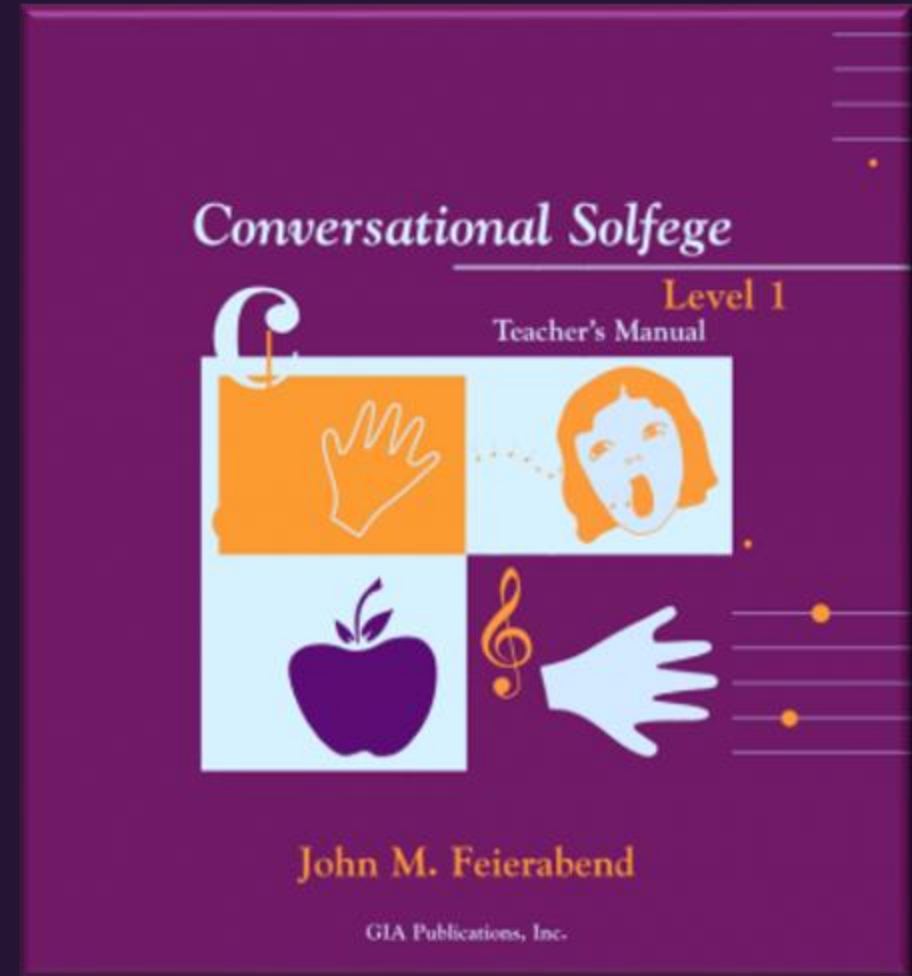


# Musical Thinking Games and Techniques for the Feier-Drill

*Excerpted from*  
**John Feierabend's Curriculum**  
**Conversational Solfege, Level 1**

An Ear-First pathway to growing  
musical thinking



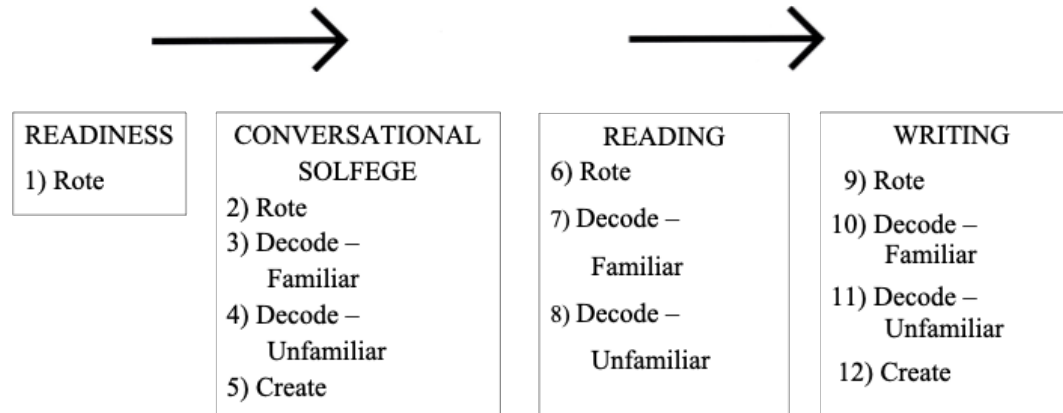
Available at GIA Music | [www.giamusic.com](http://www.giamusic.com)

# Conversational Solfege (CS) is a music reading curriculum

## Conversational Solfege Units

RHYTHM UNITS		TONAL UNITS	
Unit 1			
Unit 2			
Unit 3			
Unit 6		Unit 4	drm
Unit 7		Unit 5	drm s
Unit 8			
Unit 9			
Unit 13		Unit 10	drm sl
Unit 14		Unit 11	drmf s
Unit 15		Unit 12	drmfsl
Unit 16			
Unit 17			
Unit 19		Unit 18	s, drmfsl
Unit 20			
		Unit 21	s,l, drmfsl
		Unit 22	s,l,t,drmfsl
		Unit 23	Minor (Aeolian)
		Unit 24	s,l,t,drmfsl d'
		Unit 25	s,l,t,drmfsltd'
		Unit 26	m,f,s,l,t,drmfsltd'r'm'

## The 12 Steps of CONVERSATIONAL SOLFEGE™



### Also remember:

- 1) Sing for the class not with the class.
- 2) Develop skill with patterns before songs when decoding.
- 3) Develop inner hearing at every stage.
- 4) Most learning takes place when a child sings individually by themselves.
- 5) Develop vocal proficiency before instrumental applications at any level.

## Scaffolding Learning

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Excerpts from the Conversational Solfege Level 1 teacher manual used by permission of GIA Music, Chicago, Il..

# Conversational Steps 2- 4 Rhythm

## Step 3 & 4

### Step 2 Rote

#### Who Speaks What – T.M. p. 21

- Teacher speaks a pattern with rhythm syllables. Class repeats it.
- Teacher instructs the class to say only certain parts of the pattern and the teacher will say the other parts.  
(or)
- Teacher divides the class into two groups and tells each group which part of the pattern they should speak.  
(or)
- Teacher instructs the class to say only certain parts of the pattern and inner hear the other parts.

#### I'm Thinking of Something that Begins with – T.M. p. 25

- Teacher thinks of a four-beat pattern and says, *"I'm thinking of something that begins with ' \_\_\_\_' and sounds like . ' \_\_\_\_"* Here, the teacher speaks the first beat with rhythm syllables. Then the teacher speaks the entire pattern with neutral syllables.
- An individual attempts to decode the pattern. If he/she is incorrect, the teacher says, *"I'm thinking of something that begins with ' and sounds like . ' \_\_\_\_"* Here, the teacher speaks the first two beats with rhythm syllables. Then the teacher speaks the entire pattern with neutral syllables.
- The same individual attempts to decode the pattern again.
- Continue giving additional beats as clues until the pattern is solved. When the pattern is decoded correctly, invite the next student to decode a pattern.

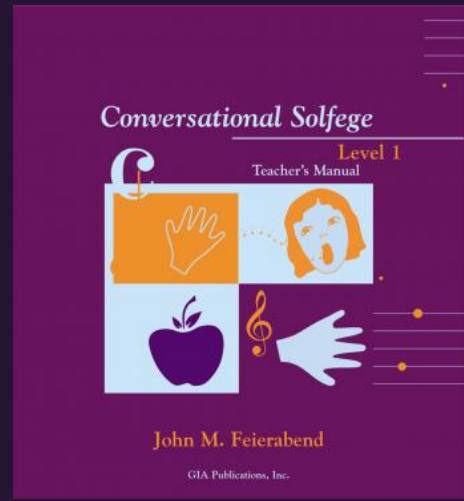
# Conversational 2 – Copy - Tonal

## Human Piano – T.M. p. 23

- Divide the class into groups.
  - Assign each group a tone.
- Ask each group to sing the assigned tone when they are pointed to.
- "Play" familiar tunes on the human piano.

*(extension)*

- Try the human piano with one individual on each tone.



There are 20 more possible games at this step in the book.

# Conversational Steps 3-4 - Tonal

First Decode Familiar patterns and songs , and then unfamiliar patterns and songs

## Rapid Fire – T.M. p. 27

- Play one tone at a time on the piano or other pitched instrument.
- Have the class sing each tone immediately after it is played. Play the tones in random order.
- Increase the speed as students develop competence.

# Conversational Step 5 – Rhythm

Create Rhythm Pattern

Add thiki for yourself

## **Think for Yourself, But Don't Change This – T.M. p. 30**

- Teacher speaks four-beat rhythm patterns with rhythm syllables.
- Individuals take turns creating rhythm patterns with rhythm syllables that are different from each pattern the teacher speaks, but:
  - The first beat is the same.
  - The last beat is the same.
  - The first and last beats are the same.
  - The first two beats are the same.
  - The first and third beats are the same.
  - The last two beats are the same.
  - The second and third beats are the same.
- Students continue until all have created a four-beat pattern.

Create Rhythm Pattern

Add something else

## **Take a Conversational Walk – T.M. p. 32**

- Students stand in a circle and place a paper plate by their feet.
- Teacher plays a recording of instrumental music with a consistent tempo that is comfortable for the students to walk with the beat.
- At the same time all students create a four-beat pattern while standing by their paper plate.
- The entire circle walks four steps to the left and arrives at the next paper plate.
- At the same time all students create a different four-beat pattern while they stand by their paper plate.
- Students continue creating patterns until the music has stopped.

# Conversational Step 5 – Tonal

## Create Tonal Pattern

### **Create a Pattern That Includes... T.M. p. 36**

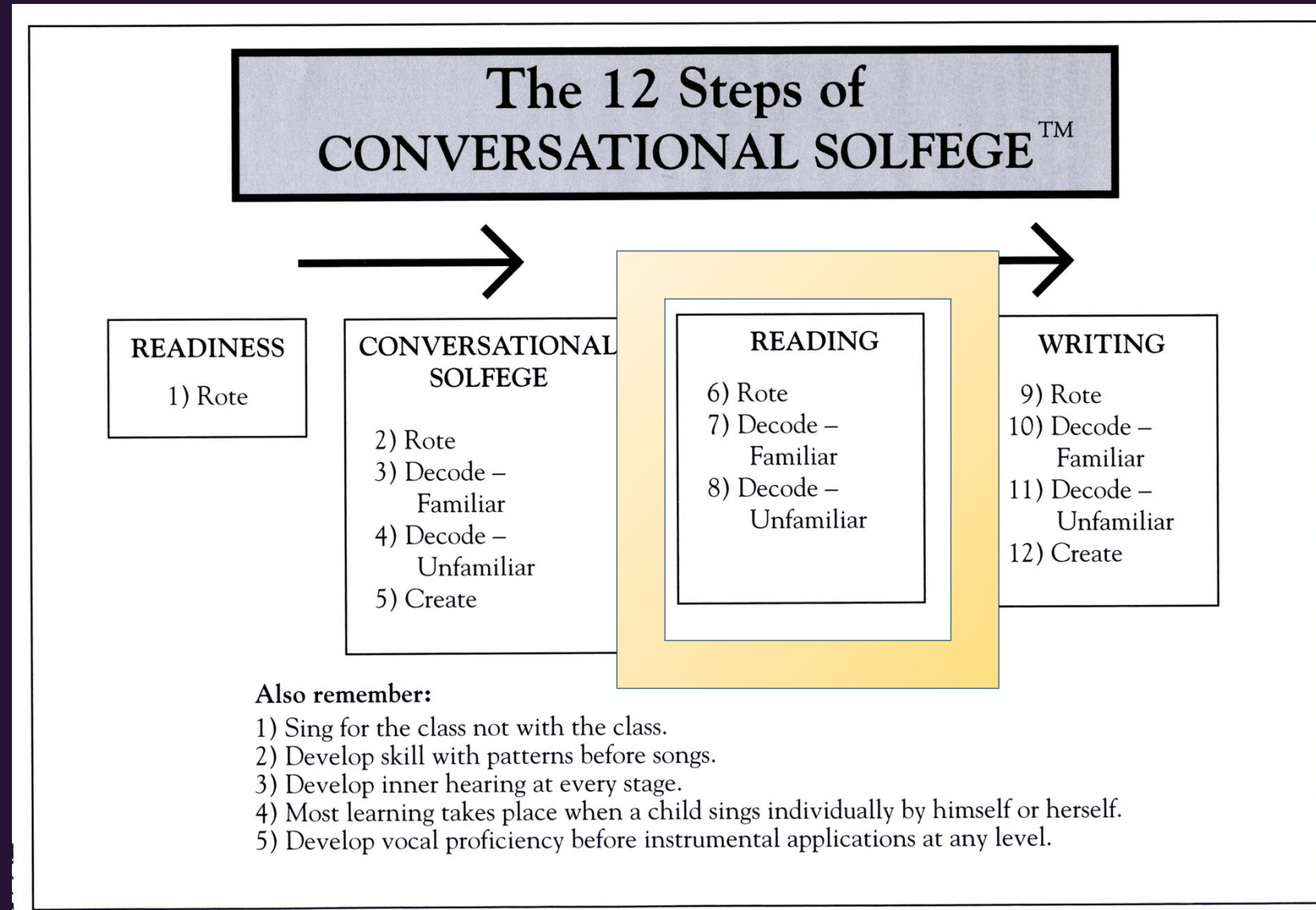
- Individual students create tonal patterns with tonal syllables with one of the following restrictions:
  - Begin the pattern with a specific tone.
  - End the pattern with a specific tone.
  - Use a specific tone only once in the pattern.
  - Use a specific tone anywhere except the first and last beats.
  - Make the first and last tones the same.
  - Make the first two tones the same.
  - Make the first and third tones the same.
  - Make the last two tones the same.
  - Make the second and third tones the same.

## Create Tonal Pattern

### **Drop and Add T.M. p. 37**

- Teacher sings a four-tone pattern with tonal syllables.
- A student sings the teacher's last two tones and adds two more tones.
- The next individual sings that student's last two tones and adds two more.
- Students continue until all have created a four-tone pattern.


# Reading Steps 6 - 8








# Step 6 & 7 TONAL


## Patterns Set 1A


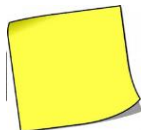
1.  $\frac{2}{4}$  



2.  $\frac{2}{4}$  




3.  $\frac{2}{4}$  

4.  $\frac{2}{4}$  

5.  $\frac{2}{4}$  

6.  $\frac{2}{4}$   

7.  $\frac{2}{4}$   

8.  $\frac{2}{4}$     8



Step 6 – Reading Rote (Echo)

Step 7 – Reading Decode Familiar

Step 8 – Reading Decode then Unfamiliar

## Step 8

Decode Unfamiliar

Read: with syllables first then words

Tech: read this


Animal Sounds 

Read in Canon





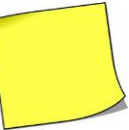
antiphonal Reading

Patterns first, then songs

## Closet Key

$\frac{2}{4}$  

1. I have lost my clos-et key in my la-dy's gar-den.

I have lost my clos-et key in my la-dy's gar-den.



# Step 6 & Step 7



Step 6 – Reading Rote (Echo)

Step 7 – Reading Decode Familiar

## **Read and Remember T.M. p. 40**

- Teacher displays a flashcard with a rhythm pattern.
- Teacher gives the students four beats to "think" the pattern with rhythm syllables.
  - Teacher lowers the flashcard from view and students speak the pattern aloud.

## **4) Read in Canon T.M. p. 40**

- Teacher displays a flashcard with a four-beat rhythm pattern.
- Students "think" the pattern with rhythm syllables.
- Teacher shows the next flashcard. While students look at the second flashcard, they speak the rhythm pattern of the first flashcard.
- Students then speak the rhythm pattern of the second flashcard while looking at the third flashcard. And so on.

## **Take a Reading Walk T.M. p. 41**

- The teacher prepares flashcards with a four-beat rhythm pattern for each.
- Students stand in a circle and place a flashcard with a rhythm pattern on the floor before them.
- Teacher plays a recording of instrumental music with a consistent tempo that is comfortable for the students to walk with the beat.
- All students read the four-beat pattern printed on their flashcard with rhythm syllables at the same time.
- The entire circle walks four steps to the left and arrives at the next flashcard.
- All students read their new four-beat pattern with rhythm syllables at the same time.
- Students continue around the circle until each student has read all of the patterns.

# TONAL

Step 6 No Rhythm

Rote: copy with syllables

Technique: echo

Echo

Step 7 & 8

Read: with syllables first

Tech: read this

next time: Read in canon

Lesson after that: Antiphonal reading

Decode

Notation

Bar/measure

Quarter note

Eight notes

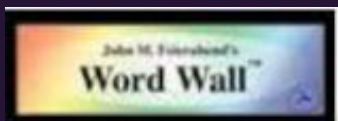
Double barline

Meter signature

Stem

Notehead

Beams



## Patterns Set 4A

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

## Patterns Set 4B

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

# Step 7 & 8



Step 7 – Reading Decode Familiar

Step 8 – Reading Decode Unfamiliar

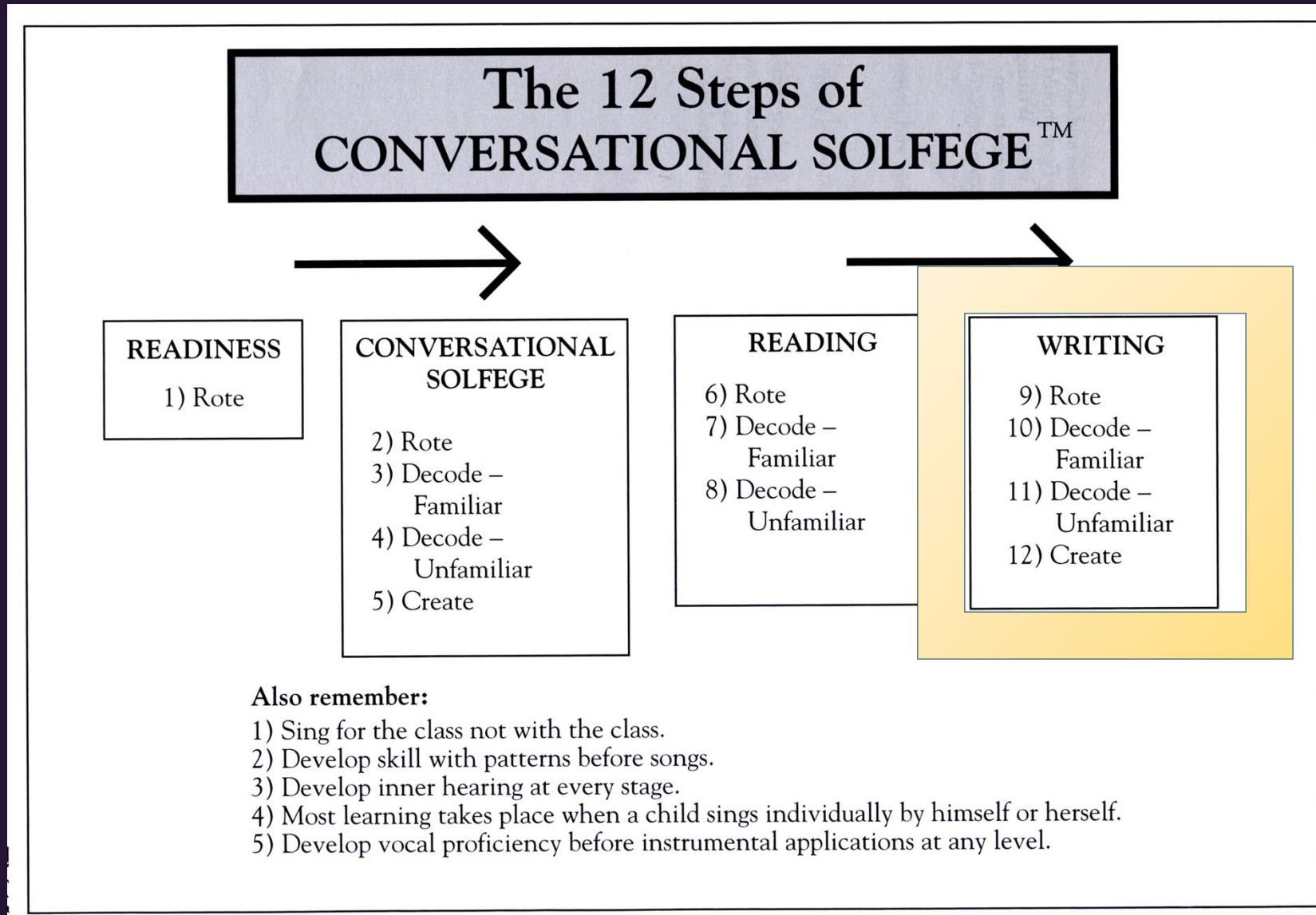
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# Writing Steps 9-12





# Pre – Writing



Step 9 Writing Rote (copying)

Step 10 Decode Familiar (**Dictation**)

Step 11 Decode Unfamiliar (**Dictation**)

Step 12 Create (**Composition**)

**Helpful:**

Flash cards

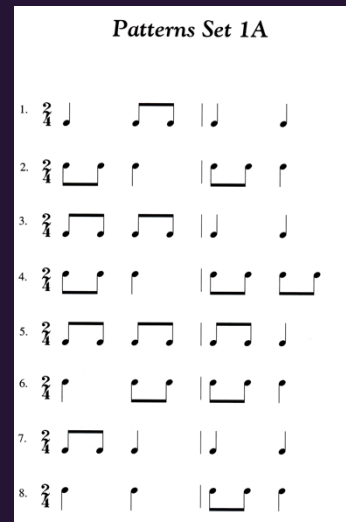


Handstaff

Lead up to writing with *Alternative Writing Techniques*

Techniques:

- People Notes
- Note Cards, *then*
- White Boards
- Floor Staff



Use patterns



Notation  
Bar/measure  
Quarter note  
Eight notes  
Double barline  
Meter signature  
Stem  
Notehead  
Beams

# *Alternative Writing* Techniques

- People Notes & Note Cards,
- Floor Staff

## **4) Human Rhythm – TM p. 50**

- Teacher displays a rhythm pattern.
- Students work in small groups and arrange themselves to look like the pattern presented.
- Simple rhythms can be depicted as follows:

## **Floor Staff – TM p. 50 – For Dictation steps**

- Teacher places five lines of masking tape on the floor to represent a ten-foot staff.
- Teacher sings tonal patterns and shows each tone's location by stepping in the correct locations (walking from one end of the staff to the other).
- Groups of students repeat each tonal pattern by singing and stepping in the correct locations.

## **3) Floor Staff – T.M. Page 53**

- Teacher places five masking tape lines on the floor to represent a ten-foot staff.
- Teacher sings a tonal pattern with a neutral syllable or plays it on an instrument.
- Students take turns repeating each tonal pattern with tonal syllables and stepping in the correct locations on the floor staff

# Writing – Do it Together -

## Student Steps:

1. Listen,
2. Copy,
3. Decode
4. Write



Notation  
Bar/measure  
Quarter note  
Eight notes  
Double bar line  
Meter signature  
Stem  
Notehead  
Beams



Watch a video of the worksheet being completed.

### Step 9 *Copy*

D  
i  
c  
t  
a  
t  
i  
o  
n  
  
Step 10  
Decode  
*Familiar*  
  
Step 11  
Decode  
Unfamiliar

### Step 12 *Create*

C  
o  
m  
p  
o  
s  
i  
t  
i  
o  
n

## 4 steps in 1 sheet

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

Unit 1 - Writing with

1. Copy this

2. Copy this

3. Decode this

Miss White Had a freight.

4. Secret Message

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Write an answer to this question

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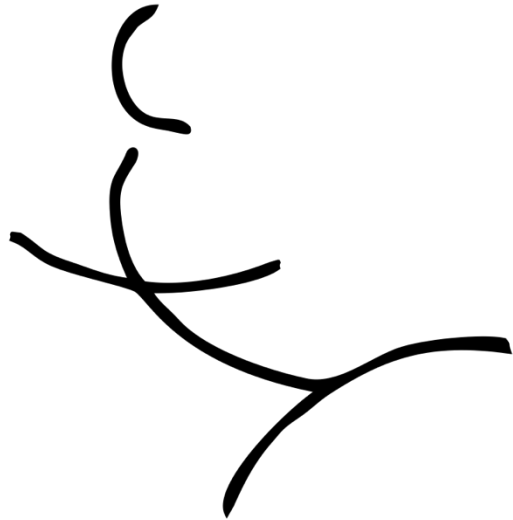
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Upcoming Events Calendar

John Crever regularly travels to lead professional development sessions with school districts and music education organizations. Set up a meeting to discuss how to bring your professional development wishes to fruition.



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