

LET'S RING CHIMES and BELLS

A Workbook for Beginning Chime and Handbell Ringers

by **Kirtsy Mitchell**

This workbook has been developed for use with beginning ringers of either chimes or two octave handbells. It assumes that the director is knowledgeable in the skills of ringing, but that the players have few or no musical skills.

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Teaching Hints

WHAT IS A CHIME? - (pg. 7) Check each ringer for correct hold on chime, especially the placement of the thumb. If your students play only one chime, have them hold it with their dominant hand. If they will be playing two chimes, be sure to *practice* each hand. Try *snapping* the wrist without holding the chime.

LET'S SWING AND SNAP - (pg. 8) Show players how to *swing and snap* by allowing them to view your *ringing* position from several different angles. Some ringers will need gentle encouragement to swing freely. Begin to use the word *stroke*. If your choir is playing a chime in each hand, practice each hand alone.

LET'S ADD - (pg. 9) Some people have trouble differentiating between the order of beat numbers in a measure and the number of counts a note receives. Have the ringers play and count the exercises before the group plays them together. Chime and bell players *must* be able to determine the beat numbers in measures.

WHAT CAN YOU SEE - (pg. 10) If chimers and ringers are going to be able to read music, they must learn to *look* at it and to move their eyes along with the music. Some look at the director for all their cues. In vocal music this is necessary, but not in chime music as everyone plays a different part. You may want to stand behind your group and keep the beat with a triangle until they can follow the music easily.

STOP EVERYTHING - (pg. 11) Understanding that a note must sound *only* for its number of beats is necessary for chime playing. Watch each player to help them develop the correct technique to *completely* stop the sound. Chimers playing two chimes should practice damping both chimes at the same time. The next exercise, LET'S SPELL, gives practice in damping different hands at different times. If you damp as bell players do, then you will not have to change a chimer's habit when this person moves on to bells. However, a small child cannot damp a long chime in this manner.

LET'S FIND THE LETTER NAMES - (pg. 12) Ring the letters in quarter notes with a quarter rest at the end of each word.

LET'S HARMONIZE - (pg. 13) You will recognize the eight chords as the triads of the C major scale.

FRUIT RHYTHM - (pg. 13) you may want all the choir to play the complete exercise before moving on to the triads. This exercise actually gives practice in ringing eighth notes.

LET'S HARMONIZE AND SING - (pg. 14) When introducing the black chimes, have all the chimes out in correct order, like a piano keyboard. Make sure ringers understand that they will *share* the black chimes.

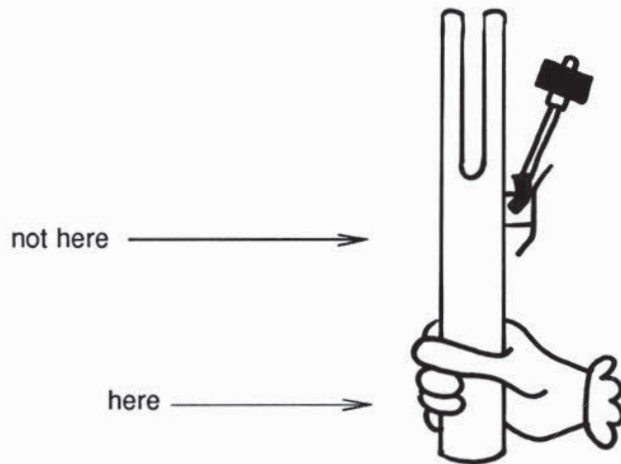
AMERICA - (pg. 15) Ask the chimers to read the list of chimes used. Check to see that they have found the correct black chime. Ringers sing as they play. Remind them to damp if they do not play the next chord. F5 can give the pitch for *America*. Do the same for *Twinkle Twinkle*, *Jingle Bells*, and *Away in a Manger*.

LET'S COUNT - (pg. 17) Picking out your note among many notes, counting aloud softly, and damping are *all* important skills developed in these exercises. Have one or two students play each exercise before the group tries it. For ringers with two chimes, do these exercises again having the L.H. ring the circled note and the R.H. ring on an agreed upon beat.

What Is a Chime?

Chimes are musical instruments which look like **giant** tuning forks. They make a clear, sparkling sound. They come in two colors - silver and black. The **silver** chimes make the same tones as white keys on the piano. Guess what piano keys make the same tones as the **black** chimes.

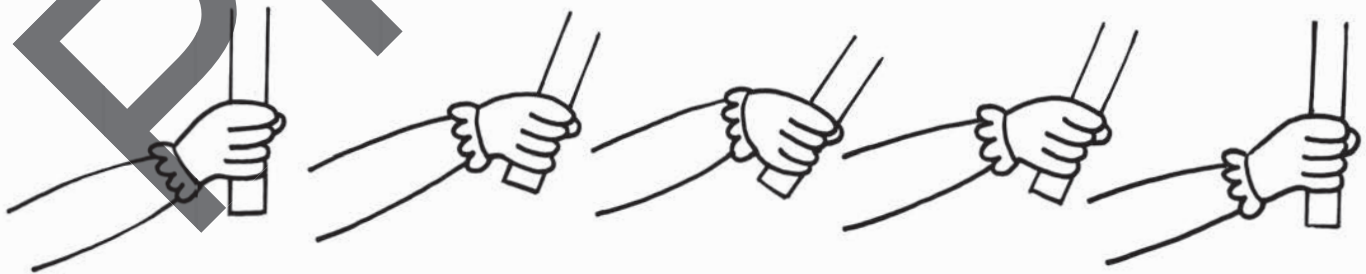
This Is the Way to Hold a Chime.



When you aren't playing, hold your chime like this.



You can make the chime sing by **SNAPPING** your wrist down quickly.



Make your chime sing by snapping your wrist down and back up.

Let's Harmonize and Sing

Your director may now want to assign you a chime(s) or bell(s) to play at every rehearsal. Big hands usually get big chimes and small hands usually get small chimes. Write the name of your chime(s) here.

_____ and _____

But before we sing you need to meet the black chimes or the bells with sharps and flats on them. These chimes and bells each have two names. They have a **sharp** name **and** a **flat** name. A sharp name is a letter followed by a sharp sign. (#) The flat name is a letter followed by a flat sign. (b) Pick up the black **sharp** chime which has the **same** letter name as your assigned chime. The **B** and **E** people will not have any luck finding a black sharp chime! Now put them back down. Pick up the black **flat** chime which has the same letter name as your assigned chime. the **C** and **F** people will not have any luck finding a black flat chime! Now put them back down.

You will share the black chimes with your neighbors!

Draw a circle around your letter every time you see it.

Old MacDonald

Chimes needed: A^b, B^b, C, D^b, E^b, F, G

E ^b	A ^b	E ^b	E ^b	B ^b	E ^b	E ^b
C	F	C	C	G	C	C
A ^b	D ^b	A ^b	A ^b	E ^b	A ^b	A ^b
Old Mac-Donald	had a	farm.	E I	E I	O!	And on that farm he

A ^b	E ^b	E ^b	B ^b	E ^b	E ^b
F ^b	C ^b	C ^b	C	C ^b	C ^b
D ^b	A ^b	A ^b	E ^b	A	A ^b
had some	chicks,	E I	E I	O!	With a chick chick here and a

E ^b	E ^b	E ^b
C ^b	C ^b	C ^b
A ^b	A ^b	A ^b
chick chick there,	here a chick, there a chick,	ev'ry where a chick chick,

E ^b	A ^b	E ^b	E ^b	B ^b	E ^b
C	F	C	C	G	C
A ^b	D ^b	A ^b	A ^b	E ^b	A ^b
Old Mac-Donald	had a	farm.	E I	E I	O!

The Case of the Missing Note

In the story, **The Case of the Missing Note**, assign each player one or more words to read. As director, on your copy it is best if you highlight all the words not on the list, as this is your part to read! This story helps to demonstrate that in chime and bell ringing each player's part is different - like in a play. Therefore, if one is absent there is a disturbing silence in the music. Commitment to be at every rehearsal is necessary. Parties, friends over, and shopping trips are not good reasons for missing.

(Each player should be assigned one word to read. The same person reads both **boy** and **boys**, etc.)

DARK
STORMY
BOY, BOYS
GIRL, GIRLS

ELECTRICITY
LIGHT, LIGHTS
CHIME, CHIMES
DIRECTOR

MUSIC
CLEAR
BRIGHT
REHEARSE

CHOIR
NAME, NAMES
NIGHT

It was a dark and stormy night. But even though it was a dark and stormy night the boys and girls had met to rehearse their chime music. However, the boys and girls had a big problem because the stormy night had caused the electricity to go off. Now without electricity the lights would not come on so that the boys and girls could see to rehearse their chime music.

And the director thought that the boys and girls should rehearse their chime music even though there was no electricity and the lights would not come on.

But it was such a dark and stormy night that neither the boys or the girls or the director could see the chimes to get them out of the case.

Then one of the boys said, "I think there is a flash light in the cabinet by the window. Maybe that would help us."

And the director said, "Yes, I do think it would."

So the boy got the flash light, and sure enough even though it was a dark and stormy night the boys and girls could see to get their chimes out of the case.

While the director held the flash light each boy and girl went to the chime case to get their chime. And they went back and stood in their correct place to play their chime.

But they still had a problem. Because it was such a dark and stormy night, and because the electricity was off and the lights were off, the boys and girls and the director could not see the music and so they could not rehearse the music.

So the director said, "Perhaps I could just call out the name of the chimes and which ever boy or girl has that chime could play it. Let us play a G scale first."

Then the director called out the names of the chimes in the G scale.

"G4." And G4 sounded clear and bright.

"A4." And A4 sounded clear and bright.

"B4." And B4 sounded clear and bright.

"C5." And C5 sounded clear and bright.

Then one at a time the director called the names of the chimes "D5, E5, F5, G5, A5, B5 and each chime sounded clear and bright.