

PERCUSSION PARADE

ARIZONA MUSIC EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION, 2025

Clinician: Artie Almeida, Ed.D.



Kids love percussion instruments, and you'll love these lessons that utilize Hoop Groups to provide non-pitched percussion and hand drum experiences. Our focus will be on the building blocks of music, including beat, rhythm, form and phrasing.

1. Hoop Groups: Play Percussion, a Parody of Alouette

Source: *Woods, Metals, Shakers, Skins!* Book by Almeida

Focus: *Timbre, Form, Note Values*

Set up Hoop Groups in this order: Woods/Metals/Shakers/Skins.

I display the lyrics sheet for student viewing while I teach the song, and it helps if the children have previously learned *Alouette*. Analyze the Lyrics Sheet drawing attention to (1) the Refrain - which is sung and played by all, (2) the cumulative Call & Response sections for the individual timbres, (3) the four-beat roll at the end of each verse on "Oh . . .". Conduct a *rallentando* and a rolled note at end.

2. Hoop Groups: I-M-P-R-O-V-I-S-E!

Source: *Woods, Metals, Shakers, Skins!* Book by Almeida

Focus: *Timbre, Improvisation*

Set up Hoop Groups in this order: Metals/Woods/Shakers/Skins.

The melody of this fun improvisation activity is the **Military Cadence** or **Cadence Call** (the call & response melody sung a capella by military personnel when marching or running). I have printed it in the score for you, but I teach this piece to the children with following along with the lyrics, rather than displaying the score. Analyze the piece, discuss the components of a musically interesting improvisation, seat students at the Hoop Group Stations and begin. Finish the song with a "round" of instrument applause (playing a roll while moving the instruments in a vertical circle in front of you). Consider rotating the students to the next hoop station and repeating the activity.

3. Hoop Groups: Hungarian Dance #5 (Johannes Brahms)

Source: *Woods, Metals, Shakers, Skins!* Book by Almeida

Focus: *Timbre, Form, Note Values*

Materials: Recording of Hungarian Dance #5, visual, non-pitched percussion instruments, four hula hoops for station organizers, a pointing device. Refer to the PDF of visuals for a detailed lesson plan.

Set up Hoop Groups in this order: Woods/Metals/Shakers/Skins. Students love the challenge of this exciting piece and its blistering pace!

4. Rocky Mountain: Hand Drum Note Value Game (American Folk Song)

Source: *Percussion Parade* Book by Almeida

Focus: *Note Values, Rondo Form, A Truism: A Science of Sound truism: "Size determines pitch."*

Materials: This lesson can be done with large drums that stand on the floor: Tubanos, Congas, etc. or hand drums played horizontally with a mallet or played by hand.

Process: It is best to prep this lesson a week before adding the drums. Teach students the **A Section** pattern, showing the direction with hand levels. Discuss the four note values to be reviewed (whole, half, quarter, eighths). Clap whole notes while singing the A section. Ask students how many occurred. Repeat with the other three note values. Perform entire song with clapping game: Pat the value on your own lap, move one leg to the right, then your own lap again, then one leg to the left. **(Continued on next page)**

(If this is not comfortable for the students, simply have the children use the floor on each side of them for the game, rather than patting another student's leg.) During each **B Section**, sing only, with no movement. Transfer clapping to drums. It is helpful if teacher displays a visual of each note value as it is performed.

5. Two is Company: A Hand Drum Mixer

Source: *Playtime Book* by Shirley McRae. Modified Almeida. Used with Permission.

Focus: *AB Form, Note Values.* This wonderful hand drum activity is in one of my favorite resource books. Be sure to teach this thoroughly, with lots of practice time, before passing out drums.

Two-Partner Directions:

A Section: Speak these words (with drum held above head) while walking to find new partners: "Two is company, three's a crowd. Four on the sidewalk is not allowed!" Bring drums down and hold horizontally in front of partner, so both drums can be accessed.

B Section script: Yours-theirs-yours-clap. Yours-theirs-ti-ti-ta (ti-ti-ta is the rhythm played on your own drum). Repeat. Immediately begin the poem again and walk to find a new partner, holding drum above head until in front of a new partner.

Three-Partner-Directions:

A Section is same as above

B Section Script: Yours . . . to the right. Yours . . . to the left. Yours to the right, yours to the left, yours to the right, ti-ti-ta ("ti-ti-ta" on your own drum). Repeat. 3 children stand shoulder to shoulder for this.

The Grand Finish: All drummers stand in a circle to perform the "3s" pattern. Then increase tempo.



Dr. Artie Almeida recently retired after 38 years of teaching in the public schools. She was the music specialist at Bear Lake Elementary school in the Orlando FL area, where she taught 1200 K-5 students. Her dynamic student performing groups have performed for AOSA, NAfME, Florida Music Educators Association, Georgia Music Educators Association, Walt Disney World, many general education conferences and on the NBC Today Show. Look for *The Bear Lake Sound* in the upcoming music education advocacy documentary "Marching Beyond Halftime."

Artie was chosen as Florida Music Educator of the Year and was also selected as an International Educator 2006 by the Cambridge England Biographical Society. She was a Teacher of the Year at the school level 6 times, Seminole County Teacher of the Year, Runner-Up for Florida Teacher of the Year, and was recently chosen as a University of Central Florida Alumni of the Decade. Artie is included in the publications *Who's Who in American Education*, and *Great Minds of the 21st Century*.

Artie was an adjunct professor of music education at the University of Central Florida for 34 years, the saxophone instructor at Valencia State College, the Music & Movement instructor at Seminole State College and a saxophone performer and teacher. Additionally, she performs early music with Ars Antiqua and the Halifax Consort.