



KLACKS

PRACTICE TEACHING BOOK



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1. Rhythm in kindergarten and school

Nowadays, rhythm plays a big part in kindergarten and in school; the target is to holistically support the personal development of children. By working with rhythm, you can stimulate the senses of children, activate them, and strengthen their perceptive abilities. Children can be introduced to the world of music in a playful manner, by singing, language, rhythm, and movement; social skills, language, coordination, motor skills, perception, and creativity are promoted.

When it comes to the specific application of music and rhythm into the everyday education of children, however, there are often psychological barriers or inhibitions facing our educators. The reasons are often the own musical abilities of the educators as well as large group sizes in kindergartens and schools. Music and rhythm is often also undervalued in the families and in school.

With our KLACKS! system, we have developed a system especially for kindergartens and schools, which will make working with rhythm easier for teachers and educators and give them the ability to work with larger groups. It takes only a few minutes to reach first senses of achievement, even very young children will quickly be able to unlock their various rhythms.

2. The KLACKS! System

With our KLACKS! system, we want to provide the opportunity to work with rhythm in the most simple and effective way. With the KLACKS! system, you can realize quick and successful learning without previous knowledge.

2.1 Function and playing technique

With the KLACKS! Box and the KLACKS! Drum Stool, we developed a drum that takes up almost no space and can be quickly at hand. These KLACKS! instruments can be played in the following manners:

- Place the KLACKS! Box onto a table and play while comfortably standing/sitting.
- Place the KLACKS! Box onto the floor and play while sitting cross-legged or on the stool.
- Place the KLACKS! Box onto your thighs and play while sitting on a chair

The KLACKS! instruments create two different sounds reminiscent of a drum kit. The snare sound is created when hitting the upper edge of the playing surface, on the two red hands. Hitting the blue hand – located in the middle of the playing surface – creates the bass sound.

2.2 Playing technique

It takes proper playing technique to achieve the optimal sound when playing the KLACKS! instruments; the correct hand position is especially important when you are playing on the instrument.

When hitting the playing surface, make sure your hands are light and loose. Strike with your hand at a slight angle, using that to cushion the blow. By angling your fingers slightly, only the fingers will strike the surface, creating a slightly more bass-y or buzzing sound.

2.3 The KLACKS! system of notes

Two red hands and a blue hand are printed onto every KLACKS! Box, marking the various sounds (bass and snare) of the KLACKS! Box. With these hands, it becomes easy to learn and play the sounds, even for the youngest children. To make playing even easier, we created an additional system of notes consisting of five basic symbols that represent different sounds.



BASS

The symbol with the blue hand is the bass. If you hit it, you will notice how deep the sound is.



CLAP

If you see the orange-colored symbol with the clapping hands, you need to clap your hands together.



SNARE

If you hit the upper edge, where the red hands are, the sound is much lighter and buzzes: that is known as snare.



REST

The symbol with a finger held to a mouth means rest. Place your finger on your mouth – even better if you say “psst!” while you do it.



SHOUT

The last basic symbol is the so-called shout. Here, it comes down to your creativity; you can use words such as “YEAH”, “YES”, etc.

It is also important to know how to use and play the different sounds. For this we use a special framework (see graphic on the right), in which the individual symbols can be played on beat

1	2	3	4

2.4 Working with the system of notes

We recommend printing out our **practical note symbols**.

Download the note symbols from www.baff.eu/download/Notes.PDF

To simplify things, use the symbol cards whenever you are working with KLACKS! instruments.

The described system of notes, with its basic symbols, allows children to start playing quickly and easily as well as quickly reach learning achievements. You can listen to the rhythm exercises described hereafter by downloading the following CD. This CD will make it easier to play along to the rhythms and songs.

Download the CD at www.baff.eu/download/CD-KLACKS.zip

To play the rhythm exercises together with the group, lay the rhythm out in front of you or pin it onto a board/wall using the note symbols, so that the children can see it well.

2.5 Playing options in a group

The rhythm exercises can be studied and played with children as follows:

1. Call and response

The simplest form that we recommend is that the leader of the exercise plays the rhythm and then the group tries to copy it. This creates a sort of call-and-response game between the exercise leader and the children, the children can see and hear how they need to play the rhythm first.

2. Everyone plays together

Another possibility is that everyone plays together in the same beat and everyone plays the rhythm together. We recommend that the exercise leader keep the time in the form of counting 1-2-3-4 or beats (e.g. bass, bass, rest, snare), so that everyone stays on the same beat.

3. The rhythm goes around

A very varied version, which requires great concentration and listening to the others, involves everyone taking turns (e.g. in a clockwise direction) playing ONE beat of the rhythm.

4. Split up groups and take turns playing

Another option is to split up the groups into two or three, and then let each group take turns playing one or two beats of the rhythm.

3. Rhythm exercises

3.1 The right count(-in)

Before starting to drum together and playing the first rhythm exercises, it is important to take a quick look at the right counting/count-in.

Loud and deliberate counting is very important when drumming together; it should absolutely be practiced! It might not be so easy to achieve this rhythmic independence between playing and counting. However, once you've internalized the counting principle it will be much easier to play rhythm passages together.

By counting '1-2-3-4' loudly with the beat, you will help the children play on beat. Do a loud count-in, so that the group begins playing at the same time. As an alternative to counting numbers, you can also use the beats in the rhythm pattern to count out loud, e.g. BASS-SNARE-BASS-REST, to help the children keep in time and hit the right symbols. To start off, the children should learn to play a 1/4 beat for each symbol.

1	2	3	4

When playing in a group, it is important to listen to what the others are playing at the same time. You can also use a metronome to help practice counting and staying on beat.



3.2 Basic beat: the bass

The first basic beat is the so-called the bass.

The bass sound is produced by striking the blue hand in the middle of the playing surface. The vibration of the surface leads to a bass-y sound. Make sure that your hands are loose and light when hitting the surface. Hit it with your hands slightly angled and let them bounce back off the surface. You can angle your fingers slightly, so that only your fingers touch the surface.




First practice exercises.

To introduce the first basic beat to the children, show them the note symbol with the blue hand, and let them play it like crazy on their KLACKS! Box. This way the children will remember the symbol and its sound well. Next, try to repeatedly play the bass sound in a constant beat with the children. This will help the children get a good feeling for the first basic beat.

Rhythm 1

To get an initial feeling for the bass, count '1-2-3' out loud, and on 4, have everyone hit the blue hand to make the bass sound. It is often easier for the children if they count along as follows: 1-2-3-bass, 1-2-3-bass, ...

Repeat this rhythm unit until all children can follow along with the rhythm

			
1	2	3	4

Rhythm 2

Count '1-2' out loud, and play the bass sound together with the children on 3 and 4.

			
1	2	3	4

Rhythm 3

Play the bass on 2 and 4.

			
1	2	3	4

3.3 Basic beat: the snare

The second basic beat is the so-called snare.

The snare sound is created by striking at the upper edge of the playing surface, where the two red hands are. Hitting it this way causes the snare wires inside to vibrate, resulting in the “snare” sound. The name “snare” comes from English. The snare is played with both hands.

When hitting the two red hands, you should also make sure that the palms of your hands are light and loose. Hit the surface with slightly angled hands, and then let your hands bounce back off. If you angle your fingers slightly, only the fingers will hit the upper edge of the surface.



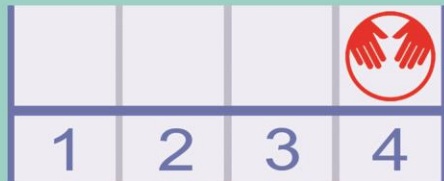
First practice exercises.

To introduce the children to the snare, show them the note symbol with the two red hands, and let them play it like crazy on their KLACKS! Box. This way the children will remember the symbol and its sound well. Next, try to repeatedly play the snare sound in a constant beat with the children. This will help the children get a good feeling for the basic beat.

Rhythm 4

To get an initial feeling for the snare, count ‘1-2-3’ out loud, and on 4, have everyone hit the two red hands to make the snare sound. It is often easier for the children if they count along as follows: 1-2-3-snare, 1-2-3-snare, ...

Repeat this rhythm unit until all children can follow along with the rhythm



Rhythm 5

Count ‘1-2’ out loud, and play the snare sound together with the children on 3 and 4.



Rhythm 6



3.4 Bass & snare together

The bass and snare sounds are the main sounds of the KLACKS! Box. The two sounds can be combined in different ways, allowing you to play a diverse range of rhythms. The next few rhythm exercises should give children a feeling for the two sounds, as well as their different possible combinations. The exercises focus on concentration, rhythm, and tempo as well as coordination and training the sense of hearing.

Rhythm 7



Rhythm 8



Rhythm 9



Rhythm 10



3.5 Clapping

Now that the children are familiar with the two basic beats, bass and snare, we can move on to the other note symbols. Let's start with clapping. To make things simple, we also have our own symbol for this: the orange symbol with clapping hands. When you see this symbol, you clap your hands together.

First practice exercises.

To introduce this symbol, hold it up and let the children guess what it could mean. Then, try to clap together with the kids in the same tempo. The next step is to combine the previously learnt basic beats, bass and snare, with the new symbol, clapping.

Rhythm 11



Rhythm 12



Rhythm 13



3.6 The rest

The next symbol signifies another very important component of music: the rest.

The symbol for rest can be recognized by the finger held to a mouth. For this beat, place your finger to your mouth and make a soft 'pssst!' sound. Try it once with the children.



Rhythm 14



Rhythm 15



Rhythm 16



3.7 The shout

The last basic symbol in our system of notes is the "shout". This requires some creativity, and you may use words like "Yeah," "Yes," "Cool," etc.

What's important is that everyone shouts their word on beat. Try to come up with a shout together with the children, but make sure that it consists of one syllable.

Rhythm 17



Rhythm 18



Rhythm 19



3.8 Rhythm exercises

In the previous chapter, we played so-called “simple bars,” four consecutive beats in 4/4 time that we repeated. To play different rhythm exercises made from the symbols we learned, we will use a “double bar.” This involves two different bars being repeated after each other, creating a multifaceted rhythm. These should also be played in 4/4 time.

Now try to play the different rhythm exercises as a group. To make it simple, lay the note symbols out in front of you or pin them onto a board/wall, so that all children can read the rhythm. Repeat the rhythm sequences until you can play it without mistakes. When you want to finish, initiate a drum roll, and end the rhythm with a joint finale.

Rhythm 20



Rhythm 21



Rhythm 22



Rhythm 23

							
1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4

Rhythm 24

							
1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4

Rhythm 25

							
1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4

Rhythm 26

							
1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4

Rhythm 27

							
1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4

3.9 Rhythm exercises with tempo changes

Now that we have learned all the basics, let us try to vary the tempo a little. We will also introduce some faster beats.

For these exercises, the counting is slightly different; you should insert an 'AND' between each number. So: 1 and 2 and 3 and 4 and ... Exactly on 'AND' is when the so-called 'off-beat' is played. There is also the further possibility of quick beats in succession. For example, a group of three or four successive beats in one bar, i.e. you play more beats in the same time. In order to make this clearer, we have slightly adjusted the system of notes to fit the 'off-beats' by including an 'AND' symbol.

Rhythm 28

							
1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+







Rhythm 29

							
1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+

Rhythm 30

									
1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+		

Rhythm 31

							
1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+

Rhythm 32

							
1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+



4. Music games

Children love games, so why not teach them about music and rhythm in a playful manner?

We have divided up the music games into several themes to make it easier for you to decide which games to play in certain situations. For example, you can find warm-up and movement games, games for listening as well as games for certain situations or rituals.

4.1 Warm-up and movement games

Warm-up games are focused on preparing and warming up to make music together. You “warm-up” just the way you would for a sport. Here, movement is key. Children are almost always moving around; it’s how they discover their surroundings. Combining the movement games with music promotes fast learning that is fun and allows the children to release their energy so that they can take up more information again afterwards.

4.1.1 Warm hands

For “Warm Hands” you don’t need a KLACKS! Box yet, but it is useful if all participants have one lying in front of them, so that they can start playing straight after the warm-up game. As the name suggests, this game involves making your hands ‘warm.’ The leader of the game (usually the teacher or educator) gives the following commands to the group, which are carried out together:

Surely you also have more ideas on how to warm-up your hands; just try it in the group

4.1.2 Loud and silent

To play this warm-up game you will need the following note symbols:

Bass
Snare
Clapping
Rest
Shout



The children should now continuously play whichever symbol the exercise leader holds up for 10 seconds. What is important here is that, after every loud phase (e.g. 10 seconds bass drumrolls from the KLACKS! Boxes), the exercise leader holds up the rest symbol for 10 seconds. In this phase, the children must be completely silent.

4.1.3 Stop drumming

Game preparation: First, choose a “drumming leader” amongst the children to play a rhythm or a drum roll on their KLACKS! Box.

This game is about reactions and body control. The “drumming leader” starts playing and the other children can move and dance around the room however they want. When the “drumming leader” stops playing, all the other children must freeze, no matter what position they find themselves in. They have to remain completely still until the rhythm starts again.

If a child wobbles or even falls over, then they are out of the game; they can take their KLACKS! Box, and join the other “drumming leader(s).” The game continues until there is only one child remaining in the game – the winner.

4.1.4 Drumming forest

Game preparation: Lay as many instruments as there are children out around the room, so that there is still enough room to move around the room. Additionally, prepare a dynamic song to play, to which the children can move.

Now the music is played from a CD or another medium and the children should move freely around the room – the “Drumming Forest”. Every time the music stops, every child/participant should find an instrument and start drumming on it until the music starts again. The game repeats.

Variation: There are many modes of movement that the exercise leader can dictate in each movement phase: e.g. walking, running, sneaking, jumping, crawling on all fours, ... You can also play a rhythm together instead of freely drumming.



4.2 Icebreaker games

Icebreaker games are used when the members of the group don't know each other, or if a new child joins the group, for example. What is important for icebreaker games is that the children familiarize themselves with each other, break down inhibitions, and build up a certain group dynamic.

4.2.1 The drumming hat

Game preparation: For this game you will need a hat. All children sit in a circle on the floor with their KLACKS! Box out in front of them. This can also be done with the children sitting around a table.

One child stands in the center of the group and holds a regular hat in their hand. The child then puts the hat onto a different child's head. The child who is now wearing the hat says their name out to the group, and then plays it, broken down into syllables, on the drum. The group responds with "Hello, Lu-kas", for example, and also drums the name. When the name has been drummed, the previously selected child puts the hat onto a different child's head, and the game repeats.

4.2.2 Name game

Game preparation: All children sit with their KLACKS! Boxes out in front of them, either in a circle on the ground, or at a table. First, choose a rhythm sequence from chapter 3 that the children have already mastered.

All children play the simple rhythm sequence together and repeat it, e.g. rhythm no. 16 – bass, snare, clap, clap.

After the rhythm has been played a few times by the group (2-4 times) the exercise leader gives a sign to stop playing and chooses a child. This child then breaks their name down into syllables, and plays it on their KLACKS! Box. The children in the group repeat the name: "Hello, Ju-li-an," for example, and then continue to play the studied rhythm as a group. The game ends when all children have said their names.

(For children that don't have much practice, it is recommended that the leader or teacher break down the name into syllables, play it, and then let the children copy it. This can help avoid building up stressful situations for the children.)



4.3 Games for listening

Children love to observe and listen; they notice many things about their surroundings and love to share these. Children need to learn to perceive, differentiate, and recognize sounds to navigate their surroundings; listening games help learn and consolidate these abilities.

4.3.1 Drumming 'Hit the pot'

Game preparation: For this game, you need one KLACKS! Box or KLACKS! Drum Stool for every child.

A child is selected and closes its eyes so that it can't see what the others are doing. (Alternatively, they can wait outside in front of the door, and then be called back in.) In this time, the other children hide a small object in the room, e.g. a rattle, keys, a pot, etc. Once the object has been hidden, the chosen child can open their eyes / is called back inside and starts to look for the object.

The entire group sits in front of their KLACKS! Boxes and plays a rhythm. You can either take a rhythm from one of the rhythm exercises or use a "small" drumroll. Depending on the volume of the drumrolls or the rhythm, the seeking child is either close to or far away from the hidden object.

4.3.2 Guess the rhythm

Game preparation: A player is selected as the game leader. The player receives the following note symbols:



The remaining note symbol playing cards are given to the guessing group.

The game leader now comes up with a rhythm and lays it out in front of them using the note symbols. Be careful: Lay the cards out face down so the other players can't see what they are.

The game leader now plays his rhythm on his KLACKS! Box or Drum Stool for the other players. They need to listen carefully and try to recognize the rhythm. Using the note symbols, they try to lay the played rhythm out on the floor/table/board. If the rhythm was guessed correctly, a new game leader is chosen.

4.4 Games for concentration and coordination

Some children struggle to concentrate properly. Concentration and coordination games combine thinking exercises with fun and entertainment, so that children can spend hours on them. Coordination also plays an important role in these games.

4.4.1 Concert visit

The “Concert Visit” game is derived from the children’s game “I packed my bag...”.

A player is chosen to start and says “I am going to a rock concert, and I will play the ...”, for example, “bass.”

As they say this, they play the bass sound on their KLACKS! Box, and it’s the next player’s turn. This player also starts with the sentence “I am going to a rock concert, and I will play the ‘bass’ and the ‘snare’.” This goes around the group, each time adding a new beat from the known note symbols. The player that can remember the longest rhythm sequence wins.

4.4.2 Group game: Come up with a rhythm

You want to create your own rhythm together with your class or learning group? The cards and note symbols are ideal for this.



Split up the children into different groups to come up with a rhythm together; it works especially well if you rap or rhyme some words to it. Decide on how many symbols to use in the rhythm, then it’s super easy to come up with a rhythm sequence that everyone can play along to. This way, children develop a sense of which symbols go well together, and which are difficult to string together. At the end, let the different groups present and play their rhythm to the other children.



4.5 Music games for language development

Language is a rhythm, and children learn the language especially well through games; rhythmic speech helps children to learn the ability to separate syllables. Making music and drumming provide great opportunities to learn languages in a playful manner: Children can concentrate on the rhythm, tempo, and beat, at the same time developing their speaking voices and expanding their vocabulary.

However, many educators and teachers are less musically educated and have a hard time incorporating musical support into everyday school/kindergarten life, seeing it as just a necessary evil. For example, how can you carry out an efficient language and musical education if the groups often consist of more than 25 children, or the rooms are too small for effective game design?

With our KLACKS! system, we have developed a system especially for kindergartens and schools, which will make working with rhythm easier for teachers and educators by providing a simple system of notes, and give them the ability to work with larger groups.



4.5.1 Drumming by syllables

When drumming by syllables, we recommend alternating between using the bass (blue hand) and the snare (red hand) on the KLACKS! Box for each consecutive syllable.

The following examples demonstrate some different words with 2, 3, or even more syllables (words with just 1 syllable are played with just one beat). Now you need to try and play the words broken down into syllables. In order to prevent the students from speeding up as they play, speak the names while drumming. This helps the students to stay on beat and drum evenly. Have you drummed all the words by syllables? Then come up with some of your own words to drum to as a group.

					
Lö-	we	Fla-	sche	Na-	se

Examples of words with three syllables

					
Ba-	na-	na	mar-	ry-	ing

					
ho-	li-	day	an-	te-	lope

Come up with more 3-syllable words and let the children try to drum to the syllables of the words.

Examples of words with four syllables

							
Wa-	ter-	me-	lon	he-	li-	cop-	ter

							
al-	li-	ga-	tor	ca-	ter-	pil-	lar

Still haven't had enough? Try to come up with words consisting of more syllables. There are no limits to your imagination here.

4.6 Music games for counting

Our KLACKS! instruments allow you to integrate the world of numbers into everyday kindergarten life in a playful manner. Below we provide a short overview of the number games you can implement for a kindergarten:

4.6.1 Throw the Die

The children sit in a circle, either on their Drum Stools or with their KLACKS! Box out in front of them. There should be eye contact between the children.

Now, a game leader throws a large foam die into the middle of the room, so that all children can see the number thrown. The children all shout the number of points displayed on the die, and then drum as many beats on their KLACKS! drums

Variation:

If the children want to try some basic arithmetic problems, you can throw the die twice in a row and ask what the sum of both dice throws is. The result is then played rhythmically on the KLACKS! drums.

4.6.2 “Drum master, how many times can I drum?”

One player is selected as the “drum master” or game leader (preferably the teacher or educator). The other players sit on their KLACKS! stools or with their KLACKS! Boxes out in front of them. Now each player takes turns asking the game leader the following question:

“Drum master, how many times can I drum?”

The “drum master” answers with an arbitrary number and a freely chosen beat order or tempo (e.g. slow beats on the bass; short, quick beats on the snare; or 2x bass, 3x snare). Every player can now play the ‘commanded’ number of beats, in the manner dictated, on their KLACKS! Boxes.



4.7 Music games for certain situations and rituals

Children need well-structured daily routines and rituals: Snack time in the mornings or repeated game situations. Recurring rituals help children find their bearings in the group and provide a form of security. We thought about how you could integrate the KLACKS! Box into the daily routine and have compiled some different playful rituals:

4.7.1 Greeting Rituals

Use the KLACKS! Boxes in your morning greeting, by rhythmically supporting a greeting song with the KLACKS! drums. For example, sing “good morning” in different languages, and follow the “good morning” with a double drumbeat:

Guten	Morgen			Buon	giorno		
Good	Morning			Bon	jour		

4.7.2 Morning Circle

It is almost impossible to imagine a kindergarten without a morning circle. It is the ideal place to convey rules and information to children, but circle time also stands for fun and games in a kindergarten. The morning circle serves as a place for joint activities in the kindergarten group such as singing and playing, but also learning. Circle time is recommended for the beginning of kindergarten or as a final event.

Try to integrate the KLACKS! Box into the morning circle; the possible applications are endless! For example, place a KLACKS! Box into the center of the circle during an introduction round and then have each child go up to the KLACKS! Box and play a “solo” when their name is called.

Build a **greeting rap**, e.g.

Who's drumming now?

It's Lukas' turn.

Look at how he's drumming – wow!

1,2,3,4 (the kid drums here)

When singing songs, integrate the KLACKS! Box by having the children use them to rhythmically accompany the song.

Introduce new children to the kindergarten group by welcoming them with a **drumroll**.

**With KLACKS! you will learn rhythm
in the most simple way.**

We have developed a system of notes for it, consisting of symbols. The depiction of notes using symbols and colors allows children to play simple rhythms and learn in a playful manner. No prior knowledge is required to use the KLACKS! system; it allows the children to make quick learning progress. There are no complicated rules to handling it and it is extremely easy for teachers and educators to implement.

In this teaching book you will find examples of applications, music games with various themes (movement, language development, understanding numbers), and various rhythm exercises. The book is designed in such a way that no previous musical knowledge is required, and to explain the topic of "rhythm" in the simplest possible way.

KLACKS