

## Classroom Online Resource Document: Body Percussion Workshop!

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### Body Percussion

The human body is a wonderful source for music-making; in many ways, it is its own musical instrument. Body percussion invites us to explore sound from within and simultaneously prompts us to engage in communal music-making. It is not only a very accessible art and energetic art form, but it also a wonderful and interactive way to develop listening skills as well as to internalize fundamental musical concepts such as tempo, rhythm, and timbre. Below you will find instructions for a teacher-led activity that will help the students develop acute aural skills.

### Copycat Game<sup>1</sup>

This activity is based on the well-known copycat game in which a “leader” starts an action for the rest of the group to imitate. For this activity, the students can either sit on the floor forming a circle, or they can simply stay on their desks. The teacher starts by making a sound (choosing from the list below) and the students follow by copying the sound. The teacher can also vary the loudness of the sound: loud, soft, from loud to soft or vice versa. Once all the students are able to reproduce the sound, the teacher may change to a different one. This activity can be used to start the day and can last from 5 to 15 minutes.

### Variation 1:

If the students are responding well to the activity outlined above, the teacher can then prompt some of their students to propose a new sound, and then the rest of the class (including the teacher) will follow.

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<sup>1</sup> Based on an activity developed by the Professional Development Service For Teacher. For more information see: “PDST | Professional Development Service for Teachers.” Accessed October 11, 2017. <http://www.pdst.ie/>.

## Variation 2:

Have the students count—at a medium speed and steadily—from 1 to 4 in a loop, creating a continuous pulse: 1-2-3-4, 1-2-3-4, 1-2-3-4, etc. Once a steady pulse is achieved, the teacher (or a student) can introduce one of the sounds listed below (except for whistling) and have the students copy it while still maintaining a steady count. Change the sound every 8 cycles.

## List of Sounds:

Tapping palm with two fingers	Clicking heels on table or floor
Clapping with cupped hands	Tapping fingertips on table or floor
Clapping with flat hands	Tapping fingernails on table or floor
Clapping with the back of the hands	Tapping knuckles on table or floor
Rubbing hands together cupped	Tapping whole fingers on table or floor
Rubbing hands together flat	floor
Rubbing backs of hands together	Tapping whole hands on table or floor
Rubbing arms or legs	floor
Slapping knees	Rubbing fingers on table or floor
Clicking fingers	Rubbing hands on table or floor
Flicking fingers in the air	Slapping fingers on table or floor
Flicking on the other palm	Slapping hands on table or floor
Popping air filled cheeks gently	Banging fists on table or floor
Tapping feet	Knocking knees together
Stomping feet	Whistling

## Useful links (includes additional activities):

<https://www.letsplaykidsmusic.com/body-percussion-rhythm-activities/>

[http://musictherapyactivities.wikia.com/wiki/Body\\_Percussion](http://musictherapyactivities.wikia.com/wiki/Body_Percussion)

## Videos of Body Percussion ensembles (you can show this to familiarize the students with body percussion):

The Percussion Show: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sb-2VsE2y-U>

Stomp Live (Just Clap your Hands):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l0XdDKwFe3k>

Latin Groove Kids (body percussion performance by middle-schoolers):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5AhrTeBVW4M>