

Sentence Ideas for Remembering the Order of Sharps

The best way to teach the order of sharps or flats is with a mnemonic, which is a sentence in which the first letter of each word represents a sharp. Probably the oldest and most famous is:

'Father **C**harles **G**oes **D**own **A**nd **E**nds **B**attle'

which of course, when said backwards becomes:

'Battle **E**nds **A**nd **D**own **G**oes **C**harles' **F**ather'

which is the mnemonic for remembering flats.

My personal opinion is that only the order of sharps need be memorised as the order of flats is simply the reverse. Since the above mnemonic does not really capture children's imagination, I prefer this sentence:

'Fat **C**at **G**oes **D**riving **A**nd **E**ats **B**ananas'

Of course, there are hundreds of possible variations! Another one I heard recently was:

'Five **C**ats **G**ot **D**rowned **A**t **E**lizabeth **B**ay'

Being a dog person myself, I really liked this one... but it's not really politically correct!

Here are some other good ones:

'Fat **C**ows **G**o **D**own **A**n **E**levator **B**ackwards' (quite surreal but the kids like it)

'Fat **C**ows **G**raze **D**own **A**t **E**very **B**illabong'

And my favourite of all time – this one works as a little story, first with the order of the sharps, and then the flats:

'Father **C**hristmas **G**ave **D**ad **A**n **E**lectric **B**lanket

Blanket **E**xploded **A**nd **D**ad **G**ot **C**old **F**eet!'