

Improvisation

Part I: Chapter 20

Dotted Half Note = Beat Unit; More Rhythms

Pass the Pattern

- **Process:**
 - Divide class into teams of 5-8. Using the elements from Part I, Chapter 20, the instructor or Student A chants a known rhythm pattern (neutral syllable or rhythm syllables). Student B improvises a similar but different rhythm pattern that MUST start with the last rhythm element in the pattern chanted by Student A. Student C improvises a similar but different rhythm pattern that MUST start with the last rhythm element chanted by Student B. Each additional student's pattern must start with the last element of the previous improviser.

Below are three different teams (A-C; D-F; G-I).

Pass the Pattern

The musical notation consists of three rows of rhythmic patterns. Row A starts with a 9/4 time signature and contains three patterns labeled A, B, and C. Row B contains three patterns labeled D, E, and F. Row G contains three patterns labeled G, H, and I. Each pattern is a sequence of notes and rests, with some patterns ending in a double bar line. The patterns are designed to be passed from one student to the next, with each student starting with the last element of the previous student's pattern.

- Variation I: The instructor or Student A chants a known rhythm pattern (neutral syllable or rhythm syllables). Student B improvises a similar but different rhythm pattern that MUST start with the last rhythm element in the pattern chanted by Student A. Student C improvises a similar but different rhythm pattern that MUST start with the first rhythm element chanted by Student B. Each additional student alternates tasks.
- Variation II: One team improvises on a neutral syllable while the other team(s) writes (dictates) each pattern.
- Variation III: Individually practice *Pass the Pattern* using the MP3 rhythm files found in Part I, Chapters 21, located on the Oxford Learning Link.
- **Parameters:**
 - Rhythm patterns to be selected from Part I, Chapter 20.3. The instructor designates the meter (compound-duple, triple or quadruple), physical motion (metric motion, heel march, circular hand/arm motion, and/or down-up-up motion) 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 goal is to develop spontaneous, rapid, automatic reaction to what is heard.

Improvisation demonstrates comprehension of higher-order skills.

Additional Improvisation Activities

- **Call and Response**
See Chapter 2 for instructions
- **Ostinato Groove**
See Chapter 6 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 20.3 (Subdivided Beat, Borrowed Beat, Divided Beat, Beat, Elongated Beat, Sustained Beat, etc.). The instructor designates the meter (compound-duple, triple or quadruple), physical motion (metric motion, heel march, and/or down-up-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).
- **Same or Different**
See Chapter 2 for instructions
- **Anything You Can Do . . .**
See Chapter 10 for instructions
- **Add A Rhythm**
See Chapter 2 for instructions
- **Change Challenge**
See Chapter 14 for instructions

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

improvisation is learning by doing.