

# Fundamental Rhythm Studies

A Crash Course in Note Lengths in Essential Time Signatures

by  
Mike C. Muncher  
*for the Benjamin Russell High School Concert Band*

# Fundamental Rhythm Studies

A Crash Course in Note Lengths In Essential Time Signatures

## Stop or My Mom Will Shoot: Essential Note Lengths

Mike C. Muncher

1

Breathe on 4

Play *all the way to the rest* and lift the air rather than "stopping" it.

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

1

Breathe on 2

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

1

Musical staff 1: A single melodic line in 2/4 time. Notes are placed on the 1st, 3rd, 5th, and 7th beats. A 'Breathe on 2' instruction with an arrow points to the second beat. The staff is numbered 1 through 8.

2

Musical staff 2: A single melodic line in 2/4 time. Notes are placed on every beat from 1 to 8. Each note has a fermata. The staff is numbered 1 through 8.

3

Musical staff 3: A single melodic line in 2/4 time. Eighth notes are placed on every beat from 1 to 8. Each note has a fermata. The staff is numbered 1 through 8.

4

Musical staff 4: A single melodic line in 2/4 time. Eighth notes are placed on every beat from 1 to 8. Each note has a fermata. The staff is numbered 1 through 8.

5

Musical staff 5: A single melodic line in 2/4 time. Eighth notes are placed on every beat from 1 to 8. The staff is numbered 1 through 8.

6

Musical staff 6: A single melodic line in 2/4 time. Notes are placed on every beat from 1 to 8. The staff is numbered 1 through 8.

1

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

Breathe on 3

2

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

3

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

4

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

5

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

6

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

7

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

8

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

# Bridge on the River Tie:

## The Tie

1

Lift Breath (stop) on 1  
Breathe on 4

2

Breathe on 4

3

Breathe on 4 - lift, DON'T CHOP!

Play *all the way to beat 4*

4

Play all the way to 2 - lift and breathe quickly, DON'T CHOP

5

lift on 1

6

Lift on 3  
(lift on 1)

# Beauty and the Beat: Starting from Scratch

1

Musical notation for exercise 1 in 4/4 time. The staff contains six measures. Measure 1: quarter note G4. Measure 2: quarter note A4. Measure 3: quarter note B4. Measure 4: quarter note C5. Measure 5: quarter note B4, quarter note A4. Measure 6: quarter note G4, quarter note F4. The notes are numbered 1 through 6 below the staff.

2

Musical notation for exercise 2 in 4/4 time. The staff contains five measures. Measure 1: quarter note G4, quarter rest. Measure 2: quarter note A4, quarter rest. Measure 3: quarter note B4, quarter note C5. Measure 4: quarter note B4, quarter note A4. Measure 5: quarter note G4, quarter note F4. The notes are numbered 1 through 5 below the staff.

3

Musical notation for exercise 3 in common time. The staff contains six measures. Measure 1: quarter note G4. Measure 2: quarter note A4. Measure 3: quarter note B4. Measure 4: quarter note C5. Measure 5: quarter note B4, quarter note A4. Measure 6: quarter note G4, quarter note F4. The notes are numbered 1 through 6 below the staff.

4

Musical notation for exercise 4 in common time. The staff contains five measures. Measure 1: quarter note G4, quarter rest. Measure 2: quarter note A4, quarter rest. Measure 3: quarter note B4, quarter note C5. Measure 4: quarter note B4, quarter note A4. Measure 5: quarter note G4, quarter note F4. The notes are numbered 1 through 5 below the staff.

5

Musical notation for exercise 5 in 2/4 time. The staff contains six measures. Measure 1: quarter note G4. Measure 2: eighth note A4, eighth note B4. Measure 3: quarter note C5. Measure 4: quarter note B4, quarter note A4. Measure 5: quarter note G4, quarter note F4. Measure 6: quarter note E4, quarter note D4. The notes are numbered 1 through 6 below the staff.

6

Musical notation for exercise 6 in 2/4 time. The staff contains five measures. Measure 1: quarter note G4, quarter rest. Measure 2: eighth note A4, eighth note B4. Measure 3: quarter note C5. Measure 4: quarter note B4, quarter note A4. Measure 5: quarter note G4, quarter note F4. The notes are numbered 1 through 5 below the staff.

7

Exercise 7 is in 3/4 time. It consists of six measures. Measure 1: quarter note, quarter note, quarter note. Measure 2: quarter note, quarter note, quarter note. Measure 3: quarter note, quarter note, quarter note. Measure 4: quarter note, quarter note, quarter note. Measure 5: quarter note, quarter note, quarter note. Measure 6: quarter note, quarter note, quarter note. Fingerings 1 through 6 are indicated below the notes.

8

Exercise 8 is in 3/4 time. It consists of five measures. Measure 1: quarter note, quarter note, quarter note. Measure 2: quarter note, quarter note, quarter note. Measure 3: quarter note, quarter note, quarter note. Measure 4: quarter note, quarter note, quarter note. Measure 5: quarter note, quarter note, quarter note. Fingerings 1 through 5 are indicated below the notes.

9

Exercise 9 is in 6/8 time. It consists of seven measures. Measure 1: quarter note, quarter note, quarter note. Measure 2: eighth note, eighth note, eighth note, eighth note, eighth note, eighth note. Measure 3: eighth note, eighth note, eighth note, eighth note, eighth note, eighth note. Measure 4: quarter note, quarter note, quarter note. Measure 5: quarter note, quarter note, quarter note. Measure 6: quarter note, quarter note, quarter note. Measure 7: quarter note, quarter note, quarter note. Fingerings 1 through 7 are indicated below the notes.

10

Exercise 10 is in 6/8 time. It consists of six measures. Measure 1: quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note. Measure 2: quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note. Measure 3: quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note. Measure 4: quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note. Measure 5: quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note. Measure 6: quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note. Fingerings 1 through 6 are indicated below the notes.

11

Exercise 11 is in 12/8 time. It consists of four measures. Measure 1: quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note. Measure 2: quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note. Measure 3: quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note. Measure 4: quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note. Fingerings 1 through 4 are indicated below the notes.

Exercise 11 is in 12/8 time. It consists of three measures. Measure 5: quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note. Measure 6: quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note. Measure 7: quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note, quarter note. Fingerings 5 through 7 are indicated below the notes.



12

The image displays three staves of musical notation for a rhythm study. Each staff begins with a double bar line on the left. The notes are placed on a single line, and their stems are all pointing upwards. The first staff contains measures 1 through 4. Measure 1 has four eighth notes. Measure 2 has a quarter note, a dotted quarter note, and two eighth notes. Measure 3 has a dotted quarter note, a quarter note, and two eighth notes. Measure 4 has a quarter note, a dotted quarter note, and two eighth notes. The second staff contains measures 5 through 8. Measure 5 has a quarter note, a dotted quarter note, and two eighth notes. Measure 6 has a quarter note, a dotted quarter note, and two eighth notes. Measure 7 has a quarter note, a dotted quarter note, and two eighth notes. Measure 8 has a quarter note, a dotted quarter note, and two eighth notes. The third staff contains measures 9 and 10. Measure 9 has a quarter note, a dotted quarter note, and two eighth notes. Measure 10 has a quarter note, a dotted quarter note, and two eighth notes. The notation ends with a double bar line on the right.

# The Land Before Time: Back to Basics

Each of these rhythmic groupings combines a note value, and its next smallest subdivision.  
 For example: half notes are combined with quarter notes, eighths with sixteenths, etc.  
 The same rhythmic groupings are used throughout this portion of the book, to facilitate learning,  
 and to foster mental transition between similar rhythms at different note lengths (speeds).  
 In addition, each section will sound the same as the next section if played in cut time.  
 (i.e. Section A in cut time is the same sound as Section B played as written.)

1

## SECTION A

2

3

4

5

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8  
9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16

6

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

7

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

8

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

9

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8  
9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16  
17 18 19 20 21 22

SECTION B

1

1 2 3 4

2

1 2 3 4 5 6

3

1 2 3 4

4

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

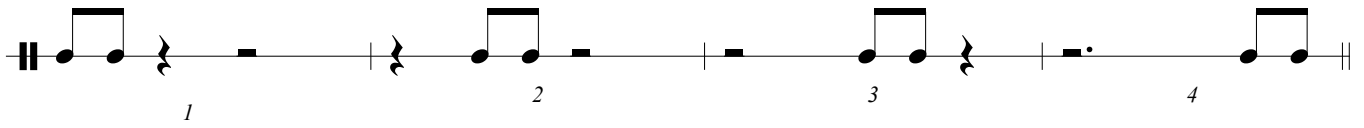
5

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

6

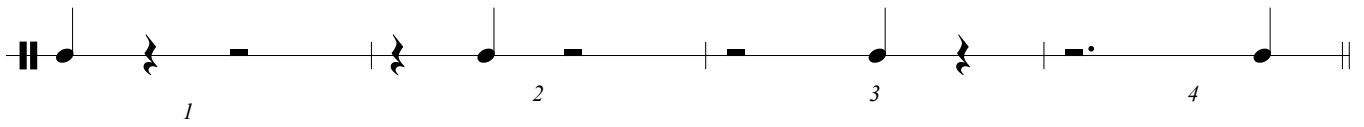
1 2 3 4

7



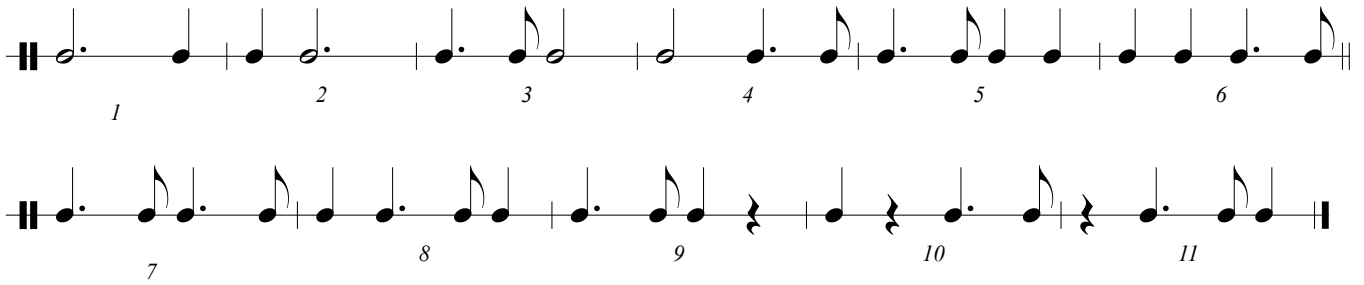
Musical notation for exercise 7, consisting of a single staff with four measures. Measure 1: quarter note, quarter note, quarter rest, quarter rest. Measure 2: quarter note, quarter note, quarter rest, quarter rest. Measure 3: quarter note, quarter note, quarter rest, quarter rest. Measure 4: quarter note, quarter note, quarter rest, quarter rest. The exercise is marked with a double bar line at the beginning and end, and numbered 1 through 4 below the staff.

8



Musical notation for exercise 8, consisting of a single staff with four measures. Measure 1: quarter note, quarter rest, quarter rest, quarter rest. Measure 2: quarter note, quarter rest, quarter rest, quarter rest. Measure 3: quarter note, quarter rest, quarter rest, quarter rest. Measure 4: quarter note, quarter rest, quarter rest, quarter rest. The exercise is marked with a double bar line at the beginning and end, and numbered 1 through 4 below the staff.

9



Musical notation for exercise 9, consisting of two staves with 11 measures. The first staff contains measures 1 through 6, and the second staff contains measures 7 through 11. The exercise is marked with a double bar line at the beginning and end, and numbered 1 through 11 below the staves.

SECTION C

1

Musical notation for exercise 1, featuring a single staff with a common time signature (C). The exercise consists of four measures, each containing a pair of eighth notes. The first measure has a downbeat on the first eighth note. The second measure has a downbeat on the second eighth note. The third measure has a downbeat on the third eighth note. The fourth measure has a downbeat on the fourth eighth note. The notes are grouped by beams, and the exercise is numbered 1 through 4 below the staff.

2

Musical notation for exercise 2, featuring a single staff with a common time signature (C). The exercise consists of six measures, each containing a pair of eighth notes. The first measure has a downbeat on the first eighth note. The second measure has a downbeat on the second eighth note. The third measure has a downbeat on the third eighth note. The fourth measure has a downbeat on the fourth eighth note. The fifth measure has a downbeat on the fifth eighth note. The sixth measure has a downbeat on the sixth eighth note. The notes are grouped by beams, and the exercise is numbered 1 through 6 below the staff.

3

Musical notation for exercise 3, featuring a single staff with a common time signature (C). The exercise consists of four measures, each containing a pair of eighth notes. The first measure has a downbeat on the first eighth note. The second measure has a downbeat on the second eighth note. The third measure has a downbeat on the third eighth note. The fourth measure has a downbeat on the fourth eighth note. The notes are grouped by beams, and the exercise is numbered 1 through 4 below the staff.

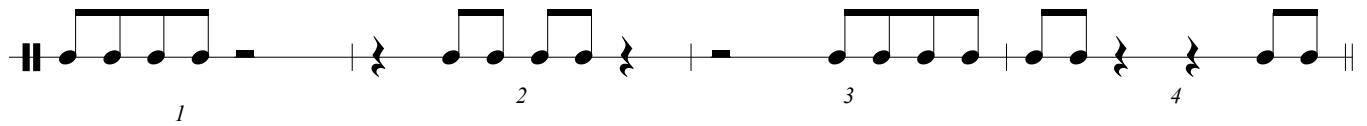
4

Musical notation for exercise 4, featuring two staves with a common time signature (C). The first staff contains four measures, each with a pair of eighth notes. The second staff contains four measures, each with a pair of eighth notes. The notes are grouped by beams, and the exercise is numbered 1 through 8 below the staves.

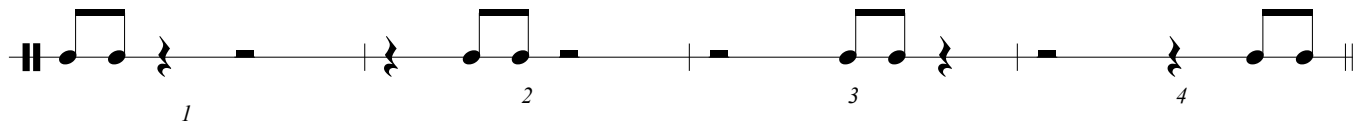
5

Musical notation for exercise 5, featuring two staves with a common time signature (C). The first staff contains four measures, each with a pair of eighth notes. The second staff contains four measures, each with a pair of eighth notes. The notes are grouped by beams, and the exercise is numbered 1 through 8 below the staves.

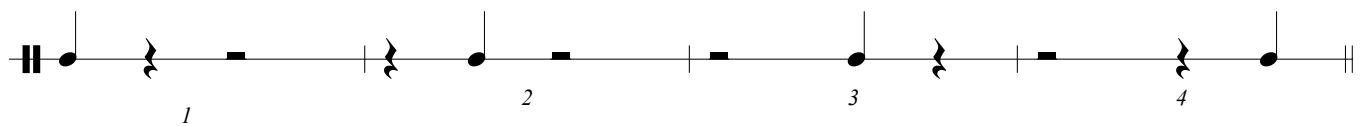
6



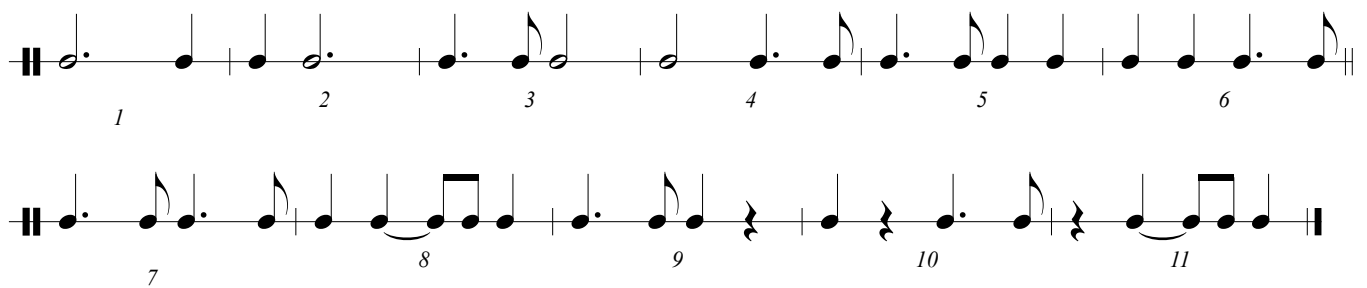
7



8

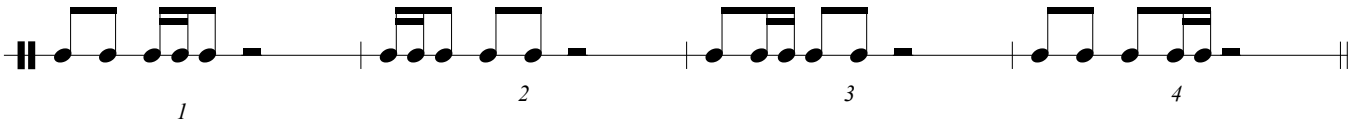


9



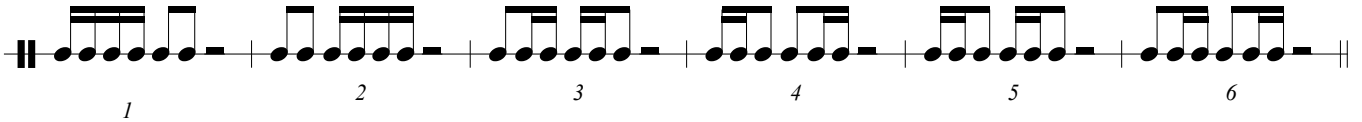
SECTION D

1



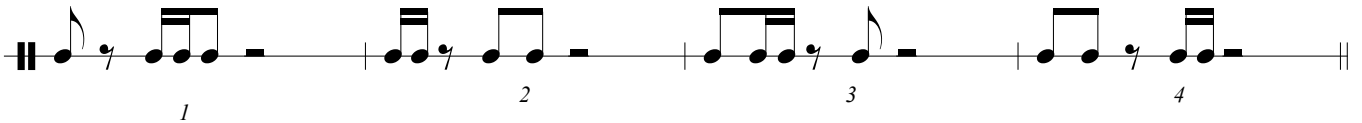
Musical notation for exercise 1, consisting of four measures. Each measure contains a pair of eighth notes followed by a quarter rest. The pairs of eighth notes are: (1) eighth and sixteenth notes, (2) eighth and thirty-second notes, (3) eighth and sixty-fourth notes, and (4) eighth and one-hundred twenty-eighth notes. The exercises are numbered 1, 2, 3, and 4 below each measure.

2



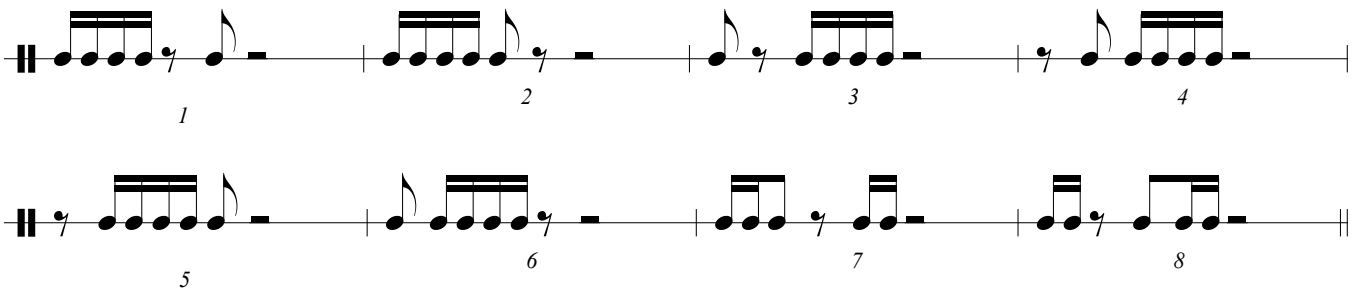
Musical notation for exercise 2, consisting of six measures. Each measure contains a pair of eighth notes followed by a quarter rest. The pairs of eighth notes are: (1) eighth and sixteenth notes, (2) eighth and thirty-second notes, (3) eighth and sixty-fourth notes, (4) eighth and one-hundred twenty-eighth notes, (5) eighth and one-hundred twenty-eighth notes, and (6) eighth and one-hundred twenty-eighth notes. The exercises are numbered 1 through 6 below each measure.

3



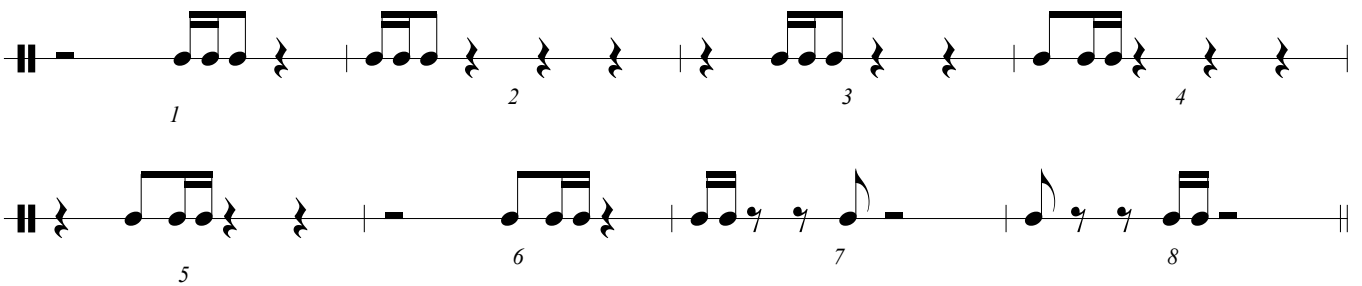
Musical notation for exercise 3, consisting of four measures. Each measure contains a pair of eighth notes followed by a quarter rest. The pairs of eighth notes are: (1) eighth and sixteenth notes, (2) eighth and thirty-second notes, (3) eighth and sixty-fourth notes, and (4) eighth and one-hundred twenty-eighth notes. The exercises are numbered 1, 2, 3, and 4 below each measure.

4



Musical notation for exercise 4, consisting of eight measures. Each measure contains a pair of eighth notes followed by a quarter rest. The pairs of eighth notes are: (1) eighth and sixteenth notes, (2) eighth and thirty-second notes, (3) eighth and sixty-fourth notes, (4) eighth and one-hundred twenty-eighth notes, (5) eighth and one-hundred twenty-eighth notes, (6) eighth and one-hundred twenty-eighth notes, (7) eighth and one-hundred twenty-eighth notes, and (8) eighth and one-hundred twenty-eighth notes. The exercises are numbered 1 through 8 below each measure.

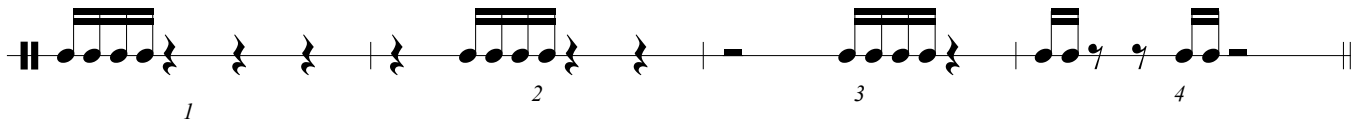
5



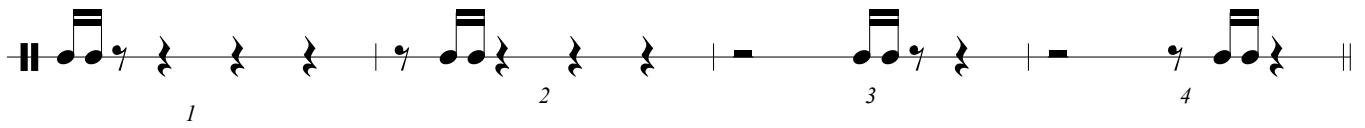
Musical notation for exercise 5, consisting of eight measures. Each measure contains a pair of eighth notes followed by a quarter rest. The pairs of eighth notes are: (1) eighth and sixteenth notes, (2) eighth and thirty-second notes, (3) eighth and sixty-fourth notes, (4) eighth and one-hundred twenty-eighth notes, (5) eighth and one-hundred twenty-eighth notes, (6) eighth and one-hundred twenty-eighth notes, (7) eighth and one-hundred twenty-eighth notes, and (8) eighth and one-hundred twenty-eighth notes. The exercises are numbered 1 through 8 below each measure.



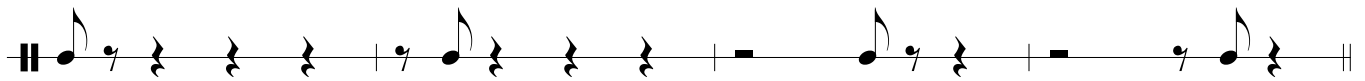
6



7



8



9

