Worksheet LR4: focus on beat groupings - MEMORANDUM

The **GOOD NEWS:** yes, because this is a short week due to public holidays, this is a quick and easy worksheet! Thank-you all for keeping up the work and for being diligent students!

The objectives of this worksheet are:

1) You should be able to identify what type of beat is used in a time signature.
2) You should be able to group notes according to the beat type.
3) You should be able to read standard time signatures and understand what they represent.

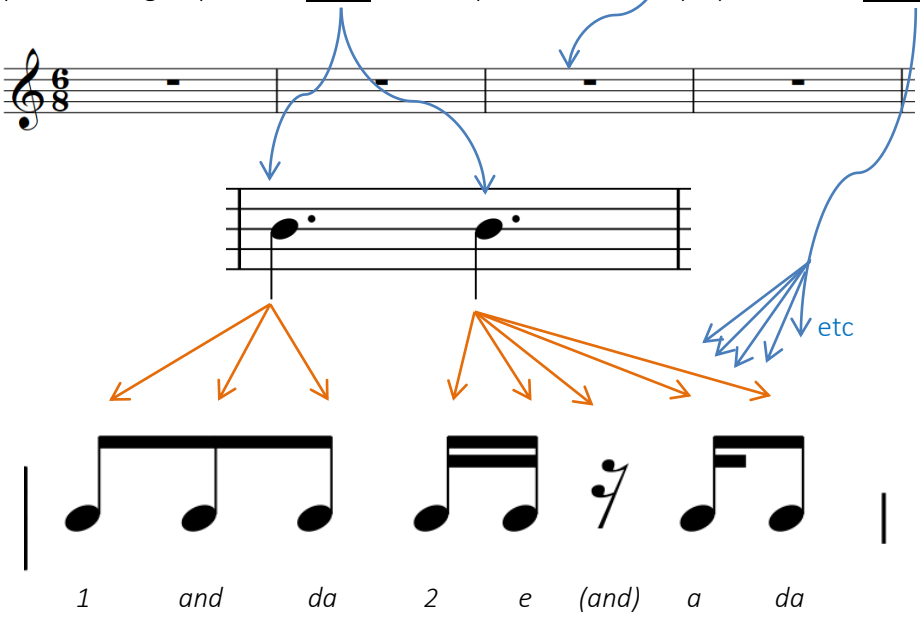
Wait, aren't those the objectives of the previous worksheet? Yes, because this is a continuation of that work. We weren't quite done, but I decided to stop at 8 pages because I could feel the anxiety growing on your side. (when will this ever end…?) Anyway:

What we need to develop in each of us is the skill to glance at a time signature and immediately know how to read the rhythms that are written there. This is an intellectual recognition which we need to partner with the sense for rhythm that we have as musicians.

When we say "having rhythm", it means that a person has a sense for the logical order and placement of both beats and divisions. Literally: a sense, like our other senses of touch, smell, taste and so on. Not quite as subtle as our emotional senses, such as sadness, happiness, pride and anger but somewhere in between. The musical sense for rhythm feels as physical to musicians as such senses as taste and touch, but it's not a true physical sense. That's a wonderful thing – in a way, I feel like we're at superhero school and I'm teaching you all how to organise sounds using only your mind – awesome stuff!

Rhythmic accuracy also allows us to manipulate the experience of time – even more superhero stuff! A lot of this manipulation and control over time comes from the fact that our experience of time leads to us having an expectation of what comes next. Predictability is the cornerstone of a rhythmic sense. This worksheet will begin the process of us mastering rhythmic predictability.

We create a system for diving up time into predictable blocks called **bars**. We further divide each bar into smaller predictable groups called **beats**. One step further: we chop up beats into **divisions**.



This system creates a sort of grid which we can use to accurately specify WHEN a note must occur in musical time. It's easy to read because it naturally tells us the order that the notes occur, as well as for how long each note must be played. The rests represent silence, but also when there must be silence, and for how long.

It's important that you realised that this is a proportional system of measurement. That means that a particular note length is a musical length, not necessarily a specific number of seconds. It must be played musically, not timed mechanically.

That was a lot of words! Let's summarise by saying that rhythmic notation on the stave can tell us:

1) The order of the notes (also called the sequence)
2) **WHEN** to play (notes) or to stop playing (rests)
3) **FOR HOW LONG** to play (notes) or to stop playing (rests)

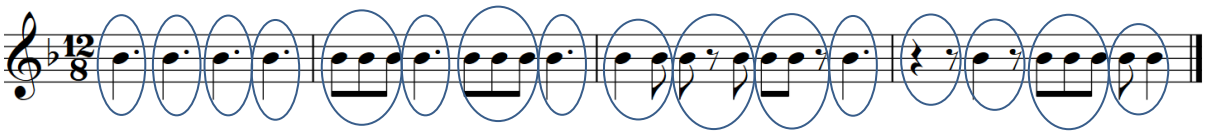
Reading musical rhythms is very much like learning to read words. You start off learning to say the letters (or in music: the individual note values), then you move to small groups of letters, i.e words. In music, words may be a handful of rhythmic values which are commonly found in that particular order. Then, just as with learning to read groups of words as phrases and sentences, you will learn to read rhythms in phrases too!

A good way to start is by analysing and examining music which is already printed correctly. In the following extracts, please answer the questions about the time signature, and then draw a circle around every group of notes which forms a beat:

Example:

What is the time signature?	How many beats per bar?	What is the type of beat?
12/8	4	

Now encircle each beat:



You must double-check your answer, please. This is easy, of course, because you already know what you should be looking for! Start by checking that there are the right number of beats per bar – in this example there should be 4 beats per bar. That means that there must be 4 circles per bar. This will cover most of the task of identifying beats, but you must still check that each circle adds up to the right total – in this example, each beat must be equal to a dotted crotchet.

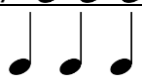
Check that you are keeping up:

Do you see how it is that each beat adds up to a dotted crotchet? Remember that a dotted crotchet is equal in length to a crotchet tied to another note half its length? In this case, that dot would be half a crotchet, i.e. a quaver. Therefore, please observe that a beat can comprise either a dotted crotchet in its original form or any combination of notes which add up to the same length. Here are some examples which add up to a dotted crotchet:

original *1 + 2 OR 2 + 1 quavers* *group of 3 quavers* *various groups of 1+1+1 quavers*

Before you start, get your mind focused.

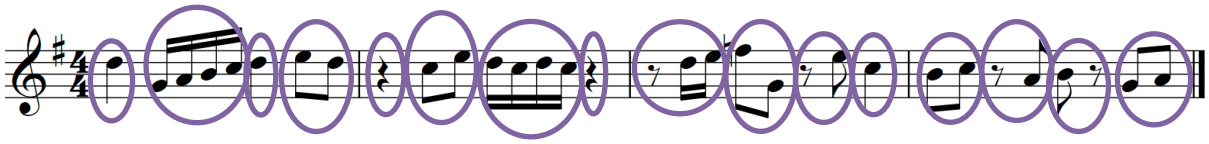
Complete the following table by writing down **ONE NOTE** which is equal in length to the following groups. This will help you later when you have to recognise the length of groups of notes.

Exercise 1 (the questions refer to the musical extract which follows them):

What is the time signature?	How many beats per bar?	What is the type of beat?
4 4	4	

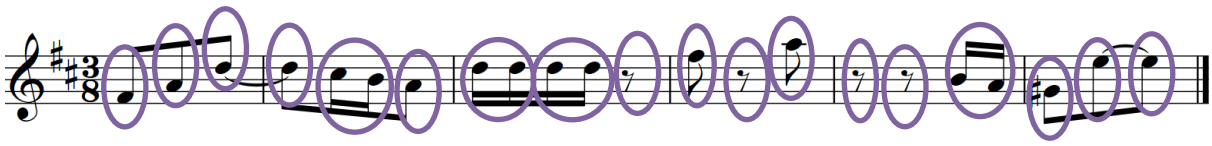
Now encircle each beat:



Exercise 2:

What is the time signature?	How many beats per bar?	What is the type of beat?
3 8	3	

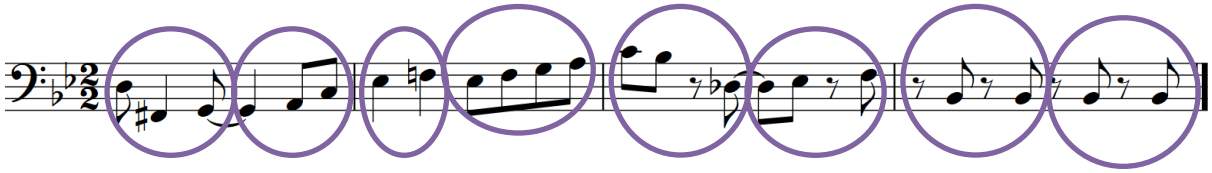
Now encircle each beat:



Exercise 3:

What is the time signature?	How many beats per bar?	What is the type of beat?
2 2	2	

Now encircle each beat:

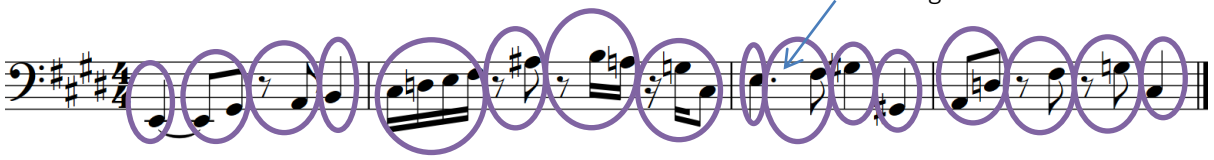


Exercise 4:

What is the time signature?	How many beats per bar?	What is the type of beat?
4 4	4	

Now encircle each beat:

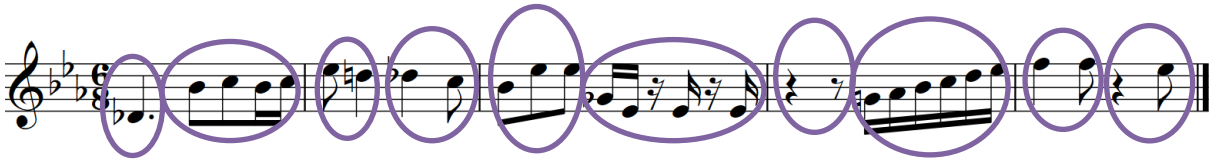
NB dot belongs to beat 2!



Exercise 5:

What is the time signature?	How many beats per bar?	What is the type of beat?
6 8	2	

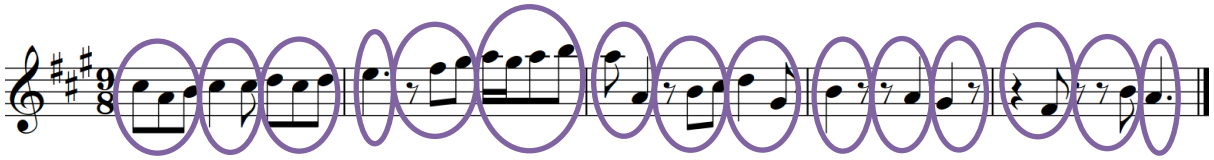
Now encircle each beat:



Exercise 6:

What is the time signature?	How many beats per bar?	What is the type of beat?
9 8	3	

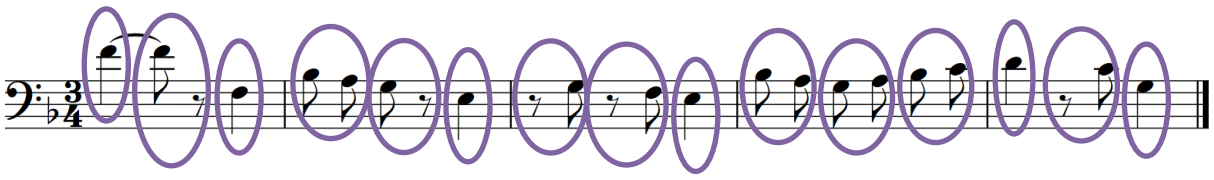
Now encircle each beat:



Exercise 7:

What is the time signature?	How many beats per bar?	What is the type of beat?
3 4	3	

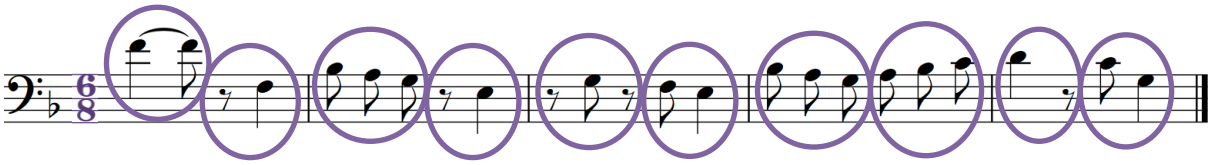
Now encircle each beat:



Bonus Challenge!!!

The same notes for Exercise 7 could be written using another, different key signature.

1) Can you figure out which is the other key signature that could be used?
2) Write the new key signature on the following stave
3) Group the notes by encircling them according to the new time signature.



Some notes:

- In Exercise 4, the dot belongs to beat 2. Why is that? Well, if each beat is 1 crotchet in length, then the dotted crotchet is more than a beat long! It is the dot which actually makes the note longer, so that is why we group the dot as the first part of beat 2.

- In Exercise 6, be honest: did you fall for my trap? In the 4th bar, did any of you put circles around the crotchets? If you did, then you were guilty of thinking that a crotchet is a beat. Remember that in $^{9}_{8}$, the beat is a dotted crotchet!

I can't wait until we get together again so that we can actually read these rhythms together – they sound much better than they look! However, if you want to challenge yourself, give it a try. WHY did we put circles around everything? Well, the circles are the beats: it shows where to tap your foot. That means that for every foot tap, you have to play all of notes which are enclosed in each circle. Remember to keep your foot tapping in time – i.e. you can not speed up or slow down the foot tap!