



# OSTINATO / MYSTERY TUNES

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Pronounced (os-tee-NAH-to), an **ostinato** is a clearly defined melodic or rhythmic phrase which is repeated many times. Ostinato patterns can be strictly rhythmical using body percussion or can be phrases taken directly from the word-rhythm of a song. An ostinato can also be played on unpitched or melodic instruments, adding to the appeal of a song.

The term ostinato is derived from the word 'obstinate', which exactly describes how it is used. The plural version is **ostinati**, meaning more than one ostinato. Using a repetitive rhythm pattern aids concentration and promotes rhythmic confidence. An ostinato is often used as an accompaniment for a familiar song, possibly transferred to unpitched instruments after practice.

## CREATING OSTINATI

Clap this simple ostinato repeatedly until it is secure, then clap it as you sing a favorite song in  $\frac{4}{4}$  meter.

Ex.

Betty Botter

Betty Botter bought some butter,  
 "But," she said, "the butter's bitter.  
 If I put it in my batter,  
 It will make my batter bitter,  
 But a bit of better butter  
 That will make my batter better."  
 So she bought a bit of butter,  
 Better than her bitter butter,  
 And she put it in her batter  
 And the batter was not bitter.  
 So 'twas better Betty Botter  
 Bought a bit of better butter.

*Traditional Rhyme*

Read the rhyme above as a class using a steady beat. Read it again tapping the rhythm of the words. What did you notice about the word rhythm? What would be the time signature?

Choose one line of the poem as an ostinato, having a small group say and tap that line repeatedly as the class reads the entire poem in rhythm.

