
ABCD MUSIC LESSONS
SOUTH LAKE TAHOE

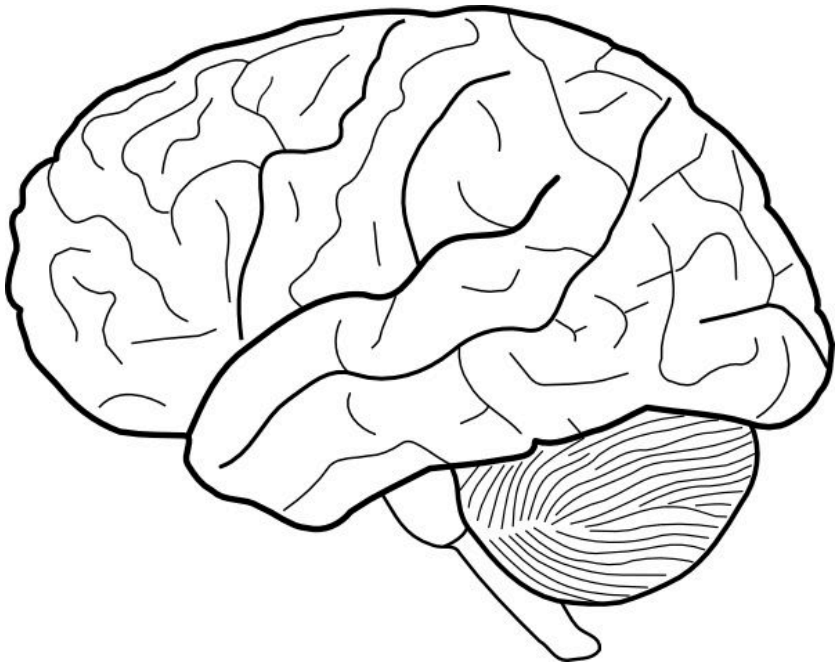
# ATTENDANCE

# Brief Introductions

- Your name
- Musical Experience
  - Beginner, Pro, Expert, Master
- One Major Goal

# CLASS A RECAP

- What are the three basic building blocks of music?



# CLASS A RECAP

- What are the three basic building blocks of music?
  - Rhythm (Horizontal)
  - Melody (Horizontal)
  - Harmony (Vertical)

# CLASS A RECAP

- We talked about what constitutes music, and what the definition of music is.
- We talked about what music theory is and how it applies to a deeper understanding and appreciation of music.
- We broke down the basic building blocks of music.
- We provided tools.

# Tools Recap

- Much like a hammer or a drill in an engineer's toolbox, music theory is simply a tool.

# Your Tool Belt (At the end of the course)

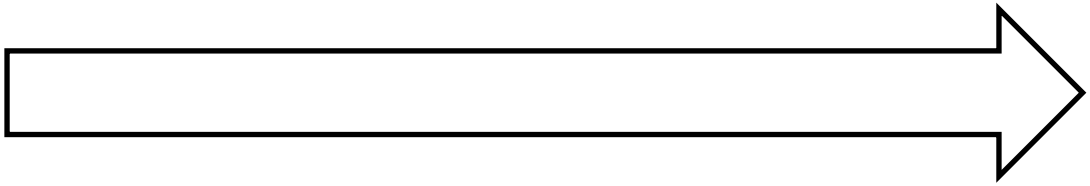
- Glossary
- Laminated Piano
- Staff Paper/Manuscript/Acronyms
- Circle of Fifths
- Key Signatures
- Scales and Modes
- Tendency Chords
- Beat Divisions Key
- Intervals
- Common Song Structures

# Class B Glossary

- Music theory frequently used terms and their definitions.
- Alphabetical Order.
- Music Theory has a lot of jargon, meaning special words that most normal humans do not use.  We will try to minimize this as much as we can for the sake of a clearer understanding.

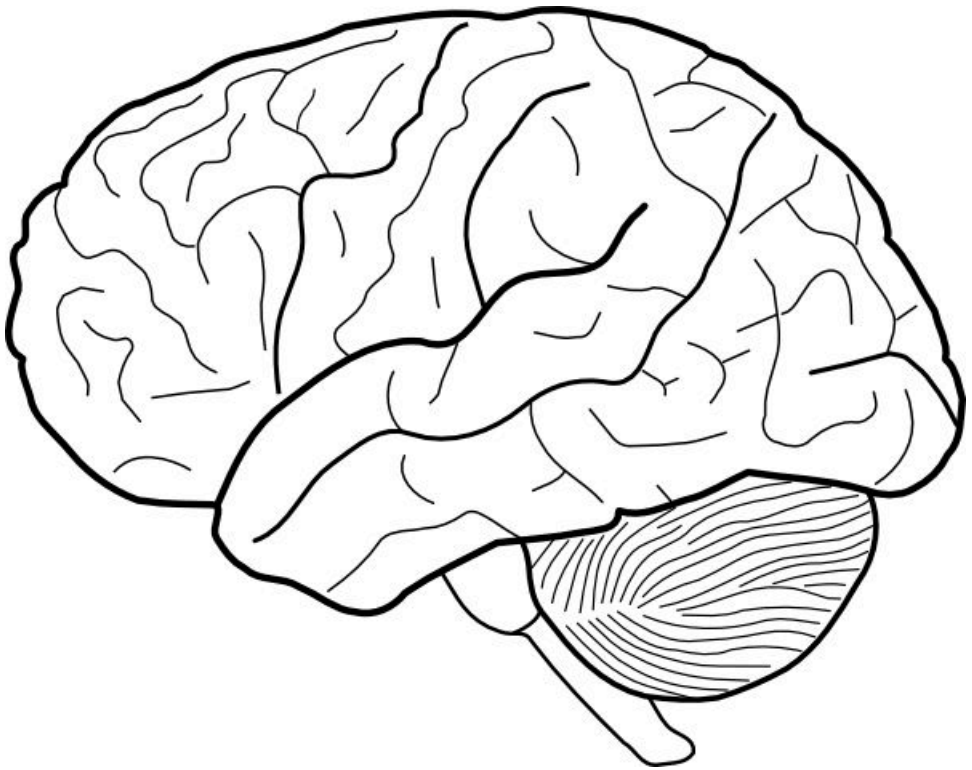
# Question of the Day

- How do we examine music from a horizontal lens?
  - When we look at music horizontally, we are seeing music as it happens in TIME



# Discussion: What is a note?

- What do you think?

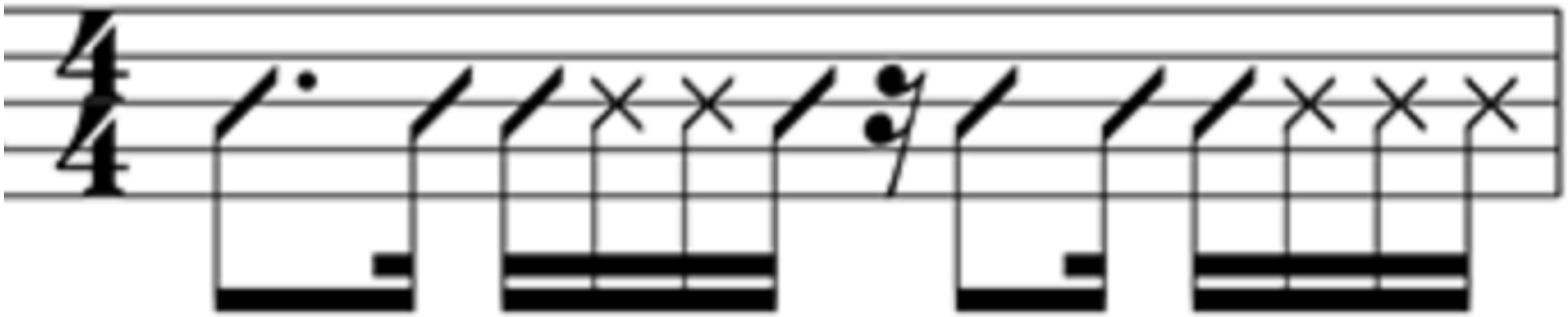


# The Official Definition of Note

- Musical Note: A representation of a musical sound.
- 2 types of notes
  - Without pitch - rhythm/time
  - With pitch - sounds played at a particular frequency (melodies, scales, arpeggios)

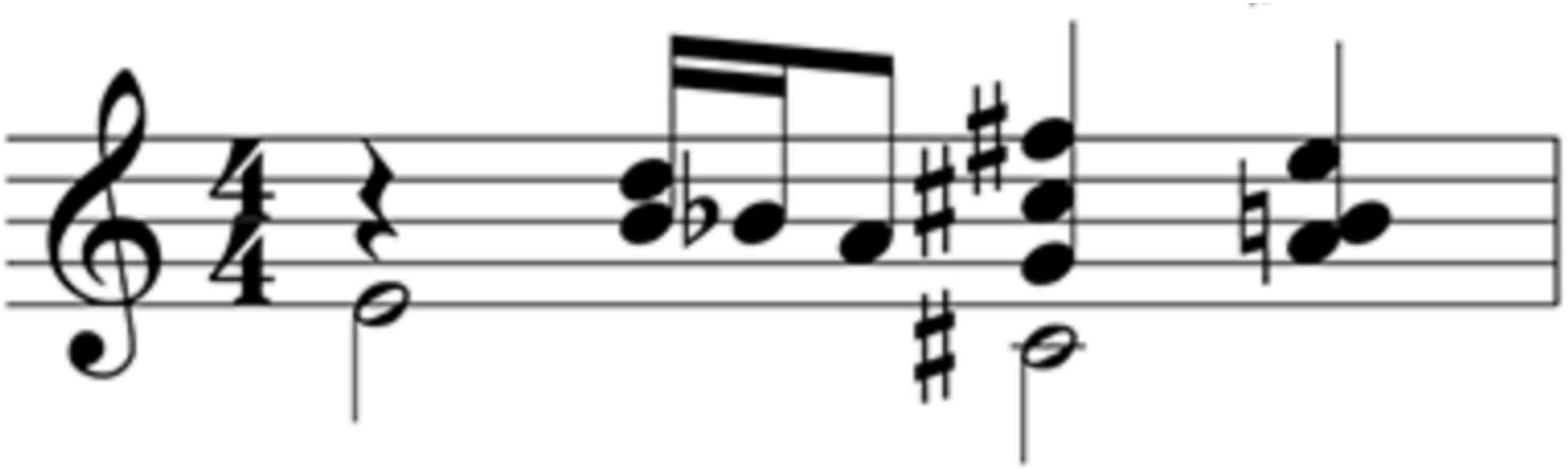
# Examples of Notes

- Notes without pitch (rhythm/in time)



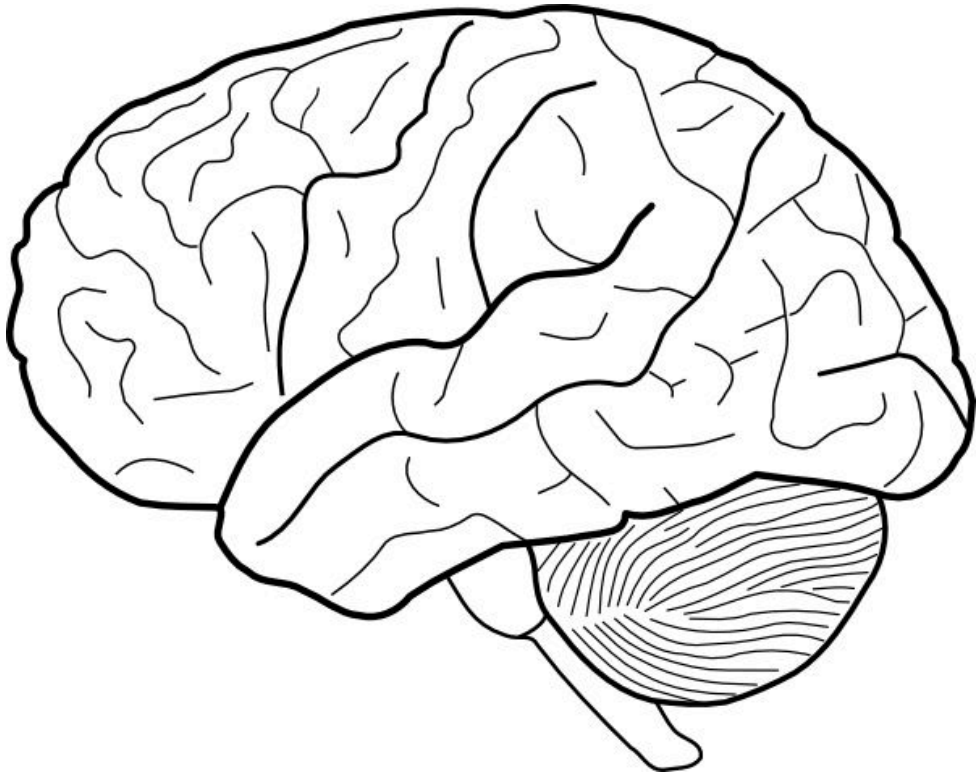
# Examples of Notes

- Notes with pitch (melody and harmony)



# Discussion: What is rhythm?

- What do you think?



# Listening Examples & Analysis

- 20th Century Fox Fanfare (4/4)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vp4s6euXbnw

- We Will Rock You – Queen (4/4)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XvKkIttJLcc

- The Blue Danube – Strauss (3/4)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IDaJ7rFg66A

- Money – Pink Floyd (7/4)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kjgwjh4H7wg

- Blue Rondo A La Turk – Dave Brubeck

  (Mixed Meter: 121212123 – 121212123
  121212123 – 123123123)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j9GgmGLPbWU

# Maybe you mentioned...

- Drums
- Percussion
- Feel
- Beat
- Groove
- Accents
- Dancing

# Why study rhythm first?

- Rhythm is the most important building block of music.
  - You can write a song without melody or harmony.
  - Rhythm dictates the overall groove or feel.
  - Based on human history, rhythm is the most primitive and earliest form of music besides vocalization.
    - Sticks and stones to make percussion.
    - String instruments were introduced much later.

# The Official Definition of Rhythm

- Rhythm: a strong, regular, repeated pattern of movement or sound.
- Not relevant to pitch.
- The systematic arrangement of musical sounds, principally according to duration and periodic stress
- Duration: how long something happens in time.

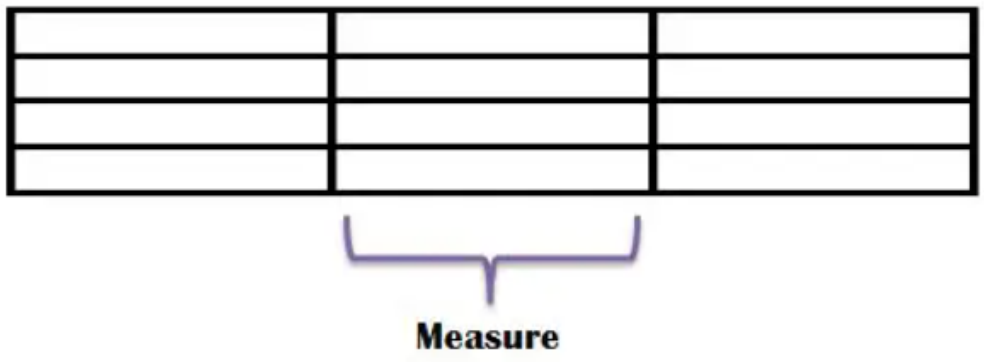
# Simplest Break-down

- Rhythm is broken down by:
  - How fast the notes are.
  - How long the notes are.
  - How many notes there are in a period of time.

# What is a beat? What is a measure?

- Beat: a regular repeating pulse that underlies a musical pattern.

- Measure: is a defined segment of time within a piece of music.



# Deeper Dive...

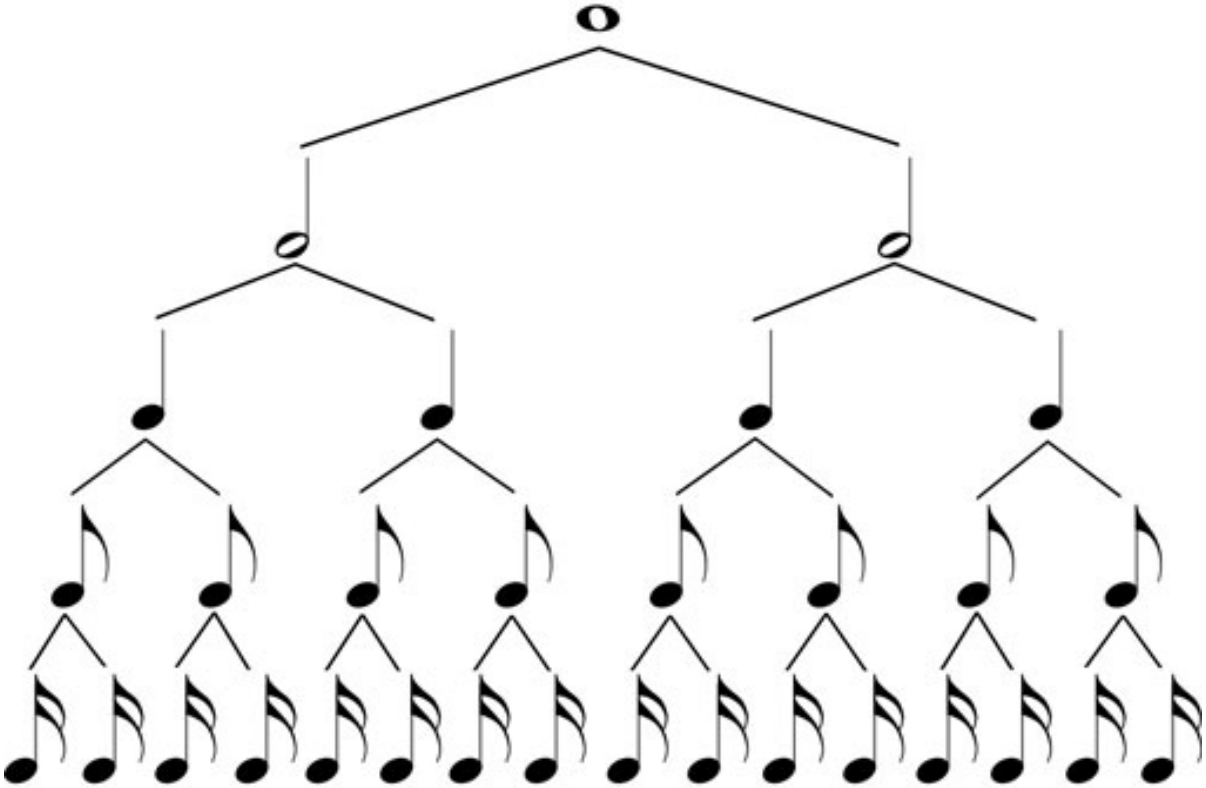
- How fast = Tempo
  - Speed in BPM (beats per minute)
- How long = Duration
  - Length of note in time
  - 1 beat? 2 beats? 17 beats?
- How many = Time Signatures/Meter
  - How many notes are in each measure of a piece of music, as well as which note value is counted as a beat.
  - 4/4, 5/4, 6/8 etc.

# Explaining Tempo

- The rate of speed of a musical piece, shown using beats per minute (BPM).
- Most common = 120 beats per minute, each beat is a quarter note.

# Explaining Duration

- Beat Divisions



# Explaining Time Signatures

- DON'T THINK OF IT AS A FRACTION

  First Number: How many beats fit into each measure.

  Second Number: The rhythmic value of each beat.

- Also called "Meter."

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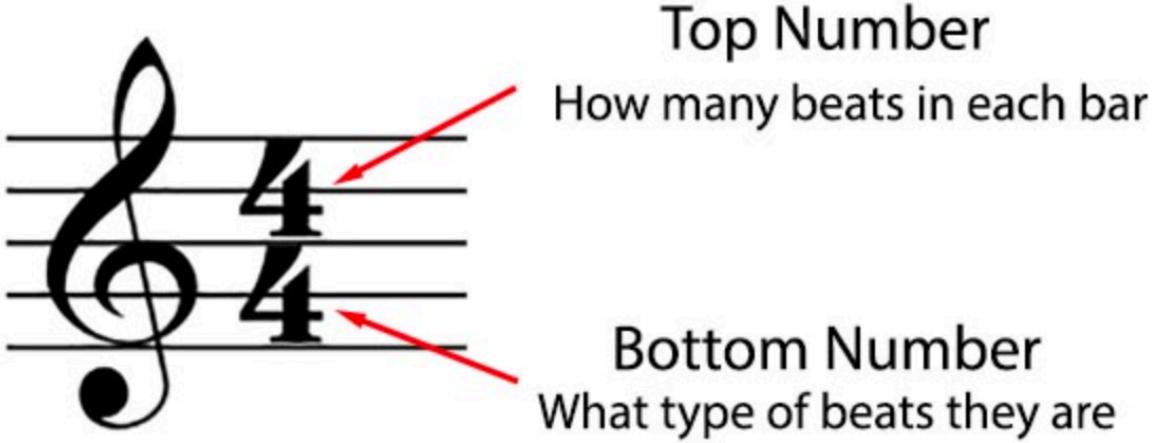
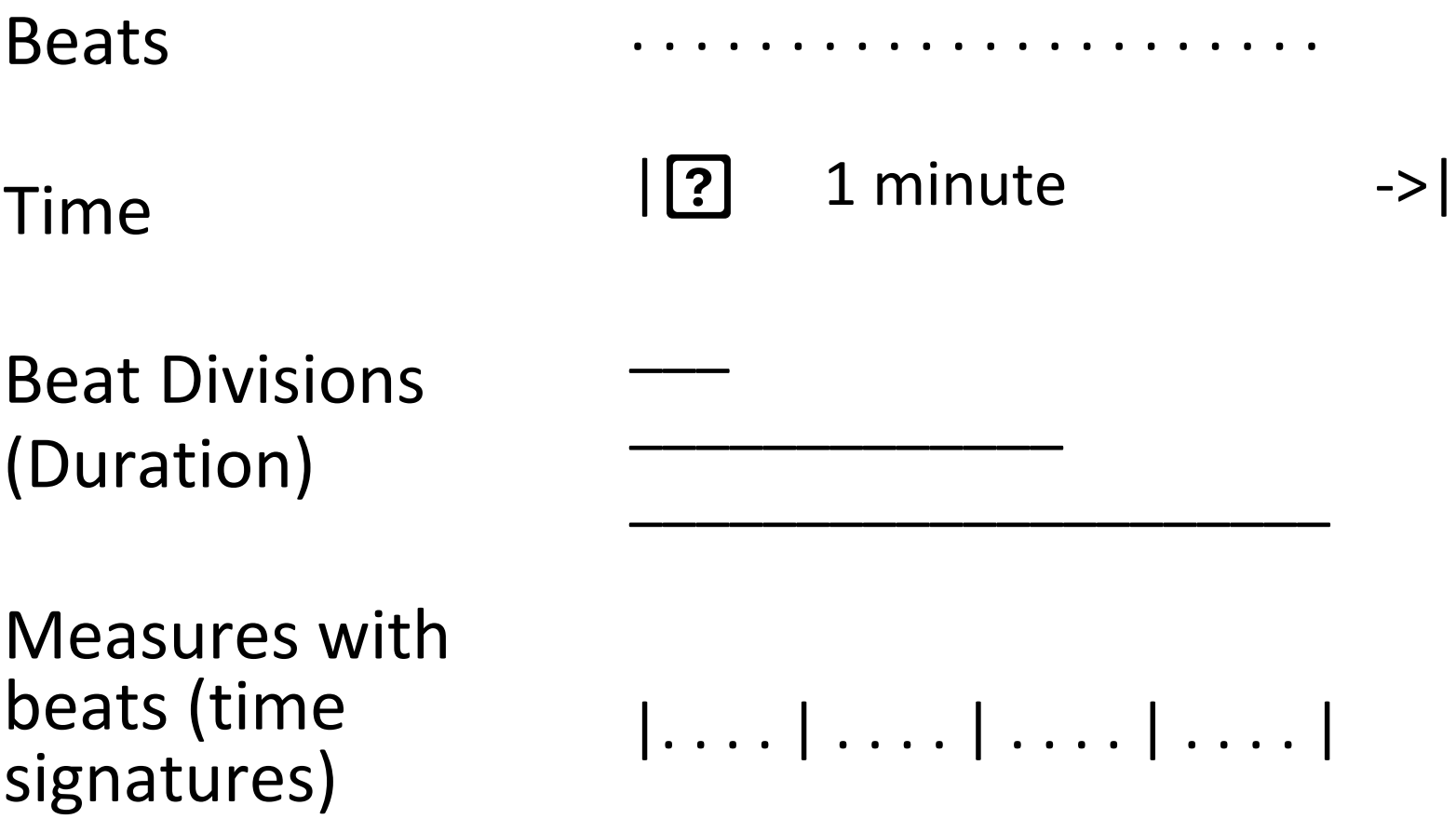



Beats
. . . . . .
Time
| ? 1 minute ->|
Beat Divisions
(Duration)
Measures with
beats (time
signatures)
|. . . . | . . . . | . . . . | . . . . |

# Clapping Exercise 1

- Accents: accenting a beat means to emphasize a beat, usually by volume (dynamics)
- Downbeat: the first beat of a measure (beat one).
- “Accenting the down beat”
- Different Time Signatures.
  - Clapping 4/4
  - Clapping ¾
  - Clapping 6/8

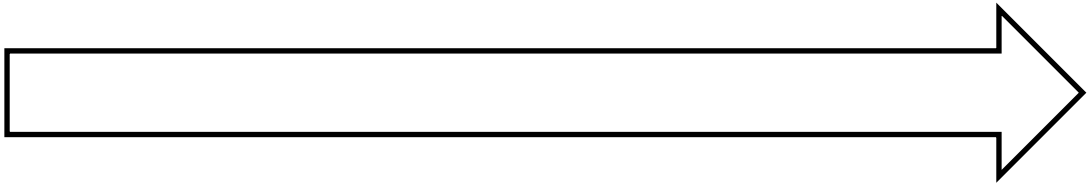
# Clapping Exercise 2

- Clapping with notation.
  - We Will Rock You

# 5-10 Minute Break!

# RECAP: QUESTION OF THE DAY

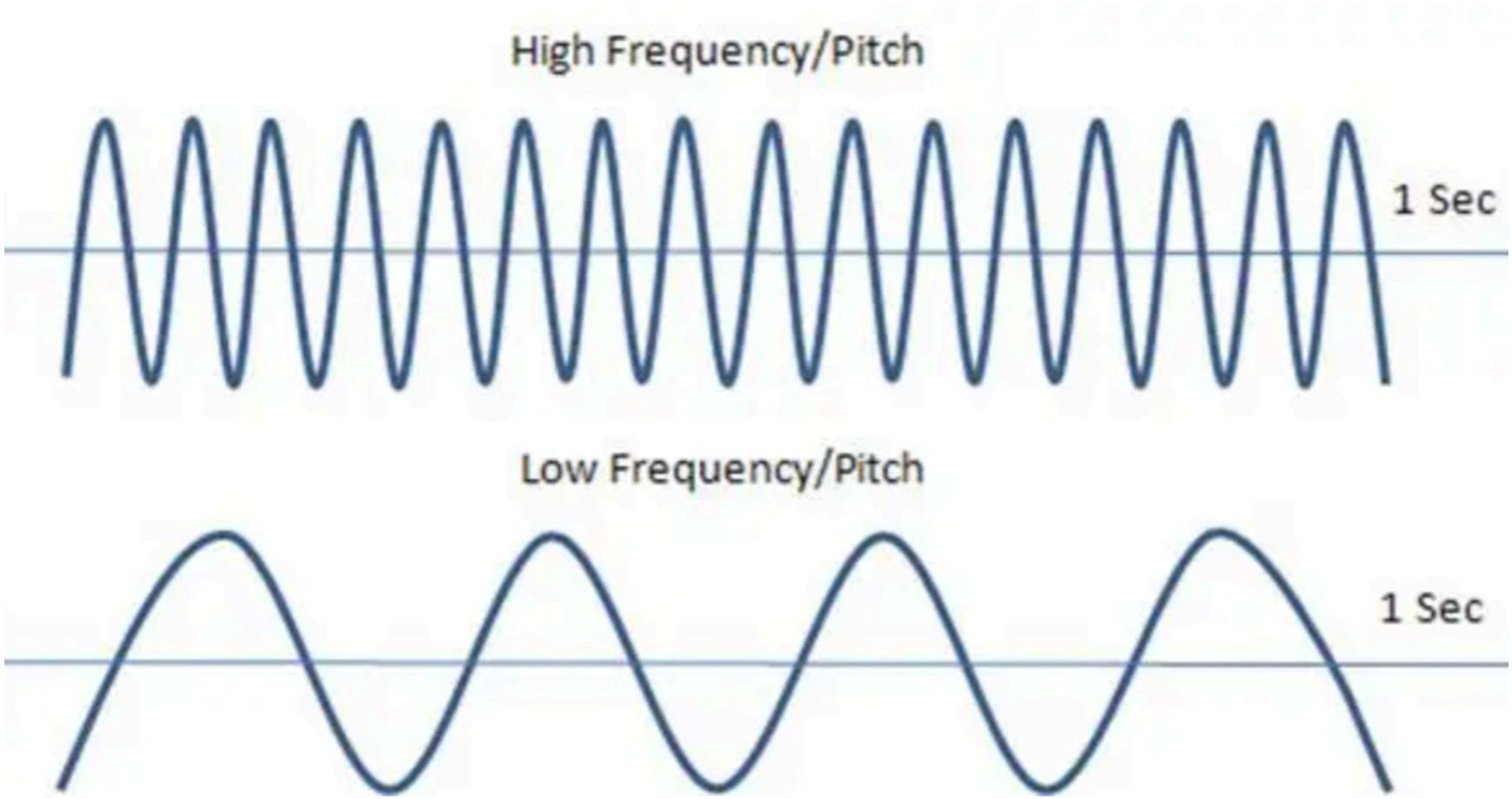
- How do we examine music from a horizontal lens?
  - When we look at music horizontally, we are seeing music as it happens in linear TIME



# What is pitch?

- Pitch is the quality of a sound governed by the rate of vibrations producing it (frequency).
- The degree of highness or lowness of a sound.
  - High frequency = high pitch
  - Low frequency = low pitch

# What is pitch?

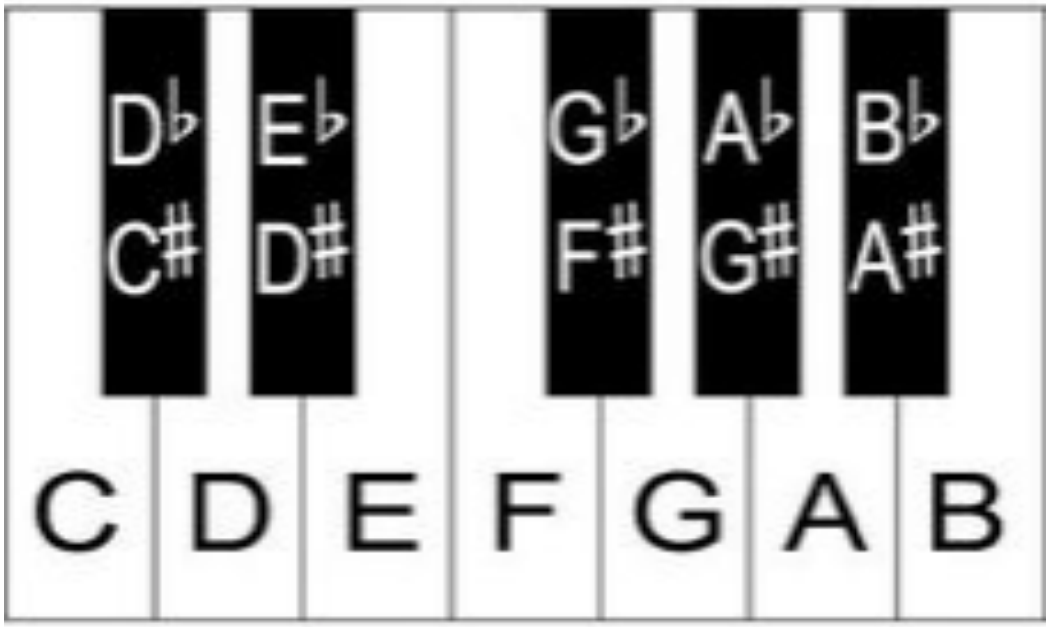


# The Octave

- The distance between one note (like C#) and the next note bearing its same name (the next C# that's either higher or lower).
- In terms of physics, an octave is the distance between one note and another note that's double its frequency.
- We have divided the octave into equal parts that create the western chromatic scale.

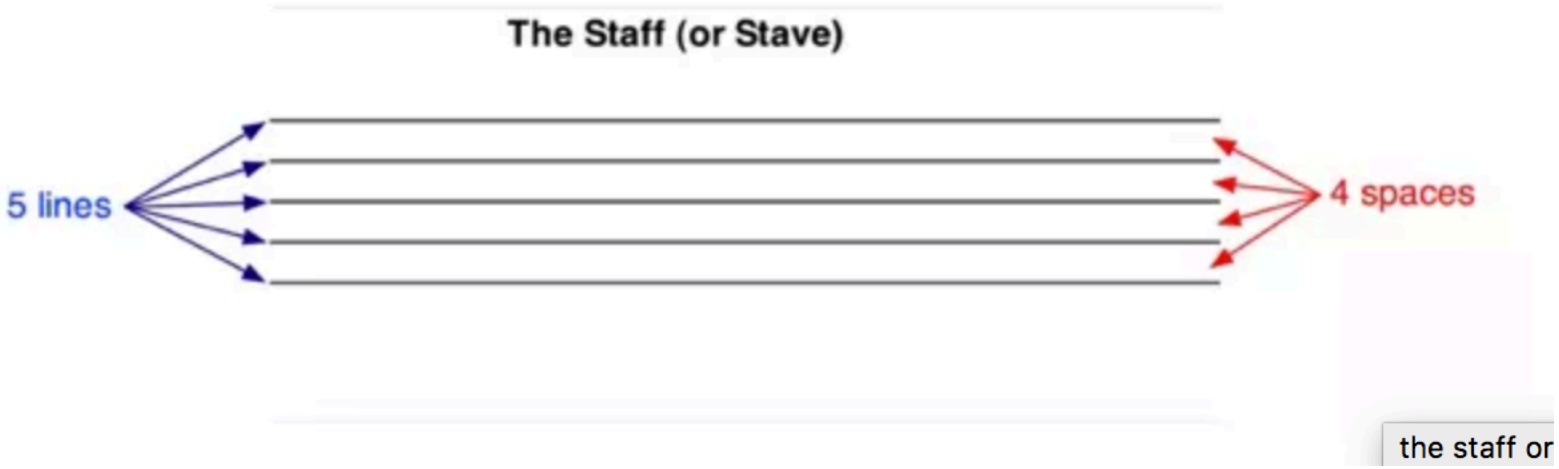
# How many notes are there?

- Infinite
- Western Music
  - 12

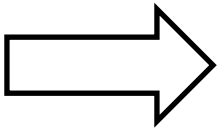


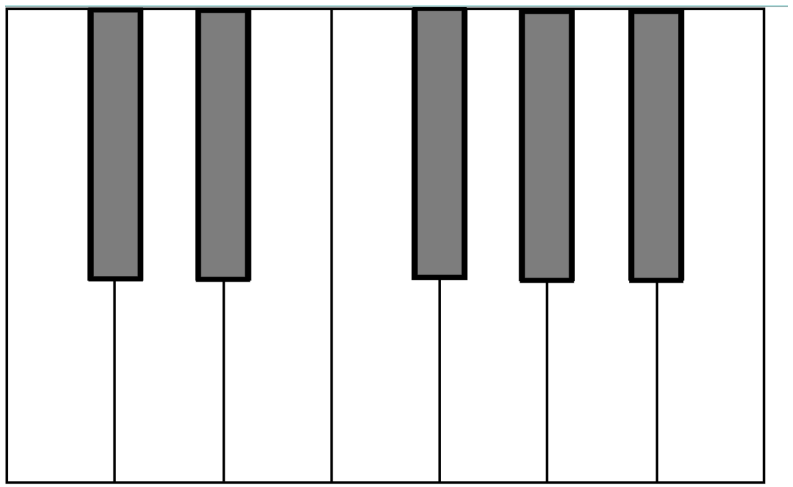
# Notation and Representation of Pitch

- The most common form of notation - the staff
- The Alphabet - A-G



- A new representation of pitch
  - Located at your seats are Jenga pieces that represent notes - a physical manifestation of a sound!
  - Place the corresponding notes on the piano laminate with your partner.



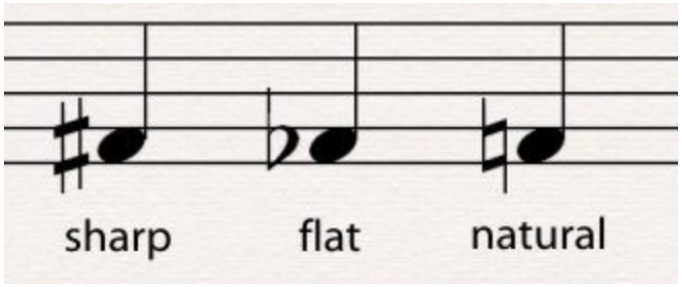
# Music is a language!

- Written music is a language much like English, Spanish, Latin, or French.
- Much like how the alphabet is the foundation of a language, notes are the foundation of the music language.
  - Like how atoms make up the universe, notes make up the three basic building blocks of music!

# The Alphabet In Music

• In the alphabet of the western music language, there are seven basic letters that determine notes and their pitches:

– A, B, C, D, E, F, G.


• Each letter that represents a note's pitch has three different modifiers that further affects it pitch:

– naturals ( ♮ ), sharps (#), and flats (b).

– F sharp, F flat, and F natural.

# Explaining Flats and Sharps

- Any time you build a scale you will use EACH of these 7 letters
  - ALWAYS!
  - Never use repeating letters! (ex: we say “C and D flat” instead of “C and C sharp”).
- The system of flats and sharps provides a modifier to the 7 core letters (notes)

# Whole Steps and Half Steps (Intervals)

- There is a grey area between our horizontal and vertical lens.

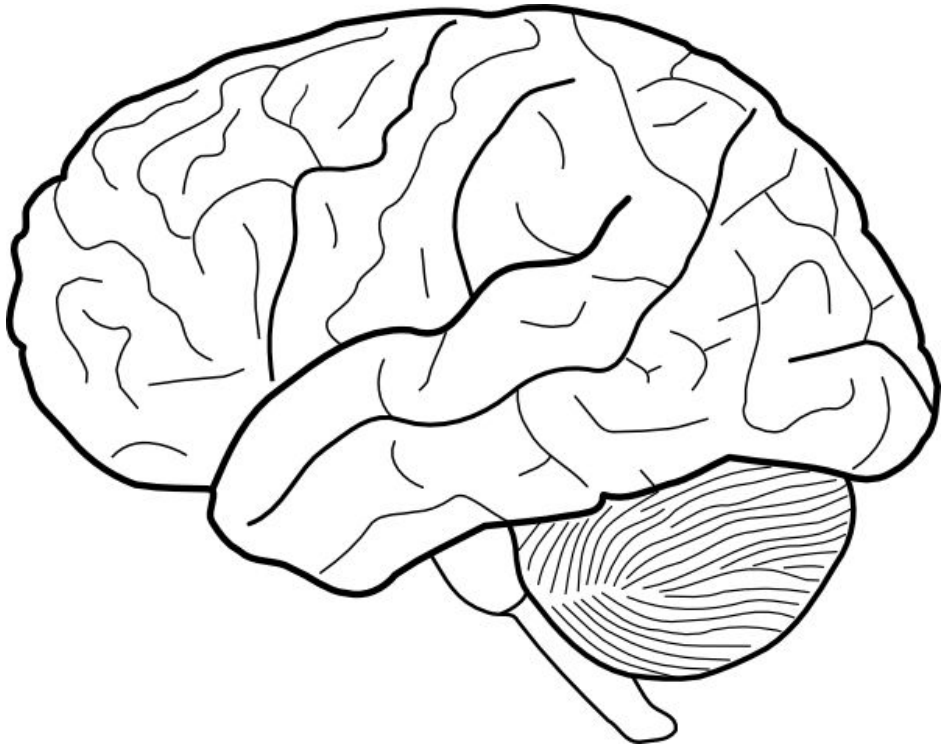

- The interval is the distance between 2 notes vertically
- But in order to understand sharps and flats within melody and scales, we have to understand intervals.
- The smallest interval is a half step.
- A whole step is equal to 2 half steps.

# Our Map

- Notes are very much like coordinates on a map in that we do not know if they are north or south unless we give them a reference point.
- To understand notes we will also need to understand scales.
- The scale is almost like a script for the note.
- It tells the note how to behave for that particular situation.
- For example, a note will behave differently in the C scale than in the D scale.

# Discussion: What is a scale?

- What do you think?



# What is a scale?

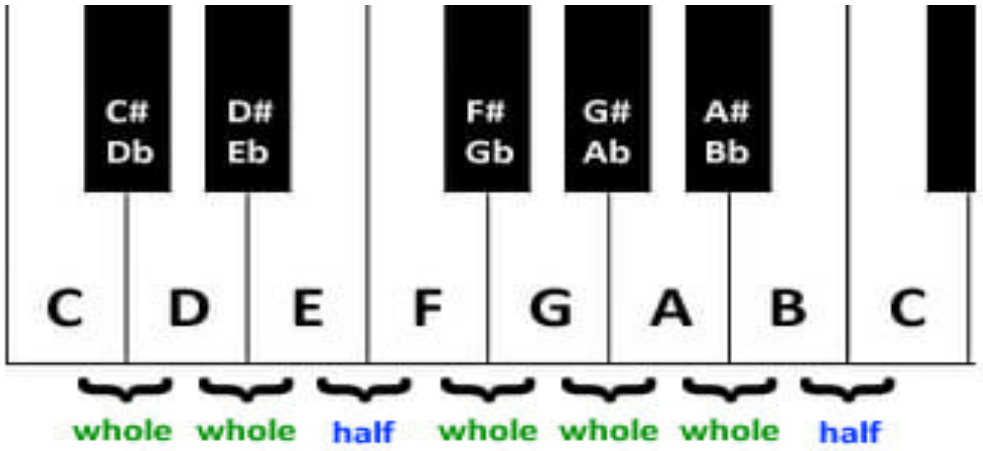
- Scale Definition:  a scale is any set of musical notes ordered by fundamental frequency or pitch
- Different than a mode.
  - A scale has a set pattern of tones or pitches whereas a mode starts and ends at different notes within a scale.
- Scales can be analyzed both horizontally and vertically:
  - They are played horizontally
  - The interval analysis is vertical

# Explaining Scales

- Chromatic
  - All 12 notes - half step etc…
- Pentatonic
  - 5 notes
- Major and Minor
  - A fixed pattern of whole steps and half steps
- Today we will stick with the major scale
  - Note: the pattern of whole steps and half steps is the same for all modes, just starting from a different place

# Creating a Major Scale

- When we create a Major scale from a particular note we follow a roadmap of whole steps and half steps.
- The Major scale, also known in modes as the Ionian scale, is laid out in this fashion: whole step, whole step, half step, whole step, whole step, whole step, half step.



# Let Us Build Horizontally!

- With your partner find the “scale time mat”
- Time and Rhythm are represented by this mat
- Pitch is represented by the wooden block
- Simply transfer the notes from the keyboard to the scale mat
- We will play or sing your wonderful creations!

# The Layout of the Piano is Perfect!

- The piano is the most linear instrument ever made
- Scales on other instruments tend to not be linear like…
  - Guitar
  - Bass
  - Trumpet
  - Sax

# Key Signatures and the Circle of Fifths

- There is a major scale for each of the 12 notes in western music
- Each consists of the letter A-G with a subcategory modifier (flats, naturals, or sharps).
- The Circle of Fifths shows the relationship between these 12 scales
  - As well as the number of flats and sharps for each scale
- For now, this is all that the circle of fifths is helpful for
  - More to come when we discuss harmony (vertical)

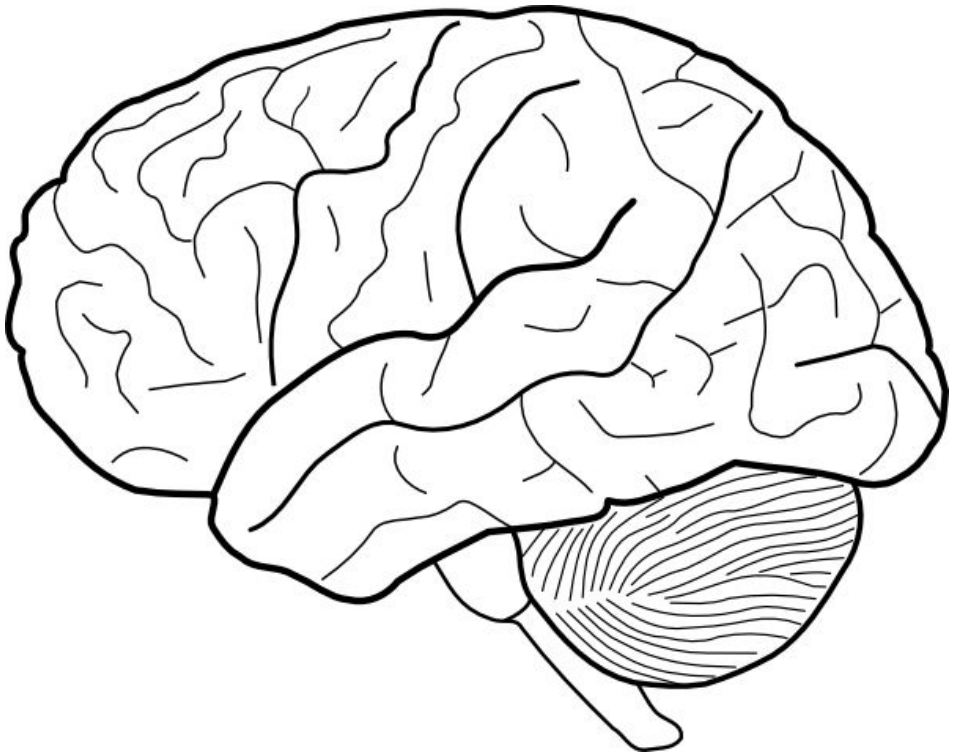
# Building Horizontally: Melody

- We arrive at the second most important building block of music: Melody.
- Just like rhythm, melody happens in linear time, and consists of notes.
- The difference? Melody is a sequence of single notes that are organized in a musically satisfying fashion, and consisting of different pitches.

# Melody Sounds Satisfying When...

- It has a beginning, middle and end (structure).
- The end feels resolved.
- Journey away from home and back to home again.
- Avoids too many repeating notes.
- Contour
- Varying pitches
- It tells a story.
- It has rhythm!

# Discussion: Is an ascending scale a melody?



# Examples of Melody

- Star Spangled Banner
  - – Almost no one ever performs the chords to this song.
  - – Play on Piano without chords
  - – Play on Piano with chords
- Mary Had A Little Lamb
  - – Play on Piano without chords
  - – Play on Piano with chords

# Perhaps the most famous

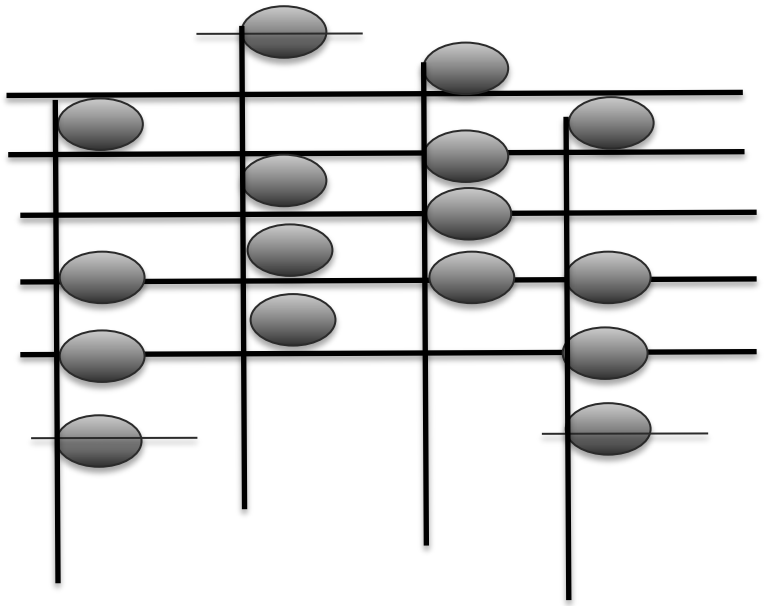
- Twinkle Twinkle
- Alphabet Song


# Building a melody: placing notes in time

- Using the twinkle twinkle mats fill in with notes
- Notice the contour of the melody on the staff above

# Simple, right? Just wait until we add harmony (the vertical lens) later!

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| E | A | G | E |
| G | C | D | G |
| E | A | B | E |
| C | F | G | C |



You must learn how to crawl before you learn how to walk!

# This is our horizontal lens!

- Discussion and allow for creation of melodies.
- Use the pitch blocks and blank time mats to create your own melodies!

Speaking of building blocks...

Remind me again what the three building blocks of music are?

MELODY – Horizontal
HARMONY – Vertical
RHYTHM – Time

There have been many changes to the way we view music, but these three core building blocks have remained consistent, regardless of culture or popularity. This is why we must study them carefully.

# Class B Recap

- We covered 2 building blocks
  - Rhythm
  - Melody
- We added two new tools for hands-on learning
  - The time mat
  - The wooden pitch blocks
- We have built a melody using pitch blocks
- And we heard them played

# Class C: Building Vertically

- Next week we will and look at music through a vertical lens
- We will stack notes and create harmony
- We will discuss chords and how to build them
- We will discuss intervals and how they define movement in music (not in time but in feeling)
- We will introduce tension and release with the cadence
- We will introduce roman numeral chord notation

# PLEASE CHECK OUT THE WEBSITE!

www.abcdmusiclessons.com

# Class Q and A

- That wraps up this second lesson!
- We hope you enjoyed it and we look forward to seeing you all again!
- Questions?
  - Feel free to ask us anything about music!
  - We will be taking questions for the next half hour.
- After Q and A, we have a couple announcements, so please stick around for 2 more minutes!

# Some Logistics:

- This power-point presentation is available online, along with Class A's presentation, in case you missed it!
- All tools are online, under the "Student Resources" tab.
- CLASS C WILL BE HELD ON November 7, 2023 FROM 3PM TO 5PM AT SOUTH OF THE NORTH.
- SAME PLACE.  SAME TIME.
- WE DON'T GIVE OUT HOMEWORK, BUT STILL, WORK HARD OUT THERE!

# Some Fun Things to Come...

- Class C will feature an Ugly Sweater Contest:
  - The person who shows up to Class C with the "best" Ugly Sweater wins a prize!
    - "Best" can mean extravagant, funny,  or hideous.
    - Please try to keep it PG13.
- After Class D and before our Master Classes begin, we will feature a Music Theory Bingo Night!
  - Date TBA
  - Test your skills by playing bingo!
  - There will also be prizes for this event too!

# OPEN MIC TONIGHT!

- @ Slice of Sierra Pizzeria
- 7:00PM – 10:00PM
- This course was planned right before each open mic so that you may apply what you just learned ASAP!
- Talk to Thomas Brandelino if you want to participate.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