

# OLD JOE HAS GONE FISHING: 7/4

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Originally published in the "American Dalcroze Journal" Vol. 39, No. 1.

## Summary

This lesson was presented at the 2012 DSA National Conference at Seattle Pacific University and teaches 7/4 with Benjamin Britten's "Old Joe Has Gone Fishing" from his opera *Peter Grimes*.

## Lesson Description

### Introduction to 7/4

#### Determine Measure and Subdivisions

These will be the constants.

The Measure

Play a slow 7/4 (**2+2+3**).

1. Stretch
2. Stretch and step downbeat

The Subdivisions

Continue as above and add lightly pulsed claps on each beat.

#### Groupings of Subdivisions create Beats

The beats are variable and unequal. Ask participants to *step beats* and *clap subdivisions*.

1. Play **2+2+3**
2. Play **3+2+2**
3. Play **2+3+2** (a sort of distorted Sarabande)
4. Change to Step/Claps (or wait until below)
5. Notate all 3. (**2+3+2** will be dropped.)

#### Step Claps/Clap Steps

Ask participants to *step the bass* and *clap the treble*.

- **2+2+3**: Play in F major
- **3+2+2**: Play in D minor

- A. Beats in bass, other subdivisions in treble
- B. Beats in treble, other subdivisions in bass
- C. Stick with beats in bass: Once students identify the key change cue, play freely

#### Set the metric pattern

The pattern is **2+2+3** (3x), **3+2+2** (1x).


1. Step/clap to master it
2. *Speak the rhythm* while conducting (dupe and ternary)

### "Old Joe Has Gone Fishing"

The music from Benjamin Britten's *Peter Grimes* follows this lesson plan.

#### Rhythm of 1st Section (Simplified)


*Clap the rhythm* and *step the beat*. This rhythmic pattern is essentially the Subdivision.

RH: 

LH: , etc.

Then, ask participants to notate the rhythm.

#### Rhythm of 1st Section (Actual)

RH: subdivide the third quarter.  Change notation.

ii. RH: 

### Words of 1st section

1. Learn by rote
2. *Step beat, clap pattern, sing words*
3. *Swing beats* with partner; find new partner on last measure of pattern (3+2+2)

### Put pattern in feet

#### deal with measure shape: ie.

"Old Joe" Crusis, metacrusis – but with an agogic accent

"fishing and" – anacrusis

"found him a shoal" – anacrusis-crusis, or crusis-metacrusis

Step the pattern and clap the Complementary Rhythm (notice the 3 ending claps)

### Rhythm of 2nd Section

"Pull them in in han'fuls..."

Step the rhythm. This rhythmic pattern is essentially the Beat.

1. Note that the meter remains 2+2+3 for remainder of the piece.
2. Clap the Complementary Rhythm
3. Notate

### Rhythm of 3rd Section

Step the rhythm. This rhythmic pattern is Anacrusis.



- A. Step pattern; Clap Complementary Rhythm
- B. Notate

### Rhythm of All 3 Sections

Step rhythmic pattern for all 3 sections.

Do each section twice in a row. It's still so new that this will be approximate; that's ok.

### Share the Music

Distribute the written music to learn the words and notes.

1. Conduct, while singing
2. *Step beat* in place, while singing

### Sing in canon

Try with the piano ostinato.

1. *Step beat* in place
2. *Step beat* while moving within the space

### Listen to a recording

End the lesson by listening to a recording of "Old Joe Has Gone Fishing."

## Closing Thoughts

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Benjamin Britten wrote this canon as a sort of faux sea chanty/drinking song. It is charming a capella; when heard in the opera with full orchestra and chorus, complete with a mixolydian counter melody, it packs a wallop.

## Author Biography

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Cynthia Lilley earned her Dalcroze License at Longy School. She lives in New York where she currently teaches at the Dalcroze School at the Lucy Moses School of Music and the Dalcroze Program at the Diller-Quaile School of Music. She is past president of the New York Chapter of the DSA. She is a composer of art songs.

# Old Joe Has Gone Fishing

from "Peter Grimes"

Benjamin Britten  
(actually in E-flat)

1  
Old Joe has gone fish - ing, And Young Joe has gone fish - ing, And

3  
you know has gone fish - ing, And found him a shoal.

5  
Pull them in in han' - fuls and in

7  
can - fuls and in pan - fuls. Bring them in

9  
sweet - ly, Gut them com - plete - ly, Pack them up

11  
neat - ly, Sell them dis - crete - ly.

13 *ostinato*