

Rhythm Pedagogy *for String Orchestras*

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I. Theoretical Overview

Moving from the Simple to the Complex Easily

- A. Aural introduction of Basic Rhythmic Cells
- B. Introduction Through Notation of Basic Rhythmic Cells
- C. Expand Basic Cells Immediately Through Relative Note-Value Relationships
- D. Present Closely Related Variations and Inverse Ideas
- E. Connect Basic Cells to Form Complex Rhythmic Ideas
- F. Add Ties to Complex Patterns
- G. Show How Dots Evolve from Tied Notes

II. Putting Ideas to Use in the Class Room

Practicing and Drilling

- A. Aural Call and Response Practice
- B. Using Rhythm Flash Cards for Drill
- C. Rhythm Glossary for Notation Drill
- D. Using Scales as a Vehicle for Practice
 - 1. Simple Application (All in Unison)
 - 2. Simple Echo Pattern
 - 3. Complex Patterns to Sharpen Ensemble Skills
 - 4. Interiorization Exercises

III. Continued Rhythmic Development Through Repertoire

New Materials and Their Application

- A. Reading Is the Issue!
Reading Practice. Forward/Backward
- B. Continuous Uninterrupted Flow of Information from Eye to Hands
Repertoire with Low Complexity but High Requirement for Concentration
Tic-Tac-Toe Grid
- C. Ear or Eye Hypnosis. Scanning Ahead in Music. Looking Ahead for Unexpected Changes.
- D. Fighting Aural Familiarity
- E. Interiorization Practice in Repertoire
- F. Repertoire Study in Relative Note Values
- G. Developing Confidence and Independence
Within the Orchestra and Within the Section
- H. Developing a Rhythmic Lesson from Current Repertoire
 - 1. What Is the Problem? Reading? Interiorization? Understanding?
 - 2. Make Flash Card Series/Drill
 - 3. Incorporate into Scale Warm-up
 - 4. Practice with Various Subdivisions
 - a. Different Speed, Different Subdivision
 - b. Same Speed, Different Subdivision (feel, inflection)
 - c. Interiorization Practice

Practicing Rhythms in a Group Setting

Ideas to Help Strengthen Skills/Weakness to Watch For

A. Using scales as a vehicle for practice.

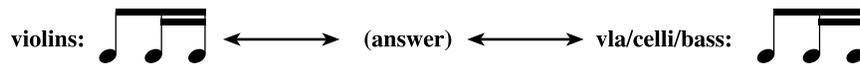
Simple application (unison)

Coordination of rhythms and the changing of notes-from easy to difficult



Simple Echo Pattern

Use any rhythm for group "call and response"



B. Reading is the Issue!

- *In performing and rehearsing pieces, the problem is often the level of reading skills*
- *Rhythms are not difficult, but students make mistakes often because of tracking*
- *Eyes must move forward, always ahead of the note being executed (See Oddities for Reading Practice. Forward/Backward music, cover up music, overhead.)*
- *Concentration!*
- *Continuous uninterrupted flow of information from eye to hands.*

C. Seeing patterns

- *Eye needs to learn to recognize groups and subset*
- *Try drilling with "Flash Cards"*



D. Looking ahead for unexpected changes: "Ear or Eye Hypnosis!" (both B & C)

- *Either because of familiarity or repeating patterns that change unexpectedly*



57 58 59 60 61



62 63 64 65 66



67 68 69 70 71



72 73 74 75 76 77



78 79 80 81 82



83 84 85 86 87



88 89 90 91 92



93 94 95 96 97 98



99 100 101 102 103 104



105 106 107 108 109 110



111 112 113 114 115



116 117 118 119 120



Evolution of the dot

Excerpt from *Treble Clef Sessions* by Livingston Gearhart (Shawnee Press)

The musical score consists of four staves, each with a treble clef and a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The first two staves are in 4/4 time, and the last two are in 6/8 time. Each staff begins with a whole rest followed by a repeat sign. The first staff is labeled 'D' and the second 'E'. The third and fourth staves are also labeled 'D' and 'E' respectively. The notation shows a progression of rhythmic patterns, with the final two staves featuring more complex eighth-note and sixteenth-note figures.

This rhythmic explanation could be simplified and presented on flash cards:

Card #1:

Card #1:

Card #2:

Card #2:

Card #3:

Card #3:

Card #4:

Card #4:

Tic-Tac-Toe Grids

Try ♩ = 60

Try ♩ = 120

Appendix

Rehearsal Suggestions for using *Scale Stuff*

Outlined below are several suggestions for group rhythm practice using *Scale Stuff*. These examples are meant as a starting point; the only limitation is one's imagination!

Simple Application

Example using Rhythm #46 (see Glossary). Uses *Scale Stuff* 1.

Example using rhythm from *Mississippi Hot Dog Agony*, bar 13.

Applications to Sharpen Ensemble Skills

Make up a simple waltz pattern. This works well with complete scale playing long notes. Uses *Scale Stuff* IV.

Good preparation for *Rhythm Antics*, uses Rhythms #13 and #14. Uses *Scale Stuff* I.

Application to Practice Interiorizing Rhythm

Simple ensemble skills. Try without conducting. Make ensemble play using only their ears. Uses *Scale Stuff* I.

Violin 2 and Viola must listen to 1sts and celli to keep ensemble ready. Uses *Scale Stuff* I.

Two forward-backward reading examples from Livingston Gearhart's *Duet Sessions* (Shawnee Press)

Canon

from the "Musical Offering"

Second player starts at the end and reads backwards.

Allegro

J. S. Bach

1 →

7

13 ← 2

f

f

Reversible Duet

*Play to the end, and without a rhythmic break, read backwards to the beginning.
Be sure to repeat the final note on the way back.*

Al Rovescio

Deciso

1

2

f

f

Forward/Backward Reading Examples
 from *Clarinet Sessions* and *Treble Clef Sessions* by Livingston Gearhart (Shawnee Press)

Minuet in M

Play as usual to the double bar; then read backwards to the beginning

Al Rovescio

Moderato

Another Contrariwise Duet

Johann Anton André (1775-1842)

Backhand

Both start together

Fast 2

first player →

9. SINFONIA ECONOMICA

after Haydn

Cover 4 parts - A, B, C, D. Optional Violin© can replace Viola C. Read to the double bar and then read from right to left, i.e., from the end to the beginning, which is now the end. Following the first tryout, there was a spontaneous explosion of laughter and "Let's play it again."

Allegro moderato

5

Violin A *p*

Violin B *p*
also Vln. ©

Viola C *p*

Cello D *p*

Bass O *p*

9

6

f

f

f

f

Excerpts from *Treble Clef Sessions* by Livingston Gearhart (Shawnee Press)

Slightly Distorted (Achtung!)

Two Versions

A $\text{♩} = 80$

B

How Come the Double Dot?

(it saves energy and ink)

A $\text{♩} = 104$

Ostinato

B thus:

C or:

Rosetta Stone I

A is for reference if needed. Having trouble with F? Play A.

A

B

C

D

E

F

Rosetta Stone II

A is for reference if needed. Having trouble with D? Play A.

A

Section A is in 2/4 time. The right hand starts with a quarter rest followed by a quarter note G4, then a quarter note A4. The left hand plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment: G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F4, G4. The melody continues with eighth-note patterns: G4-A4-B4-C5, D5-C5-B4-A4, G4-A4-B4-C5, D5-C5-B4-A4. The section ends with a repeat sign.

B

Section B is in 2/4 time. The right hand starts with a quarter rest followed by a quarter note G4, then a quarter note A4. The left hand plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment: G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F4, G4. The melody continues with eighth-note patterns: G4-A4-B4-C5, D5-C5-B4-A4, G4-A4-B4-C5, D5-C5-B4-A4. The section ends with a repeat sign.

C

Section C is in 2/4 time. The right hand starts with a quarter rest followed by a quarter note G4, then a quarter note A4. The left hand plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment: G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F4, G4. The melody continues with eighth-note patterns: G4-A4-B4-C5, D5-C5-B4-A4, G4-A4-B4-C5, D5-C5-B4-A4. The section ends with a repeat sign.

D

Section D is in 3/4 time. The right hand starts with a quarter rest followed by a quarter note G4, then a quarter note A4. The left hand plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment: G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F4, G4. The melody continues with eighth-note patterns: G4-A4-B4-C5, D5-C5-B4-A4, G4-A4-B4-C5, D5-C5-B4-A4. The section ends with a repeat sign.

E

Section E is in 3/4 time. The right hand starts with a quarter rest followed by a quarter note G4, then a quarter note A4. The left hand plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment: G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F4, G4. The melody continues with eighth-note patterns: G4-A4-B4-C5, D5-C5-B4-A4, G4-A4-B4-C5, D5-C5-B4-A4. The section ends with a repeat sign.

F

Section F is in 3/4 time. The right hand starts with a quarter rest followed by a quarter note G4, then a quarter note A4. The left hand plays a steady eighth-note accompaniment: G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F4, G4. The melody continues with eighth-note patterns: G4-A4-B4-C5, D5-C5-B4-A4, G4-A4-B4-C5, D5-C5-B4-A4. The section ends with a repeat sign.

Challenge I

How many steps can you skip?

Ostinato

Musical staff in treble clef, key of D major (two sharps), and 4/4 time. It features a sequence of eighth notes: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4. The first measure is followed by a repeat sign and a fermata over the first measure.

A

Musical staff in treble clef, key of D major, and 4/4 time. It starts with a whole rest, followed by a quarter rest, and then a sequence of eighth notes: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4. The first measure is followed by a repeat sign and a fermata over the first measure.

B

Musical staff in treble clef, key of D major, and 4/4 time. It starts with a whole rest, followed by a quarter rest, and then a sequence of eighth notes: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4. The first measure is followed by a repeat sign and a fermata over the first measure.

C

Musical staff in treble clef, key of D major, and 4/4 time. It starts with a whole rest, followed by a quarter rest, and then a sequence of eighth notes: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4. The first measure is followed by a repeat sign and a fermata over the first measure.

D

Musical staff in treble clef, key of D major, and 4/4 time. It starts with a whole rest, followed by a quarter rest, and then a sequence of eighth notes: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4. The first measure is followed by a repeat sign and a fermata over the first measure.

E

Musical staff in treble clef, key of D major, and 4/4 time. It starts with a whole rest, followed by a quarter rest, and then a sequence of eighth notes: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4. The first measure is followed by a repeat sign and a fermata over the first measure.

F

Musical staff in treble clef, key of D major, and 4/4 time. It starts with a whole rest, followed by a quarter rest, and then a sequence of eighth notes: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4. The first measure is followed by a repeat sign and a fermata over the first measure.

G

Musical staff in treble clef, key of D major, and 4/4 time. It starts with a whole rest, followed by a quarter rest, and then a sequence of eighth notes: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4. The first measure is followed by a repeat sign and a fermata over the first measure.

Two Note Tango

Musical staff in treble clef, key of D major, and 4/4 time. It features a sequence of eighth notes: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F#4, E4, D4. The first measure is followed by a repeat sign and a fermata over the first measure. An arrow above the staff points to the right.

11. Madrigal Madness

Tenderly, with expression $\text{♩} = 68$

The musical score for 'Madrigal Madness' is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The tempo is 'Tenderly, with expression' at a quarter note equal to 68 beats per minute. The score consists of four staves of music. The first staff begins with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic and features a melodic line with various articulations. The second staff starts at measure 7 with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic and includes a piano (*p*) section. The third staff continues the melody with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The fourth staff begins at measure 18 with a forte (*f*) dynamic and concludes with a ritardando (*rit.*) marking. Measure numbers 7, 11, 14, 16, 19, 20, and 21 are indicated in boxes above the notes.

12. Cross Rhythms

Variation I

(A "round" at four bars)

A With precision! $\text{♩} = 60$

The musical score for 'Cross Rhythms Variation I' is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 2/4 time signature. The tempo is 'With precision!' at a quarter note equal to 60 beats per minute. The score is divided into four sections labeled A, B, C, and D. Section A is the first four bars. Section B is a triplet of eighth notes. Section C consists of two triplet eighth notes followed by a quarter note. Section D is a sequence of eighth notes and quarter notes, including two triplet eighth notes. The score concludes with a repeat sign.

Any Kind of Note Can Get One Beat

Hymnlike ♩ = 88

A musical score for a piano in 3/4 time. The tempo is marked as 'Hymnlike' with a quarter note equal to 88 beats per minute. The score consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The melody in the treble clef starts with a quarter note, followed by eighth notes, and ends with a half note. The bass clef staff provides a simple accompaniment with quarter and eighth notes.

Bach and Hindemith (among many others) frequently write in $\frac{3}{2}$

♩ = 88

A musical score for a piano in 3/2 time. The tempo is marked as '♩ = 88'. The score consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The melody in the treble clef starts with a half note, followed by quarter notes, and ends with a half note. The bass clef staff provides a simple accompaniment with quarter and eighth notes.

Entirely common with all composers

♩ = 88

A musical score for a piano in 3/8 time. The tempo is marked as '♩ = 88'. The score consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The melody in the treble clef starts with a quarter note, followed by eighth notes, and ends with a quarter note. The bass clef staff provides a simple accompaniment with eighth notes.

Many thousands of compositions were written in this language, in early days.

♩ = 88

A musical score for a piano in 3/1 time. The tempo is marked as '♩ = 88'. The score consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The melody in the treble clef starts with a half note, followed by quarter notes, and ends with a half note. The bass clef staff provides a simple accompaniment with quarter and eighth notes.

Beethoven chose this meter for one of his slowest Adagios.

♩ = 88

A musical score for a piano in 3/16 time. The tempo is marked as '♩ = 88'. The score consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The melody in the treble clef starts with a quarter note, followed by eighth notes, and ends with a quarter note. The bass clef staff provides a simple accompaniment with eighth notes.

IV. Terra My Hair Out!

A la tango ♩ = 54

Musical score for Violin 1, Violin 2, Viola, Cello, and Bass, measures 1-5. The score is in 2/4 time with a key signature of two flats. The tempo is marked 'A la tango' with a quarter note equal to 54. The dynamics are marked *mf* for measures 3-5. The Cello part starts with *mf* and includes an *arco* marking. The Bass part includes a *f* marking and the instruction 'Play out!'.

Musical score for Violin 1, Violin 2, Viola, Cello, and Bass, measures 6-10. The dynamics are marked *mp* for measures 6-10. The word 'singing' is written above the notes in measures 7-10. The Cello part includes a *mf* marking at the end of measure 10.

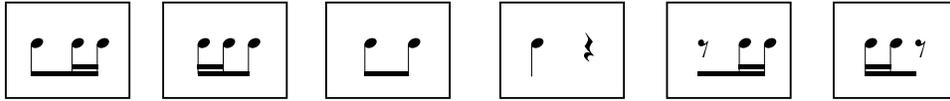
Musical score for Violin 1, Violin 2, Viola, Cello, and Bass, measures 11-15. The dynamics are marked *f* for measures 11-15. A box highlights measures 11-14 in the Violin 1 part. The Cello part includes a *f* marking at the end of measure 15.

In difficult measures, such as 13-14, try having outside players leave out ties, then have the inside players try it. This way, each stand can begin to feel the subdivision within the tie.

Developing a Rhythmic Lesson from Current Literature

1. What is the issue of difficulty? (Ex. 1: Ties, Interiorization.)

2. Developing flash card series. (Take cells from a difficult passage.)



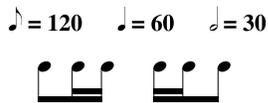
3. Drill in "train car" series. (Suggest: Mix order of cells. Develop series replacing notes with rests.)



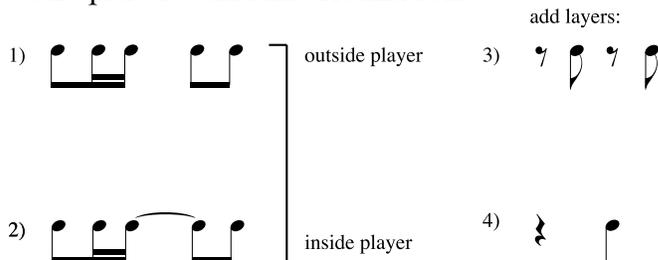
4. Play with different subdivisions. Different tempi. (Also use relative values.)



5. Play with different subdivisions. Same tempi. *Inflection*.



6. Scale practice and interiorization.



Dvorak *Serenade*: Excerpt from the last movement (Violin 1)

149

pp

155

The image shows two staves of musical notation for the Violin 1 part of Dvorak's Serenade. The first staff, starting at measure 149, contains six measures of music. The second staff, starting at measure 155, contains six measures of music. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 3/4. The music consists of eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together. The first measure of the first staff is marked with a piano-piano (*pp*) dynamic. Above the notes in both staves are small square markings with a 'V' above them, indicating bowing or vibrato instructions.

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