Episode 5

Duration
The length of a sound

1. **OVERVIEW**

Duration indicates the length of a sound, and in music, is represented by notes. Quaver challenges volunteers to a note-holding contest and invites a barbershop quartet to harmonize on whole, half, quarter, and eighth notes. With an in-lab challenge and reporting from the field, he reinforces recognition of music symbols. This episode teaches the note lengths of the four most popular notes.

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**LESSON OBJECTIVES**

Students will learn:
- That whole, half, quarter, and eighth notes are essential to basic music writing.
- That each note symbol has a specific number of beats.
- That acquiring the skill of writing down note durations allows compositions to be performed by others.
- That patterns of whole, half, quarter, and eighth notes can be read and performed.

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**Vocabulary**

Duration
Whole note
Half note
Quarter note
Eighth note
Key Scenes

What they teach

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Music Standard</th>
<th>Note-holding contest is held in the shop</th>
<th>Duration is the length of a sound. In music, notes are the symbols of duration.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A barbershop quartet assists Quaver with whole, half, quarter, and eighth notes</td>
<td>Note durations have a value, measured in beats: whole (4 beats), half (2 beats), quarter (1 beat), and eighth (half a beat).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Buzz That Note duration demonstration</td>
<td>The note symbols – whole, half, quarter, and eighth – are matched with their beat values.</td>
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<td>Quaver travels to quiz the public about note length</td>
<td>This exercise reinforces the note symbols and their meaning.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Song: Whole, Half, Quarter, and Eighth</td>
<td>This song unites the four note values with hand symbols.</td>
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LESSON INTRO Introducing the episode

Explain to students that their assignment is to create a series of rhythms and to write them down so they can be read by others. Draw the following examples on a board to demonstrate ways of communicating rhythms in written form.

Example 1
Example 2
Example 3

Send a volunteer out of the room, and have students create a rhythm. Invite the volunteer back into the room, and see if he/she can decode the musical message. Try it again with another volunteer. Challenge students to make the patterns more complicated. See if students can come up with other creative ways to communicate holding a note.

Tell students that they are about to learn the secrets of writing music so it can be played by others.
Feel the Note
Purpose: Feeling different note durations
March to a steady beat and count to 4. After 8 preparatory beats, instruct students to join you. If you want to do this to music, use *Circus Rag (Track 1)*.

While marching, demonstrate to students these four actions that represent the four note durations:
- **Whole note**: brush arm once for a duration of 4 beats with the opposite hand.
- **Half note**: brush down arm for 2 beats, and up arm for 2 beats.
- **Quarter note**: snap fingers to 4 steady beats.
- **Eighth notes**: clap twice for 1 beat, or 8 times for 4 steady beats.

The Long and Short of It
Purpose: Translating listening skills
Ask students to draw three columns on a sheet of paper, labeling the columns respectively short, medium, and long. Instruct students to listen silently for one minute and list all the sounds they hear in the appropriate column. Have students read aloud their lists for each column and discuss how they evaluated what they heard.

Clap My Rhythm
Purpose: Putting note durations together into patterns of rhythm
Cut out the duration flash cards from the worksheet and direct students in clapping these simple 4-beat rhythm patterns. Rearrange the cards to build upon this skill.

Note: Students can also reorder the flash cards using the IWB.

Discussion Points
- Define duration.
  - the length of a sound
- What were the names of the 4 notes Quaver introduced?
  - whole, half, quarter, and eighth
- How long does each note last?
  - whole = 4 beats, half = 2 beats, quarter = 1 beat, eighth = 1/2 beat
- Demonstrate the four hand positions used in Quaver’s song.

Materials Needed
- Paper
- Flash cards
My Note Band  Track 2  Worksheet # 2
Purpose: Counting out note duration and playing a part
Distribute the four instruments outlined in the worksheet. Have students practice their instrument parts individually, then gradually add each instrument. Change the exercise by choosing different instruments. Ask students to play their arrangement to Dura-groove (Track 2), which has a strong steady beat.

Note: Have students get into the habit of counting the steady beat aloud.

VIDEO REPLAY  Track 3
Whole, Half, Quarter, and Eighth
Purpose: Remembering note lengths
Guide students in learning the words and motions to Whole, Half, Quarter, and Eighth (Track 3). Challenge them to keep up as the tempo accelerandos.

QComposer
Different rhythms and various note lengths can be combined to create melodies. Chord Helper will assist students in choosing correct chords for individual melodies.

Songbrush
Students can create designs with long and short lines and see their art turned into music. Click on the art easel in the shop to find out more!

5 WEB ACTIVITIES
Find the Note  Worksheet # 3
Purpose: Remembering new musical symbols
Assign students to count the whole, half, quarter, and eighth notes on the worksheet and write their answers. This familiarizes students with seeing notes on a musical score.

Beat Shopping  Worksheet # 4
Purpose: Learning basic notes and their durations
Use this worksheet to evaluate students' ability to combine notes of different values by going beat shopping.

Note Finder  Tracks 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9  Worksheet # 5
Instruct students to listen carefully to the tracks provided. Ask students to quietly pat the steady beat. Have them decide whether each instrument is playing whole, half, quarter, or eighth notes and circle the appropriate symbol.

Track 4  The Sleeping Giant - whole notes
Track 5  Kangahop - eighth notes
Track 6  Spacey - half notes
Track 7  Quarter Note March - quarter notes
Track 8  Alien Wedding - whole notes
Track 9  Flippy - eighth notes

Q Tips
For eighth notes, have students count "1 - and 2 - and 3 - and 4 - " as they clap.
CROSS-CURRICULUM ACTIVITIES

Math
Just as 0.5 is the decimal equivalent of 1/2, represents a half note. Challenge students to decode note symbols into their appropriate fractional value and express all answers as whole numbers or fractions. A whole note has a value of 1 in this exercise. Even though a whole note has four beats in music, in this exercise a whole note has a value of 1.

\[ \begin{align*}
&\flat + 1/4 = \underline{\text{____}} (1/2) \\
&\flat + 1/4 = \underline{\text{____}} (3/4) \\
&1/2 + \flat = \underline{\text{____}} (5/8) \\
&\flat - 1/4 = \underline{\text{____}} (3/4) \\
&\flat + 1/4 + \flat = \underline{\text{____}} (1)
\end{align*} \]

Create more complicated equations to match the students’ math skills.

Art
Using color markers, instruct students to accurately draw a whole, half, quarter, and eighth note randomly on a page. Now challenge them to create a cartoon design incorporating the notes. Ask students to think about shapes, line, and proportion as they work.

Materials Needed
- Colored markers

DIGGING DEEPER

Sweet 16th Notes!!
Purpose: Learning more note durations
Using the worksheet or IWB, have students review note durations by clapping whole notes, half notes, quarter notes, and eighth notes. Look with them at the music notation for 16th and 32nd notes, and ask how many claps are needed for each beat. Ask them to clap 16th and 32nd notes together.

Note: Count out a very slow steady beat so all note durations will fit with it.

Rhythm Music
Purpose: Listening to and counting note durations within pieces of music
A great way to discover the note durations of a melody is first to find the steady beat. In Beethoven’s 9th Symphony, Ode to Joy (Track 10), the melody is composed of mainly quarter notes. Play the track, and have students clap the steady beat while counting 1,2,3,4 along with Beethoven’s melody. In Ocean Waves (Track 11), the melody consists of eighth notes. Have students clap the steady beat and count 1 - and 2 - and 3 - and 4 - and.
TEACHER NOTES

Featured Instrument

Voice