

Music Education Network

- for The Visually Impaired -

An International Coalition of Parents, Educators, and Students

- MENVI Headquarters -

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- *The College Survival Guide is Now Available for Download* -
- *The Seven Little Steps To Read Music in Braille* -

COLLEGE SURVIVAL GUIDE NOW AVAILABLE FOR FREE DOWNLOAD

The newly revised edition of “*A Blind Music Student’s College Survival Guide*” is now available as a special free service on the MENVI website at www.menvi.org. A braille edition is available by special request at www.atpc.net. If you are planning to enter college as a blind music major, consider doing a little early homework to avoid an inevitable struggle. By knowing your own special needs, and letting your chosen school know that “you know” what your needs will be, you can make your own difference in success or failure. Never does an approaching Fall Semester go by that we are not confronted with a student whose college Disabled Student Services has assured him or her that they are in control of needs and can supply alt-media. About 90 % of time, the student ends up frantic within weeks of beginning classes with no transcriber, no texts, and promises that cannot be met.

Sadly, there are schools that believe all they need to do is purchase software, and away they go. Wrong! The time needed for tutorial training must be considered, and rarely is. All of these problems can be avoided with a little

information and preparation. Hopefully this little manual will fill the gap. Prominent educators and DSS officers have endorsed the guidebook, and their contributions have been included.

SPEAKING OF HOMEWORK - HOW ABOUT A SHORT LESSON IN MUSIC BRAILLE?

Since music education and braille music is our focus, we thought you might find the following “mini-course” in music braille reading useful and fun. It has been used at several conference presentations, including the recent 49th CTEVH conference, and at CSUN conferences. Try it with groups by dividing them into singing sections. Use Middle C on your keyboard for “do” as the pitch, and watch the smiles.

On the serious side of music braille pedagogy, use the little ear training steps 1-4 before attempting to introduce actual music code. No, VI teachers, you will NEVER, EVER confuse a student with music vs. literary IF you begin with solfege, and ONLY if you leave the dots 3-6 for later to teach values. That way, the

Seven Little eighth notes never change, and music students only need to know those seven at first. The value dots, 3 & 6, are added later.

7 Little Steps To Read Music in Braille

*Whether you read print music, or think it looks like your worst nightmare,
anyone can read music in braille!*

STEP 1

“Do” (pronounced as “dough”) is the Middle C on the piano keyboard.

STEP 2

Learn the first five notes of the C Scale:

1. Solfege Syllables: *do re mi fa sol*
2. Letters: *C D E F G*
3. Numbers: *1 2 3 4 5 = Piano Keyboard = Right Hand fingers 1-5*
Thumb = finger 1

STEP 3 – a Trio:

Group 1 sing: *do - re - mi - fa - sol*
Group 2. sing: *mi - fa - sol - fa - mi*
Group 3 sing: *sol - fa - mi - re - do*

Name That Tune!

1. *do - re - mi - do - mi - do - mi*
re - mi - fa - fa - mi - re - fa ...
2. *mi - mi - mi --- mi - mi - mi --- mi - sol - do - re - mi ...*

A Duet:

Group 1 Sing: *mi - mi - mi --- mi - mi - mi --- mi - sol - do - re - mi*
Group 2 Sing: *do - re - do --- do - re - do --- do - re - mi - fa - sol*

STEP 4

Quiz: [The answers are written backward – don’t cheat – try it first]

1. Which scale step number is *mi*?eerht
2. Which solfege syllable is number 3? im
3. Which solfege syllable is the note G? los (in the scale of C)
4. What is the interval name between *do* and *fa*? htruof

STEP 5 - Reading Music in Braille With Numbers (sing step 1 as “do,” and so on)

1. ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠
 1 2 3 4 5 5 4 3 2 1

2. ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠
 1 2 3 1 3 4 5 4 3 2 1 2 1

STEP 6 - Reading with Braille Music Notation

Eighth Notes: ⠠⠠ ⠠⠠ ⠠⠠ ⠠⠠ ⠠⠠
 do re mi fa sol
 1 2 3 4 5
 C D E F G

Name That Tune!

1. Eighth Notes & rests: ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠
2. Quarter Notes & rests: ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠
3. Quarter Notes & Half Notes: ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠

STEP 7 - All Notes – The C Scale

Eighth Notes: ⠠⠠⠠ ⠠⠠⠠ ⠠⠠⠠ ⠠⠠⠠ ⠠⠠⠠ ⠠⠠⠠ ⠠⠠⠠ ⠠⠠⠠
 do re mi fa sol la ti do
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
 C D E F G A B C

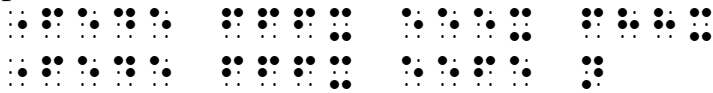
Quarter Notes: ⠠⠠⠠⠠ ⠠⠠⠠⠠ ⠠⠠⠠⠠ ⠠⠠⠠⠠ ⠠⠠⠠⠠ ⠠⠠⠠⠠ ⠠⠠⠠⠠
 Half Notes: ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠
 Whole Notes: ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠

Now, divide your classes or into little groups. Rehearse each group’s part first, then put your first braille choir together!

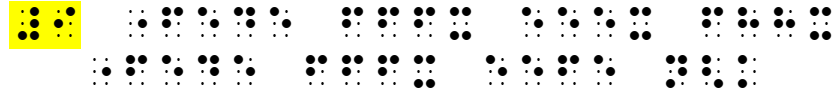
Let's Sing and Play!

HARRY HAD A LITTLE JAM - DUET

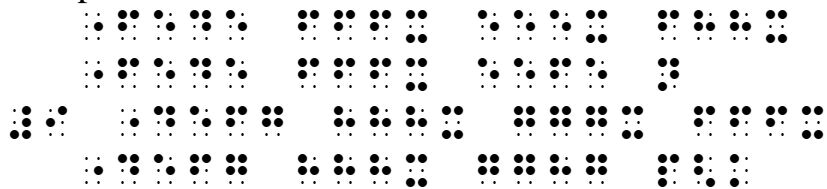
Group 1:



(measure #9)

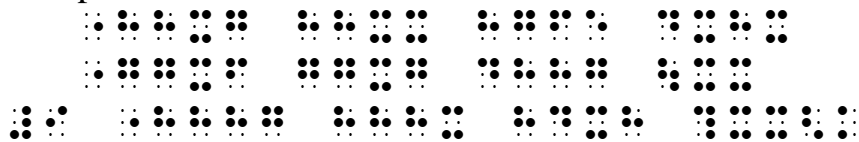


Group 2:

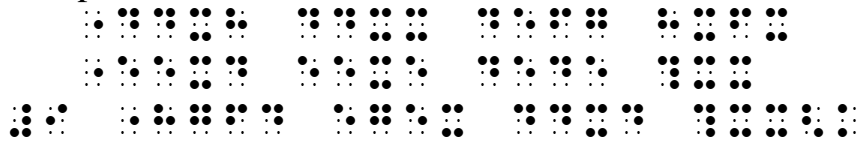


JAZZ FOR BEGINNERS - DUET

Group 1:



Group 2:




A BRAILLE MUSIC DICTIONARY FOR EXPERTS (almost)

⠠ The Braille Number Sign
 Numbers 1-0: ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠

⠠⠠ Middle C with Fourth Octave Sign, dot 5

⠠⠠ ⠠⠠ ⠠⠠ ⠠⠠ ⠠⠠ ⠠⠠ ⠠⠠ ⠠⠠ = The C Scale in Eighth Notes

⠠⠠ Eighth Rest

- ⋮ Quarter Note C - (add dot 6 to the eighth note)
- ⋮ Quarter Rest
- ⋮ Half Note C - (add dot 3)
- ⋮ Half Rest
- ⋮ Whole Note C - add dots 3 & 6
- ⋮ Whole Rest
- ⋮⋮ Ending Double Bar
- ⋮⋮ Backward Repeat Sign (used for repeat of a section)
- ⋮⋮⋮ Four-Quarter Time Signature
- ⋮⋮ Low C (quarter note) with Third Octave Sign, dots 456

NEWS FROM OUR WEBMASTER FOR ONLINE MEMBERS ONLY

Serving as a webmaster for an organization such as the MENVI Network is quite involved. One must be able to keep track of applications, contact forms, billing for maintenance of the site, upkeep after development, and much more. I've just described my work for the MENVI Network overall. However, in addition to keeping up, I also have another responsibility.

As part of the job, I maintain a database of subscribers who have signed up for E-mail and web delivery notification. While I may not cover those lists as in previous articles, I would like to describe more of what goes on, and what we all can do to help eliminate problems.

Here at MENVI web services, we have a privacy policy that went into effect last year. I've modified it this year in order to cover the Downloads section of the site. A new section will be developed to address the purpose of our internal database, which we keep track of when a member signs up for e-mail and web delivery. This database will never be shared with anyone outside the inner workings of our network. We may from time to time send it to members who are subscribed to both lists so that they might see what is there, and to make sure they are up to date. This is generally done at least twice a year, about one month before the new roster is due, and again in six months after the roster has been published.

In January of this year, I requested that someone internally assist me in compiling members' names with the e-mail addresses so that we could track those who were missing. That work was not done as I had hoped, thus it became necessary to ask a volunteer to help complete the project. At

that point, I went through all of our applications, dating back to 2003, in order to determine who was missing. We telephoned at least 15 different members, and then discarded the names of those where the info was invalid. While I was not expecting everyone to return calls, I was glad to have folks in contact with us again. I want to remind everyone that I really need YOUR help! I've designed the lists in such a way that we can track bounces more accurately. I won't go into detail on how we do it, but we have accomplished much. With over 500 network members, there are now 190 online, with about 200 using e-mail and website delivery.

One thing that I have noticed on this database, is the fact that we have members who have not provided us with phone numbers. It has been necessary to look up international codes for quite a few of the members to determine how to dial numbers. As I've indicated, your privacy is a priority here at MENVI web. If you do not want to publish your number with the network, that is your choice, but be aware that if your e-mail address bounces, and we do not have a phone number, we have no choice but to remove your listing from the communication feature of the network. We will not attempt to locate you through other means. [editor's note: Please remember that the purpose of any network cannot be fully realized without the ability of members to "network" by contacting one another. Your application assumes your permission to publish your contact information.]

In one instance, the number of an applicant actually belonged to someone else. Fortunately, the party was very pleasant, and provided the necessary information for me. I am unable to invest time and network resources to search for elusive information.

I respectfully ask that you try to help us with your accurate updates. If you know you are moving, or your phone number changes, your e-mail address changes, or if you are receiving braille or print and your mailing address changes, please fill out a new application. Or, you can contact Jared Rimer if you need a new application faxed to you. If you are online, we do require that you fill out a new application.

I am here to help. I will only call or send mail to those who request it. If you do not want us to contact you, kindly contact us through our "contact form," or by calling Jared Rimer directly. I can then verify the information that we have on file, and make corrections accordingly.

You may read our privacy policy at any time by going to our web site at www.menvi.org. The privacy policy link can be found on any page. If you have questions, please look up Jared Rimer in your roster, or call 818-921-4976 international, or toll-free 866-824-7876, and follow the voice prompts.

Jared Rimer, Webmaster

COMMON SENSE ... has it gone the way of the cassette? [Editorial]

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In the effort to see that music examples are in the hands of a reader on a class day that they are needed, there is no substitute for the combined efforts of the music transcriber, and a textbook specialist who may use the files such as NIMAS to document-process text portions of a music theory book. Sadly, if the crystal ball continues to yield the direction of an un-checked paradigm shift, we could begin to see a serious decline in quality of music transcriptions used in classrooms. With so many wonderful newly certified transcribers coming out of NLS, and only beginning the process of acquiring precious experience, the potential problems for music braille readers could become simply unimaginable. In addition, refreshable braille is great! But until the developers put aside some profits to create a note-taker whereby two to five vertical lines of braille can be viewed, the devices will remain about 80% useless for music theory in the college arena.

And so the analogous cassette tape may not have gone the way of the horse and buggy altogether, that is if we apply a little of that rare "C" word. Consider a parallel: Not long ago, a simple recorder and cassette tape was the perfect tool to use in music lessons. An instructor could instantly re-play examples, and send home inexpensive and priceless impromptu demonstrations with his or her student. Now, it is virtually impossible to do without mounds of digital technology at hand. And, the result is that decline in quality of which I spoke, and clearly emerging evidence of un-controlled *paradigm shift*. UNLESS we, the music teachers, apply the simple catalyst of common sense, just like inferior and more flimsy products we see everywhere, nature will take its course and our readers will be the losers. This is simply not a good direction,

particularly considering the dramatic increase of blind music majors who are now required to read music in most colleges!

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Band Music/Director - Rick Coates, Band & Music Technology, The Governor Morehead School - coatesncr@earthlink.net
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Braille Piano Music Library Resources – Stephanie Pieck, Concert Pianist; Braille Music Instructor for New York Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped - themusicsuite@verizon.net

Braille Music Textbooks and Formats - Ed Godfrey, Braille Program Assistant, Washington Talking Book and Braille Library, Seattle - ed@wtbbl.org

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International Braille Music Code - Mrs. Bettye Krolick - (Retired) Compiler, *New International Manual of Braille Music Notation*

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Music Transcriber Training and Certification - Karen Gearreald Braille Music Advisor/Instructor for The Library of Congress, Washington DC - karen118@cox.net

National Braille Association Music Committee - Lawrence Smith, Chairman - NBA Music Committee - musicbrl@earthlink.net

Postsecondary Braille Music Literacy & Advocacy - Valerie Gaer-Sandler M.M., Postsecondary Education Specialist - vgae@msn.net

Professional Transcriber Software and Technology - Robert Stepp, President of Computer Application Specialties Company (*ED-IT PC; Braille 2000*)

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