



# Staff and Symbol Games

by Denise Gagné

This book contains 11 games to play with your class using the Noteworthy Elementary Music Rug or on a teacher made floor staff. Ideas for making a floor staff are given on page 32. There are also 10 games to learn the names and meanings of symbols. These can all be played by a class on the Noteworthy Music Rug, but we have included a game board in this guide so the symbol games can also be played if you don't have the rug. All the written material needed to play the games are included in this guide. The teacher will need to have a class set of beanbags and paper plates for some of the games. The Noteworthy Elementary Music Rug is a great teaching tool, and an effective seating plan for primary students - 24 squares for 24 students. Use the floor staff to teach the note names on the treble staff. Use the symbol squares to teach note values, signs, and symbols. Information on ordering the rug is included at the end of the guide.

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## Themes & Variations

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# Music Rug Games

## Staff Games

### 1. Lines and Spaces Jump

#### Learning Objective:

The purpose of the game is to familiarize lower elementary students with the music staff. They will learn that there are five lines and four spaces. They will learn that the lines and spaces are numbered from bottom to top, and they will learn how to place notes on the line or in a space.

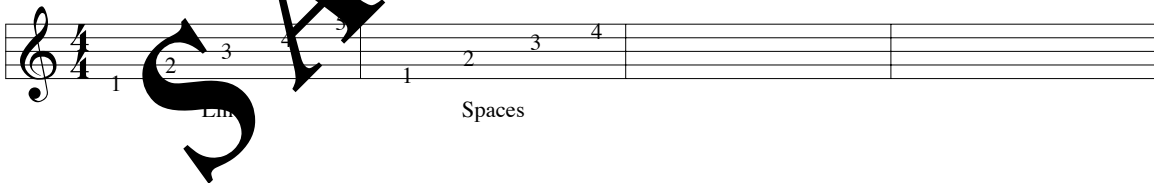
#### Level:

K-3

#### Preparation:

1. The teacher should draw a music staff on the board, and have the students count how many lines and spaces there are on the staff. The teacher should number the lines and spaces. The teacher should demonstrate the use of the hand staff, and have the children practice finding a line or space on their hand staff. I have my students hold their hand with the palm facing them, with the thumb up. The pinky finger will be line 1 and the thumb line 5.

**The Staff:** Music is written on a 5 line staff. Notes can be placed on lines or in spaces. The lines and spaces are numbered from the bottom to the top. At the beginning of a staff a clef is given. The *treble clef* circles the note G and is used for treble, or higher notes. A high pitch is shown by placing a note high on the staff. A low pitch is shown by placing the note lower on the staff.



Groups of 6-10 students will be on the music rug at a time. The size of the group that will fit will depend on the size of the rug that is purchased or made by the teacher. The students that don't fit on the rug will watch, and show the lines and spaces on their hand staffs as the teacher calls them.

#### Materials:

No additional materials are required.

#### Instructions:

Group one will jump the lines on the music staff. The teacher calls out a line number - one, two, three, four, five - and the students jump to the line that she calls. To play this as an elimination game (optional), the last child to land on the line that is called is out. The last child left after the eliminations is the winner. Group two will jump the spaces on the music staff. If groups are small, repeat the lines and spaces jump as needed until all children have had a turn.

## 2. Note Names Jump

### Learning Objective:

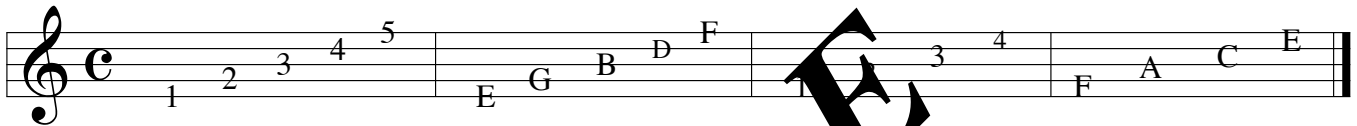
The purpose of the game is to learn the names of notes on the lines and the notes in the spaces.

### Level:

Grades 3-6

### Preparation:

1. The teacher should draw a music staff on the board, and teach the children the names of the notes on the lines and the notes in the spaces.
2. Teach the children how to find the notes on their hand staves, and practice finding all the notes of the treble staff on hand staves.



**Letter Names:** The first seven letters of the alphabet are used to name notes - ABCDEFG. When you play an instrument, you use letter names to name notes.

You can remember the names of the notes on lines with this poem:  
The notes on the line spell **Every Good Boy Does Fine**

You can remember the names of the notes in spaces with this poem:  
The notes in the space spell you **FACE**.

Groups of 6-10 students will be on the music rug at a time. The size of the group that will fit will depend on the size of the rug that is purchased. The students that don't fit on the rug will watch, and show the lines and spaces on their hand staves as the teacher calls them.

### Materials:

No additional materials are required for this game.

### Instructions:

Group one will jump the lines on the music staff. The teacher calls out a line note - E, G, B, D, F - and the students jump to the line that she calls. To play this as an elimination game (optional), the last child to land on the line that is called is out. The last child left after the eliminations is the winner. Group two will jump the spaces on the music staff. The teacher will call out a space note name - F, A, C, E. If groups are small, repeat the note names jump as needed until all children have had a turn.

When the students are very confident jumping lines or spaces, have each group jump to the note name that is called, using both notes that are on lines, and notes that are in spaces.

### 3. Note Name Beanbag Toss

**Learning Objective:**

The purpose of the game is to learn the names of the notes on the treble staff.

**Level:**

Grades 3-6

**Preparation:**

The teacher should review the names of the notes on the treble staff.

**Materials:**

A class set of beanbags is needed for this game. Most schools have sets of beanbags as part of the phys-ed equipment.

**Instructions:**

1. Divide the class into groups. The number of groups will depend on the size of the music rug purchased. On a small rug, you may only be able to have three groups. On the larger rug, you may be able to have five or six groups.
2. Give each group at least one beanbag per child. If you have lots of time and beanbags, you may want to give each child two beanbags.
3. The first child in group one tosses his beanbag onto the music staff. He must name the note. (For example, if the beanbag lands on the first space, the child must name the note F.) If the child is correct, the beanbag stays on the staff. If a mistake is made, the beanbag is removed. If the beanbag does not land on the staff, it is removed as if it were a wrong note. (This rule can be changed at the teacher's discretion. You may want to have the children name the G above the staff, or the D below the staff. Leger lines are difficult to name in this manner, but you may want to add some leger lines with painter's tape and have children learn those as well.)
4. The first child in group two tosses his beanbag and names the note. The first child in group three tosses his beanbag. Play continues, with one child tossing at a time. At the end of the game, the group that has the most beanbags remaining on the staff is the winner.

### 4. Note Name Frisbee Toss

**Materials:** A class set of Frisbees is needed for this game. If you don't have a class set, you can use the lids of margarine containers instead.

**Instructions:** Play this game in the same way as Note Name Beanbag Toss, tossing Frisbees onto the music staff instead of beanbags.

### 5. Note Name Putt

**Materials:** One golf ball per student, and at least one putter.

**Instructions:** Play this game in the same way as Note Name Beanbag Toss, but putt golf balls onto the music staff instead of tossing beanbags.

## 6. Note Name Twister

### Learning Objective:

The purpose of the game is to learn the names of the notes on the treble staff.

### Level:

Grades 3-6

### Preparation:

1. The teacher should review the names of the notes on the treble staff.

### Materials:

Treble clef note name flashcards (The game can be played without the flashcards if you don't have any. If you would like to purchase a set, visit [www.musicplay.ca](http://www.musicplay.ca).)

### Instructions:

1. Divide the class into two groups. Give each group a pile of note name flashcards.
2. One member from each group goes to the music staff. A student from group one pulls a note name flashcard from the pile, and names the note. The body parts should be given in this order: left foot, right hand, right foot, left hand, and head. If the players have accomplished correctly placing the first five body parts on the staff, elbows and knees can be added. The players on the staff must put the body part named on the note that was named. The first player to fall, or be unable to complete a task is the loser. Two new players are chosen to compete against each other. If you have a small class, you may want to have students stay on the music staff until they have been defeated. The game will take longer this way and involve fewer students, so it is best to do this with smaller classes.

## 7. Note Name Race

### Learning Objective:

The purpose of the game is to learn the names of the notes on the treble staff.

### Level:

Grades 3-6

### Preparation:

1. The teacher should review the names of the notes on the treble staff.

### Instructions:

Divide the class into two (or three) groups. Line the groups up, about 6-10 feet away from the musical staff. Name a note from the staff and specify if it is on a line or in a space. For example, G on a line. Say "Go!" before students are allowed to run. The first student from each line runs to the G line. The first student to stand on the G line is the winner.

If your classroom doesn't have enough space for students to run to the staff, choose another way to race. Students could baby step, tiptoe, walk backwards, hop or jump.

