

## **Pitch Pets Teaching Instructions “Farm” 2020**

[WWW.PITCHPETS.COM](http://WWW.PITCHPETS.COM)

The young brain is capable of acquiring absolute pitch, the ability to recognize musical notes, a skill that cannot be attained past a certain age, perhaps 6 years old. Children love animals and twelve one syllable animal names correspond to the twelve notes of the musical scale. Using the American Sign Language hand movements for each animal is fun and more importantly, engages active thinking in their brain. Yet this remains secondary as the primary purpose is to develop an auditory skill.

It is not necessary that this course be taught by a singer or musician. Any included *musical terminology* in these instructions may be disregarded by the non musician. While it is not necessary to sing with them it is important that the children sing the notes accurately and some effort may be needed if this does not come naturally to them. Should you sing it is important not to do so in a low range but in their range. This can simply be attained by sustaining high laughter or a high yawn.

It is not necessary to complete this course in its entirety to achieve its goal which is the brain’s retention of the skill of note recognition. Most children will not become musicians or even be aware of a more refined sense of listening. And while traditional teaching methods for the very young have their own merits, there is only a limited opportunity to realize the higher learning potential of this course. Those children who continue to study music will later find it easy to substitute the note names or solfege for the animal ones.

You may use this course individually which is ideal, or in a quiet classroom setting where varied results are to be expected. When admonishment is necessary it is suggested that they be given by a non-course stuffed animal or puppet and directed to the adult who “forgot” to advise concerning the issue being addressed. The course is progressive in sequence and certain tracks will not need to be repeated once their concepts are attained. Initially it’s OK to help the children with the answers once a pitch sounds,

but with repeated use you'll want to delay and then cease any assistance other than corrections. Lessons should last about 10 minutes, then something else and perhaps a return to the course.

Progressive lessons should begin with a review of Tracks 5, 7, and 9, the "Pet Sets", then easy recognition tracks which are 10-24. Intermediate and advanced lessons should warm up with tracks 25-28. The intermediate recognition tracks are 29-41, and the advanced recognition tracks are 38-49. The final track "Hoedown" should be used by all levels once all the signs are learned and it serves well for an opening, interlude or conclusion.

### **Animal / Note name / Fixed do Solfege**

Cat / C / *do*

Cow/ C sharp or D flat / *di or ra*

Dog / D / *re*

Dove / D sharp or E flat / *ri or me*

Elk / E / *mi*

Fox / F / *fa*

Frog / F sharp or G flat / *fi or se*

Goat / G / *so*

Goose / G sharp or A flat / *si or le*

Ant / A / *la*

Ape / A sharp or B flat / *li or te*

Bee / B / *ti*

It is ideal to incorporate 12 corresponding stuffed animals into the lessons and a suggested list is on the web page. Alternatively, the downloadable flashcard images are easily implemented and may be enhanced by attaching magnets or tongue depressors. Simple children's songs, perhaps led by an animal, may be sung in between exercises or as the next set of animals are positioned. There are infinite improvised possibilities off script.

### FRONTGATE (WELCOME)

1. Intro: need not be repeated
2. Sensitive Ears: For classroom settings this may be calming.
3. Finger Signs: need not be repeated. Always use your left hand for signing as you need to be the mirror image to their right hand.

### MEET THE FAMILY (BEGINNER)

4. Sign Set 1: You should make the signs with the children even if you do not sing with them. During the use of this course first make the signs initially, later delayed and finally for correction. All of the signs may be viewed on the webpage ASL PRO. Skip once all are known.
5. Pet Sign 1: They must master this and is a good track for beginner level review for **starting the second lesson**. After each prompt: "Which note is this?" Wait to enter in order to allow an attempt at recognition. The ending sequence is the most important. The pattern uses *a tri-tone, then up a minor third then down a tri-tone*. This is a good place to **stop the first lesson**, ideally after repeating it.
6. Sign Set 2: same as #4 with new notes.
7. Pet Set 2: Very important. Once #6 is known you should go right to this from #5. *Same pattern as #5*.
8. Sign Set 3: same as #4 with new notes.

9. Pet Set 3: Very important. Once #8 is known you should go right to this from #7. *Same pattern as #5.*

**A beginning level warm up starts by using #5, #7 and #9-**

### SANDBOX (BEGINNER GAMES)

10. Friends Game Intro: sets up #11.

11. Friends Game 1: preparation for #13. *Lower set of minor thirds.*

12. Night Game 1 Intro: sets up #13. Turn down the lights if appropriate. Cover the animals or turn over the flashcards.

13. Night Game 1: The first attempt at note recognition. Wait after prompts: “Sounds like” to allow recognition. Uncover or display the animals after each set.

14. Friends Game 1: preparation for #16. *Upper set of minor thirds.*

15. Night Game Intro: sets up #16. Same as #12.

16. Night Game 1: The second attempt at note recognition. Wait after prompts: “Sounds like” to allow recognition.

**Use only tracks 13 and 16 for a challenging review.**

17. Hide 1 Intro: sets up #20.

18. Hide 1: preparation for #20. Hide the animals progressively.

19. Seek 1 Intro: sets up #20.

20. Seek 1: The third attempt at note recognition. Wait after prompts: “You are” to allow recognition. Display animals after the names are sung.

21. Hide 2 Intro: sets up 24.

22. Hide 2: preparation for #24. Hide the animals progressively.

23. Seek 2 Intro: sets up 24.

24. Seek 2: The fourth attempt at note recognition. Wait after prompts: “You are” to allow recognition. Display animals after the names are sung.

**Use only tracks 20 and 24 for a challenging review**

### SOW THE SEEDS (INTERMEDIATE WARM UPS)

Tracks 25 through 28 review all 12 notes and should be used at the beginning of later lessons. It's not necessary to do all four concurrently.

25. Listen and Sing: *Circle of fourths.*

26. Scatter and Start: *Circle of fifths.*

27. Climb a Tree: *Augmented triads ascend.* Sets up track 32: Tree 2<sup>nd</sup> set

28. Spin a Circle: *Diminished 7ths ascend.*

### ORCHARD (INTERMEDIATE GAMES)

29. Three in a Tree Intro: Sets up #30.

30. Tree 1<sup>st</sup> Set: *First three notes of a major scale: middle, lower, upper.*

31. Three in a Tree Into 2: Sets up #32.

32. Tree 2<sup>nd</sup> Set: *Augmented 5<sup>th</sup> triads: middle, lower, upper.*

33. Tree 3<sup>rd</sup> Set: *Three half step minor third, then one half step fifth: middle, lower, upper.*

34. through 37. Name Call 1-4: These should be done as a set. They're the first time the name is spoken and then asked to be sung. *First three notes of the major scale: middle, upper, lower, middle, lower, upper.*

## COMMUNITY (ADVANCED GAMES 1)

38. Neighbors: *Four chromatic sets: middle, upper, lower, middle, lower, upper.*

39. through 41. Four Square 1-3: *Random animals and order.*

## SOCCER (ADVANCED GAMES 2)

42. and 44. Hear Team 1 and 2: *Whole tone scale then random order.*

43. and 45. Call Team 1 and 2: *Name is called then sung. Random order.*

## HARVEST (EXPERT GAMES)

46. Hide All 1: *Circle of fourths.*

47. Hide All 2: *Circle of fifths.*

48. Hide and Seek: *Augmented triads then diminished 7<sup>th</sup> chords descend.*

49. Bedtime: *Name is called then sung. Random order.*

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50. Get up: sets up #51. Prior to beginning, review all twelve animals, beginning with the goose, turning your head to one side and then the other.

51. Hoedown: Begin using upon learning all the signs as it is so much fun! Also it's great to begin with, for a break or for a conclusion. Step slowly in place single or double time. When the individual animal names begin, stop and make the signs, turning to one side and then the other. Cue the entrance of each animal and cue the drop in pitch for the cat's entrance until familiar.

*The End*

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