

CLAP YOUR NAME

Integrating rhythm and language

The mathematics of rhythm can be complex, and the way rhythm is used varies considerably from culture to culture.

Bobby Summerhill, a second-grade teacher, had her students convert their names to clapping patterns. Soon she could clap a pattern and students would recognize their names:

"Clap-Slap-Clap" Ana would say "yes?"

"Slap-Clap-Slap-Clap-Slap" Peter would jump up.

Do you see the pattern?

Clap hands = vowel

Slap thighs = consonant



~ PLAY YOUR NAME ~

Learn to sound out the letters of your first name by clapping your hands for a vowel and slapping your thighs for a consonant.

For example, M-A-R-I-A would be played slap-clap-slap-clap-clap. Learn to play your name pattern without pauses, so every clap and slap takes the same amount of time. While there is nothing wrong with making some beats longer than others, and it can even be fun, this exercise works better if all beats are the same length. Don't pound. Keep the sounds audible, but soft.

Replacing sounds: If the thigh slap or clap don't work for some children, it's great if they come up with their own. As long as the sound is fairly consistent, it will work. We've had children slap the floor, vocalize on the first letter on their name, and do other things too.

©www.mathdance.org. Visit the site for ideas about integrating math and dance.

