

Improvisation

Part I: Chapter 14

Simple Meter—Quarter Note = Beat Unit; More Rhythms with Borrowed Beat Division

Change Challenge

- **Process:**
 - The instructor or Student A chants a known rhythm pattern; Student B makes only one change to the pattern following the guidelines below. Student C chants Student B's pattern and makes one change following the guidelines below, etc.
 - Student D chants a new rhythm pattern; Student E and F each make one change to the pattern following the guidelines below, etc.
- **Rules**
 - Notes can move to a beat level above or below but may not move two levels. For example, beat division may move up to the beat level or down to the subdivision level but may not move to the elongated or sustained level. Refer to table below.
 - Notes may also move to their corresponding rest. Notes may not move to a rest a beat level higher or lower.
 - A rest may only move back to its corresponding note.

Improvisation—Change Challenge—Simple Meter																			
Move up or down one level only	Verbal Signals		Rhythm Syllables															Rests move to note of same value	
	↓	Sustained Beats	ta				ah				ah				ah				
	↑↓	Elongated Beats	ta				ah				ta				ah				
	↑↓	Beat	ta				ta				ta				ta				
	↑↓	Beat Division	ta		di		ta		di		ta		di		ta		di		
	↑	Beat Subdivision	ta	ka	di	mi	ta	ka	di	mi	ta	ka	di	mi	ta	ka	di		mi

Change Challenge

A

B

C

D

E

F

G

H

I

The goal is to develop spontaneous, rapid, automatic reaction to what is heard.

- Variation I: A particular rhythm is designated as a wild card (for example elongated beats or divided beats). The next student is free to ignore the rules and improvise at will;
- Variation II: Chant on rhythm syllables or a neutral syllable (bum);
- Variation III: One team improvises on a neutral syllable while the other team(s) writes (dictates) each pattern;
- Variation IV: Integrate accents, articulations and/or dynamics.
- Variation V: Individually practice *Change Challenge* using the MP3 rhythm files found in Part I, Chapter 14.3, located on the Oxford Learning Link.
- **Parameters:**
 - The patterns must be selected from Part I, Chapter 14.3. The instructor or team leader designates the length of pattern (3-4 beats, 1-2 measures), meter (simple-duple, triple, or quadruple), physical motion (metric motion, heel march, down–up with hands/arms) and then sets the tempo and sets the tempo.

Additional Improvisation Activities

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| • Call and Response
See Chapter 2 for instructions | • Add A Rhythm
See Chapter 2 for instructions | • Same or Different
See Chapter 2 for instructions |
| • Pass the Pattern
See Chapter 3 for instructions | • Ostinato Groove
See Chapter 6 for instructions | • Anything You Can Do . . .
See Chapter 10 for instructions |
- **Parameters:**
 - See the indicated chapter on the Oxford Learning Link, Improvisation-Part I for instructions.
 - Rhythm patterns to be selected from Part I, Chapter 14.3 (Subdivided Beat, Borrowed Beat, Divided Beat, Beat, Elongated Beat, Sustained Beat, etc.). The instructor designates the meter (simple-duple, triple or quadruple), physical motion (metric motion, heel march, and/or down-up motion with hands) and then sets the tempo.
 - Remember to perform the patterns (a) with inflective expression (foundation of phrasing) and (b) while moving to meter, macro beat, or micro beat (facilitates understanding of rhythm).

The ability to improvise is a skill that can be learned!

Improvisation develops rapid, automatic reaction to what is heard.