



CLASS ACTIVITY: BEAT TAG IN 5/4

OVERVIEW

In this activity, students will work on understanding 5/4 meter/time signature and keeping a steady beat while playing a game of tag.

SPACE CONSIDERATIONS: Students will need space to move around the room. Consider moving chairs/desks to one side of the room to create an open space.

HOW TO PLAY

Begin with modeling a 5-beat pattern by stepping right-left-right and then clapping two times. After repeating this pattern a few times, ask students how many beats they hear in the pattern. (5)

Then have students join in and model the 5-beat pattern with you. Be sure to keep the pattern steady, not letting students rush as they go. Once they have modeled the pattern in place a few times, have students try moving around the room on the right-left-right steps on beats 1, 2, and 3, but staying still on the claps on beats 4 and 5.

Once students have gotten comfortable with keeping the beat pattern at a steady pace, choose two students to be "taggers;" the rest of the students are "players." Have taggers stand to one side of the room and have the rest of the players stand to the other. When the game starts, students will step on beats 1 and 2, and stand still and clap on beats 3, 4, and 5. Step and clap along with the students as they are playing to help them keep a steady beat. When a tagger comes within range of a player, they can tag them out. Once a player is tagged out, they must exit the game. The last player left in the game wins.

Here are a few 5/4 songs for students to step and clap along to while playing:

[BRUBECK "Take Five"](#)

[BARTOK *Mikrokosmos*, vol. II, no. 48, "In Mixolydian Mode"](#)

[BRUBECK "Countdown"](#)

OPTIONAL

Repeat this activity using 3/4 meter, stepping on beat 1 and clapping on beats 2 and 3.