

# UKE AND (YOU CAN) JAM WITH THE BAND

## Why Ukulele?

- Economical classroom instrument (democratic)
- Gateway instrument...leads to other stringed instruments
- Fingerboard fits smaller hands
- Four strings (why would you need more?)
- Requires less pressure on strings (compared to guitar)
- Lots of easy chords (1-2 fingers)
- Fingering similar to the bottom four strings of guitar
- Helps students hear vertically, not just horizontally
- Supports improvisation development (Guilbault, 2009)

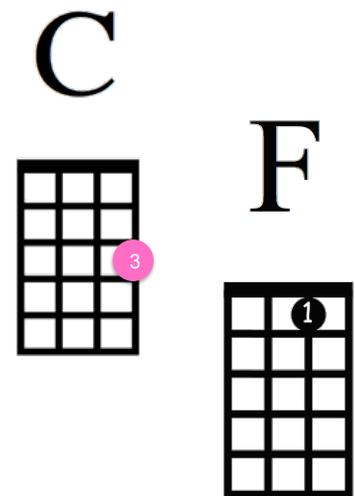
## Learning Supports

- Colored dots on the bridge for beginning chords
  - ✦ Not a replacement for audiation
  - ✦ Early success contributes to high motivation
  - ✦ Removes some weight from the cognitive load of executive skills
- Make small groups responsible for single chords at first
- Chord posters
- Play-along videos
- Individualize by providing options for simpler strums and more challenging strums



## Where could you begin?

1. Teach rest position and playing position (classroom management)
2. Strum on open strings
  - Begin with down strum
  - Strum at the bottom of the neck (NOT over the sound hole)
  - Demonstrate, then let them explore on their own
  - Strum rhythm as a class (Sing it...play it)
3. Introduce a one-finger chord (C)
4. Create own strum pattern!!!
  - Down strum, up strum, combination
  - At own tempo, with the class, with accompaniment (Garageband?)
5. Create own strum pattern!!!
  - Share with class
  - At own tempo, with the class, with accompaniment
6. Perform Lime in the Coconut (one-chord song) - C
7. Polly Wolly Doodle (familiar folk song)
  - Movement game (dance)
  - Chord roots (sing)
  - 1/2 sing DO, 1/2 SO (then switch jobs)
  - Class sings chord root melody
8. NEW CHORD (F or "easy F") - Repeat strumming as above
9. Perform Polly Wolly Doodle with 1/3 on F, 1/3 on C, 1/3 sing and move (then switch jobs)
10. Practice toggling between chords
  - 1/2 play and sing chord roots, 1/2 sing and move



*Repeat for other familiar tunes with I and V chord roots in the Key of F*

✦ *Interested in adding more chords? Try adding traditional F, then G7, then Am, then G. Next, you could add Dm (sister chord to F) or D7 and then D (sister chord to D7). Depends on what repertoire your students are interested in playing. Think of how many fingers they need to play the chord...and if it's related to any other chords they know! If students need a chord to play a favorite tune, they've got a TON of motivation to learn a new chord!!!*



## Increasing challenge and adding creativity

- ✦ Combine singing and playing
- ✦ Increase complexity and syncopation of strum
- ✦ Improvise strum patterns
- ✦ Improvise vocally while another group or partner accompanies on uke
- ✦ Improvise melodically by picking a melody
- ✦ Connect to composition

## Not enough instruments?

- Partner the students up
  - ✦ One sings and one plays
  - ✦ One plays and the other practices "strum" pattern on a hand drum
- Use Orff instruments for the chord roots
- Use ukes during "center" time, supported by play-along videos.
- Ask families to "adopt" a uke. Put a "adopted by" or "donated by" label on the instrument. Allow the family to name the instrument. =)

## Readiness activities

- Strum on open strings
  - ✦ Alternative string tuning (open tuning) - Major chords only!
- Demonstrate for the students on YOUR uke
  - ✦ Accompany singing (tunes...chord roots), Orff arrangements, movement activities
- Combine younger classes (singing) with older classes (accompanying on ukulele)

## Strategies to Support Strumming:

### Beginners and new chords

- Use simple down strum on steady beat

### One chord songs

- Opportunity for strumming challenges

### Provide strumming options for a variety of ability levels

- Steady beat, simple rhythm, syncopated

### Creativity?

- Ask students to create strum patterns

### Break down strum patterns

- Assign chords to sections of the class and focus on strumming rhythm
- Mute the strings to practice strum patterns separate from chords
- Use hand drums to practice strumming (2:1 settings)
- Slow down recording and gradually increase speed

## Other Resources:

Beloff, J., & Belloff, L. (2010). *The daily ukulele*. Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard.

Greenberg, M. (1992). The ukulele in your classroom. *Music Educators Journal*, 79(3), 43-48.

Thibeault, M. D., & Evoy, J. (2011). Building your own musical community: How YouTube, Miley Cyrus, and the ukulele can create a new kind of ensemble. *General Music Today*, 24(3), 44-52.

Thibeault, M. D. (2014). Exploring the old town school of folk music's Beck Song Reader Ensemble: An interview with Nathaniel Braddock. *General Music Today*, 27(2), 43-47.

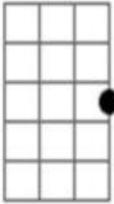
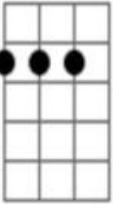
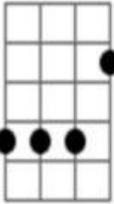
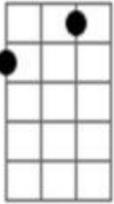
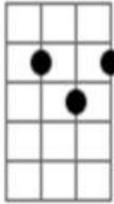
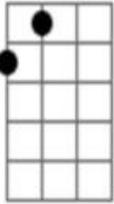
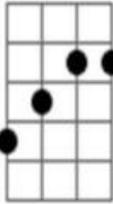
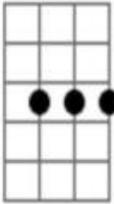
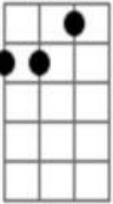
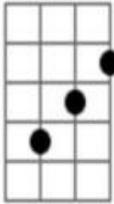
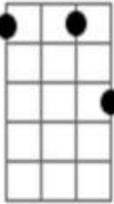
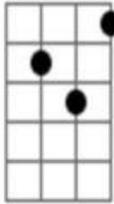
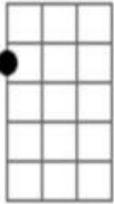
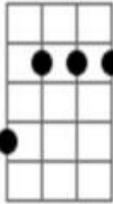
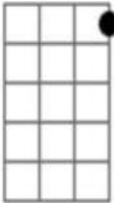
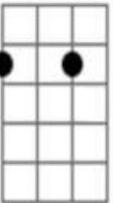
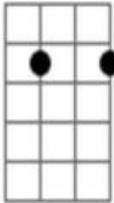
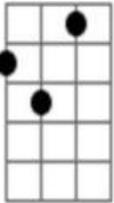
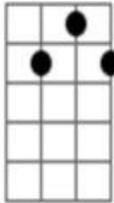
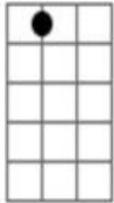
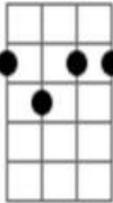
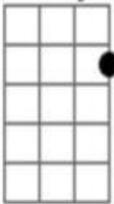
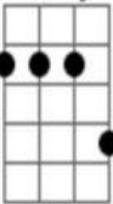
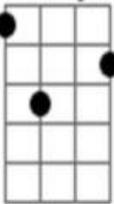
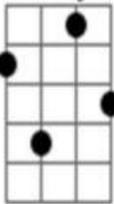
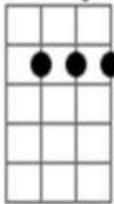
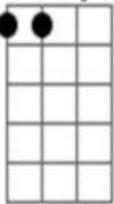
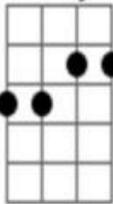
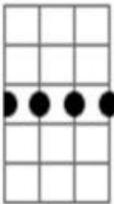
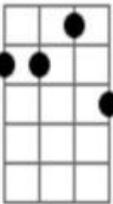
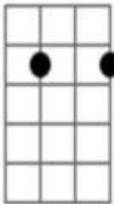
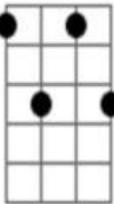
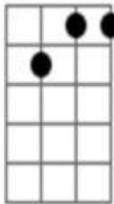
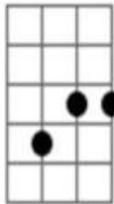
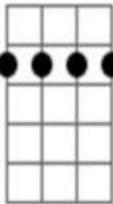
Thibeault, M. D. (2014). Media as an invitation to rethink music education. *General Music Today*, 27(3), 36-39.



## Some Resources

- Uke Can Do It! - Philip Tamberino
- Ukulele for Music Teachers (iBook) - Robin Gieblehausen
- <https://www.youtube.com/user/DrJillReese>
- <https://sites.google.com/a/fredonia.edu/reese-ukulele/>

# BASIC UKULELE CHORDS

<i>C</i> 	<i>D</i> 	<i>E</i> 	<i>F</i> 	<i>G</i> 	<i>A</i> 	<i>B</i> 
<i>Cm</i> 	<i>Dm</i> 	<i>Em</i> 	<i>Fm</i> 	<i>Gm</i> 	<i>Am</i> 	<i>Bm</i> 
<i>C7</i> 	<i>D7</i> 	<i>E7</i> 	<i>F7</i> 	<i>G7</i> 	<i>A7</i> 	<i>B7</i> 
<i>Cmaj7</i> 	<i>Dmaj7</i> 	<i>Emaj7</i> 	<i>Fmaj7</i> 	<i>Gmaj7</i> 	<i>Amaj7</i> 	<i>Bmaj7</i> 
<i>Cm7</i> 	<i>Dm7</i> 	<i>Em7</i> 	<i>Fm7</i> 	<i>Gm7</i> 	<i>Am7</i> 	<i>Bm7</i> 

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