

John Thompson's
Easiest Piano Course

PART ONE

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Printed in England

CHAPPELL & CO., LTD. 50, NEW BOND STREET, LONDON, W.1
THE WILLIS MUSIC CO. CINCINNATI, OHIO

CONTENTS

	PAGE		PAGE
FOREWORD	3	REVIEW —"Marching Up and Down".	20
THE KEYBOARD —Showing Middle C	4	REVIEW —"Rag-time Raggles"	21
KEYBOARD CHART	5	WORK SHEET	22
RUDIMENTS	6	NEW NOTE —G in the Bass "The Chimes"	23
MIDDLE C AS A SEMIBREVE —In the Treble "Let's Play"	8	REVIEW —"Funny Faces"	24
MIDDLE C AS A SEMIBREVE —In the Bass "Let's Play"	9	REVIEW —"Old MacDonald Had a Farm"	25
MIDDLE C IN MINIMS "Grandfather's Clock"	10	RESTS—WORK SHEET	26
MIDDLE C IN CROTCHETS "Moccasin Dance"	11	REVIEW —"Blow the Man Down".	27
WORK SHEET	12	NEW NOTE —F in the Treble "The Church Organ"	28
NEW NOTE —D in the Treble "The Train"	13	REVIEW —"Yankee Doodle"	29
NEW NOTE —B in the Bass "The Seabees"	14	REVIEW —"Carry Me Back to Old Virginny"	30
WORK SHEET	15	THE TIE —"The Old Cotton Picker"	31
TWO-FOUR —New Time Signature "March of the Gnomes"	16	NEW NOTE —G in the Treble Theme from "The New World Symphony", Dvorák	32
THREE-FOUR —The Dotted Minim "Dance of the Gnomes"	17	REVIEW —"Bugles"	33
NEW NOTE —E in the Treble "Mary Had a Little Lamb"	18	REVIEW —"Row, Row"	34
NEW NOTE —A in the Bass "The Paratrooper"	19	REVIEW —"Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen"	35
		NEW NOTE —F in the Bass "In a Rickshaw"	36
		REVIEW —"The Banjo Picker".	37
		REVIEW —"Princess Waltz"	38
		WORK SHEET	39
		CERTIFICATE	40

FOREWORD

PURPOSE

This Course is designed to present the easiest possible approach to Piano Playing.

Part One is devoted to developing fluency in *reading by note*, solving a problem that still seems to rate as "Musical Enemy, Number One" with most young students.

The Work Sheets together with the Reading Aloud Exercises, appearing frequently, afford plenty of drill even for the backward student.

SCOPE

The range covered in Part One is purposely limited. Only five notes up and five notes down from Middle C are presented and Time Values do not go beyond Crotchets. This makes it possible to include many examples in the form of Review Work and obviates the necessity of using supplementary material. In short, each book of the Course is complete in itself and contains its own Writing Exercises, Sight Reading Drills, Review Work and (in later books) Technical Studies.

ACCOMPANIMENTS

Accompaniments for teacher or parent are supplied with most of the examples. They have been carefully composed to make the little pieces sound as much as possible like fragments from larger compositions. Valuable in several ways, they not only make it possible to play in various keys, avoiding the deadly monotony of C major, but their use imposes strict Time and sharp Rhythm, especially when they are played with somewhat vigorous accents, thus helping the pupil to "feel" the rhythm from the very beginning.


GRADING

The Books in this Course do not represent any certain grade. They simply follow in proper sequence as Part One, Part Two, Part Three, etc. Nor are the Lessons measured page by page. Some pupils will master several pages per lesson—others only one. The Course progresses "Point by Point" rather than "Lesson by Lesson," and it is left to the teacher (who, after all, is the only one qualified) to decide how much or how little each pupil can absorb in one lesson.

PART TWO

Part Two proceeds from the exact point reached at the end of Part One. New Notes, Time-Values and Rudiments are presented. Technique also begins in Part Two—first in the form of simple Finger Drills and later, more extended technical figures. Part Two remains in what is generally classified as Preparatory Grade.

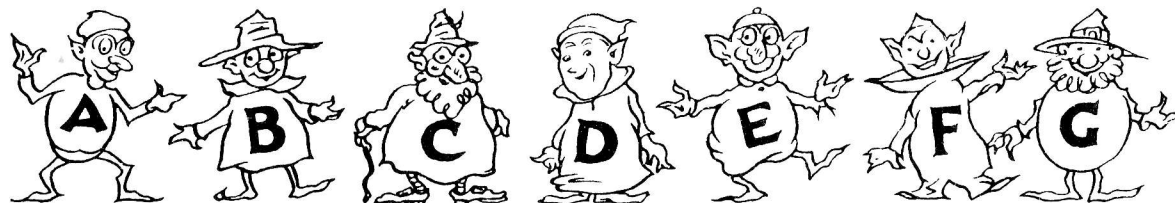
The prime objective of the entire Course is to show *how easily, thoroughly, entertainingly and musically*—rather than *how fast*—each pupil can progress.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "John Thompson". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned at the bottom right of the page.

THE PIANO KEYBOARD

There are WHITE KEYS and BLACK KEYS on the Piano Keyboard.

The WHITE KEYS are named



Recite the letters of the Musical Alphabet several times.

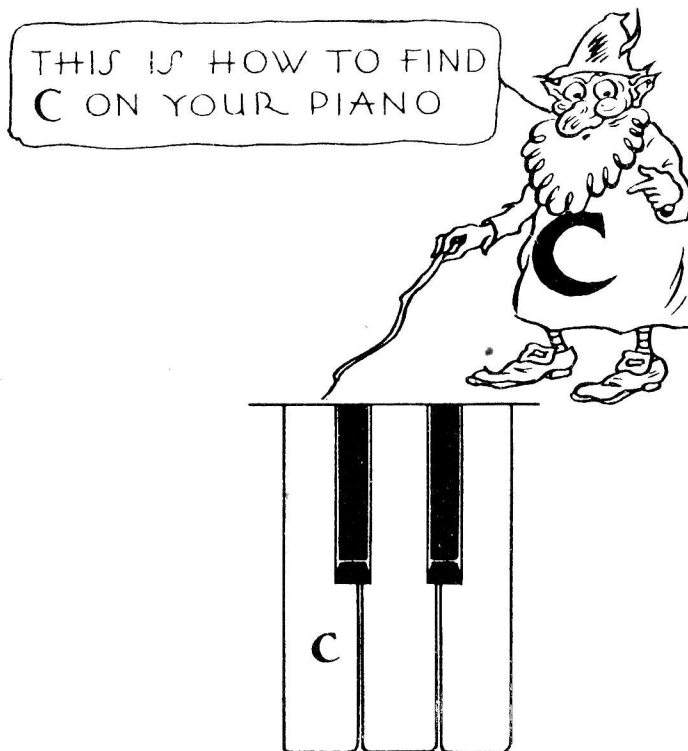
The BLACK KEYS are grouped in TWOS and THREES.

Touch all the groups of TWO BLACK KEYS on your piano.

C is found to the left of the TWO BLACK KEYS.

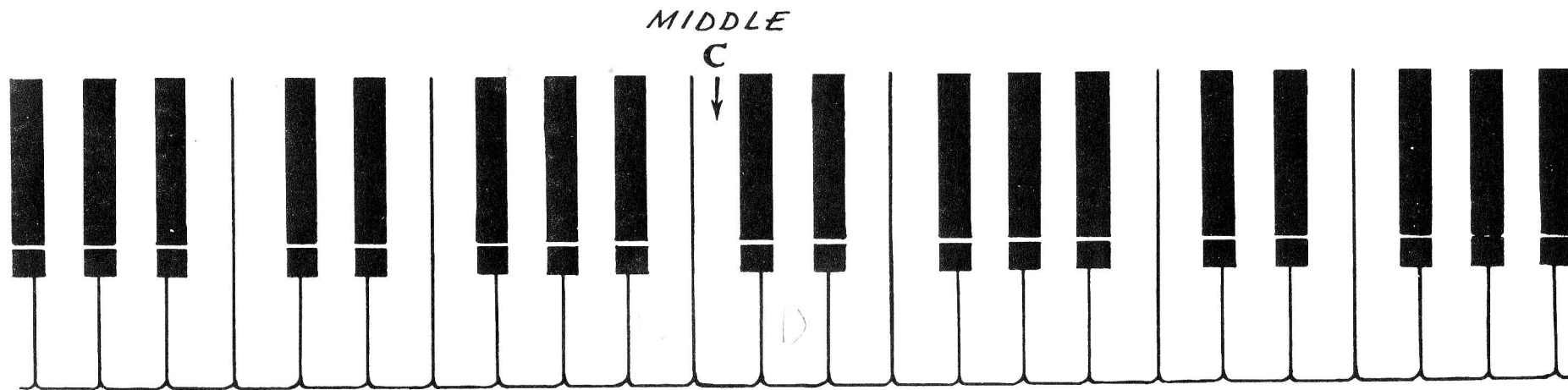
Letter all the C's you can find on the Keyboard Chart, next page.

Now, on your piano, PLAY all the C's you can find—using the thumb.



KEYBOARD CHART

(A section of the Keyboard)

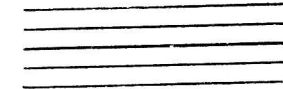


THIS IS A PICTURE OF PART OF YOUR KEYBOARD ~ AS YOU LEARN THE NAME OF EACH NEW KEY, TURN BACK TO THIS PAGE AND MARK **ALL** THE KEYS HAVING THE SAME NAME.

MIDDLE C ON THE MUSIC

Music is written on the LINES and SPACES of the STAFF.

The Staff



The NOTES on the Music tell us which KEYS to play.

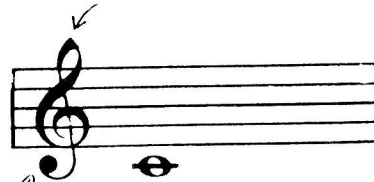
There are different kinds of Notes, but first we shall learn the SEMIBREVE.

A SEMIBREVE looks like this, ○

It is held for FOUR COUNTS.

Clef Signs

Treble Clef sign



This is how MIDDLE C looks in the Treble.

It is written as a SEMIBREVE, and gets *four counts*.

It is played by the RIGHT HAND thumb.

Play it and count FOUR.



Bass Clef sign

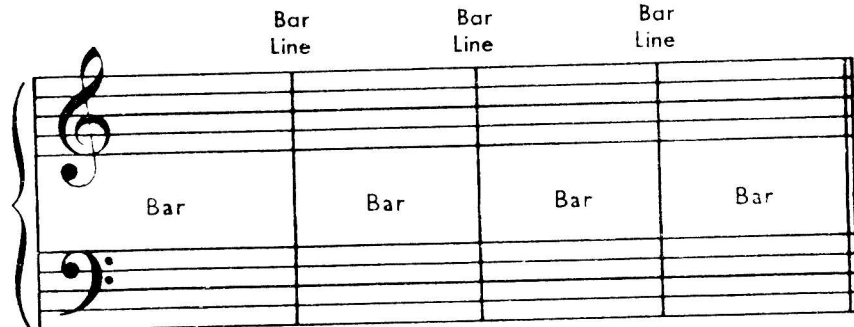
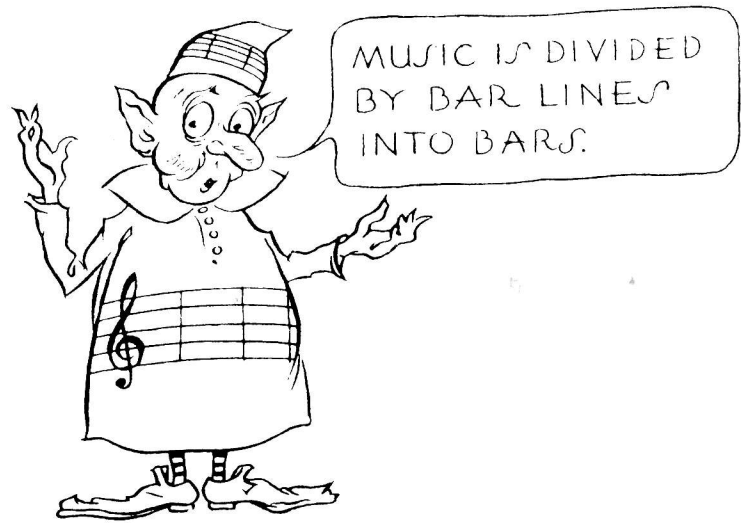
This is how MIDDLE C looks in the Bass.

Written as a SEMIBREVE, it gets *four counts*.

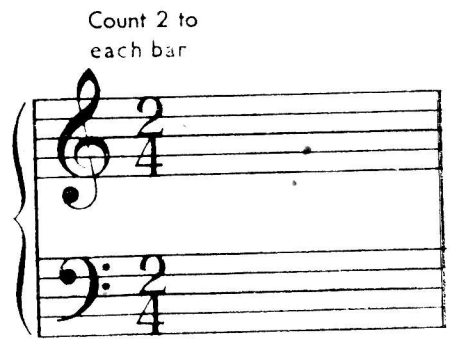
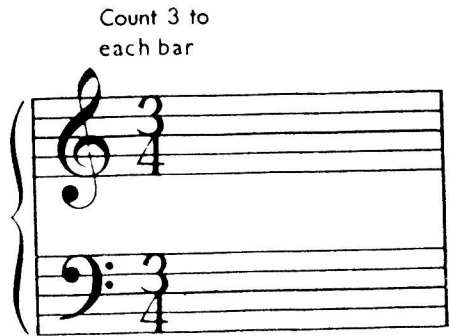
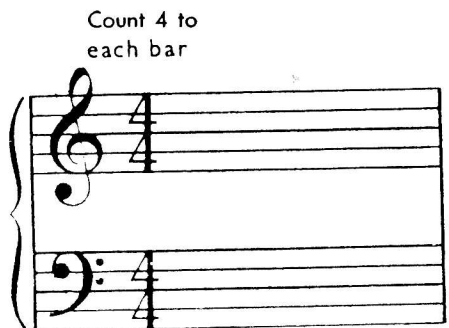
It is played by the LEFT HAND thumb.

Play it and count FOUR.





The figures after the Clef Signs tell us how to count.
 In this book we need only read the top figure.
 It shows how many counts to each bar.



Left Hand

Each finger has a number. The thumbs are number 1.

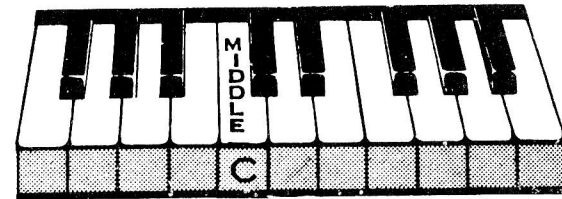


Right Hand

Middle C as a Semibreve

In the Treble

Accompaniment



PLAY WITH RIGHT HAND THUMB
 COUNT FOUR TO EACH NOTE



Let's Play

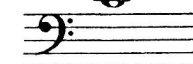
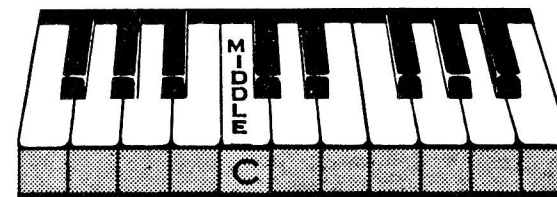
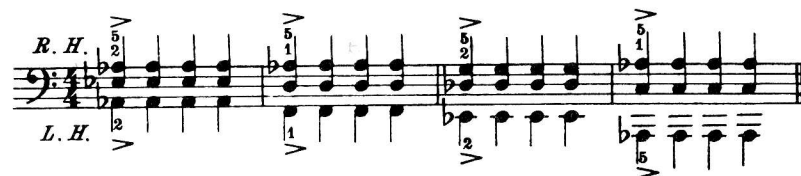
With the Right Hand

	4			
	4	⊖ 1	⊖	⊖
	4			
	4			

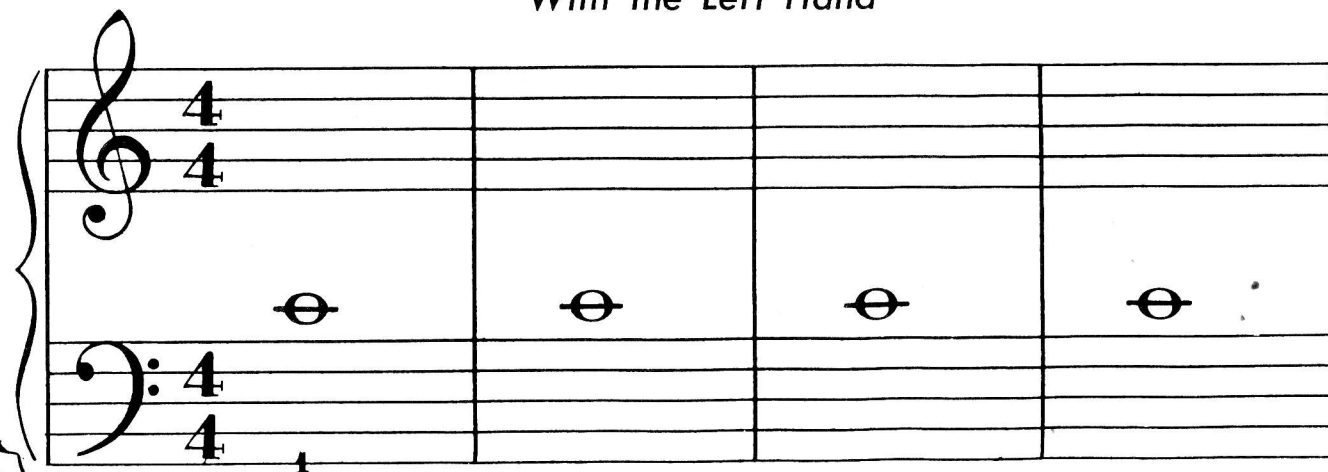
Middle C as a Semibreve

In the Bass

Accompaniment





Let's Play *With the Left Hand*



PLAY WITH
LEFT HAND THUMB,
COUNT FOUR
TO EACH NOTE

Middle C in Minims

When a Note has an open head and a stem, like this, ( or ) it is called a MINIM and gets two counts.

Play the following, counting TWO to each note—"ONE, TWO" to the first note and "THREE, FOUR" to the second note of each bar.

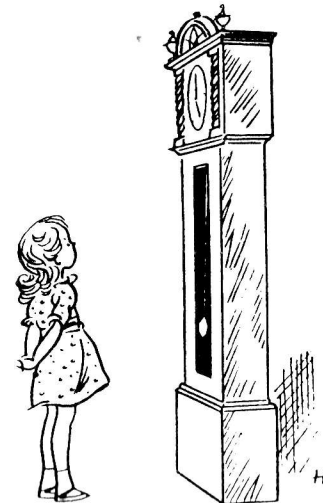


Grandfather's Clock

Count: One-Two Three-Four



Accompaniment

stacc.



Middle C in Crotchets

READ

A CROTCHET looks like this ( or ) and gets one count.



Moccasin Dance

Count: One Two Three Four



Accompaniment





Mark the Time Values of the following notes, using 1 for Crotchets, 2 for Minims and 4 for Semibreves.

1

Make Minims of the following by adding stems.
Stems Up

2

Stems Down

Change the following into Crotchets by filling in the heads and adding stems when necessary.

3

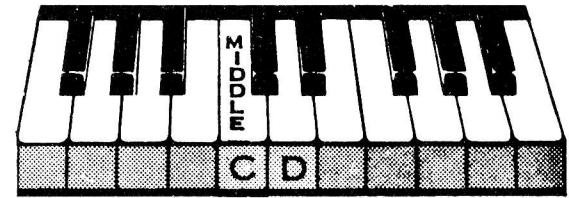
Write Middle C in each Clef.

4

Semibreve	Two Minims	Four Crotchets	Two Minims	Four Crotchets	Semibreve

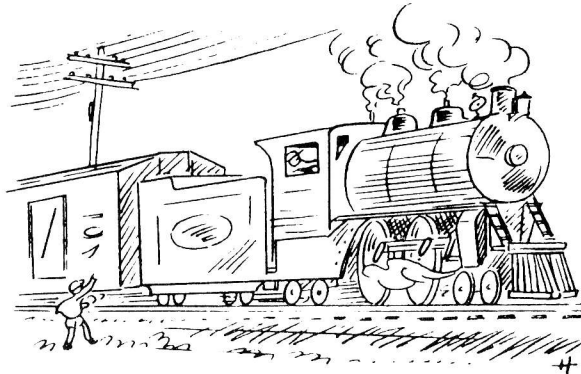
Accompaniment

Piano accompaniment notation for 'The Train'. It consists of two staves in 4/4 time. The right hand plays a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, starting with a forte (*sf*) dynamic and moving to mezzo-forte (*mf*) and mezzo-piano (*mp*). The left hand plays a steady bass line of quarter notes.



Musical notation for the right hand (R. H.) in treble clef. It shows two notes: a quarter note on middle C (fingered 1) and a quarter note on D (fingered 2). The D note is labeled as a 'New Note'.

The Train



Musical notation for 'The Train' in 4/4 time. The right hand part consists of four measures of quarter notes: C, D, C, D. A cartoon character is jumping over the notes in the second measure. The left hand part consists of four measures of quarter notes: C, C, C, C.

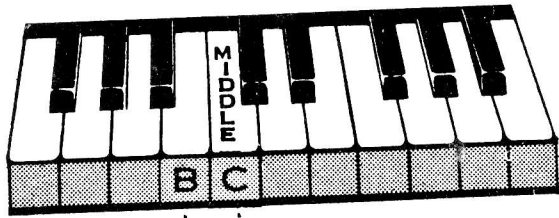
Musical notation for a piano exercise in 4/4 time. The right hand part consists of four measures of quarter notes: C, D, E, F. The left hand part consists of four measures of quarter notes: C, C, C, C.



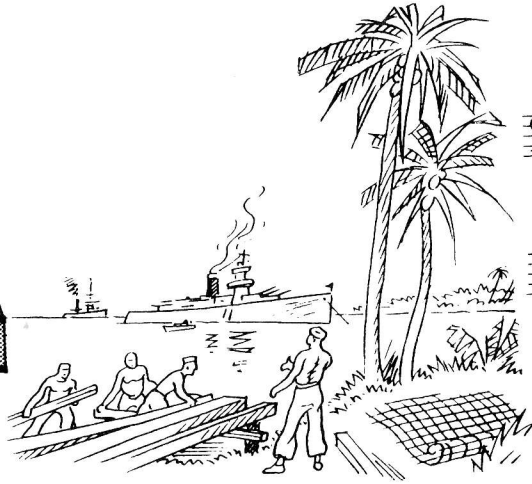
TURN TO THE WORK SHEET
ON PAGE 15 AND DO
EXERCISES 1 AND 2

Note to Teacher

From this point on, be sure to stress the importance of accenting the first count of each bar.



L. H.
New Note



Accompaniment

The Seabees



DO WRITING EXERCISES
3, 4 AND 5
ON PAGE 15

SEABÉES: A descriptive word-play on the U.S. Navy's CONSTRUCTION BATTALION who are busy as bees when tackling a difficult task.



Write the letter names under the notes.

1

Write the new note (D) as indicated.

2

Write the letter names under the notes.

3

Write the new note (B) as indicated.

4

In the following exercise, first draw the Bar Lines where they belong. (note Time Signature).

Next write the letter names of the notes.

Finally, mark the Time Values—using 1 for a Crotchet, 2 for a Minim and 4 for a Semibreve.

5

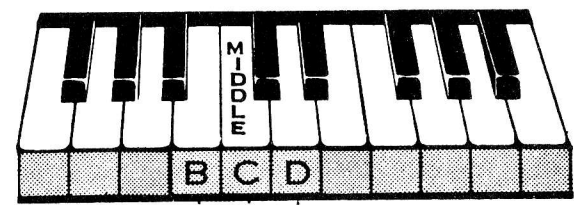
Letter Names C
Time Values 2

Handwritten notes: ✓ good ✓ good

✓ April 20th

Accompaniment

TWO-FOUR



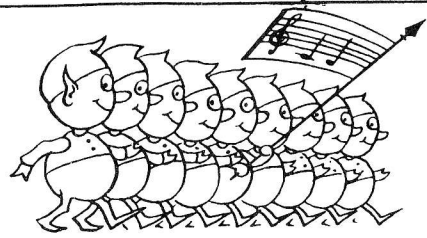
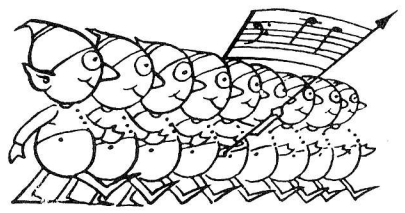
R.H. 1 2

L.H. 2 1



COUNT TWO
TO EACH
BAR.

March of the Gnomes



✓ semibreves = o = 4 counts.
minims = d = 2 counts.

crotchets = c = 1 count.

dotted minim. = 3 counts.

THREE-FOUR and The Dotted Minim

The dotted minim.

looks like this (c or c.)

and is held for 3 counts.

19/5
 Do this one
 Learn
~~the~~ carefully
 what is written
 at the top.




COUNT 3 TO
EACH BAR.

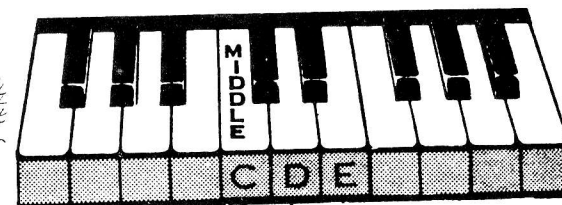
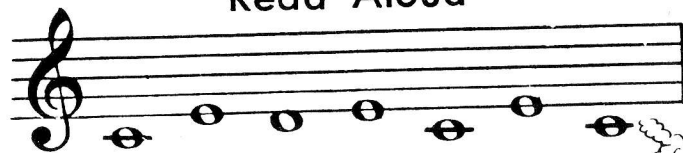
Dance of the Gnomes



DOTTED MINIM/
HOLD FOR 3 COUNTS

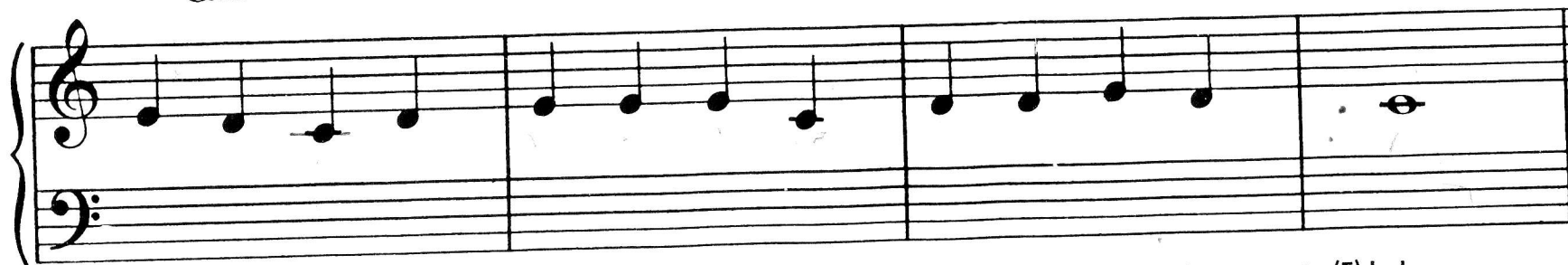
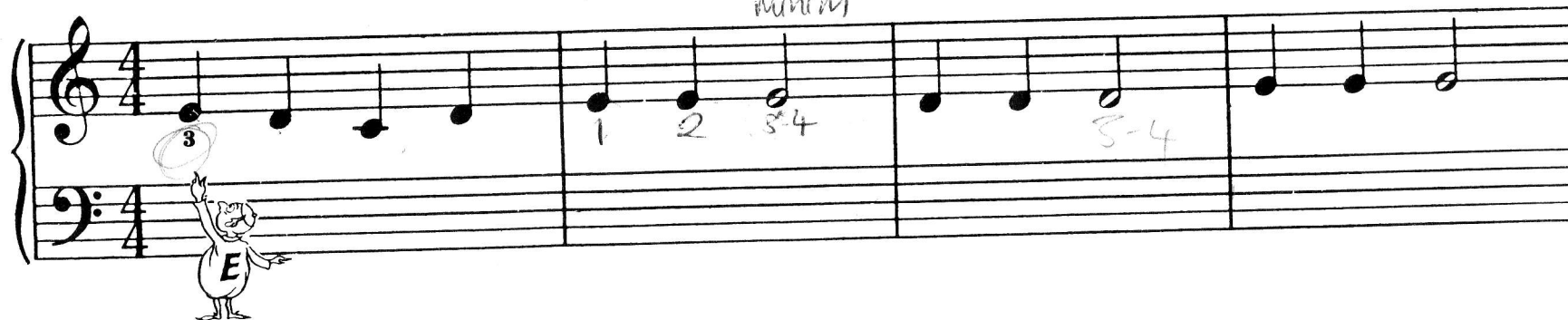
See the importance of correct counting? These are the same notes you played in "March of the Gnomes" but they make a new piece when you count 3 to each bar.

26th May 18 *Dotting are now*
Read Aloud



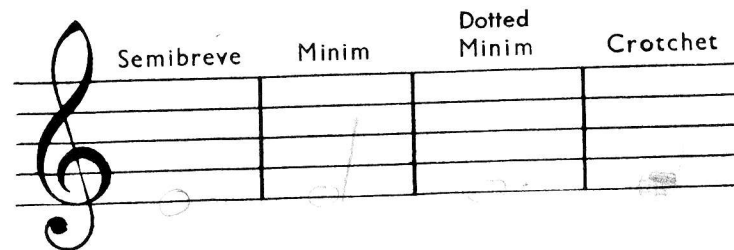
Mary Had a Little Lamb

Minim

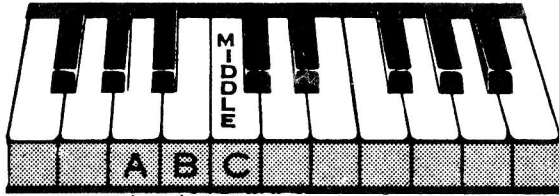


Write the new note (E) below.

Accompaniment

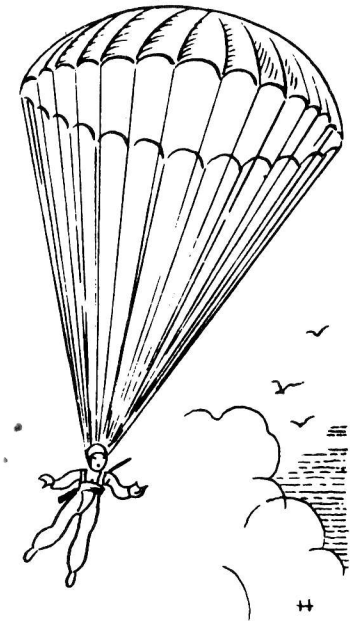


Accompaniment



New Note

The Paratrooper



Read Aloud

Write the new note (A) below.

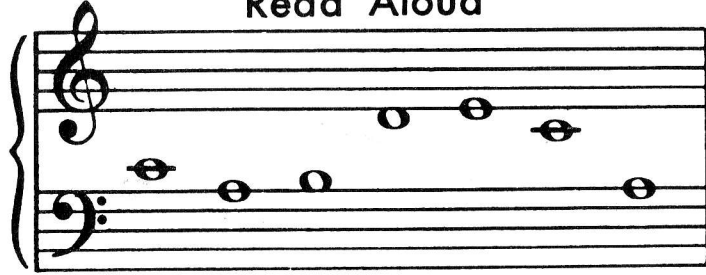
Semibreve

Minim

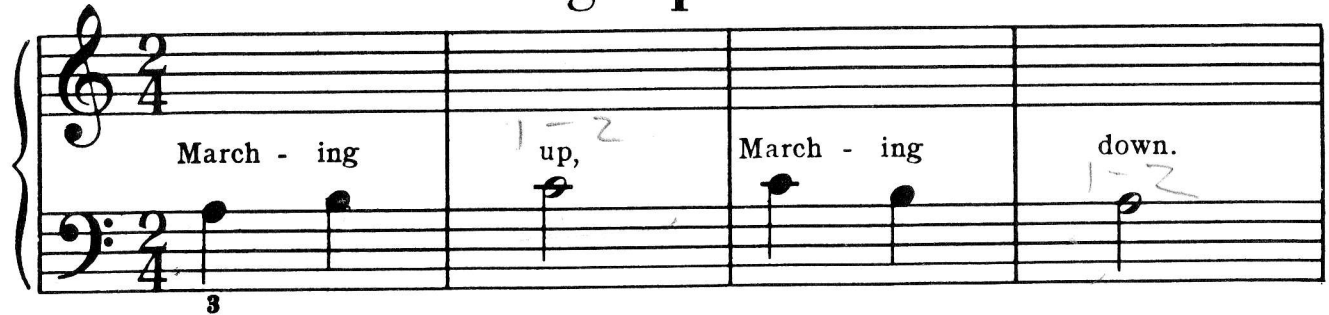
Dotted Minim

Crotchet

Read Aloud



Marching Up and Down



Accompaniment

