

The XO and TamTam in the Music Curriculum for ECE

*Curriculum Goals excerpted by Caryl Bigenho, MA Music Education
and OLPC Support Volunteer*

*From
The Jamaica Early Childhood Curriculum Guide:
Four and Five Getting Ready for Life (© 2010)
and
The Jamaican Revised Primary Curriculum Guide:
Grades 1-3 (©1999)*

What is Tam Tam?

- **Tam Tam** is a powerful music synthesizer that transforms the XO computer into a real musical instrument
- **Tam Tam** is a suite of 4 Activities with increasing levels of complexity:
 - **Tam Tam Mini** is the simplest Activity, suitable for all ages from pre-school to adult. It does not require a mesh network or server. It uses the XO keyboard to play a two octave chromatic scale players can use to play melodies with their chosen sound. It also offers a selection of several simple loops for harmonizing, and a drum machine with adjustable tempo, speed and complexity on a variety of "drum sets."
 - **Tam Tam Jam** is similar to TamTam Mini, but offers more features so participants can record melodies to be repeated, customize loops, and share a rhythm within a group of players through a mesh network or a server.
 - **Tam Tam Edit** is the basic Tam Tam Activity and must be installed in order to run any of the other Tam Tam Activities. It offers customizable loops where you can choose instruments, pitches and the duration of notes on five different tracks. It offers almost 100 different musical sounds and a limitless variety of musical styles.
 - **Tam Tam Synth Lab** is a highly sophisticated synthesizer program suitable for advanced work in both music and physics.

What are the Musical Goals for ECE Education?

The following example Goals are excerpted from the Jamaican music curricula for 4-year-olds and 1st Grade students

- **Sing** songs about topics related to the themes being studied
- **Play rhythms** on simple instruments. Clap, Tap, and move in rhythm
- **Make simple instruments** from various objects
- **Differentiate** between high and low itches and, by grade 1, sing in tune
- **Differentiate** between fast and slow tempos
- **Differentiate** between loud and soft dynamics
- **Create** and sing own songs related to the themes being studied
- **Record** own songs (by Grade 1)
- **Perform** songs by self and/or in a group
- **Listen** to a variety of types of music

How can Tam Tam help achieve these goals?

Key to the Keyboard from

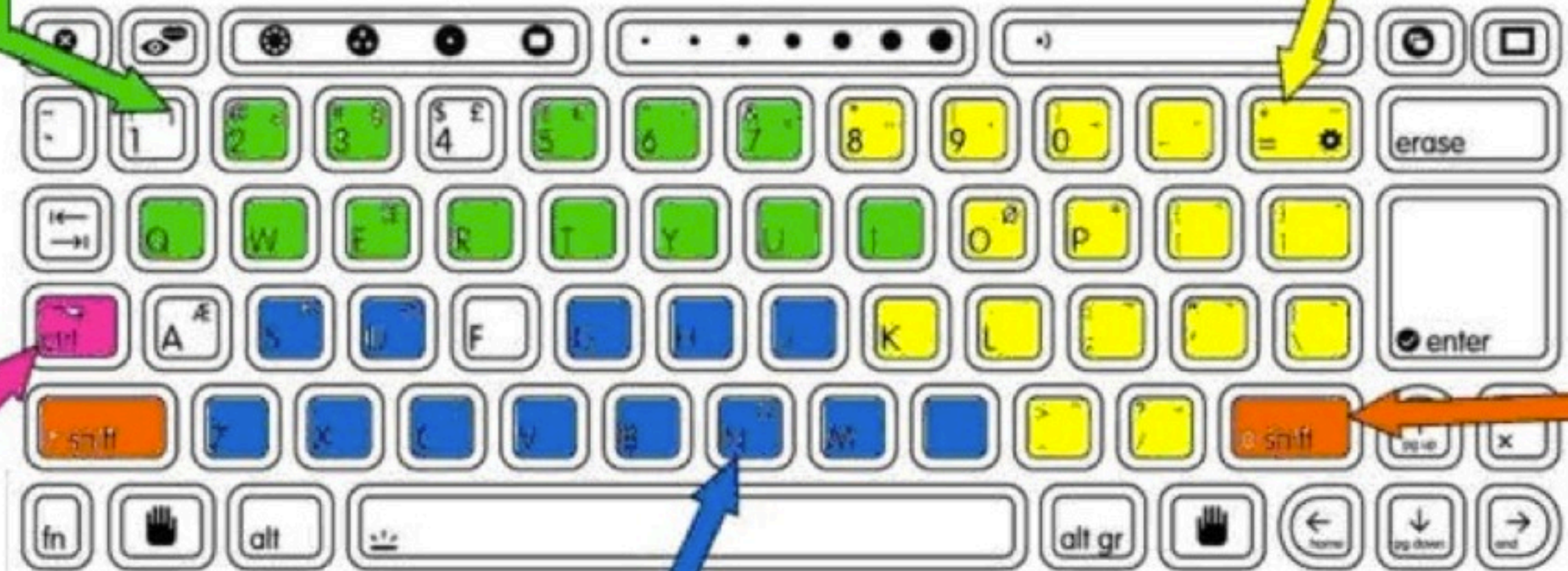
by Sdenka Salas

The XO Laptop in the Classroom

Using the XO Keyboard and Tam Tam Mini to play music

Play higher octave with selected sound

Music loops are synchronized to the drum beat

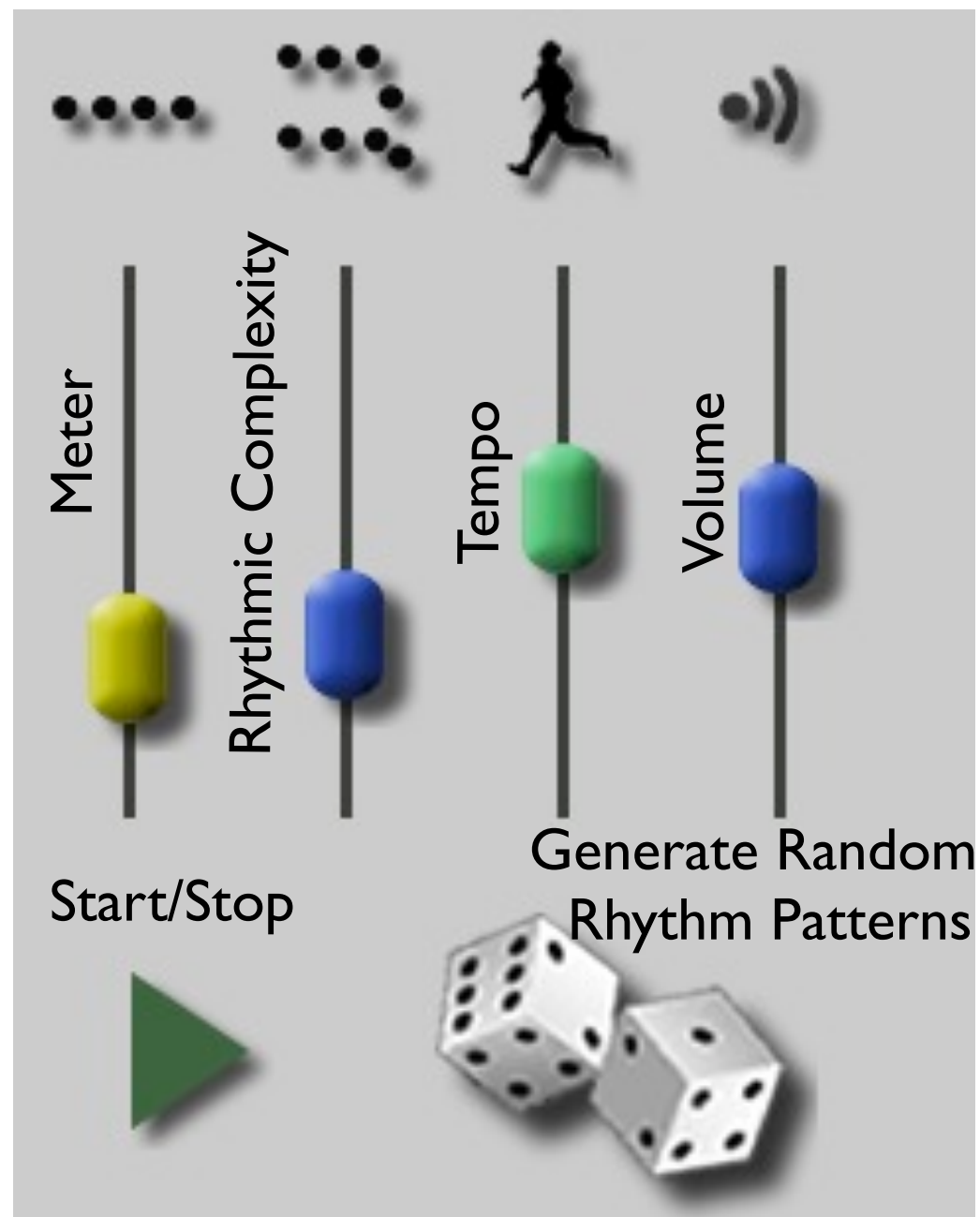


Ctrl activates and deactivates the preview of the sound

Play lower octave with selected sound

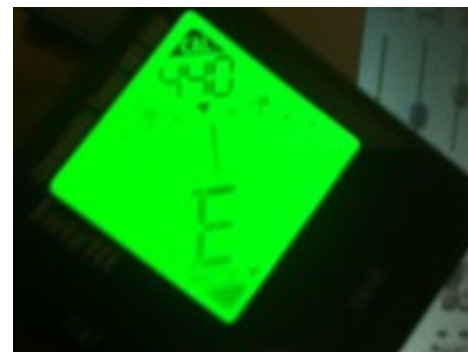
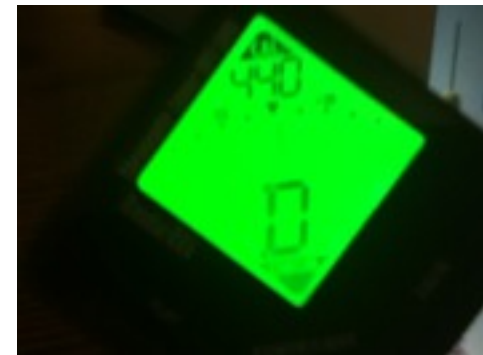
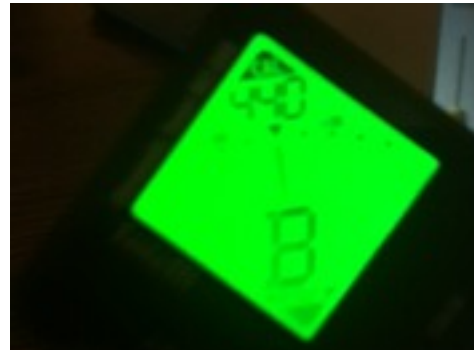
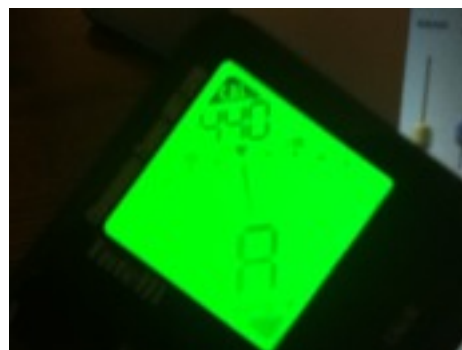
Shift makes music loops, holding it when first pressing a key

The Tam Tam Mini Rhythm Box



Intonation on the XO

The intonation of the XO is surprisingly accurate as these images taken of a tuner attached to the body of the laptop show



Younger children exposed to well tuned instruments have an excellent chance of developing a good sense of pitch



Students in Uruguay perform “Silent Night” with an orchestra.

A Tam Tam “Orchestra”

- **Children choose** which “instrument” they want to play
- **Children learn** the music for their “instrument”
- **Children practice** with others playing the same “instrument”
- **All children practice** as a group with a “conductor”
- **Children perform** their music for each other, parents, and friends