

# John Thompson's Easiest Piano Course

## PART ONE

Copyright, MCMLV, by The Willis Music Co.  
International Copyright Secured  
Printed in England

CHAPPELL & CO., LTD. 50, NEW BOND STREET, LONDON, W.I  
THE WILLIS MUSIC CO. CINCINNATI, OHIO

## CONTENTS

	<b>PAGE</b>		<b>PAGE</b>
<b>FOREWORD</b>	3	<b>REVIEW</b> —"Marching Up and Down". . . . .	20
<b>THE KEYBOARD</b> —Showing Middle C . . . . .	4	<b>REVIEW</b> —"Rag-time Raggles" . . . . .	21
<b>KEYBOARD CHART</b> . . . . .	5	<b>WORK SHEET</b> . . . . .	22
<b>RUDIMENTS</b> . . . . .	6	<b>NEW NOTE</b> —G in the Bass "The Chimes" . . . . .	23
<b>MIDDLE C AS A SEMIBREVE</b> —In the Treble "Let's Play" . . . . .	8	<b>REVIEW</b> —"Funny Faces" . . . . .	24
<b>MIDDLE C AS A SEMIBREVE</b> —In the Bass "Let's Play" . . . . .	9	<b>REVIEW</b> —"Old MacDonald Had a Farm" . . . . .	25
<b>MIDDLE C IN MINIMS</b> "Grandfather's Clock" . . . . .	10	<b>RESTS</b> — <b>WORK SHEET</b> . . . . .	26
<b>MIDDLE C IN CROTCHETS</b> "Moccasin Dance" . . . . .	11	<b>REVIEW</b> —"Blow the Man Down" . . . . .	27
<b>WORK SHEET</b> . . . . .	12	<b>NEW NOTE</b> —F in the Treble "The Church Organ" . . . . .	28
<b>NEW NOTE</b> —D in the Treble "The Train" . . . . .	13	<b>REVIEW</b> —"Yankee Doodle" . . . . .	29
<b>NEW NOTE</b> —B in the Bass "The Seabees" . . . . .	14	<b>REVIEW</b> —"Carry Me Back to Old Virginny" . . . . .	30
<b>WORK SHEET</b> . . . . .	15	<b>THE TIE</b> —"The Old Cotton Picker" . . . . .	31
<b>TWO-FOUR</b> —New Time Signature "March of the Gnomes" . . . . .	16	<b>NEW NOTE</b> —G in the Treble Theme from "The New World Symphony", Dvorák .	32
<b>THREE-FOUR</b> —The Dotted Minim "Dance of the Gnomes" . . . . .	17	<b>REVIEW</b> —"Bugles" . . . . .	33
<b>NEW NOTE</b> —E in the Treble "Mary Had a Little Lamb" . . . . .	18	<b>REVIEW</b> —"Row, Row" . . . . .	34
<b>NEW NOTE</b> —A in the Bass "The Paratrooper" . . . . .	19	<b>REVIEW</b> —"Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen" .	35
		<b>NEW NOTE</b> —F in the Bass "In a Rickshaw" . . . . .	36
		<b>REVIEW</b> —"The Banjo Picker" . . . . .	37
		<b>REVIEW</b> —"Princess Waltz" . . . . .	38
		<b>WORK SHEET</b> . . . . .	39
		<b>CERTIFICATE</b> . . . . .	40

# FOREWORD

## PURPOSE

This Course is designed to present the easiest possible approach to Piano Playing.

Part One is devoted to developing fluency in reading by note, solving a problem that still seems to rate as "Musical Enemy, Number One" with most young students.

The Work Sheets together with the Reading Aloud Exercises, appearing frequently, afford plenty of drill even for the backward student.

## SCOPE

The range covered in Part One is purposely limited. Only five notes up and five notes down from Middle C are presented and Time Values do not go beyond Crotchets. This makes it possible to include many examples in the form of Review Work and obviates the necessity of using supplementary material. In short, each book of the Course is complete in itself and contains its own Writing Exercises, Sight Reading Drills, Review Work and (in later books) Technical Studies.

## ACCOMPANIMENTS

Accompaniments for teacher or parent are supplied with most of the examples. They have been carefully composed to make the little pieces sound as much as possible like fragments from larger compositions. Valuable in several ways, they not only make it possible to play in various keys, avoiding the deadly monotony of C major, but their use imposes strict Time and sharp Rhythm, especially when they are played with somewhat vigorous accents, thus helping the pupil to "feel" the rhythm from the very beginning.

## GRADING

The Books in this Course do not represent any certain grade. They simply follow in proper sequence as Part One, Part Two, Part Three, etc. Nor are the Lessons measured page by page. Some pupils will master several pages per lesson—others only one. The Course progresses "Point by Point" rather than "Lesson by Lesson," and it is left to the teacher (who, after all, is the only one qualified) to decide how much or how little each pupil can absorb in one lesson.

## PART TWO

Part Two proceeds from the exact point reached at the end of Part One. New Notes, Time-Values and Rudiments are presented. Technique also begins in Part Two—first in the form of simple Finger Drills and later, more extended technical figures. Part Two remains in what is generally classified as Preparatory Grade.

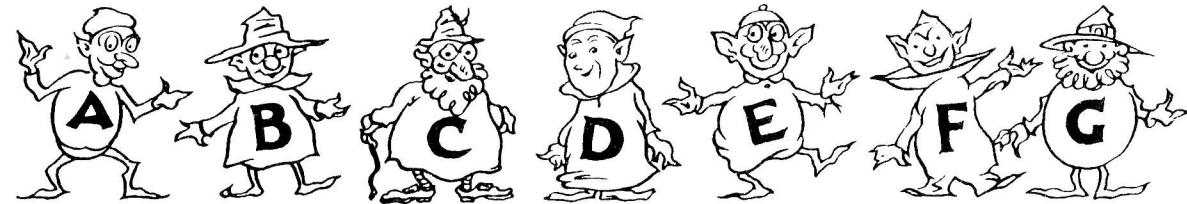
The prime objective of the entire Course is to show how easily, thoroughly, entertainingly and musically—rather than how fast—each pupil can progress.



# THE PIANO KEYBOARD

There are WHITE KEYS and BLACK KEYS on the Piano Keyboard.

The WHITE KEYS are named



Recite the letters of the Musical Alphabet several times.

---



---

The BLACK KEYS are grouped in TWOS and THREES.

Touch all the groups of TWO BLACK KEYS on your piano.

---



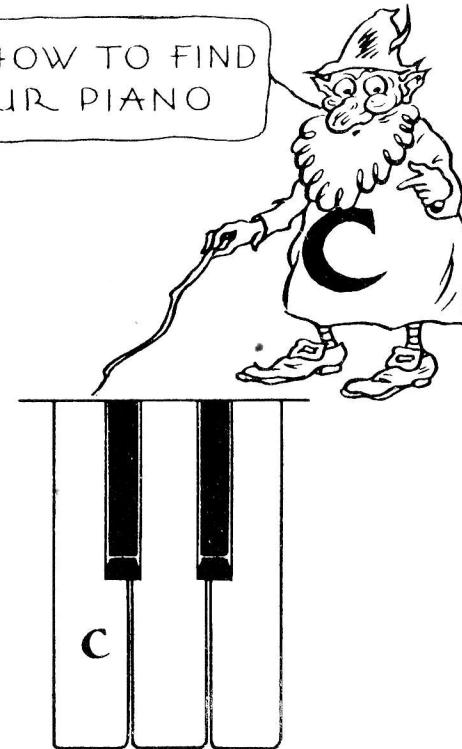
---

C is found to the left of the TWO BLACK KEYS.

Letter all the C's you can find on the Keyboard Chart, next page.

Now, on your piano, PLAY all the C's you can find—using the thumb.

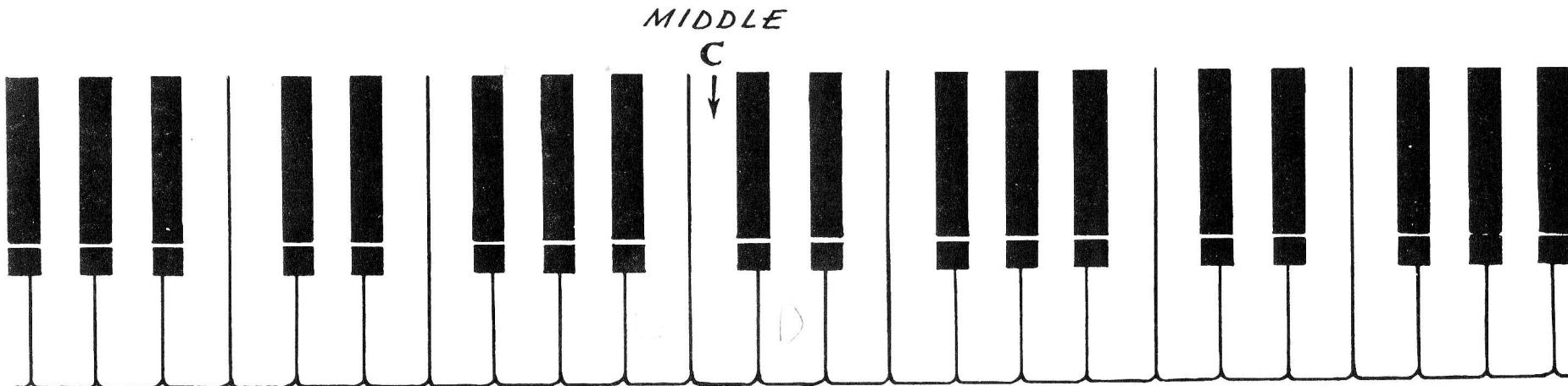
THIS IS HOW TO FIND  
C ON YOUR PIANO



# KEYBOARD CHART

5

(A section of the Keyboard)

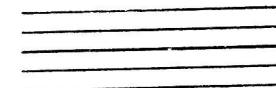


THIS IS A PICTURE OF PART OF  
YOUR KEYBOARD ~ AS YOU  
LEARN THE NAME OF EACH NEW  
KEY, TURN BACK TO THIS PAGE  
AND MARK **ALL** THE KEYS HAVING  
THE SAME NAME.

# MIDDLE C ON THE MUSIC

Music is written on the LINES and SPACES of the STAFF.

The Staff



The NOTES on the Music tell us which KEYS to play.

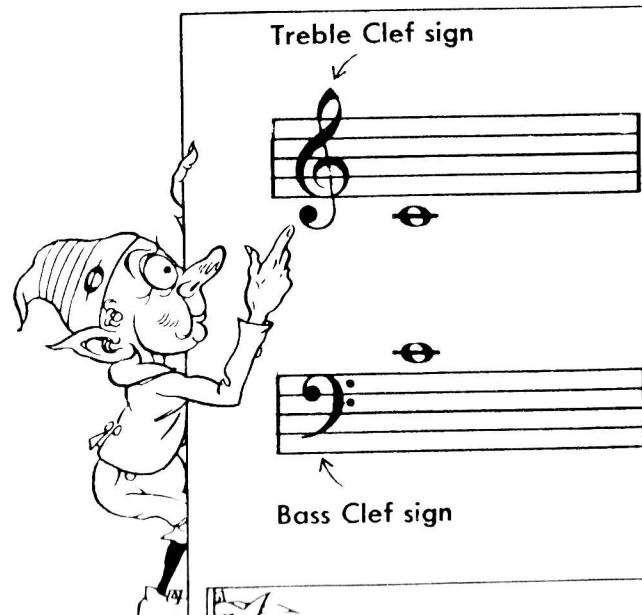
There are different kinds of Notes, but first we shall learn the SEMIBREVE.

A SEMIBREVE looks like this, O

It is held for FOUR COUNTS.

## Clef Signs

**Treble Clef sign**



This is how MIDDLE C looks in the Treble.

It is written as a SEMIBREVE, and gets four counts.

It is played by the RIGHT HAND thumb.

Play it and count FOUR.

**Bass Clef sign**



This is how MIDDLE C looks in the Bass.

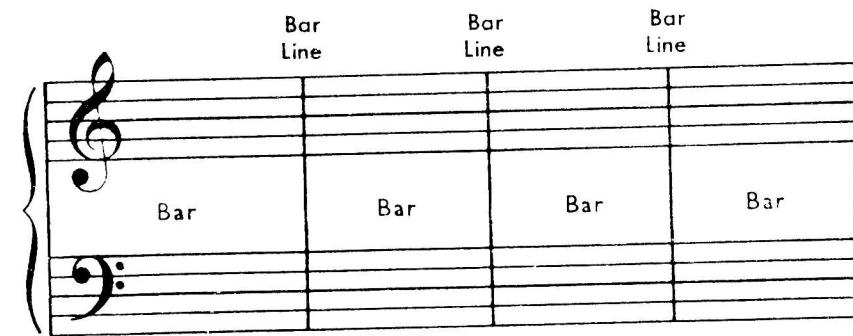
Written as a SEMIBREVE, it gets four counts.

It is played by the LEFT HAND thumb.

Play it and count FOUR.



MUSIC IS DIVIDED  
BY BAR LINES  
INTO BARS.



The figures after the Clef Signs tell us how to count.

In this book we need only read the top figure.

It shows how many counts to each bar.

Count 4 to  
each bar

Count 3 to  
each bar

Count 2 to  
each bar



Left Hand

Each finger has a number. The thumbs are number 1.

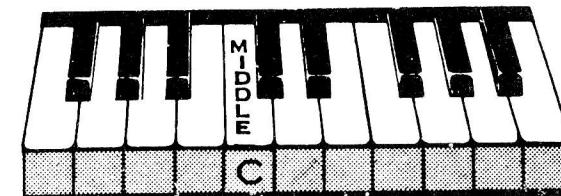


Right Hand

# Middle C as a Semibreve

*In the Treble*

**Accompaniment**



PLAY WITH RIGHT HAND THUMB  
COUNT FOUR TO EACH NOTE



**Let's Play**

*With the Right Hand*

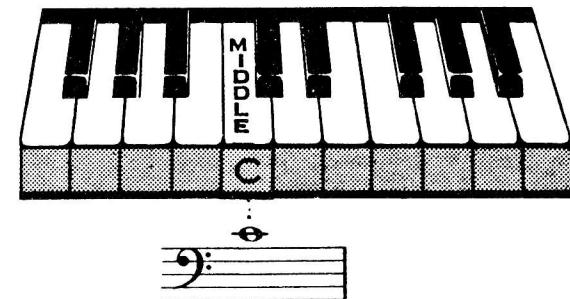
# Middle C as a Semibreve

*In the Bass*

## Accompaniment

R. H.

L. H.



Let's Play

*With the Left Hand*

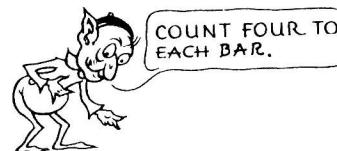


PLAY WITH  
LEFT HAND THUMB,  
COUNT FOUR  
TO EACH NOTE

## Middle C in Minims

*(REDO)* When a Note has an open head and a stem, like this, (  or  ) it is called a MINIM and gets two counts.

Play the following, counting TWO to each note—"ONE, TWO" to the first note and "THREE, FOUR" to the second note of each bar.

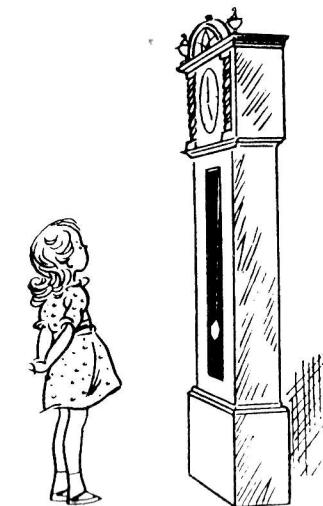


## Grandfather's Clock

Count: One-Two Three-Four

### Accompaniment

*stacc.*



# Middle C in Crotchets

A CROTCHET looks like this (  or  ) and gets one count.



## Moccasin Dance

 4

Count: One Two Three Four

 4





### Accompaniment

 3

 4





Mark the Time Values of the following notes, using 1 for Crotchets, 2 for Minims and + for Semibreves.

1

Musical staff with notes: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, followed by a series of dashes.

Make Minims of the following by adding stems.

Stems Up

2

Musical staff with notes: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, followed by a series of dashes. Below the staff, the text "Stems Down" is written.

3

Musical staff with notes: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, followed by a series of dashes.

Change the following into Crotchets by filling in the heads and adding stems when necessary.

Semibreve

Two  
Minims

Four  
Crotchets

Two  
Minims

Four  
Crotchets

Semibreve

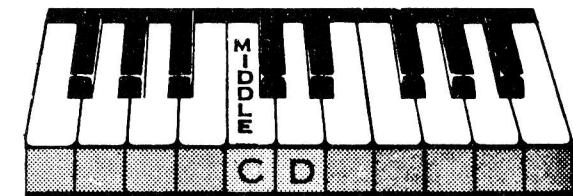
4

Musical staff with treble clef and a 4 over it, and bass clef and a 4 over it. The staff is divided into six boxes for writing note heads.

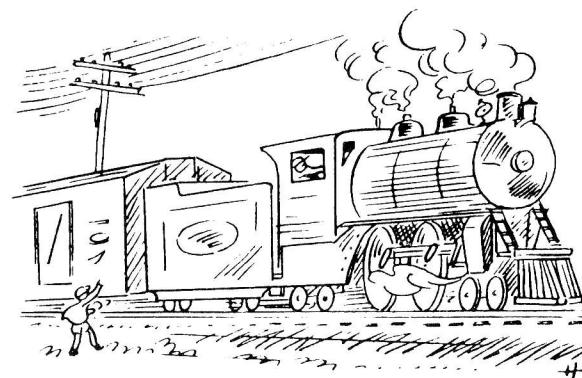
### Accompaniment

Musical notation for the accompaniment, consisting of two staves. The top staff is in common time (indicated by 'C') and the bottom staff is in 2/4 time (indicated by '2/4'). The notation includes dynamic markings 'sf' (fortissimo), 'mf' (mezzo-forte), and 'mp' (mezzo-pianissimo). Measures include eighth and sixteenth note patterns.

13



### The Train



Musical notation for 'The Train' with a cartoon mouse character. The notation is in common time (4/4) with a treble clef on the top staff and a bass clef on the bottom staff. The mouse is shown running across the middle of the page between the two staves. The music consists of quarter notes and rests.

Continuation of musical notation for 'The Train'. The notation is in common time (4/4) with a treble clef on the top staff and a bass clef on the bottom staff. The music consists of quarter notes and rests.

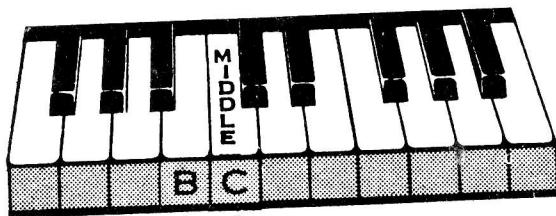


TURN TO THE WORK SHEET  
ON PAGE 15 AND DO  
EXERCISES 1 AND 2

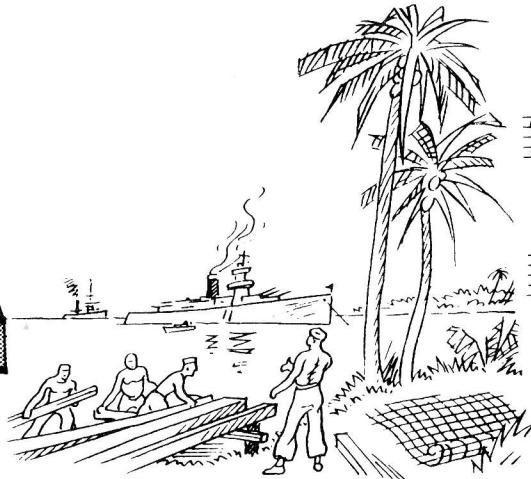
W.M.Co. 7259

#### Note to Teacher

From this point on, be sure to stress  
the importance of accenting the first  
count of each bar.



L. H. New Note  
2 1



### Accompaniment

## The Seabées



DO WRITING EXERCISES  
3, 4 AND 5  
ON PAGE 15

**SEABÉES:** A descriptive word-play on the U.S. Navy's CONSTRUCTION BATTALION who are busy as bees when tackling a difficult task.



Write the letter names under the notes.

1

Write the new note (D) as indicated.

2

Semibreve	Two Minims	Four Crotchets
4	4	4
D	D	D D D D

Write the letter names under the notes.

3

Write the new note (B) as indicated.

4

Semibreve	Two Minims	Four Crotchets
4	4	4
D	D	D D D D

In the following exercise, first draw the Bar Lines where they belong. (note Time Signature).

Next write the letter names of the notes.

Finally, mark the Time Values—using 1 for a Crotchet, 2 for a Minim and 4 for a Semibreve.

5

Letter Names C

Time Values 2

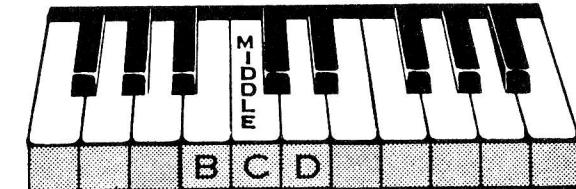
✓ April 20th

16

Accompaniment



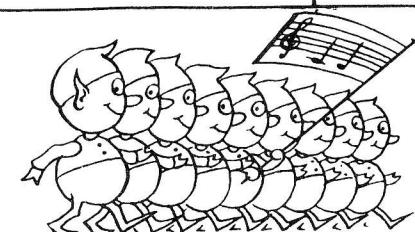
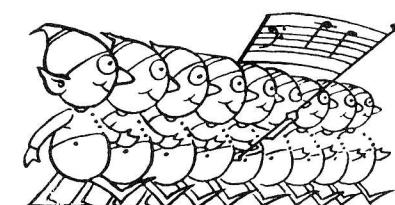
TWO-FOUR



March of the Gnomes

Hand-drawn musical notation for the March of the Gnomes. It features a treble clef and a bass clef, both in 2/4 time. The notation consists of four measures of music, with each measure containing two notes. The notes are marked with arrows indicating they should be played on the first beat of each measure.

Hand-drawn musical notation for the March of the Gnomes. It features a treble clef and a bass clef, both in 2/4 time. The notation consists of four measures of music, with each measure containing two notes. The notes are marked with arrows indicating they should be played on the first beat of each measure.



Semibreves = o = 4 counts.  
Minims = d = 2 counts.

crotchets = . | = 1 count.

dotted min.m.d. = 3 counts.

# THREE-FOUR and The Dotted Minim

### The dotted mini

looks like this (- or -.)

and is held for 3 counts

~~Learn~~ carefully what is written at the top.



COUNT 3 TO  
EACH BAR.

## Dance of the Gnomes

3/4

1 2 1 2 3 1-2 3 1-2 3 1-2 3 1-2 3

1 2 3

DOTTED MINIM  
HOLD FOR 3 COUNTS

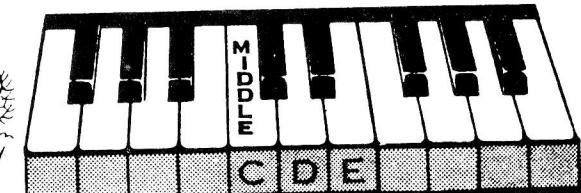
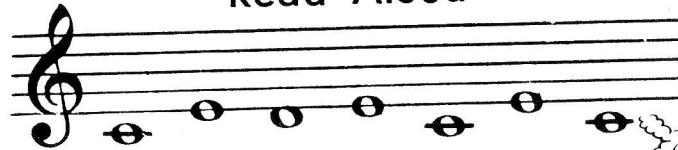
A handwritten musical score for two voices, Treble and Bass. The Treble staff begins with a half note followed by a quarter note. The Bass staff begins with a half note followed by a quarter note. Measures 1-2 are identical.

See the importance of correct counting? These are the same notes you played in "March of the Gnomes" but they make a new piece when you count 3 to each bar.

W.M.Co. 7259

26th May 18 Dotted note now

Read Aloud



## Mary Had a Little Lamb

Minim

The first two staves of the musical score for "Mary Had a Little Lamb". The top staff is in treble clef and 4/4 time, with a figure holding a balloon labeled '3'. The bottom staff is in bass clef and 4/4 time, with a figure holding a sign labeled 'E'. The music consists of eighth notes and rests.

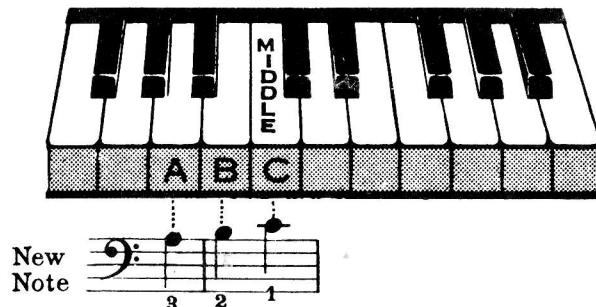
The third and fourth staves of the musical score for "Mary Had a Little Lamb". The top staff continues in treble clef and 4/4 time. The bottom staff continues in bass clef and 4/4 time. The music consists of eighth notes and rests.

Write the new note (E) below.

Accompaniment

The musical accompaniment for "Mary Had a Little Lamb" in bass clef, consisting of two staves of eighth notes and rests.

A diagram comparing note values: Semibreve, Minim, Dotted Minim, and Crotchet. It shows a treble clef followed by four empty boxes for each note type.



### Accompaniment

## The Paratrooper

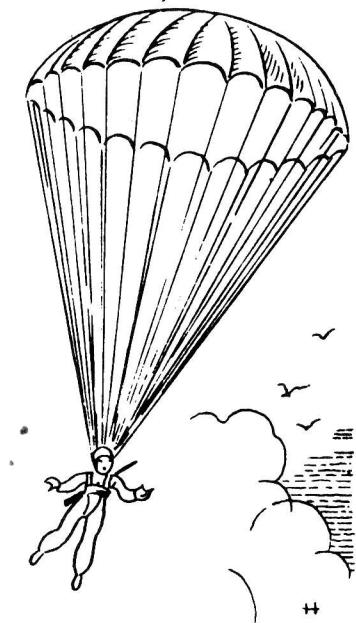
3

3

3

3 1 2

1-2



Read Aloud

Write the new note (A) below.

Semibreve      Minim      Dotted Minim      Crotchet

20

## Read Aloud

## Marching Up and Down



2

## Accompaniment

