

Lesson 12: Whack the Tarantula

Treble: D' E' F' G' A' D'' E'' F'' G'' Standards: 1, 2, 9

The musical score consists of two staves in 6/8 time. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a 6/8 time signature. It starts with a double bar line, a fermata over the first measure, and a second measure marked with a '2' above it. The music then continues with a series of eighth notes and chords, marked with dynamics *mf-mp* and ending with a *Fine* instruction. The second staff also begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. It features a series of eighth notes and chords, marked with dynamics *p* and *f*, and ending with a *D.S. al Fine* instruction.

Lesson and Performance

1. Clap the rhythm of the lyrics in measures 5 and 6.
2. Discuss why the eighth notes are in groups of three.
3. What is the mood of this piece? Unsettled or settled? Tense or peaceful? This is in a minor key with very close intervals that clash. The fast tempo helps create a frantic feeling.
4. A tarantella is a lively Italian dance in 6/8 time. According to legend doing the dance was supposed to cure the poisonous bite of the tarantula spider it was named for.

Activity: The Tarantula Dancetula

Materials: Tarantella recording of your choice.

1. Have students form one or more circles. Practice the 6-beat jive pattern: step in place -- right, left, right; clap hands to thighs -- parallel, cross, parallel.
2. As the circles jive to the recording choose several students to jump on one foot in the middle, keeping the beat. For a challenge, they hold one foot behind with one hand and raise the opposite hand overhead.
3. When a jumper loses balance and the other foot touches the ground, they tag someone from the circle to replace them, and they join the jive.