Rhythm and Tonal Patterns
from the Pattern CD

By Marilyn Lowe
In cooperation with Edwin E. Gordon
Read — Write — Audiate

This book, *Rhythm and Tonal Patterns from the Pattern CD*, and the *Pattern CD* are necessary companions to all the Music Moves for Piano *Reading and Writing Music Notation* workbooks.

Students will learn to read, write, and recognize in notation the patterns they have learned through pattern instruction. This acquired pattern vocabulary is a prerequisite for developing reading and writing skills with understanding.

Students who have completed *Music Moves for Piano, Book 2* and are at least nine years old may use this book, first, with *Reading and Writing Music Notation, Book 1*. By this time, students with a large personal music vocabulary of tonal and rhythm patterns are ready to begin to study music reading and writing skills. The books advance with the knowledge that fluent music reading requires abstract thinking skills that usually start to develop around age 11.

To develop music reading and writing skills, students should:
- be familiar with the symbols used to write music
- read familiar patterns
- write familiar patterns
- understand rhythmic notation
- understand enharmonic notation
- recognize patterns in music notation
- write patterns from dictation
- improvise and create with patterns

Rhythm and tonal patterns give meaning to music and are the building blocks for developing audiation, musicianship, and music literacy.

Rhythm and tonal patterns are the foundation for:
- improvisation
- composition
- playing by ear
- listening to music with understanding
- learning new music
- performing music with understanding
- reading music
- writing music
Rhythm and Tonal Patterns
from the Pattern CD

A Handbook to Accompany Music Moves for Piano
Reading and Writing Books 1, 2, and 3

A Piano Series Based on the Music Learning Theory of Edwin E. Gordon
Designed to Develop Audiation and Keyboard Performance Skills

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Why are rhythm and tonal patterns important?
Rhythm and tonal patterns are a music vocabulary.
With this music vocabulary we are able to give meaning to music.
We learn to read, write, listen to, perform, compose,
and improvise music using rhythm and tonal patterns.
Patterns are the building blocks for developing musicianship
and music literacy.
Activities using rhythm and tonal patterns develop audiation skills.

What is audiation?
Audiation, simply defined, means to listen to and perform music
with understanding.
Because music is a listening and a performing art, learning how
to audiate is an important part of the music learning process.
Everyone has the potential to audiate, or “think,” music.
The ability to audiate is fundamental for music achievement.

How do we learn to audiate?
Remember how we learned to speak language?
Music learning is much like language learning.
We listen, think/audiate, speak/perform, improvise, read, and write.
During this sequential process, we acquire a personal vocabulary.
What is a music vocabulary?

A music vocabulary consists of organized and categorized rhythm and tonal rhythm patterns within the context of a meter or a tonality. When we think about it, we realize that music has a recognizable tonal and rhythm pattern organization that makes sense. Music has syntax. It sounds too good to be true, but the fact is that rhythm and tonal patterns are the foundation for building audiation skills. The patterns on the Pattern CD are a basic music vocabulary. Students should learn these patterns.

How can we use an acquired music vocabulary?

When we have personal ownership of a functional music vocabulary, we are able to anticipate, predict, and remember the organization of a musical work. We can learn music quickly because we have the tools, meaning music vocabulary, to understand music. Most importantly, we can enjoy and understand music because our music vocabulary has provided us with the foundation to audiate.

What are music patterns?

It may seem at first that any music teacher or music student should be able to create rhythm and tonal patterns. In fact, it is possible to create a rhythm and tonal pattern learning sequence if one follows Gordon’s theories for developing a pattern vocabulary. Creating appropriate pattern sequences takes time and an understanding of how patterns are specifically created for the purpose of building audiation skills. The patterns on the Pattern CD and in this book follow Edwin E. Gordon’s rhythm and tonal pattern curriculum that is presented in his Tonal and Rhythm Register Books and in the accompanying teachers’ guide, Reference Handbook for using Learning Sequence Activities.

The sequenced and categorized patterns printed in this book are from the Music Moves for Piano Pattern CD.
How do we learn patterns?

There is a learning sequence to pattern instruction. Students first learn patterns, in the context of a meter or tonality, on a neutral syllable, such as “bah” for rhythm patterns and “bum” for tonal patterns.

After neutral syllable patterns become familiar, these same patterns are learned with rhythm and tonal syllables. Thus, a familiar pattern vocabulary is acquired.

It is important to know that:

1. Rhythm and tonal patterns are learned separately.
2. Patterns are always learned within the context of a meter or a tonality.
3. Rhythm patterns are chanted without pitch.
4. Tonal patterns are sung without rhythm.
5. To build a personal vocabulary, a student must first echo the pattern with the teacher, then, if the student echos the pattern correctly, the student should echo the pattern alone. With this learning process, the student will gain ownership of individual patterns.

Pattern learning is reinforced at home when the student listens to the Pattern CD and echos the patterns.

What are labels?

Labels are names that we use for communication. When we know something by its name, or label, we can recognize it and talk about it.

Students must learn labels in order to recognize, apply, and remember patterns. Labels include: major, minor, tonic, dominant, macrobeat, microbeat, duple, triple, and so forth.
What are some activities that help students learn a pattern vocabulary?

**Rhythm patterns - have students:**
- chant the function and meter of the pattern (macro/microbeat duple)
- chant macrobeats while other students chant microbeats
- chant rhythm patterns while some students chant macrobeats/microbeats
- chant syllables in response to a pattern chanted using BAH
- echo different patterns, individually with the teacher
- chant patterns with a designated pattern function (only duple division)
- carry on a rhythm conversation with either BAH or syllables

**Tonal patterns - have students:**
- sing the first tone of a pattern
- sing the resting tone only
- sing the tones of a pattern in a different order
- sing syllables in response to a pattern sung using BUM
- echo different patterns, individually with the teacher
- sing the opposite pattern function (teacher sings tonic, student sings dominant)
- sing the function and tonality of the pattern (tonic major)

What is the difference between sound and staff notation?

Music notation is complex. We must learn the difference between “sound” and “staff” notation. “Staff” notations may look the same but sound different. Or “staff” notations may look different, but sound the same.

For example, the same two music staff notes can be “Do-Re” or Mi-Fa,” which sound different when in the context of a tonality.

In addition, the notes can be flat, sharp, natural, double-sharp, or double-flat. All may be on the same line-space arrangement on the music staff.

Enrhythmic (rhythm) and enharmonic (tonal) patterns look different but sound the same.

Music is notated by the way a composer wants the music to look on the printed page.

Our understanding of patterns and how notation works is essential for fluent reading of music notation.
Description of Rhythm Patterns, Tempo, and Meter

What we need to know about tempo and meter.

1. The large beat, or macrobeat, is what we feel to be the tempo beat.
2. Meter is determined by splitting the macrobeat into parts. Move to the macrobeat by swaying from side to side using heel movement. For duple meter, split the macrobeat into two parts (two hand touches). For triple meter, split the macrobeat into three parts (three hand touches).
3. The macrobeat (tempo beat or pulse) in all meters is “Du.” Duple meter microbeats (meter beats) are “Du-de” and triple meter microbeats (meter beats) are “Du-da-di.” Anything between microbeats that is not a macrobeat is a “ta.”
4. To read rhythm, first decide what note value you will use for the macrobeat. Then name the note values that will be the microbeats and divisions. This alignment, macrobeat-microbeat-divisions, is referred to as a “rhythm tree.”

Macrobeats, microbeats, and rhythm pattern categories.

1. Macrobeats and microbeats are not tied to note names or time signatures, but refer to tempo beats and meter beats.
2. A rhythm pattern has a minimum of two underlying macrobeats. The “typical” rhythm pattern has four underlying macrobeats.
3. Three rhythm elements must work together simultaneously to create a strong, consistent rhythmic performance: macrobeats, microbeats, and rhythm patterns. Macrobeats and microbeats provide the context (meter) for rhythm patterns.
4. Rhythm patterns are chanted while audiating or moving to underlying macrobeats (tempo beats) and microbeats (meter beats).
5. Rhythm patterns are functional, meaning that they are separated into meaningful categories. Learning rhythm patterns in sequential categories provides a way to recognize and remember music when listening, performing, creating, or reading notation.
6. Music staff notation of rhythm is enrhythmic: a rhythm pattern can be notated different ways and still sound the same.
7. The six rhythm pattern categories are:
   1) Macrobeat and microbeat
   2) Divisions
   3) Division-elongations and elongations
   4) Rest
   5) Tie
   6) Upbeat
What is the meaning of the time signature?

1. The time signature is a measuring device. The upper number tells how many, or its equivalent, of the bottom number there are in each measure. It has nothing to do with “time.”

2. The time signature does not represent beats. There are different kinds of beats, that can only be determined by looking at notation and feeling the flow of macrobeats, microbeats, and rhythm patterns.

3. It is not necessary to look at the time signature to determine meter. By looking at notation, one can tell if the music moves in two, three, or something else.

Time Signatures
Rhythm Pattern Activities

Use BAH – Establish Meter First

1. The teacher chants a pattern and asks students to audiate the pattern before they echo it.
2. The teacher chants a pattern in a designated category (for example, duple division) and asks students to respond together, or one at a time, with a pattern in a different category (for example, duple macro/microbeat pattern).
3. Chant and echo a rhythm pattern. Then change the speed of the macrobeat and chant the same rhythm pattern again.
   - Have students improvise with rhythm patterns using the same pattern at different speeds. Ask them how the tempo affects the character of the rhythm pattern.
4. Have students improvise at the keyboard with a rhythm pattern.
   - Use random keys and think about dynamics, articulation, and register.
5. Have students improvise rhythm patterns, one after the other by carrying on a conversation.
   - Students who have difficulty thinking of a pattern, can echo a pattern they have just heard, or the teacher can give them a pattern to chant.
   - The point is to use the voice in different ways to carry on a conversation.
   - This can be very funny.

Use BAH – Do Not Establish Meter First

1. The teacher chants two patterns and asks students if they are the same or different.
2. The teacher chants one pattern and asks students to name the meter - duple or triple (or something else).
3. Students may also lead in the activities in numbers 1 and 2.
4. The teacher (or student) performs part of a piece or song at the keyboard or with the voice. Have students first find the macrobeat, then the meter.
   - Remember that the macrobeat movement is subjective. Some students may move to macrobeats at different speeds. However, they should all arrive at the same conclusion regarding meter.
5. The teacher chants a chant. Ask students to name the meter.
6. Ask each student to create a chant. Have other students name the meter.
Use Rhythm Syllables – Establish Meter First

1. Chant a pattern using BAH and have students echo the pattern using syllables.
2. Play a rhythm pattern, or a short musical phrase.
   Ask students if they audiated “Du-de” or “Du-da-di” while listening.
3. Play a rhythm pattern, or a short musical phrase.
   Ask students to move to macrobeats and microbeats then chant the pattern using rhythm syllables.
4. Have some students chant “Du” with the foot movement and others chant “Du-de” for duple meter or “Du-da-di” for triple meter with the hand taps. Continue this movement while the teacher or a student chants patterns for students to echo.

Assignments for Home Study Using the Pattern CD

1. Listen to tracks with patterns chanted on BAH.
   Echo the patterns using rhythm syllables.
2. Listen to tracks with patterns chanted using rhythm syllables.
   Echo the patterns using BAH.
3. Listen to a track and echo a different pattern in the same category.
   For example, when listening to macro/microbeats, echo another macro/microbeat pattern.
4. Listen to a track and echo a pattern in a different category.
   For example, when listening to macro/microbeats, echo a division pattern.
5. As students advance, have them write the rhythm patterns from a CD track.
   If the patterns are too fast at first, have them write every other pattern.
   After the track is finished, have students rewrite the patterns enrhythmically.
Description of Tonal Patterns

What we need to know about tonal patterns.

1. Tonal patterns are harmonic in function. This means that they function as tonic, dominant, and so forth, within a tonality.
2. The relationship of major and minor triads within a tonality (meaning major, minor, dorian, and so forth) and how they function (meaning tonic, dominant, and so forth) creates the context and an understanding of tonic, or “home tone.”
3. It is important to know that:
   1) Tonal patterns are different orders of triad (chord) tones within a tonality.
   2) The tonal syllable system that fosters audiation is the “movable-do with a la-based minor” system. In other words, “Do” is the resting tone for major tonality, “La” is the resting tone for minor tonality, and so forth. Other tonalities have specific resting tones. For example, “Re” is the resting tone for dorian tonality and “So” is the resting tone for mixolydian tonality.
   3) An awareness of resting tone (tonality) and tonic (keyality) is essential for audiation to take place.

Tonal patterns in a context. What is the meaning of a DO or “key” signature?

1. A DO signature tells us the letter name of the tonic DO. When we know the letter name for DO, then, because of the movable DO with a LA-based minor tonal system, we should know the tonic letter names for the other tonalities represented by the DO signature.
   For example, when DO is G (one sharp) then we know that E is LA (harmonic minor or aeolian), D is SO (mixolydian), and so forth.
2. Students should learn the DO letter name for every DO signature.
3. Writing or naming the sharps and flats before a student recognizes the letter name of DO/LA for a DO signature is not necessary. In fact, naming and writing the “key signatures” is confusing for students.
4. The Do signature is necessary for establishing keyality and tonal context. This is in contrast with the time signature, which is not necessary for establishing meter.
Tonal Pattern Activities

Use a Neutral Syllable – Establish Tonality First
1. Always have students name the tonality.
2. The teacher sings two tonal patterns using a neutral syllable. Students answer with “the same” or “not the same” (different).
3. Students sing only the resting tone.
4. Students sing only the first pitch of the pattern.
5. The teacher sings a two-tone pattern and asks students to sing it backwards.

Use a Neutral Syllable – Do Not Establish Tonality First
1. The teacher sings a tonic and a dominant pattern. Students name tonality.
2. The teacher sings a major tonic/dominant pattern followed by a minor tonic/dominant pattern. The two patterns should be the SAME, except for the tonic 3rd. Alternate the major and minor patterns or sing the same pattern two times. Students name the tonalities.

Use Tonal Syllables – Establish Tonality First
1. Sing only the resting tone for each pattern.
2. Sing only the first pitch of the pattern.
3. The teacher sings a two-tone pattern and asks students to sing it backwards.

Assignments for Home Study Using the Pattern CD
1. Sing the resting tone only.
2. Sing the first pitch only.
3. Sing syllables to echo patterns sung with neutral syllables.
4. Sing a neutral syllable to echo patterns sung with tonal syllables.
5. Sing a contrasting pattern. If the pattern is tonic, sing a dominant pattern.
6. Sing the tones of a tonal pattern in a different order.
7. Write the tonal patterns using black noteheads. Use staff paper with the DO signature already written on the staff.
Rhythm and Tonal Pattern CD
Listening, Reading, and Writing Instructions

General Listening Instructions

1. Listen to the unit assignment several times during the week that it is assigned.
2. During the week, you may listen to all of the tracks through the current listening assignment. However, do not listen ahead on this CD.
3. Echo the patterns with your voice.

Listen to and Echo Rhythm Patterns

1. Before each set of rhythm patterns four clicks establish the macrobeat.
2. Begin to echo a rhythm pattern on the first click after the pattern chant.
3. Move to macrobeats and microbeats while you listen and chant.

Listen to and Echo Tonal Patterns

1. Before each set of tonal patterns you will hear a cadence to establish tonality.
2. Wait for two clicks, then echo each pattern with the clicks.
3. The first two clicks give time to pause and breathe before singing the pattern.

General Reading and Writing Instructions

1. Establish meter or tonality before beginning to read/perform/write the patterns. Use both your voice and your instrument to perform the patterns.
2. After the patterns are familiar, you should read, copy, write, and create patterns. You should practice recognizing patterns in music performance pieces.

Specific Reading and Writing Instructions

1. First, read the patterns. Use a neutral syllable (BAH for rhythm patterns and BUM for tonal patterns) to chant or sing the patterns using your voice.
2. Next, read the patterns using rhythm and tonal syllables.
3. When you can successfully read the patterns, copy the patterns.
4. Next, write the familiar patterns that you remember.
5. Create your own patterns within the context and category of the patterns you can read.
6. Find patterns in music that you listen to and perform.
7. Find patterns in unfamiliar music notation.
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#### BOOK 5

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Pattern CD: Rhythm Patterns Without Syllables

Duple Meter: Macrobeats and Microbeats

Track 1 — Neutral Syllable
Track 4 — Rhythm Syllables

Rhythm Register Book Unit 1-A-1
Rhythm Register Book Units 2-A-1 and 2-B-1

Two-Macrobeat Rhythm Patterns: Enrhythmic Notation

Macrobeat = \( \bullet \)
Microbeats = \( \bullet \bullet \)

Duple Meter Macrobeat and Microbeat Patterns
Triple Meter: Macrobeats and Microbeats

Track 2 — Neutral Syllable
Track 6 — Rhythm Syllables

Rhythm Register Book Unit 1-B-1
Rhythm Register Book Units 2-A-2 and 2-C-1

Two-Macrobeat Rhythm Patterns: Enrhythmic Notation

Macrobeat = ∣
Microbeats = |||

Triple Meter Macrobeat and Microbeat Patterns
Pattern CD: Tonal Patterns Without Syllables

Major Tonality: Tonic (I) and Dominant (V/V7) Functions
When E♭ is DO

Track 3 — Neutral Syllable
Track 7 — Tonal Syllables

1. I
2. V
3. V7
4. I

5. I
6. V
7. V
8. I

9. I
10. V
11. V
12. I

Harmonic Minor Tonality: Tonic (i) and Dominant (V) Functions
When D is LA

Track 5 — Neutral Syllable
Track 10 — Tonal Syllables

1. i
2. V
3. V
4. i

5. i
6. V
7. V
8. i

9. i
10. V
11. V
12. i
Pattern CD: Reference Rhythm Patterns With Syllables

Duple Meter: Macrobeats and Microbeats

Track 1 — Neutral Syllable
Track 4 — Rhythm Syllables

Rhythm Register Book Unit 1-A-1
Rhythm Register Book Units 2-A-1 and 2-B-1

Two-Macrobeat Rhythm Patterns: Enrhythmic Notation

Macrobeat =  
Microbeats =  

Duple Meter Macrobeat and Microbeat Patterns

1.  
2.  
3.  
4.  
5.  
6.  
7.  
8.  

1.  
2.  
3.  
4.  
5.  
6.  
7.  
8.
MUSIC MOVES FOR PIANO: RHYTHM AND TONAL PATTERNS

Triple Meter: Macrobeats and Microbeats

Track 2 — Neutral Syllable
Track 6 — Rhythm Syllables

Rhythm Register Book Unit 1-B-1
Rhythm Register Book Units 2-A-2 and 2-C-1

Two-Macrobeat Rhythm Patterns: Enrhythmic Notation

Macrobeat =
Microbeats =

Macrobeat =
Microbeats =

Triple Meter Macrobeat and Microbeat Patterns
Major Tonality: Tonic (I) and Dominant (V/V7) Functions
When E♭ is DO

Harmonic Minor Tonality: Tonic (i) and Dominant (V) Functions
When D is LA
Music Moves for Piano is the first piano method of its kind. It applies Edwin E. Gordon’s Music Learning Theory to the teaching of piano. When music is taught as an aural art, lessons build a foundation for lifelong musical enjoyment and understanding. With guidance, “sound to notation” leads to fluent music performance, reading, and writing. Following are some of the major concepts of this approach:

- **Rhythm is based on body movement:** Feel the pulse and meter then chant rhythm patterns. Move in both a continuous fluid way and a rounded, pulsating way.
- **Tonal audiation is developed by singing:** Singing songs and tonal patterns develops pitch sensitivity, singing in tune, and a “listening” ear.
- **Music pattern vocabularies are acquired and applied to listening and performing**
- **Various elements of music, such as rhythm, meter, pulse, tonality, harmony, style, and form, are studied.**
- **Creativity is fostered by using different elements of music, such as rhythm, pitch, harmony, and form to create with.**
- **Improvisation activities apply everything a student learns.** Use familiar patterns from folk songs, transpose, change tonality and meter, create variations and medleys, and create melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic variations.
- **Perform with technical freedom.** Students learn how to use the playing apparatus from the beginning of lessons.

Marilyn Lowe, who has taught piano for more than 40 years, has used her experiences and knowledge to create a non-traditional piano method based on Edwin E. Gordon’s theories of audiation. Other influences include the techniques and theories of Carl Orff, Shinichi Suzuki, Emile Jaques-Dalcroze, Zoltan Kodaly, and Dorothy Taubman. Lowe has been using this approach successfully with her students for more than 20 years. Her academic credits include degrees in liberal arts and piano from Knox College in Galesburg, Illinois, and a master’s degree in piano from Indiana University in Bloomington. Lowe completed additional graduate study in organ and music theory at Indiana University. She would like to express appreciation to her former music teachers: Nadia Boulanger, Murray Baylor, Walter Robert, and Menahem Pressler.

Edwin E. Gordon is known throughout the world as a preeminent researcher, teacher, author, editor, and lecturer in the field of music education. In addition to advising doctoral candidates in music education, Gordon has devoted many years to teaching music to preschool-aged children. Through extensive research, Gordon has made major contributions to the field of music education in such areas as the study of music aptitudes, stages and types of audiation, music learning theory, and rhythm in movement and music.

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