Appendix 2
RHYTHMIC COUNTING SYLLABLES

Rhythmic counting systems

Rhythmic counting syllables encourage a precise understanding of the relationship between rhythm and meter. Syllables are assigned to the notes of the rhythm based on their position within the measure and individual beats of the music. Two common counting systems are the **standard system** and the **Eastman system**.

Simple time: Notes on the beat

For **simple time signatures**, notes on the beat use the number of the beat, in both the standard system and the Eastman system:

All: 1 2

Simple time: Upbeats

Notes on the second half of the beat use **&** ("and") for the standard system, and **te** ("tay") for the Eastman system.

standard: 1 & 2 &
Eastman: 1 **te** 2 **te**

Simple time: The second fourth of the beat

Notes on the second fourth of the beat use **e** ("ee") for the standard system, and **ti** ("tee") for the Eastman system.

standard: 1 **e** & 2 **e** &
Eastman: 1 **ti** te 2 **ti** te

Simple time: Other notes

All other notes in simple time use **a** ("ah" or sometimes "uh") for the standard system, and **ta** ("tah") for the Eastman system.

standard: 1 e & **a** 2 e & **a**
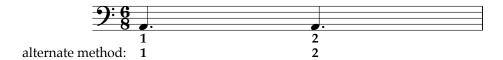Eastman: 1 ti te **ta** 2 ti te **ta**

**Compound time:
two systems**

For **compound time signatures** or **triplets/sextuplets**, many teachers of both the Eastman counting system and the standard system use the same syllables, shown first in the examples below. Some teachers of the standard system prefer the "alternate method" on the second line of each example.

**Compound time:
Notes on the beat**

In all cases, notes on the beat use the number of the beat:

	1	2
alternate method:	1	2

**Compound time:
The second third
of the beat**

Notes on the second third of the beat use **la** ("lah"). The alternate method uses the number two on the second third of the beat.

	1	la	2	la
alternate method:	1	2	2	2

**Compound time:
The last third of
the beat**

Notes on the last third of the beat use **li** ("lee"). The alternate method uses the number three on the last third of the beat.

	1	la	li	2	la	li
alternate method:	1	2	3	2	2	3

**Compound time:
Other notes**

All other notes use **ta** ("tah"). The alternate method uses "and" for other notes.

	1	ta	la	ta	li	ta	2	ta	la	ta	li	ta
alternate method:	1	&	2	&	3	&	2	&	2	&	3	&

Other notes

Any note not covered by the above, in both simple and compound time signatures, will use the syllable **a** (standard system) or **ta** (Eastman system).