

RHYTHMIC EXERCISES:

How did you learn to read rhythms? Was it something abstract and math-y?

1 2 e & 3 & 4 & 1 & a 2 aaaand and 4 1 e & a 2 3 & 4

Carolyn Graham's *Jazz Chants* is an ESL approach that relies on the rhythmic nature of speech to allow for memorizing phrases and the intonation patterns of conversational English. Jeff Brandt's "Tasty Rhythms" is similar: utilizing syllable stress to make abstract rhythms easier to conceptualize. The rhythms are basic and easy to customize to local food (I prefer to let students come up with their own):

QUARTER NOTES: EIGHTH NOTES:

fish fish fish fish man-go-man-go-man-go man-go

16th notes:

wat-er-me-lon wat-er-me-lon wa-ter-me-lon wat-er-me-lon

8th and 16th note combos:

straw-ber-ry straw-ber-ry straw-ber-ry straw-ber-ry co-co-nut co-co-nut co-co-nut co-co nut

The dreaded syncopated off-beat accented note cluster:

cu-cum-ber cu-cum-ber-cu-cum-ber-cu-cum-ber

Our pattern at the top becomes:

Fish co-co-nut man-go go straw-ber-ry cu-cum-ber fish wa-ter-mel-on fish man-go fish

PRACTICE & PRODUCTION

Create your own syllables:

Quarter notes:   _____

Eighth notes:   _____

Sixteenth notes:     _____

Combo:    _____

Combo:     _____

Syncopated:     _____

T.U.B.S. (Time-Unit-Box-System) was created by ethnomusicologist James Koetting in the 1960s for notating African polyrhythms that didn't quite fit into western rhythmic notation. Each box represents the smallest unit of time (rather than subdividing a quarter note into 4 16th notes, it would treat the 16th as the box). This allows for an equally-divided, visually-aligned graphic representation of the rhythm. It can easily be layered with multiple instruments or various pitches, or altered to suit your needs (as I have done below: note that I treat each box as a sub-divided food item)

High pitch	Mango		Coco-	Wa- ter-	Mango		Cucumber	
Low pitch		Fish	-nut	-me -lon		Fish		fish

Try writing your own, using your own syllables created above:

High pitch								
Low pitch								

High pitch								
Low pitch								