old, are familiar with solfege (do, re, mi...) and can already sing a major scale. You can have them sing a scale with solfege first, then replace the syllables with note names.

Draw eight notes on the staff, beginning with Middle D and ending with 4th Line D. Instruct students to do the same with their staff paper.



Say: We just wrote 8 notes in order, and they begin and end on the same note in two octaves, but it is not a scale yet.* Something is missing.

Note: Some older students who are taking music lessons may already be aware of major, minor, or even modal scales. They may interject at this point in the lesson. If so, let them know that for this class, "scale" always refers to a major scale.

Explain: When a scale begins with D, we need to change some notes just a bit to make it sound like the scale we sang earlier.*

This transitions to the next task...

**If this confusing, there is a more detailed explanation of the characteristics of a major scale on the vocabulary page.*

3. Teach Flat and Sharp Symbols

Explain: To complete our scale, two notes need altering - the F and the C. They need to be just a tiny bit higher. Add sharp symbols beside them, then prompt students to do the same to theirs.



Define a sharp. Explain that the opposite of a sharp is a flat, which lowers a note by one half -step. Practice drawing the symbol, but tell students they will not use them for this class.

As a class, say or sing the notes of a D scale: D, E, F-sharp, G, A, B, C-sharp, D.

4. Now let's learn to play it!

TIN WHISTLE (~15 minutes)

1. Warm Up

Instruct students to warm up, at respectful volumes, with the Right and Left Hand Exercise.

2. Play the D Scale

Display or pass out individual copies of the D Scale chart. Have students practice the D Scale individually for a few minutes. Walk around and help students who need it. (*Tip: some kids may find it hard to balance the tin whistle while playing a C#, or switching from C# to high D. A C# can be played with the right hand down like this - ○○○●●●. It is easier for some.*)

After a few minutes, play the D Scale as a group. Play the scale at 2 or 3 different speeds. (Optional: use a metronome or metronome app if you have one.) Define tempo.

3. Begin learning a tune.

Use *Mary*[†] or *Twinkle* from the Foundations Guide, or another simple and familiar tune. Learn one measure at a time, as a group. Aim to learn about 4 measures in class this week. Remind your students to practice at home.

While preparing for the lesson, refer to the Week 10 appendix on pages 168-170 of your Foundations Guide.

[†]The Mary Had a Little Lamb in the Foundations Guide is not in the key of D. If this bothers you, there is a version in D on page 5.

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Week 10 – Vocabulary

Scale: a sequence of notes in order, made up of 7 pitches and one octave. A scale is 8 notes long. It is the framework of all music.

Octave: two notes that are 8 steps apart. A scale begins and ends on the same note, in different octaves. (**do** re me fa sol la ti **do**).

Sharp (#): raises a written note one half-step higher than it would otherwise be played. On a piano, a half-step is the distance between a white and black key.

Flat (♭): lowers a written note by one half-step.

No matter what the first note is, all scales use the same pattern of whole-steps and half-steps. A half-step is the smallest distance between two notes. The Jaws Theme is a famous example of a half-step.

The step pattern for all major scales is:

Whole - Whole - Half - Whole - Whole - Whole - Half

Flats and sharps are used when necessary to complete the pattern.

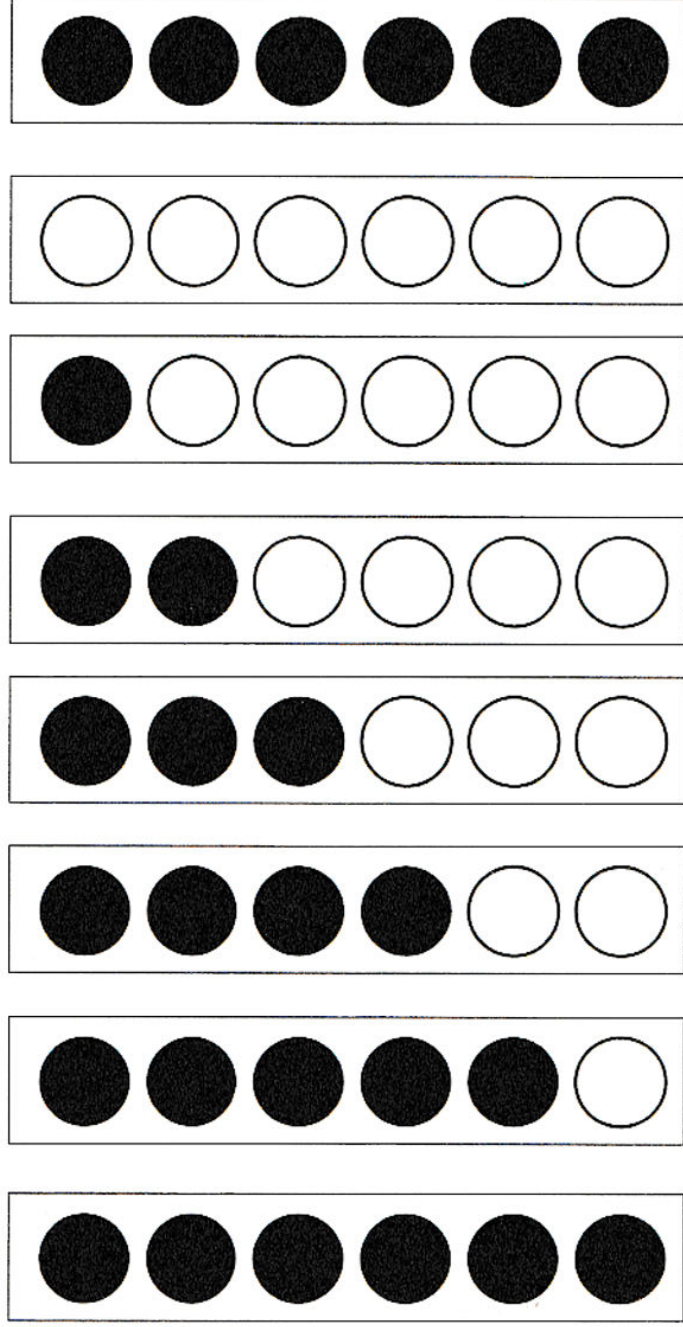
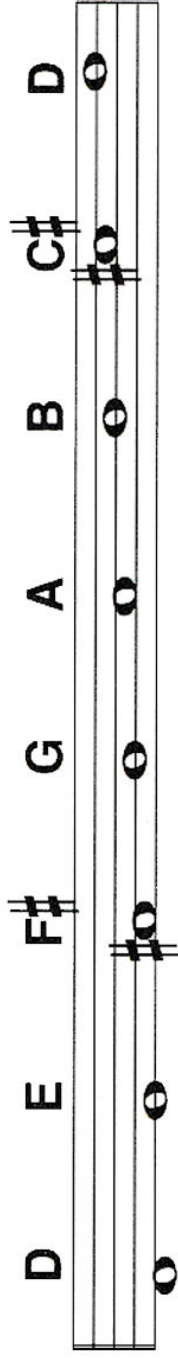
Example: The notes B and C are one half-step apart. In a D scale, a whole-step needs to come after the B to comply with the pattern. That is why we turn the C into a C# - it turns a half-step into a whole-step.

Tempo: the rate of speed music is played. Tempo is measured in beats per minute (BPM), or described with words (usually Italian).



Tin Whistle Chart

PLAYING THE D SCALE



6

0

1

2

3

4

5

6

Finger Code

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Mary Had a Little Lamb

Tin Whistle

Ma - ry had a li - ttle lamb, li - ttle lamb.

Ma - ry had a li - ttle lamb, his fleece was white as snow.