Melodies Are Made of Lines and Spaces

- Refer to the first page of Unlocking Music Notation. Print this page for your students or project it for the class while you discuss the following:
  - Music is made of high and low sounds called pitches. Each pitch has a name that is just like the letters of the alphabet. Look at the pitches and their names and notice how the pitches start to repeat after G.
  - When musicians read music on a staff, they know which notes to play because each note is put on its own line or space. As notes move up the staff they sound higher. As they move down the staff they sound lower. Look at the lines and spaces and notice how they are similar to your hand. You have five fingers and in between your fingers are four spaces.

- Help students remember the names of each line and space on the treble clef using words and phrases like “Every Good Boy Does Fine” and “FACE.” Have students create a sentence of their own using the second page of Unlocking Music Notation.

Pitch Puzzles

- Practice naming pitches on the staff in Pitch Puzzles. Write the letter name of each note to decode words.
- Next, identify the pitches in our Link Up theme song, “Come to Play,” by writing the correct letter names below the staff.
- Practice reading notes on the staff by playing the melody on the recorder.

Creating Two-Note and Three-Note Songs

- Practice the melodies provided in Reading Melodic Patterns and Two-Note Songs by clapping, saying, singing, or playing the recorder. Be sure to reinforce the 2/4, 3/4, and 4/4 time signatures.
- Have students choose a time signature they will use to compose their own two-note songs.
  - Would you like to write your song in 2/4, 3/4, or 4/4?
  - How many quarter notes are in each measure of your time signature?
- Students can write their own song on B and A, or choose two other notes they know. Students should also decide how many measures their compositions will be.
- Perform students’ compositions by clapping, saying, singing, or playing the song on the recorder.
- Repeat the steps above with Three-Note Songs.
Melody Name Game

• Have students establish a steady beat by snapping fingers, patting knees, or clapping hands. Once the beat is established, go around the class in turn and have each student speak his or her name in rhythm.
• Pick a few names as examples and determine how many syllables are in each name.
• Using Melody Name Game, have students assign a note value and pitch for each syllable of their name.
  • For our first composition, let’s compose a two-measure melody in 4/4 time, also called common time.
  • Be sure to check your musical math. Look at the Music Decoders if you need help.
• Perform your compositions by clapping, saying, singing, or playing the song on the recorder.
• Compose longer melodies for a sentence or poem, or give students composition parameters such as types of rhythms, different sets of pitches, or specific expressive qualities.
• Compose melodies in 3/4 or 6/8 meter.