



“Step, Step, Step, Step, LONG: Movement for Whole Note”
Clinton Pratt, MTA

Equipment: Piano

Age: Late elementary and up, depending on which variations (the various get progressively more sophisticated and complex)

Objective: Feel, react, and express four short sounds (quarter notes) vs. one long note (whole note), as well as independence of a rhythmic motive (in the variations)

Directions:

Teacher (T) plays 4 quarters then a whole note (piano, improvising). As the teacher repeats this rhythmic pattern many times (improvising a melody that uses ONLY this rhythm in repetition), students can move along with it, when they feel comfortable using short steps and gestures for the shorter sounds (quarter notes) and a long gesture and step with the body for the long sound (whole note). Teacher should emphasize continual movement through the long sound, through bending of the knees, hips moving, upper body, etc, as opposed to the student stepping and pausing for the long sound.

Variations (progressively more sophisticated):

Variation 1: T plays opposite (whole note while S step quarters, quarters while S do long note)

Variation 2: split the room and S do it in canon (one group starts “step step step step..” then the other group starts, so half the room is stepping quarters while the other half is expressing the whole note, and it alternates every measure). T plays whole notes in one hand and quarters in the other, or alternates.

Variation 3: S step quarters, but also show the whole note in their arms/hands. T calls out “switch” and S switch to stepping whole notes while tapping quarters. T plays music to match (LH bass matches feet, RH melody matches hands)

Variation 4: T doesn’t call out when to switch. S must listen to music to dictate which one to do

Variation 5: S switch every measure!