

# ***Using Classical Music To Teach Beat, Meter and Form***



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# Beat Movement Ideas

## Preschool through Early Elementary

Three to seven year olds should begin experiencing on the *First Steps in Classical Music: Keeping the Beat* CD with the activities suggested for toddlers. When they are successful maintaining beat motions when the beat is grouped in twos (duple meter) and threes (triple meter), try the following:

When music is in duple meter tap two times on one leg and chant “here” and then tap two times on the other leg and chant “there”. Continue alternating between “here” and “there”. When the music is in triple meter chant “here” for every three taps and “there” for every three taps. When the children are able to maintain the beat and alternate between “here” and “there” stop chanting the words.

Try tapping on the following parts of the body with both hands tapping in one location (“here”) and then both hands tapping in a different location (“there”).

Later try to alternate between “here” and “there” while you tap two or three times with one hand and then two or three times with the other hand.

Back of Hand – Forearm – Shoulder – Head – Neck – Cheek – Nose – Elbow – Chest – Tummy – Hip – Bottom – Thigh – Knee – Calf – Foot

Also try performing the following motions two times “here” and two times “there” when the music is in duple meter, and performing the motions three times “here” and three times “there” when the music is in triple meter.

- 1) Flap both hands to one side then the other
- 2) Flap one hand and then the other
- 3) Shake head “yes” looking to one side then the other
- 4) Knock with both fists on an imaginary door in one place then another
- 5) Knock on an imaginary door with one fist and then the other
- 6) Twist to one side and bounce one more time then twist the other way and bounce one more time
- 7) Shrug one shoulder and then the other
- 8) Point to something with one hand and then the other
- 9) Push out front and push above your head
- 10) Push one hand above your head and then the other

Ask individual children to demonstrate a “here” and “there” and have other children imitate the motions.

Distribute rhythm instruments and ask children to discover two different ways to play them. Have children alternate between “here” and “there”.

***Oh, Dear, What Can the Meter Be?*** – Play various selections from *First Steps in Classical Music: Keeping the Beat* CD and randomly have the children discover “here” and “there” by performing motions and ask them to decide if the music is in duple or triple meter.

# Beat Movement Ideas

## Middle through Upper Elementary

Children of this age should be able to perform the activities suggested for the toddlers and the early elementary children before attempting the following. If they are ready, the following activities are a great way to continue developing beat proficiency while experiencing the wonderful world of classical music.

### Stationary

- *Follow the leader* – Lead the class in motions as described in the Preschool to Early Elementary section. Have individual children take turns being the leader.
- *Two Plus Two* – Lead the class in motions where one “here” and “there” is paired with another “here and “there.” Perform these four motions as a set.
- *Prop Dancing* - Have children imitate the leader’s motions while holding props such as streamers, balloons, paper plates.
- *Fudge* – Perform some motion(s) for the children. Ask them only to watch but not to do the motion until you say “fudge.” As you say “fudge” and they begin doing the motion, you switch to another motion. Tell them to be sure to do the motion you were doing not the motion you are currently doing. Alternate between simple and complex motions.
- *Conducting patterns* – Learn to conduct the music (usually with the right hand). Start with your hand up about head level. The duple meter music (simple duple and compound duple) is conducted by lowering the hand on “1” and making one bounce returning it back to the up position on “2.” The triple meter music is conducted by lowering your hand on “1” and making one bounce to the right on “2” and one more bounce back to the up position on “3.”

## Traveling

- *Walk and Stop* – While a selection from the CD is playing move around the room in a circle. It is not necessary to remain in single file and one child may pass another child while moving around in the circle.

Alternate sections of walking with sections of stopping.

During the sections of **walking** try

- walking
- walking on tiptoes
- walking with toes pointed in
- walking with toes pointed out
- walking on heels
- walking with hands touching the floor
- walking backwards
- walking side-step-side-step

When the music is in triple meter try one of these steps:

- Wedding step* – Step forward on “1” and bring the other foot together on “2” and hold for “3.” Begin again with the opposite foot.

- Waltz step* – Walk on each beat. This will put the opposite foot forward at the beginning of each set of three

- Minuet Step* – Step forward with the right foot on “1”, rock back onto the left foot on “2” and rock forward onto your right foot on “3.” Begin the next set of three beats with the left foot.

During sections of **stopping** perform motions described in the preschool to early elementary section.

- *Walking through Hoops* – Lay various hoops on the floor in 3 or 4 colors. Assign certain movements to each color. As the music plays children walk around the room with the beat. Whenever a hoop is vacant step inside the hoop and perform 10 of the prescribed motions while counting out loud. Then leave the hoop and begin walking around the room with the beat again until another vacant hoop is found. This game is funny in the confusion that is created while various children are at different stages

counting to ten. This can be done with duple meter music or triple meter music.

- *Metronome music* – Use music on the CD as background music to provide a supporting beat while students:

- read rhythm patterns.
- perform ostinatos on rhythm instruments.
- walk and create rhythm patterns.
- alternate between any of the above activities every four beats.

- *Form and Analysis* – Older students can discover the form of these short pieces and create movements that reflect the form. These movements might be stationary beat movements for younger children or traveling beat movements for older children. You may want to demonstrate one or two examples for the children before they try this on their own.

You are never too young and never too old to enjoy classical music and moving with the beat. Enjoy performing these movement activities with the CD or simply listen and enjoy being moved by the music.

# **Beat Motion Difficulty**

## **Variables**

### **Tempo of Movement**

- Following the child's demonstrated beat tempo is easiest for individuals
- MM 120-136 is the easiest for young children to maintain a beat motion in a group
- Faster and slower tempi increases difficulty

### **Type of Movement**

- Tapping down on legs or floor with both hands is the easiest
- Next try clapping one hand onto the other hand
- Walking in place is harder than hand motions but easier than traveling
- Tapping on shoulders is difficult for young children
- Traveling on the beat is the most challenging (usually not successful before second grade)

### **Complexity of the Game Rules**

- Difficulty increases the quicker and more frequently the game requires changing words or changing motions

### **Complexity of the Movement Sequence**

- Stationary
  - One motion used throughout is the easiest
    - Both hands doing the same thing
    - Alternating hands
  - Alternating between two different motions
  - Performing a sequence of four different motions
- Traveling
  - One motion used throughout is the easiest
  - Difficulty increases as the number of different motions increases

**Beginners should use activities in which all variables are easy.**

**Gradually introduce activities in which a challenge occurs in one of the variables.**

**Difficulty increases when more than one variable presents challenges.**

## **First Steps in Classical Music: Keeping the Beat!**

### **Track # 7 Suite No. 3 in D, BWV 1068: Gigue (J.S. Bach)**

#### **Longways Dance** (6 times)

**Choreography by John Feierabend**

Each Set consists of two lines of six - eight people facing each other (couples opposite each other)

**8 beats – Forward and Back**

Lines move forward toward each other (*forward, 2, 3, touch*) and back (*back, 2, 3, together*)

**8 beats – Both Hands Round**

Couples come together and hold both hands and make one complete circle and back into their places in their lines.

**8 beats – Sashay to the Bottom**

Head couple holds hands and sashays (sideways gallops) to the bottom of the set

**8 beats – Sashay to the Top**

Head couple sashays back to where they began

**16 beats – Cast Off**

All turn to face the head couple. Head couple leads their lines out and down to the bottom of the set. Head couple holds both hands and makes an arch. Other couples reunite at the bottom of the set join hands and come through the arch and back up to the top. There will now be a new head couple and the dance is repeated.



## First Steps in Classical Music: Keeping the Beat!

### Track # 11 Suite # 2 in b minor, BWV 1067: Menuet (J.S. Bach)

#### Minuet

#### Choreography by John Feierabend

Form two circles one inside the other. Each person from the outer circle becomes a partner with a person in the inner circle. When possible gents are in the inner circle and ladies are in the outer circle.

All face counter-clockwise. The gent lifts his right hand, palm down. The lady rests the tips of her fingers of her left hand on top of the back of the gents right hand.

**Basic minuet step:** Step forward with right foot, lift left foot slightly. Rock back onto left foot setting it in back down. Then, rock forward stepping onto right foot. Repeat beginning with left foot. (*Forward, back, step, Forward, back step*)

A - Circle takes 8 minuet steps counter-clockwise. Turn to go in the opposite direction on the last of the minuet steps.

A – Circle takes 8 minute steps clockwise. Turn and face each other on the last of the minuet steps.

B – Couples hold right hands lifted up to head level. Couple step forward toward each other with right foot and bring feet together and hold one beat. Then steps back with left foot, bring feet together, and hold one beat. Repeat. Then, still holding right hands take for minuet steps and switch sides, (Gents are now on the outside and ladies are inside).

A - Circle takes 8 minuet steps counter-clockwise. Turn to go in the opposite direction on the last of the minuet steps.

B – Couples hold right hands lifted up to head level. Couple step forward toward each other with right foot and bring feet together and hold one beat. Then steps back with left foot, bring feet together, and hold one beat. Repeat. Then, still holding right hands take for minuet steps and switch sides, (Ladies are now on the outside and gents are inside).

A – Circle takes 8 minute steps clockwise. Turn and face each other on the last of the minuet steps and bow toward each other.

# Teaching Form and Expression Through Movement with Classical Music

Experience wonderful music activities with classical music that enable students to acquire an understanding of each piece's form and expression in non-verbal ways. The activities are mostly stationary and appropriate for all ages from age 3 to senior citizens.

Process:

- 1) Use music that has a clearly defined form
- 2) Analyze music for formal structure and expressiveness
- 3) Create movements that reflect the formal structure and expressiveness and are easy to follow.

Sample:

Brahms, Waltz in Ab

A 00-27

With palm facing out make 4 large circles with the right hand and 4 large circles with the left hand.

B 28 - 38

With palms down both hands make circles, coming together and going out in front.

A 39 - 52

Repeat A motions

B 53 – 1:02

Repeat B motions

A 1:02 – 1:25

Repeat A motions

# Sylvia - Pizzicato Polka by Léo Delibes

## Move It! 2

### **Introduction** 00 – 19

With both hands, pretend to wind a giant clock three times.  
Place palms together and slowly raise hands above head.

### **A** 20 – 32

Leaving one hand straight up, lower the other hand in seven short motions until straight out to the side.  
Continue moving the same hand seven more short motions until hand is straight down.  
Continue moving the same hand seven more short motions until hand is crossed in front and is straight out the other side.  
Continue moving seven more short motions until both hands are straight up.

### **A** 33 - 44

Repeat motions described in section A but with the other hand.

### **Interlude** 45 – 52

With both hands, pretend to wind a giant clock two more times.  
Place palms together and slowly raise hands over head.

### **B** 1:05 – 1:17

Lift elbows up and let arms hand down.

Swing one arm in and out three times and then swing that arm in and around in one circle.  
Swing the other arm in and out three times and then swing that arm in and around in one circle.

### **Bv** 1:18 – 1:29

With elbows still lifted:  
Swing both arms at the same time in and out three times and then swing both arms in and around in one circle.  
Swing both arms at the same time in and out three times and then swing both arms out and up above head.

### **A** 1:30 – 1:45

Repeat motions described in section A.  
End with a sudden lowering of hands to frame the face.

# Concerto in E Major - Johann Sebastian Bach

## Move It!

**A** 00 – 14

Step in one foot and swing both arms forward and up.  
Step back and swing arms down and back.  
Continue eight times while slowly rotating in a circle once in place.

**B** 15 – 29

With arms outstretched, slowly glide and flap wings (like a bird).

**A** 30 – 44

Repeat motions described in Section A

**C** 45 – 59

Flutter hands up and down and all around (like a butterfly).

**A** 1:00 – 1:13

Repeat motions described in Section A

**D** 1:14 – 1:28

Roll hands quickly one over the other and burst hands open and out.  
Repeat many times, bursting in many directions (like dandelions).

**A** 1:29 – 1:43

Repeat motions described in Section A

**E** 1:44 – 2:15

Flap both arms in parallel movements here and there and everywhere (like flags).

**A** 2:16 – 2:35

Repeat motions described in Section A

The A section can be performed while holding hands in a circle. Swing arms in and out with the beat. Step in and out with the beat. Begin with the right foot and slowly move the circle to the right with each step in. Perform the contrasting sections with individuals moving around the room. Reassemble in a circle as each A section returns.

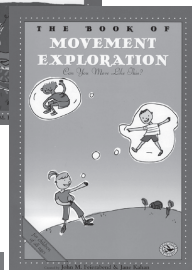
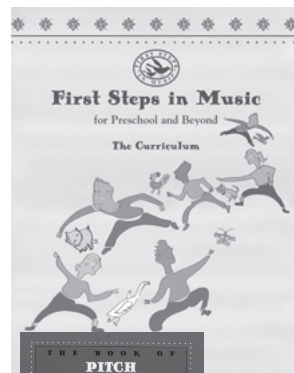
*Note: IMPROVISATION about things that float and fly help illustrates this energetic dance.*

# AVAILABLE RESOURCES

## Music for Creative Movement 3-CD set .....CD-903

### Books for Preschool and Early Elementary

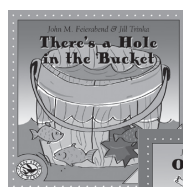
- G-5880 First Steps in Music for Preschool and Beyond
- G-5276 The Book of Pitch Exploration
- G-5277 The Book of Echo Songs
- G-5278 The Book of Call and Response
- G-5280 The Book of Children's Song Tales
- G-5876 The Book of Movement Exploration
- G-5877 The Book of Finger Plays and Action Songs
- G-5878 The Book of Beginning Circle Games
- G-5879 The Book of Songs and Rhymes with Beat Motions



### Recordings for Kids of All Ages

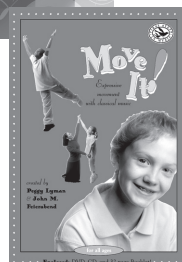
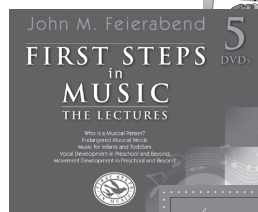
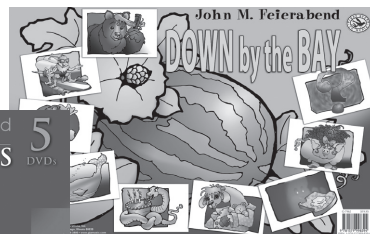
by John M. Feierabend and Jill Trinka

- CD-645 There's A Hole in the Bucket
- CD-646 Had a Little Rooster
- CD-647 Old Joe Clark
- CD-493 First Steps in Classical Music  
Keeping the Beat
- G-7001 Set of all four recordings above  
plus First Steps in Music for  
Preschool and Beyond
- G-7001A Complete Curriculum Package  
Set of all books and recordings above  
Save over \$40 with this offer!



### Companion Materials

- G-8453 Word Wall
- G-6400 Vocal Development Kit  
(Puppets, toys, and instruments with manual)
- G-6509 Pitch Exploration Stories  
(12 large picture cards)
- G-6510 Pitch Exploration Pathways  
(12 large picture cards)
- G-6511 Oh, In the Woods  
(12 large picture cards)
- G-7962 Down by the Bay  
(10 large picture cards)
- DVD-875 First Steps in Music;  
The Lectures (5 DVDs)



### Move It!

- DVD-549 Music DVD, CD, and booklet

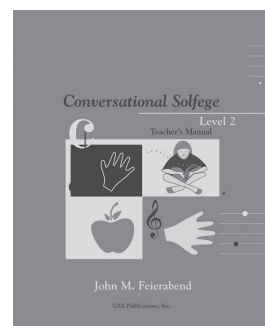
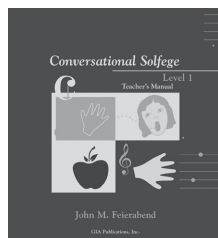
### Move It! 2

- DVD-756 Music DVD, CD, and booklet

## Conversational Solfege

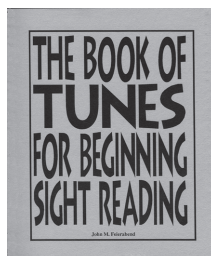
### Level 1:

- G-5380 Teacher's Manual
- G-5380FL Flashcards
- G-5380S Student Book
- CD-526 Classical Selections CD



### Level 2:

- G-5381 Teacher's Manual
- G-5381FL Flashcards
- G-5381S Student Book
- CD-527 Classical Selections CD



### Level 3:

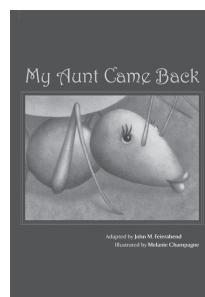
- G-5382 Teacher's Manual
- G-5382S Student Book
  
- G-5547 The Book of Tunes for Beginning Sight-Readers

### Books for Older Children

- G-5279 The Book of Young Adult SongTales
- G-5281 The Book of Canons

### Lomax the Hound of Music

- DVD-829 The Best of Lomax the Hound of Music (2 Hours)
- CD-830 Lomax the Hound of Music: Favorite Songs (25 Songs)

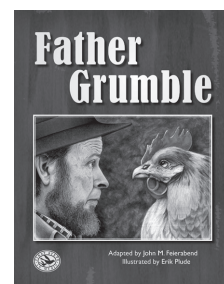
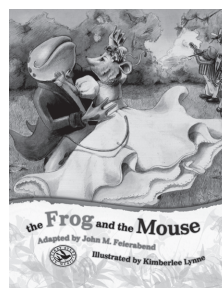


### Book of Church Songs and Spirituals

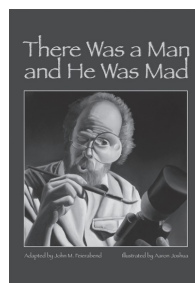
- G-7816 Spiral Bound and illustrated

### Folk Song Picture Books (with downloadable MP3)

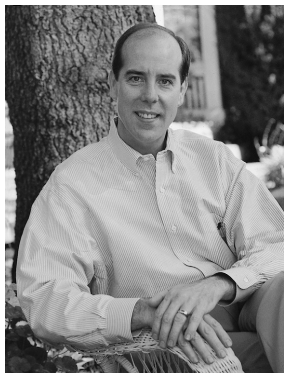
- G-6535 The Crabfish
- G-7178 My Aunt Came Back
- G-7179 There Was a Man
- G-7416 Father Grumble
- G-7690 The Derby Ram
- G-7844 The Frog and the Mouse
- G-8121 Risseldy Rosseldy
- G-8122 The Tailor and the Mouse
- G-8454 There's a Hole in the Bucket



- DVD-499 Music and Early Childhood  
(30-minute documentary  
produced by Connecticut  
Public Television)







Dr. John Feierabend is considered one of the leading authorities on music and movement development in early childhood. He is a Professor of Music and the Director of the Music Education Division at The Hartt School of the University of Hartford and is a past President of the Organization of American Kodály Educators. Dr. Feierabend makes frequent presentations both in the United States and abroad and is the author of over 70 books, CDs, and DVDs.

A music educator for over 40 years, he continues to be committed to collecting, preserving, and teaching the diverse folk music of our country and using that folk music as a bridge to help children understand and enjoy classical music. His books are a result of his belief that when many generations share common experiences such as traditional folk songs and rhymes, it helps them develop a valuable but dwindling commodity—a sense of community. When adults share childlike memories with children, they not only connect children with their ancestors, but they also enrich their children's childhood and enable their children to someday tap into their own delicious childhood memories to share that same repertoire with their children.

In addition, research has suggested that these traditional activities provide precisely the tonal, rhythmic, and expressive experiences that are needed to develop one's musical sensitivities. Children fortunate enough to have these songs and rhymes shared with them will grow to become adults who will not only be musically sensitive to music in their lives, but will also be musically able to connect to their children through music play.

Dr. Feierabend's research has resulted in two music curricula: *First Steps in Music*, a music and movement program for infants through early elementary aged children, and *Conversational Solfege*, a music literacy method for use in general music classes. *Lomax: The Hound of Music* is a public television series that is based on his *First Steps in Music* curriculum.

Dr. Feierabend has been honored by the National Association for Music Education (MENC) as a Lowell Mason Fellow, received the Outstanding Educator Award from the Organization of American Kodály Educators (OAKE), and was the first American recipient of the international LEGO prize, an award given annually to someone who has "helped to make the world a better place for children to live and grow."



First Steps in Music Series  
by John M. Feierabend

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# FAME

Feierabend Association for Music Education

[www.feierabendmusic.org](http://www.feierabendmusic.org)



The Feierabend Association for Music Education (FAME) was born on July 28, 2012! FAME is dedicated to promoting and supporting the work of Dr. John M. Feierabend through collaboration, advocacy, training, and resource sharing. Its mission is to build tuneful, beatful, and artful learners throughout the world, ensuring a lifetime of joyful music making.

FAME's founding members are John Feierabend (Founder), Sandra Doneski (President), Joani Brandon (President Elect), Melissa Strong (Vice President), Jennifer Elliott (Secretary), Tom Hawley (Treasurer), Betsy Greene (Member at Large), Craig Knapp (Member at Large), Alec Harris (Industry Representative), Rite Wilder (Executive Director), Andrew Feierabend (Webmaster), John Crever, Lillie Feierabend, Connie Greenwood, Rachel Grimsby, Jim Hilbie, Andy Himelick, Al Holcomb, Lindsay Jackson, Kristen McCarty, Sarah Milligan, Randy O'Keefe, Chris Anne Powers, Stephanie Schall-Brazee, Chris Tranberg, Paula Trebra, and Kim Yannon.

Dr. Feierabend is recognized as an international leader in the field of music education and is committed to collecting, preserving, and teaching the diverse folk music of our country. His research has resulted in two music curricula: First Steps in Music, a music and movement program for infants through early elementary aged children, and Conversational Solfege, a music literacy method for use in general music classes. His over 70 publications of books, CDs, and DVDs are a result of his belief that the teaching and sharing of traditional folk songs and rhymes, coupled with an understanding and enjoyment of classical music, builds a community which binds multiple generations through shared musical experiences.



You are invited to become a member of FAME! Join the founding members and the growing association of people dedicated to the goal of having tuneful, beatful, and artful students, families, friends, and communities! Bookmark and share [www.feierabendmusic.org](http://www.feierabendmusic.org) to learn more about FAME. Our "under-construction" site is up and running and will continue to add new information. Please check it periodically for updates.

Start Spreading the News! [www.feierabendmusic.org](http://www.feierabendmusic.org)

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