



CLASS ACTIVITY: Triple Meter Ball

OVERVIEW

SPACE CONSIDERATIONS: Students will need room to stand in a large circle.

MATERIALS: Tennis balls

In this activity, students will work to feel strong and weak beats in 3/4 meter.

HOW TO PLAY

Begin by having students count out loud "1, 2, 3" in a steady rhythm. Once they have fallen into a steady rhythm, have students emphasize the first beat by loudly saying "1," and whispering "2" and "3." Explain to students that they have just modeled 3/4 meter, in which beat 1 is the strong beat, and beats 2 and 3 are the weaker beats.

Now while standing in a circle, practice speaking the "1, 2, 3" pattern again, this time stomping on beat 1 and clapping on beats 2 and 3. Help students focus on keeping the beat steady and not speeding up.

Pass out the tennis balls, alternating every other student. Students who are holding a tennis ball will bounce the ball on beat 1, and hold on beats 2 and 3. Students without a tennis ball will hold on beat 1, and clap beats 2 and 3. Have students practice this a few times, until they are able to create a steady rhythm. Now, have students with tennis balls pass the ball to their right at the end of the beat pattern, without interrupting the steady rhythm.

Now let's add music. Choose a piece in 3/4 in which students can clearly hear the emphasized beat pattern. Signal students to start on beat 1 by bouncing the ball, clapping on 2 and 3, and then passing to their right until the piece is over.

Below are a few examples of pieces in 3/4 to use for this activity:

[BRAHMS Waltz in A-flat Major, op. 39, no. 15](#)

[SCHUBERT Waltz in B Minor, op. 18, no. 6, D. 145](#)

[BECK "Winter Waltz" from Frozen](#)

OPTIONAL

Repeat the activity multiple times with other pieces written in 3/4.