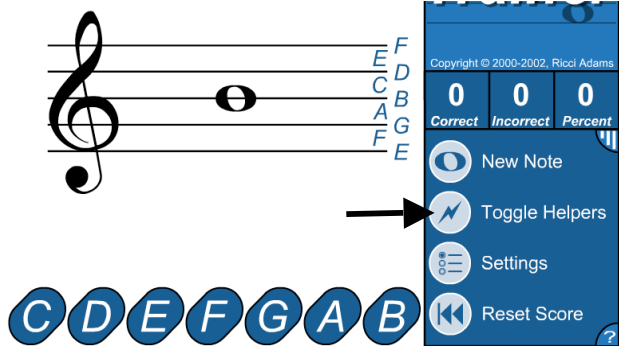


SmartBoard and Musictheory.net by Ken Peters

I have never been a fan of Drill and Practice software. Well, that is not completely true. When computers first hit the market it was exciting and fun to do anything on the computer. My favorite software was a game called Spider Eater. A spider would jump on a staff and crawl across the screen. You had to touch a Koala pad (never mind) with the letters A-G to zap him before he got to the G clef. I had a large laminated poster board that I could write the winners name for each class. I haven't felt that excited about using Drill and Practice software until now and only because of the use of SmartBoards. First, go to musictheory.net and download the program for free on either the windows or Macintosh platform computer.



I started with Note Trainer. You can toggle on and off the names of the notes so that the first turn by students is very easy. I first go through the FACE , Every-Good-Boy-Does-Fine lesson. (I do tell them about the Moody Blues album called Every Good Boy

Deserves Fudge and how that was an inside joke for musicians. We also find other phrases that they might know, Empty-Garbage-Before-Dad-Flips, Even-George-Bush-Drives-Fast, Elvis's-Guitar-Breaks-Down-Frequently). I have every student come to the SmartBoard and see how many he or she can get correct in 20 seconds. They first tap the **Reset Score** icon and then when they tap the board for their first answer, I start my stopwatch. I record their score and find a class average on Excel. On one page, I print the name and score of the top contestant from each class.

For older students, you can click **Settings** and move the whole notes to work on ledger lines (ex. for flutes that often read above the staff) You can work on several staves by clicking on the other staves.

Settings

Click a clef to enable/disable it. Click and drag the notes to alter the range.

 ALTO CLEF DISABLED	 TENOR CLEF DISABLED

I next moved to Chord Ear Trainer. At first, I thought this was way too advanced for my elementary students until I figured out that you could uncheck chords. I removed all the possibilities except for Major and Minor. They first tap **Reset Score** and then tap **Play Again**. My rules were that you could tap **Play Again** up to 3 times before you had to make a

decision. Your turn was over when you got one wrong. I was shocked when some students got high scores. A 2nd grader got 52 and today a 5th grader got 111 in a row! When the student reached 100, I said from now on you cannot push the **Play Again** button. Later this year, I would like to try Major, Minor and add Suspended chords. I am also considering adding the two choices Dominant 7th and Major 7th for a more challenging ear training.

Many students have been very excited about these games and have downloaded the program at home. The SmartBoard has MANY possibilities for creating an exciting learning environment in your classroom.

