

This is why we believe in a syllabic system of counting. When counting syllabically (with Ta's), students tend to count with a musical rhythmic inflection that aids the student in developing a basic sense of pulse and organization of the rhythm. They rarely count incorrectly when using Ta's. Little explanation is necessary. Teachers can just tap and say the syllables with students, and after a number of examples, the students just pick it up easily. We use syllabic counting in Piano Safari Level 1 and introduce metric counting in the beginning of Level 2. In Level 2 we gradually transition students from syllabic to metric counting by using both systems until students are comfortable with metric counting. Truth be told, I never fully stop using syllabic counting, as I find it so musical.

Ta - ti Ta - ti Ta Ta Ta - 2 Ta - 2 Ta Ta Ta Ta Ta - 2 Ta - 2






RHYTHM PATTERNS

Secondly, Rhythm Patterns. We use animal patterns in Piano Safari to further reinforce the macro sense of rhythm. Many of the patterns tie into their Animal Technique Exercises as well. Students count both with Ta's, with a rhythmically musical inflection, and we also ask them to find the animal rhythm patterns in their pieces and Sight Reading Exercises. I often draw the animals in the score, or I use my stuffed animals to tap the Rhythm Patterns.

The example above counted with Ta's can also be counted with Animal Rhythm Patterns:

Zech-a-ri-ah Zeb - ra Hip - po Char - lie Chip-munk Hip - po

Here are the animal and syllabic patterns that are found most commonly in Piano Safari Level 1:

	Charlie Chipmunk
	Zechariah Zebra
	Hippo
	Kangaroo
	Tall Giraffe

Internalizing these rhythmic patterns and practicing tapping and saying rhythm patterns at the bottom of each Sight Reading Card separate from melodies really enhances the ability of a student to decode music.