

## POSSIBLE TEACHING SEQUENCE



### INTRODUCTION

1. Harmonica Care
  - a. Be selfish—don't share!
  - b. Be sanitary—don't eat or drink right before you play! (Rinse your mouth with water before you play.)
  - c. Be responsible—keep your harmonica in its case and remember where you put it!
2. Breathing
  - a. Breathe gently (don't overblow)
  - b. Breathe from your "belly" (from the diaphragm)
3. Instrument Position
  - a. Hands
    - i. Grip between thumb and a finger or two of the left hand
    - ii. Cup right hand around left hand
  - b. Mouth
    - i. Angled down—lower lip soft (JP)
    - ii. Lots of harmonica in the mouth
    - iii. Teeth may rest on ridge about ¼ inch apart (David Harp)
  - c. Lips
    - i. Keep them wet
4. How the harmonica works
  - a. Show harmonica parts
  - b. Discuss how the reeds vibrate

**Storytime:** Read a book with a harmonica theme to avoid hyperventilation!

### PLAYING SEQUENCE

1. Playing
  - a. Blow vs. Draw
    - i. Pitch changes between blow/draw
  - b. Pitch exploration/exercises
    - i. As the hole numbers increase (1-10), the pitch goes from low to high
    - ii. Explore all areas on blow or draw: low (123)—middle(456)—high(789)
    - iii. Tip: use sliding as well as individual areas (low/middle/high)
    - iv. Combine blow and draw – can add 'wah-wah' or 'shake' on longer sounds or 'endings'
  - c. Dynamics exploration
    - i. Practice changing loud/soft
    - ii. Discuss the importance of playing softer (reeds will go out of tune if played too loud)
  - d. Rhythm patterns
    - i. Play rhythm patterns to reinforce reading
    - ii. Could be all blow or all draw
    - iii. Could blow on quarters, draw on eighths
    - iv. Tip: divide room, boys vs. girls, different colors play
    - v. Could have students say "ta", "ti-ti" while playing rhythms
  - e. Chords – listening for I-V harmonies and playing along with a song
    - i. Blow is I chord and Draw is V chord
    - ii. Play along with I-V songs changing from blow to draw at the chord changes
    - iii. Tip: play on the beat or use a rhythm ostinato
    - iv. Example: play 'cha-cha-cha' rhythm at the end of each phrase of "Mama Paquita" (all blow or all draw depending on the chord)

- f. Chords and changing from high to low (or reverse)
- i. exercise: (B=blow; H=high; L=low; D=draw)  
 BH-BL-BH-BL-BH-BL-BH-DL  
 DH-DL-DH-DL-DH-DL-DH-BL  
 Put these two patterns together and play along with  
 “Pay Me My Money Down” (take a break during the interludes)
- g. Playing single notes (partial songs) – using *mi-re-do* patterns (holes 4 & 5)
- i. play by rote at first:  
 exercises
    - a. 5B 4D 4B
    - b. 5B 5B 4D 4D 4B (Old MacDonald’s Farm)
    - c. 5B 5B – 4D 4B (Way Down ...Brickyard-2<sup>nd</sup> phrase)
    - d. 4B 4D 5B
    - e. 4B 4B 4D 4D 5B
    - f. 4B 4B – 4D 5B (Way Down ...Brickyard-1<sup>st</sup> phrase)
    - g. 4B 4D 5B – 5B 4D 4B
    - h. 4B 4B – 4D 5B –; 5B 5B – 4D 4B
  - h. Playing single notes (partial songs) – using *so-la-ti-do* patterns (holes 6 & 7)  
 exercises
    - a) 6B 6D 7D 7B (I Know an Old Lady . . .)
    - b) 6B 6B 6D 6D 7D 7D 7B
    - c) 6B 6B – 6B 6D – 7D – 7B (The Hokey Pokey)
  - i. Playing single notes (whole songs)
    - i. play 3 note songs
    - ii. play 4 note songs
    - iii. play 5 note songs and more
- Note: when choosing songs, stay in the middle octave for a better sound.

### POSSIBLE SONGS:

1. three note songs: 4B 4D 5B (do/re/mi)
  - a) Hot Cross Buns
  - b) Merrily We Roll Along
  - c) Long-Legged Sailor
  - d) Au Claire de la Lune (2 lines only)
2. four/five note songs: 4B 4D 5B 5D 6B (do/re/mi/fa/so)
  - a) Mary Had a Little Lamb
  - b) When the Saints Go Marching In
3. four/five note songs: 3B 4B 4D 5B 5D  
(so,/do/re/mi/fa)
  - a) Hush, Little Baby
  - b) The Old Grey Mare
4. six note songs: 4B 4D 5B 5D 6B 6D  
(do/re/mi/fa/so/la)
  - a) Bow Wow Wow (no fa)
  - b) Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star
  - c) Rocky Mountain
  - d) Michael Row the Boat Ashore
5. six note songs: 3D 4B 4D 5B 5D 6B  
(ti,/do/re/mi/fa/so)
  - a) Oh, Susanna
  - b) Shoo Fly
  - c) Polly Wolly Doodle
  - d) Skip to My Lou
6. six note songs: 3B 4B 4D 5B 5D 6B  
(so,/do/re/mi/fa/so)
  - a) Sleep, Baby, Sleep
  - b) Sandy McNab
7. seven note songs: 3B 3D 4B 4D 5B 5D 6B  
(so,/ti,/do/re/mi/fa/so)
  - a) Oh, My Darling Clementine
  - b) Bow Belinda
  - c) Down in the Valley
  - d) Streets of Laredo
  - e) A Ram Sam Sam
  - f) Sur le Pont d’Avignon
8. seven note songs: 4B 4D 5B 5D 6B 6D 7B  
(do/re/mi/fa/so/la/do’)
  - a) Camptown Races
  - b) On Top of Old Smokey
9. seven note songs: 3B 4B 4D 5B 5D 6B 6D  
(so,/do/re/mi/fa/so/la)
  - a) Frere Jacques
  - b) Looby Loo
10. all-blow songs
  - a) Ten in the Bed
  - b) Reveille
  - c) Taps

**Note:** You can use any B-A-G recorder song with accompaniment changed to key of C.