

How to Use Easy Rhythm Flashcards:

Easy Rhythm Flashcards help elementary students become better rhythm readers. Many of the rhythms are derived from familiar songs. Some Ways to Use the Flashcards are suggested here. There are many possibilities!

Easy rhythm flashcards use the following note values: ♪ ♪♪ ♪♪♪♪ ♪♪♪ ♪♪♪ ♪ - ○ These are the rhythms that you will need for students that are beginning rhythm reading in grades K-4. If you need more advanced rhythms, use "Rhythm Flashcards" which has 100 color coded flashcards, sequenced for use in grade 1-8.

Cut the flashcards in half before using. Laminate them if you can, but they will be durable even without laminating.

1. Teaching and practicing new rhythms: Use these flashcards to teach rhythms. It is easiest for children to say the rhythms using time names. When they know them well, have them clap them or play them on rhythm instruments. The rhythm reading syllables that I use are: ♪ = ta ♪♪ = ti-ti ♪♪♪♪ = ti-ka-ti-ka ♪♪♪ = ti-ti-ka ♪♪♪ = ti-ka-ti ♪ = two-oo ○ = fo-o-o-our This system has been effective for my students - you can use any counting system with the flashcards.

2. Disappearing Flashcards: Show the flash card on beat one, then put it face down until they have said it, clapped it or played it. Flash the next card on beat one of the next bar, then put it face down until they have completed it. This helps to develop reading ability as the children have to read the entire card very quickly. Establish a steady tempo, and encourage the children to maintain the tempo. They will tend to rush.

3. Which flashcard did I clap? Choose four flashcards and put them on a chalkboard ledge. Clap one of them. Ask them to identify which flash card was clapped.

4. The Price is Right! Choose four flashcards and put them on a chalkboard ledge or on music stands in the wrong order. Sing or play them in the correct order and invite kids to "Come on Down" and put them in the correct order. If they get them right, ring a bell.

5. Rhythm dictation: Clap or play the pattern to them. They notate the pattern using toothpicks, popsicle sticks or pencil and paper. Hold up the flashcard for them to check answers.

6. Rhythm Bingo - 16 flashcards allow enough variations to make a rhythm bingo game. Make a class set of bingo cards with different combinations of 6 rhythms on each one. Make counters by cutting small squares out of construction paper. Shuffle the flashcards, choose the top one and clap it. If your students are inexperienced, show them the flashcard to check if they have it on their card. More advanced students should have to pick out the correct rhythm without seeing the flashcard. With 6 rhythms per bingo card, you can have games that require the students to complete the top row, the bottom row, all the corners or a blackout.

7. Playing practice: Use the flashcards for rhythm playing practice on recorders or other melody instruments. Assign a note (Concert Bb for band instruments or G on recorder) and have students play the cards.

8. Ostinato: choose one card to be an ostinato. Have one group in your class perform the ostinato while the rest of the class performs 4-8 cards.

9. Rhythm canons: Choose four or eight cards and put them on a chalkboard ledge. Divide the class into two groups. Have group one begin first. After one or two cards have the second group begin. Try beginning the canon at different entry points - After one, two, three or four cards. A variation of this would be to divide the class into two groups. Have one group read the flashcards as you show them. The other group would echo what the readers clap.

10. Clap and Pat: When using Cards 1-30 ask the children to put ta's on their legs, and clap the ti-tis. Try this with instruments. Example: Play the ♪♪ on rhythm sticks and the ♪ on hand drums.

11. Flashcard Turnover: Arrange four cards on two music stands and have the children say them in order. Ask them to put the rhythm of one card 'inside their head'. Then turn that card over. Have the children say all 4 rhythms again, including the one that is turned over. (They do that one from memory) Continue turning cards over one at a time until the children have all 4 cards memorized. This is an excellent way to extend memory skills!

12. Turnover Mixup: Begin this activity in the same way as activity 11. When the children have all four cards memorized, switch two cards and ask them to say the rhythms in the new order. It sounds impossible, but I've had grade two students who could do this! If I have a good class, I might switch the cards a second time. After they have said the pattern in the new order I ask if anyone can remember the way that the cards were to begin with. This activity is fun, challenging and an excellent way to extend thinking skills!

13. Turn the Cards upside down. This helps the children get used to stems going in either direction.

14. Assessment: Use the flash cards for testing children individually. Choose the patterns that you want to assess and hold up for individual students to see and say to you.

15. Another Assessment Idea: Hand out the cards that you want to assess face down on the children's desk so that only the child who has the card knows what is on it. Have the child clap the pattern and have the class tell what the rhythm is. This requires the child clapping to be accurate, and the class to know the patterns well.

16. Choose three or four different patterns and use them as a rhythm performance piece. For example:

12.	♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪	drum
4.	♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪	shaker
11.	♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪	claves
13.	♪ ♪ ♪ ♪	triangle

Have the drums repeat their pattern at least 4 times alone, then continue. Add the shakers, repeating their pattern 4 times, then have them continue. Add the claves, repeating their pattern. Add the triangle part and have all instruments play together before having the instruments end together, or drop out one at a time. This activity helps children to develop independence of parts and can be successful with children as young as first grade. It is a favorite activity for all grades! This activity is equally successful with body percussion. You can choose any rhythms that you want to reinforce.

17. Name that Tune! Choose four or five songs from the flashcard list that your students know well and write the titles on the board. Show the flashcards in random order and have your students match the flashcard to the title.

2.	♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪	Rain Rain
4.	♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪	Old MacDonald
7.	♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪	Pease Porridge Hot
12.	♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪	Hot Cross Buns

This can be an assessment activity as well. Write the song titles on the chalkboard, including at least one extra title. Show the flashcards in random order. Then the students write down the song title that matches each flashcard.

18. Play along: Choose a piece of music with a moderate steady tempo. Choose 4 rhythm cards that have the same time signature as the music. Have the children play the 4 measure pattern with the music. They can play the rhythms using body percussion or instruments.

19. What pattern did we clap? Divide the class in half. Show half of the class the rhythm card and have them clap it. The other half of the class has to say the rhythm.

Themes & Variations

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