

Yussef Dayes is a drummer. He and his band mate Kareem use fractions to get the right timings when they play music.

Description: Yussef plays in a successful band – his job demands hours of rehearsal and regular performances at gigs and concerts. Music has always helped him to feel relaxed and positive and to play well he must get his timing perfect.



Discussion points:

1. What do you think Yussef likes best about his job?
2. What might he do in a typical day?
3. What skills does he need to be a good drummer?
4. We often talk about fractions of cakes, fruit and so on. What type of fractions does Yussef talk about, what is being measured?
5. If the full beat takes one second, how long will each half beat last, how long will a quarter beat last etc. ? What if one beat takes 2 seconds...?
6. When Yussef is drumming, he nods his head – which beat do you think he is nodding his head to? (Replay at 2.30 onwards) Can you clap to the full beat played on the guitar?

Suggested activities:

1. Clapping games – one group claps the whole beat, the other group claps the half beat
2. Find your own way of drawing these whole beats, half beats and quarter beats.
3. Make a fraction wall to represent Yussef's drumming :

1 whole beat 8/8							
½ beat				½ beat			
¼ beat		¼ beat		¼ beat		¼ beat	
⅛	⅛	⅛	⅛	⅛	⅛	⅛	⅛
beat	beat	beat	beat	beat	beat	beat	beat

Extension activities:

- Develop into percussion activities – use a xylophone to strike the whole beats, a tambourine for the half beat and drum for the quarter beats. Compose a class tune for a set of percussion instruments. Groups write it out using their own agreed notation.
- Look at music notation. What fraction of a crotchet is a quaver and a semi-quaver? Find out about semibreves, minims. A semibreve is also known as a 'whole note'. Can you make a music notes fraction-wall?

Teacher's notes:

Subject keywords:

fraction, one whole, half, quarter, eighth, third, sixth, fifth, tenth, twentieth, proportion, for every equivalent, part, equal parts

Job keywords:

Co-ordination – in music playing, the ability to move your hands and feet together effectively and in time

Rehearsal – to practise for a performance or gig

Rhythm – the regular beat of a piece of music that sets the speed at which it is played