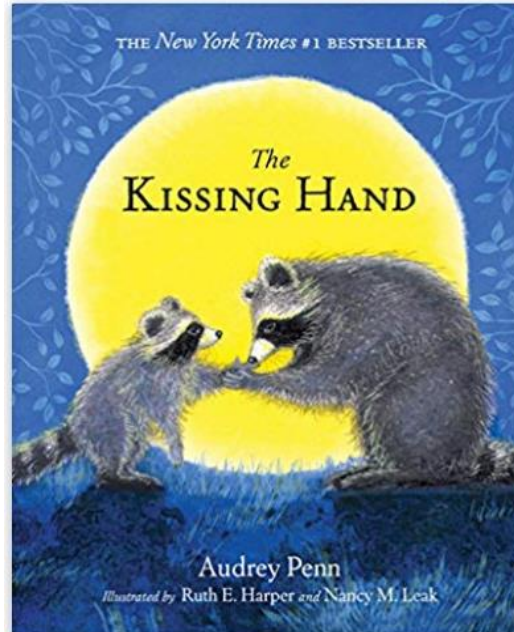


# The Kissing Hand

By Audrey Penn



I use this book to introduce the term *beat* to my students, and it is definitely taken from my Kodaly Level 1 class :) This is a very heartwarming story about how a mother raccoon helps her little raccoon to feel ready to go to school on his own. Many of my kindergarteners have read this book with their teacher at the beginning of the year, so they already know it but love it.

At the end of the book, there is a picture of a heart on a raccoon hand, and so to introduce *beat*, I ask, *where are hearts located in my classroom?* They point to the white board, where I have 4 large magnetic hearts. (For older grades I put notes and rhythms underneath the hearts, but for Kindergarten I sometimes point to each heart during a song and they keep a body motion along with it). I tell them in music we have these “heart beats” that are like our own beating hearts that always keep pulsing at the same speed. We shorten “heart beats” to just “beat” and we keep the beat all the time in music with our bodies and our instruments!

I also have my students perform simple songs while pointing to heart charts or beat charts that look like this:



And I also transition these heart icon charts to be other things like bees, stars, train engines, etc. for songs like Bee Bee Bumble Bee, Star Light Star Bright, Engine Engine Number Nine, etc. and have “beat books” where the icons match each song. It’s easy to assess how well your students are keeping the beat when they are pointing along to these beat charts.

Once they can point to the beat well, I have them keep the beat to all these songs on tubano or other instruments.

Once the beat is solid, I introduce word rhythm with large AND small icons and charts/word rhythm books, and eventually tell them those stand for *ta* and *ti-ti*.