

# Tin Whistle & Music Theory

## Week 9

### MUSIC THEORY (~20 minutes)

#### 1. Review previous weeks.

Specifically: identifying a staff, quarter notes, half notes, whole notes, and eighth notes. Review names of treble clef lines and spaces.

*Optional:* Tell students that notes alone do not make music. To illustrate, sing *Mary Had a Little Lamb* or *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star* with no rhythm. Ask students what is wrong with what you sang. This transitions to the Week 9 theory...

#### 2. Explain Rhythm

Tell students that when we take the different types of notes and create a pattern with them, that is rhythm. Sound + Rhythm = Music

#### 3. Explain Time Signature

Musicians know how to play each note by looking at the time signature. Draw one on a blank staff or point it out on a sheet of written music. Define what the top and bottom numbers means. If students have their own staff paper, prompt them to first draw a treble clef, then a 4/4 time signature.

#### 4. Explain Measures and Bar Lines

Draw or point out a measure and bar lines. Define, then prompt students to draw their own measures.

Tell students that a whole note gets four beats. Help them figure out the lengths of half, quarter, and eighth notes and how many will fit into one 4/4 measure. Draw bar lines accordingly:



#### 5. Learn to Count Rhythms in 4/4

Tell students they will now learn to count rhythms, their final skill needed to read music. Tutors: Refer to the Foundations Guide (pages 165-166) for help learning how to count rhythms.

*Author's Note:* there are many methods for teaching children to count rhythms, and many resources are available on CC Connected. My personal preference is to use no hand-outs, charts, or flashcards for this first lesson. I have found that a stick in the sand - simply drawing notes on a staff and counting with children - is most effective. However, all tutors should use the method they are comfortable with.

#### 6. Count the Rhythm of a Song

Choose a tune familiar to all children. *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star* is great for beginners.

#### 7. Get out your tin whistles!

### TIN WHISTLE (~10 minutes)

Remind students of the guidelines discussed in Week 7. Briefly review parts of the tin whistle and left hand notes. Keep it short, because all the children really want to do is blow.

#### 1. Warm Up

Explain that musicians always warm up before every practice, rehearsal, or performance. While warming up, they play with their best sounds at respectful volumes. Tell students that they can warm up for 30 seconds, playing the left hand notes they learned last week. After warming up, ask students to put tin whistles in *lap position*.

#### 2. Learn Right Hand Notes

Explain that, when playing with the right hand, the left hand *always* plays a G (first three holes closed). Prompt students to finger a G and softly blow, confirming that all three holes are covered.

Ask students to put tin whistles in *chin position*. Demonstrate how to finger an **F#** note. First in chin position, then playing together. Point out that the F is lower in pitch than the G.

Return tin whistles to chin position. Demonstrate how to finger and play a **E** note. Point out that the E will lower in pitch than the F#. Play the E together.

Return tin whistles to chin position. Demonstrate how to finger and play a **D** note. Point out that the D is the lowest note on their tin whistle and it will require all finger holes completely covered and gentle, warm air. Play the D together.

#### 3. Work on the Right Hand Exercise

While preparing for the lesson, refer to the Week 9 appendix on pages 164-167 of your Foundations Guide.

# Tin Whistle & Music Theory

## Week 9 – Vocabulary

**Rhythm:** the pattern that notes take when played. Or more simply: notes in time.

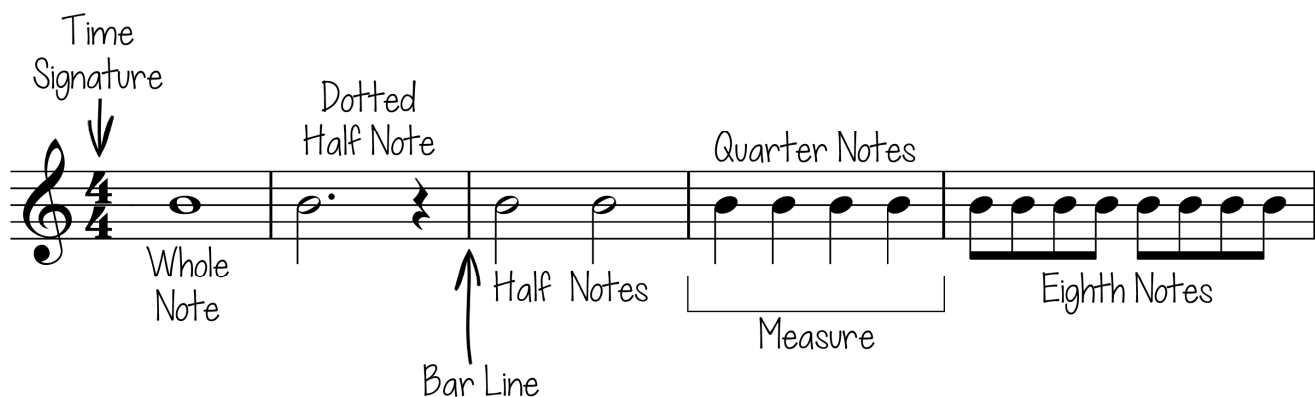
**Time Signature:** two numbers on top of each other, located just after the clef sign and key signature at the beginning of each line.

TOP: Number of beats in each measure

BOTTOM: What kind of note receives one beat.

**Measure:** a division of music that contains the number of beats specified in the time signature.

**Bar Lines:** vertical lines drawn through the staff, dividing it into measures.



# Right Hand Notes

F#



Remind students to keep their left hand fingers covering each hole as they play right hand notes. This will be difficult for young students; their left hands will shift and uncover holes.

E



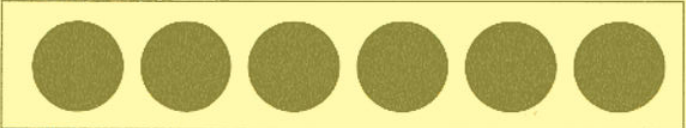

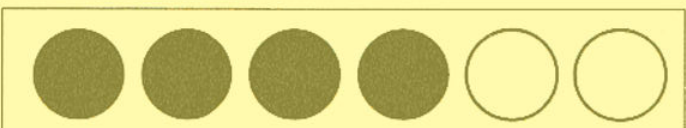





D



The low D is a difficult note to play. It requires covering every hole and having the correct air velocity. You can demonstrate how it should sound, but let students know that it will take practice. Remember: the goal is familiarity with the grammar, not perfection!

# Tin Whistle Chart

## PLAYING THE D SCALE

D	E	F#	G	A	B	C#	D
							
6	5	4	3	2	1	0	6
Finger Code							