


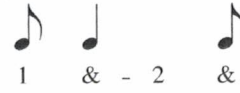


Name _____

ACCENT THE OFF BEAT

In a rhythm pattern, when an accented note occurs on a usually weak beat, this is called **syncopation**. Normally, the first beat of a measure receives the greatest emphasis (accent), but composers sometime plan accents in unexpected places, such as 'off beats' or between beats. Syncopation also occurs when a note introduced on a weak beat is held over into a stronger beat. This technique is characteristic of jazz and ragtime music.

Ex. Steady Beat	
Divided Beats	
Tied Beats	
Syn-co-pa	



The most common example of syncopation is the rhythm of an eighth note on the downbeat followed by a quarter note, then followed by another eighth note. The pattern below shows a displacement of the normal accent, therefore accenting beats that would not normally be emphasized.

Ex. 

FOLLOW THE ACCENTS

The use of syncopation has appeared in European art music for centuries and is associated with dance rhythms from which modern jazz developed. Get accustomed to this emphasis by clapping and counting these examples.

Clap and count this pattern, stressing the strong beats.

Ex. 

Clap and count this pattern, stressing the weak half of the beats as marked.

Ex. 



Clap and count this example of tied beats with the stress markings.

Ex. 

Clap and say these examples, first with rhythm syllables (ta, ti and ta-ah), then clap and say them using the syllables under each example.

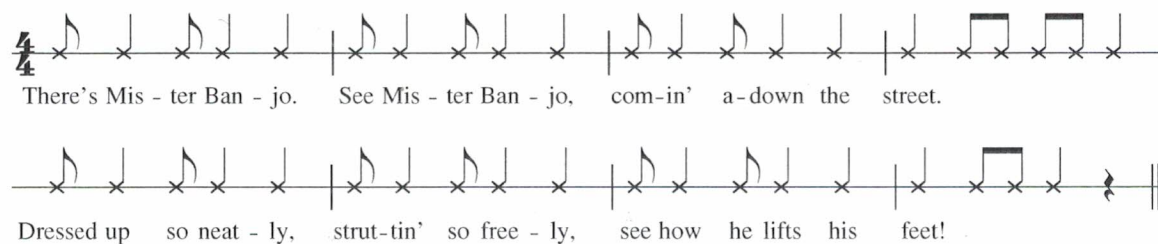
Ex. 1  syn - co - pa
 Ex. 2  syn - co - pa - ta - ah
 Ex. 3  syn - co - pa - ta - ta

RECOGNIZING SYNCOPATION

Figure out the rhythm language for this line of the folk song, “Shoo, Fly, Don’t Bother Me”. Circle the syncopated rhythm, then clap the rhythm of the words.



In this Louisiana folk song below, “Mister Banjo”, circle the measures that **do not** contain syncopation. As the class pats a steady beat, select a few students to play this song rhythm on unpitched instruments.



BONUS ACTIVITIES

1. Read the words of “Shoo, Fly, Don’t Bother Me”, substituting “syn-co-pa” for “shoo, fly, don’t” in measures 1, 3 and 5.
2. Listen to a recording of “The Entertainer” by American composer, Scott Joplin, to hear examples of syncopation in ragtime music. Raise your hand every time you recognize a pattern of syncopation as you enjoy the music.

X