

Beatbox Staff

Beatbox staff is an interactive way to teach students the names of the notes in a musical staff.

A musical staff has five lines. Traditionally, we are taught an acronym to remember the notes on each line: Every Good Boy Does Fine (EGBDF). Likewise, the spaces in between the lines are represented by the acronym "FACE".

I separate the class into three sections, and then I start a rhythm using the rhyme "every good boy does fine" in a rap lyrics style. Group 1 will rap the rhyme while group 2 lays down the beatbox, using the phrase "boots and cats." It's a simple word combination that when emphasized properly sounds like a bass and snare drum. Group 3 will chant the word "FACE" as if cheering on group one.

This creates such an earworm that my students never forget the sound. I will then ask the students to create their own rhymes based on the lines of the staff. A few examples my students have come up with: "Empty Garbage Before Dad Flips," or "Even George Bush Farts Everyday."

Giving the kids the opportunity to be creative carves in their memory the main purpose of the lesson. Rather than wrote memorization, the game helps them internalize the notes and gets them thinking about rhythm as well.

