

Unit 1

Week 1

Jumbo Ice Cream Cone

Purpose: Review the names of the keys on the keyboard.

Materials: Jumbo Ice Cream Printout.

Preparation: Print the printout on cardstock and cut out each piece.

Set Up: Give the child a cone and have him sit facing you. Keep the ice cream scoops with you.

How to Play: In this fun game, kids get to try to build a super tall jumbo ice cream cone.

Hold up a scoop of ice cream for the child to see. If the child can correctly say the letter name on the first try, he gets to add the ice cream to his cone. If he isn't able to name it on the first try, help him by pointing out how we can identify that key by looking at the black key groups and remembering the den and grass activities we did earlier. Then place that scoop of ice cream back in the pile to come back to later.

Hold up the ice cream scoop. If the child can correctly name this key on the first try, he gets to add it to his cone, and make his ice cream cone even taller. Continue play with all the cards. When a child cannot correctly answer on the first try, review with him and then place it back in the pile to come back to. The game is over when the child has correctly identified all the keys and built a jumbo ice cream cone.

You can easily play this game with a group of children by printing out multiple copies and letting the kids take turns identifying the keys.

Lion and Kitty Popups

Purpose: Ear training- high or low

Materials: A set of Lion and Kitty signs for each student.

Teach: Ask the children to roar like a lion. Then have them meow like a tiny kitten. Point out that the kitten's voice is high and the lion's voice is low. You may want to show them a YouTube video of each animal. Just search for "lion roar" and "kitten meowing" and you should get plenty of video options.

How to Play: Teacher plays either a high note or a low note on the keyboard. Students hold in front of them the lion if they think it was a low note or the kitty if they think it was a high note.

Week 2

Escape From the Zoo!

Purpose: Review the names of the keys.

Materials: Escape from the Zoo cards, painter's tape.

Set Up: Use tape to attach the cards to the wall. Scatter them throughout the room.

How to Play: Tell the students that the animals have escaped from the zoo! We need help catching them so that they can be returned to their homes.

Call out a letter name and let students hunt for the card that has that key highlighted. Continue until all the keys have been reviewed.

Variations: You can make this game a competition in which the first student to find the correct card keeps the card. At the end of the game, count up everyone's cards. The child with the most cards wins.

Distant Arrows

Purpose: Ear training- going up or down

Materials: A set of UP and Down arrows for each student.

Teach: Tell students that their ear can listen to a sequence of notes and know if the notes are getting higher- "going up" or getting lower- "going down." Demonstrate an example of each and describe how it sounds.

How to Play: Place a set of arrows in front of each student, just beyond their reach. Play a sequence of notes, either going up or going down. It usually works well to play the first 5 notes of a scale.

Students reach for either the UP or Down arrow. Have everyone show their answer, tell them the correct answer, and play the sequence again for them to hear. Repeat with another sequence.

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Week 3**My Key**

Purpose: Review the names of the keys.

Materials: A set of letter cards and a keyboard at the front of the room.

How to Play: Students sit together in a group far away from the keyboard. Pass out two cards to each student. Teacher calls out a letter. Whoever has that letter jumps up and runs to the keyboard to play the correct key.

Variation: If you have a single student, have the child sit on the floor and spread out all the letter cards in front of her. Whisper that you're going to give the child silent directions and she needs to watch carefully and then run to the piano and play the correct key. Without saying anything, point to one of the letters. The child then jumps up and runs to the piano to play the key.

Same or Different Faces

Purpose: Ear training- same or different

Materials: Same/Diff Faces printout

How to Play: Scatter the Faces around the room. Students will stand together in a group. Teacher will play two keys- either the same key twice, or two different keys. Play them twice and then say go. Students run and stand on either the Same face or the Diff face. Check everyone's answer, tell the correct answer, and play the notes again. Repeat with a different set of notes.

Week 4**Keys for Cash**

Purpose: Review the names of the keys.

Materials: Keyboard, die, Cash from Keys for Cash printout, a token for each student (such as a bead, eraser, coin or anything else that will fit on a piano key)

How to Play: Have each student place her token on the lowest key of the keyboard. Let student roll the die and move their token that number of spaces. Students should count each key as a

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space and move towards the high end of the keyboard. If the student can correctly name that key on the first try, give her “cash” (one of the dollars from the print out).

Now let the next student take a turn to roll the die and name the key. When students reach the end of the keyboard, count up their money and see who collected the most cash.

Variation: A single student can easily play this game either by playing against the teacher or by just trying to get as much cash as he can before he reaches the end of the keyboard.

Same/Diff Scramble

Purpose: Ear training- same or different.

Materials: Blocks labeled Same or Diff. Have one for each student.

How to Play: Have the students sit in a circle and place the blocks in the middle. Teacher plays a set of notes, either the same note twice or two different notes. Play the set twice and then say go. Students reach into the middle and grab either a Same or Diff block. Check everyone’s answer, tell the correct answer, and play the notes again. Repeat with a different set of notes.

Week 5

Picture Perfect

Purpose: Review the names of the keys.

Materials: One Picture Perfect print out for each child. Cut along the lines to create a puzzle. If you’re playing this game with multiple students, you may want to keep each puzzle in a ziploc bag so that the pieces from the different puzzles don’t get mixed up.

Set up: Give each child the two rectangles from her puzzle that do not have a keyboard diagram on them. Keep the remaining puzzle pieces beside you.

How to Play: Hold up a puzzle piece for the first child. If she can correctly name that key on the first try, she gets the puzzle piece and can begin trying to put her puzzle together while you give the next child a turn.

Give the second child a turn and continue this process with all the children. Quiz them one at a time until each child has received all her puzzle pieces.

Variation: If you’re playing this game with a younger child who might have difficulty piecing together the puzzle, you can print out an extra copy of the puzzle. Don’t cut this one up. Instead

place it in front of the child before you begin. The child can then place the pieces she receives on top of the print out.

Feed the Cats

Purpose: Ear training- high or low

Materials: Game board for each player and a set of food tokens.

Teach and Review: Review with the child the sounds that lions and kitties make. You can take a minute to have fun roaring and meowing. Ask the children to identify each sound as low or high.

How to Play: Teacher plays either a high note or a low note. If the student thinks it's a high note, he places the kitty token in front of him. If he was correct, he flips the token over, revealing the kitty food and places the food on his game board next to the kitty. If he's incorrect, he doesn't get to feed an animal that round. Student wins by feeding either the lion or the kitty until that animal is "full" i.e. has 3 food tokens.

Week 6

Twist and Play

Purpose: Review the names of the keys.

Materials: 2 Keyboards. Only 1 keyboard needed if playing with a single student. If you're playing with a group and only have one keyboard, just have one group at each end of the piano.

How to Play: Divide students into two teams and have each team line up behind a keyboard. The first child in each line stands with her back to the keyboard. Teacher calls out a letter and the students quickly turn around and play a key. Review their responses. Send the first student to the back of the line and the second student from each team then takes a turn.

Building My Playground

Purpose: Ear training- going up or going down.

Materials: Two ladders and two slides for each student from Playground printout, a hoola hoop. Note: if you don't have a hoola hoop, you can designate a playground area with yarn or another material.

How to Play: Discuss that you climb UP a ladder and go DOWN a slide. Whenever the students hear notes going up, they should choose the ladder. They should choose the slide when they hear notes going down. The hula hoop represents the sandy playground area where they will construct their slides if they answer correctly.

Each student sits with a pile of playground equipment in front of them. Teacher plays a sequence of notes, either going up or down. Students select either a ladder or a slide, and hold it up. Review their answers. All correct answers are then placed inside the hula hoop. A student wins when she has constructed both of her slides inside the “playground”.

Week 7

First 15 min

Fastest Keys in the West

Purpose: Review the names of the keys

Materials: Laminated keyboard printout and dry erase marker for each player.

How to Play: Each student has a keyboard and a dry erase marker. Teacher calls out a letter, such as D, and students quickly label all the D’s on the keyboard. Check everyone’s answers and then repeat with a different letter.

Caterpillar Worksheet

Purpose: Ear Training- going up or down

Materials: Dry erase marker and caterpillar worksheet in page protector for each child, keyboard.

How to Play: Give each child a worksheet and marker and have them sit so that they cannot see your hands as you play the piano. Instruct them that you will play a sequence of notes and they should listen carefully to determine if the caterpillar is crawling up or down the keys.

Teacher plays a sequence of notes, either going up or down. Students listen and then place an X in either the “Up” box or the “Down” box. Review their answers, provide feedback, and then repeat with another sequence of notes.

Week 8

Army Crawl

Purpose: Review the names of the keys.

Materials: A keyboard

How to Play: Two students race against each other, crawling on their bellies. Each is designated half of the keyboard. The player to the left can play any key below middle C and the player to the right can play any key to the right of Mid C. Teacher calls out a letter and students crawl to the keyboard, trying to be the first to play the correct key.

Variation: To play with a single student, just have him army crawl as fast as he can. If he's motivated by getting a speed, you can have him race against the clock by using a timer. Make a big deal out of it each time he gets faster.

Rounding Sheep Worksheet

Purpose: Ear training- same or different

Materials: Keyboard. Worksheet and writing utensil for each student. If you'd like to reuse the worksheets, place them in page protectors and provide each child with a dry erase marker.

How to Play: Teacher plays two notes- either the same note twice or two different notes. If the child thinks she hears two notes that are the same, she draws a line from the number to the "same" corral. If she thinks the notes sound different, she draws a line to the "different" corral.

Check the child's answer and give feedback. Play the two notes again for her to hear now that she knows the answers. Continue with a second set of notes.

Week 9

Keyboard Quiz

Purpose: Evaluate the child's ability to correctly name the keys. Also helps prepare the child for theory testing.

Materials: Keyboard quiz print out, pencils.

How to Play: Give each child a print out and a pencil. Instruct them to fill in the names of the keys on the picture. No help will be given during the analysis. After the quiz is finished, check answers and give feedback.

Use this quiz to determine if the child has mastered this concept or if it needs more attention. If the concept needs more attention, you can return to previous activities to continue teaching and reviewing the names of the piano keys.

Hot Air Balloon

Purpose: Ear training- high or low

Materials: Hot Air Balloon game board for each student, tokens

How to Play: Teacher plays a high or low note. Student places token on balloon for high notes or grass for low notes. Check responses, tell correct answer and play note again for them to hear.