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National Group Piano and Piano Pedagogy Forum

Steering Committee Laura Beauchamp, Lenoir Rhyne College, Michelle Conda, Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music, Barbara Fast, University of Oklahoma, Andrew Hisey, Oberlin College Conservatory of Music

The second National Group Piano and Piano Pedagogy Forum (GP3) was held August 2-3, 2002 at the Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. This intensive, two-day forum was specifically designed for college and university group piano and piano pedagogy teachers. The first day was devoted to group piano teaching and the second day focused on piano pedagogy. Similar to the first forum held in 2000, a unique feature of the conference was an on-sight library consisting of syllabi, proficiency requirements, and other course materials brought by participants. These were available for browsing throughout the forum.

A complimentary welcome reception was held August 1, on the Rooftop Garden of the conference hotel, the Vernon Manor. The reception was sponsored by the Yamaha Corporation and Vernon Manor.

The Forum began with a day devoted to the teaching of group piano. The opening panel presentation focused on group piano and piano proficiency. Five representatives from different types of institutions shared how the piano proficiency is handled at their schools. Panelists included: Glenna Sprague (Oakton Community College), Andrew Hisey (Oberlin Conservatory), Cynthia Benson (Bowling Green State University), Tim Shook (Southwestern College), Timothy Shafer (Penn State University). Questions discussed included:

- How many semesters of instruction and hours per week are required of students in different majors?
- What mechanism do you use to place incoming students at the appropriate point in the sequence?
- What are the proficiency requirements?
- What process was used to arrive at the requirements? What, if anything, would you change and why?
- What procedures are used for certifying and/or documenting your piano proficiency?

Two rotations of small group discussions followed the panel presentation. Additionally, participants filled out a questionnaire related to various components of piano proficiency at their respective institutions.

The afternoon featured four presentations on group teaching techniques. Participants rotated and were able to attend all four sessions. Presenters and topics were: Michelle Conda, "Teaching Popular Chording in the Group Piano Setting;" George Litterst, " Putting it All Together: Using Personal Computers in the 21st Century Piano Laboratory;" Ann Milliman Gipson, "Facilitating Group Interaction Within the Piano

Class;" Martha Hilley, "Web-Based Instructional Support for Group Piano."

The afternoon concluded with a presentation by Connie Arrau Sturm, "Video Excerpts to American Group Piano Pioneers." Using excerpts of videotapes from her doctoral research, Dr. Sturm illustrated and discussed components of successful group piano teaching.

The first day of the conference was brought to a close with a complimentary reception hosted by MTNA (Music Teachers National Association).

The second day of the forum was devoted to teaching piano pedagogy at the college level. The opening panel discussion topic was "Perspectives on Pedagogy Teaching: "How do you Teach Beginning Teachers to Teach Beginning Technique?" Panel members included Jane Magrath (University of Oklahoma), Mary Craig Powell (Capital University), and Sam Holland (Southern Methodist University).

The morning concluded with two small group discussions on the following topics: "Share your favorite technology-focused assignment or project from your pedagogy course," and "Share your favorite non-technology-focused assignment or project from your pedagogy course."

The afternoon began with a presentation by Lynda Metelsky, Senior Examiner at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto, "Perspectives on Pedagogy Teaching: Testing and Evaluating Pedagogy Students at the Royal Conservatory of Music, Toronto." Her presentation was followed by two rotations of small group discussions on the topic: "How do you test and evaluate the work of pedagogy students in courses and internships at your institution?"

The afternoon concluded with self-selecting small group discussions in which participants were asked to meet with colleagues who work in situations similar to their own. The three designated groups were: people who teach at undergraduate institutions whose loads are limited to the piano area, people who teach at undergraduate institutions whose loads include work in other areas (theory, aural skills, music appreciation/history, administration), and people who supervise graduate students.

Click on the link http://pianopedagogy.uc.edu/ to access a list of participants, comments, and pictures from GP3 2002. The following reports of the various panel presentations, individual presentations, and small group discussions serve as the forum proceedings.

Panel and Group Discussions: ***Across the Spectrum: Group Piano and Piano Proficiency Requirements***

Reporter: Linda Christensen

The following is a summary of current practices and trends in group piano and piano proficiency, as discussed at the second meeting of the National Group Piano/Piano Pedagogy forum. The report below is the compilation of comments from the panel discussion and two small-group breakout sessions. The panel consisted of representatives from different types of colleges and universities. Panelists included: Glenna Sprague (Oakton Community College), Andrew Hisey (Oberlin Conservatory), Cynthia Benson (Bowling Green State University), Tim Shook (Southwestern College), Timothy Shafer (Penn State University). During two rotations of discussion groups, teachers shared the practices of their programs, including what they teach, how it is taught, and how their school handles piano proficiencies.

How many semesters of group piano are required?

Most institutions require four semesters of group piano for all music students, with an additional two semesters required for vocal and choral majors. One institution requires only two semesters for instrumental majors.

How are freshmen and transfer students placed within the group piano sequence?

Placement auditions are given either in orientation or during the first week of classes. For those students who do test out of one or more semesters, a waiver is given, but no course credit is given.

Specifics of Proficiencies at various institutions:

Scales

The vast majority of teachers indicated including all major and minor scales on the piano proficiency exam, ranging from two to three octaves. There was some disagreement as to whether scales should be required hands together or hands separate. Rationale for hands together included coordination, hand independence, and discipline. However, many stated that hands-together take too much time from other important skills. It was generally agreed that scales serve a purpose related to music theory, and that memorization and fingering are important.

Arpeggios

While all panelists reported that they require major and minor arpeggios hands together from two to four octaves, the smaller discussion groups revealed that many do not require them hands together, and some stated that arpeggios are too difficult to include on a

proficiency exam due to the facility required. Many participants include dominant and diminished 7th arpeggios in addition to the major and minor ones.

Chord Progressions

All of the panelists reported requiring primary and secondary chords in keyboard style. One assigns chord progressions in class but does not include them on the proficiency exam.

Sight Reading

The majority of teachers include sight reading of a some sort, including melody with accompaniment, harmonization, a hymn, an accompaniment, and reading a score. There was much discussion about when the students are given the sight reading example for a proficiency exam. Answers varied from a preparation time of 24-48 hours for a harmonization example, and 30 minutes to "at sight" for other types.

Repertoire

While the number of selections required and the level of difficulty of the repertoire varies, the teachers indicated that memorization is neither important nor required.

Improvisation

Although improvisation was is not generally reported as being included on proficiency exams, the skill was discussed in many of the breakout sessions. One of the groups discussed why improvisation should be included in group piano. Reasons included the ability to apply the concept to other instruments, the opportunity to expand on knowledge of harmony, the reiteration of musical concepts, and the possibility of having students start solving problems for themselves.

Grading

There was much discussion about grading, particularly in light of the current assessment movement present in many institutions. Many teachers give some sort of daily grade, whether it is a daily quiz or a grade based on daily preparation. For the exams, including proficiency exams, the two main types of grading were a checklist and giving a percentage for each skill. It was agreed that having some sort of quantifiable grading system is becoming more important, as students are challenging grades more often. Some participants suggested recording exams on MIDI disks or videotape in case the grade was challenged later.

Conclusions

While there are many different ways of teaching group piano classes and administrating

piano proficiencies, this reporter was able to make some general conclusions from the written reports of the sessions.

- Piano skills are a crucial part of a music student's education.
- Although our class size, scope, and teaching methods and materials vary widely, we as group piano teachers all seem to agree that functional skills are essential. The skills discussed most at this forum were scales, arpeggios, chord progressions and harmonizations, sight reading, repertoire, and score reading.
- Group piano and theory are so closely related that many institutions are correlating the curricula.
- Grading and assessment continue to be difficult to quantify; however, it is becoming increasingly necessary to have a less subjective way of grading.

There is continued interest in meeting together in such a form as this to share syllabi, teaching techniques, and other ideas.

Linda Christensen teaches class piano, group piano, and music technology at Wayne State College. She holds a BA in music from Weber State University, an MM in Piano Performance and Pedagogy from Southern Methodist University, and a Ph.D. in Music Education/Piano Pedagogy from the University of Oklahoma. Her pedagogy teachers have included Sam Holland, E. L. Lancaster, and Jane Magrath. Her piano teachers have included Ed Gates, Alfred Mouledous, and Mary Ray Johnson. Dr. Christensen is active in the Music Teachers National Association and the National Conference on Keyboard Pedagogy, where she chairs the Future Trends in Piano Teaching committee. She has been published in Keyboard Companion, and has served as educational consultant for the 2000 edition of The Music Tree. In addition to her regular academic schedule, Dr. Christensen has been a faculty member at many summer piano camps focusing on music technology for children, and has also been musical director and pianist for many theater companies in Washington, Utah, Tennessee, Oklahoma, and Texas.

Michelle Conda Group Teaching Presentation: *Teaching Popular Chording in the Group Piano Setting*

Reporter: Lisa Zdechlik

In Michelle Conda's session, *Teaching Popular Chording in the Group Piano Setting*, participants were taken on a nostalgic journey of pop and rock classics that Michelle has adapted for use in her non-music major and music major piano classes at the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music. We were also treated to Michelle's joyful approach and her upbeat voice as she played and sang her way through the examples that followed. Michelle provided a handout that included fingering outlines or a basic chord chart for each selection. Michelle cited two reasons that she uses lead sheets with her students: 1) it helps students learn this classic music, and 2) it teaches students to read lead sheets. Michelle's approach to teaching these pieces was clear, direct, and attuned to precise steps that students would need to take to achieve success in their playing. As her students, we were immediately involved in making music, her approach ensuring our success.

Michelle began with the 1962 hit, *Alley Cat*, demonstrating how students can be immediately involved in playing *Alley Cat* with the use of two simple block chords, C and G Major. Michelle first asked us to play a C major chord with our right hand instructing, "notice that your fifth finger is on **G**; lift up your whole hand and move to the G chord." Not leaving any movements to chance, Michelle choreographed the movement from the C chord to the G chord with a large kinesthetic cue of lifting her own left hand (mirroring our right hands) and a verbal cue to "lift the hand." When we were proficient in playing the C and G Major chords, Michelle guided us to play the harmonic progression of *Alley Cat* : C - C - C - G - G - G - G - C -. Michelle verbally led the group through the progression as she played a vivacious rendition of *Alley Cat*.

We played two verses of *Alley Cat*, accompanying Michelle with our C and G chordal accompaniment as she played the melody and accompaniment. As we moved into the refrain, Michelle noted, "this uses the F chord and the D chord," referring to the D chord as her "anti-oreo chord." At the end, following Michelle's cue to "sting it," we brought *Alley Cat* to a striking close. By learning *Alley Cat* in this manner, students have fun, they are immediately successful in playing, and they begin to develop a sense of harmony and form.

Michelle teaches the *Baby Elephant Walk* to introduce students to the boogie-woogie style. A smooth transition is made from the full chords of *Alley Cat* to realizing the chords in the boogie-woogie pattern of *Baby Elephant Walk*. Perfect fifths, the variable third, and eighth notes are introduced. Michelle indicated that, while students experience playing the eighth note in this piece, she doesn't officially teach eighth notes at this point. Michelle begins by prompting students to play the Perfect 5th of the C chord, then the flat 3, then the natural 3. As Michelle led us through this musical example in the workshop session, we gradually evolved from the Mama Elephant's Walk in quarter notes to the baby elephant's walk in eighth notes, and finally to a full-blown 12-bar blues *Baby Elephant Walk*. Without a break in playing, Michelle refined our boogie-woogie style

with quick verbal directives of "staccato" and "bounce your wrist." Suddenly, we were in stride with Michelle, playing boogie-woogie; and, we didn't know how we got there. Of course, our getting-there was the result of expert teaching, where the teacher had skillfully moved us from the known (the chords of *Alley Cat*) to the unknown, creating a boogie-woogie pattern. All this occurred in the time of two minutes. As soon as our left hands were fluent in the boogie-woogie style, Michelle introduced Henry Mancini's melody to our boogie-woogie bass line. It was obvious that students would thoroughly enjoy this. Michelle pointed out that in moving up to the F chord, one has to cross over one's body; hence, she prefers to have students move from the C chord down to the F chord. Another tip was that it doesn't really help to cue students to move by position, e.g., the C major position to the F major position, because the third finger ends each pattern. Michelle warned that this is a "bug" that needs to be worked out in the teaching of *Baby Elephant Walk*.

Once students have experienced moving around the keyboard with chords, Michelle introduces *Heart and Soul*. Most humans have learned *Heart and Soul* from their best friends, but at the workshop session we had the benefit of learning Michelle's new spin on this old favorite. Michelle demonstrated a rhythmic variation, based on *boom-di-a-ta*. Prepping our left-hand thumb on **C**, Michelle outlined the infamous bass line, cuing our fingers 1(C)- 3(A)Ð 5(F) -4(G). When participants were familiar with the bass line, Michelle added the right-hand chords in a two-hand accompaniment, using the rhythm of *boom-di-a-ta* (*boom* being the left hand, *di-a-ta*, the right hand). After we were comfortable with the coordination of this two-hand rhythmic pattern, Michelle introduced the familiar arpeggiated variation. We alternated between the two patterns, taking our cue from Michelle's indications to "chunk" it (block it) or break it up (arpeggiate it). Varying the accompaniment style in this way develops flexibility and rhythmic coordination in students.

From *Heart and Soul* we progressed to *Fiddler on the Roof*, Michelle guiding us to simply convert the two-hand *boom-di-a-ta* accompaniment of *Heart and Soul* to a straightforward *boom-chick* between the hands (*boom* in the left hand; *chick* in the right hand). After we practiced "boom-chicking" the opening C and Db Major chords and chunking the Eb and Db major chords, we enjoyed a verse of *Fiddler on the Roof*. C - C - Db - C - C - C - Db Eb Db (block) - C - C .

Moving on to the Beetles' style with *Let it Be*, we played a more complex version of a two-hand, broken chord accompaniment style. Here the left hand played the root note of each chord while the right hand realized the full chord in an eighth note rhythm. Again Michelle's directives were impeccably clear. She explained, "Play the chord in the right hand. Now we are going to break the chord in half; play the top two notes; roll down to the tonic note with the thumb." Even though she does not officially teach eighth notes to her students at this point, Michelle shows the eighth notes of the right hand on the board to stress their rhythmic movement. Hence, students experience eighth notes through playing *Let it Be* and Michelle has embedded readiness for the time when students begin to read eighth notes. Once our right hands were comfortable with the rocking eighth notes, we added the root note of each chord with the left hand. When teaching beginning

students how to coordinate this accompaniment between the hands, Michelle emphasizes that whatever way your left hand goes, the right hand, in position, follows. As we got into the groove of this Beetle's hit, Michelle broke into singing, "speaking words of wisdom, let it be."

The ballad style of *Love is Blue* followed with a variation of the two-hand accompaniment of *Let it Be*. Here, the left hand plays and holds on the strong beats one and three, while the right hand complements this with a broken chord on &-2&-3&-4&. Michelle also uses this ballad to introduce seventh chords.

Make Me Smile uses a double thumb technique in the left hand (LRRLLRRLL) to create a typical rock style accompaniment in dotted rhythms. The right hand uses root position and sus chords, playing on &2& and &4& while the left hand is heard on 1--&3--&1, etc.

Michelle concluded the session with John Lennon's *Imagine*, referring to this as the "ultimate" Beetles. The progression uses inverted chords and seventh chords: C Cmaj7 - F/C - C Cmaj7 - F (repeat for 5 total) - C/E - Dm7 Dm7/C - G7 - G7 (block) . Although Michelle hasn't formally taught inversions at this point, she introduces the inverted/slash chords to her students by saying C/G is a C chord "with-a" G in the bass. This two-hand accompaniment is similar to *Let it Be*, the right hand rocking the chord in eighth notes, the LH playing the bass line. Michelle also taught us the familiar chromatic run (A-Bb-B-C) heard at the end of each two-measure segment of the opening four measures.

This was a fun, joyous, captivating session! Michelle's upbeat spirit and talent in imparting the style and capturing the essence of each of these pieces left each of us with a fresh approach to introducing chords, practicing chord progressions, teaching accompaniment styles, and making music with our students with these truly "classic" pieces.

Lisa Zdechlik, is Assistant Professor of Class Piano and Piano Pedagogy at the University of Arizona. An active performer, educator and clinician, she has presented workshops on pedagogical topics at the state and national levels. Her research involves the interaction between music analysis and performance and the applications of current technologies to music learning. Former faculty appointments include San Diego State University, Grossmont College and San Diego Mesa College. Dr. Zdechlik holds a D.M.A. in Piano Performance and Pedagogy from the University of Oklahoma, where she was recently awarded the 2002 Dissertation Prize in Education, Fine Arts and the Professions for her dissertation, *Texture and Pedaling in Selected Nocturnes of Frederic Chopin*.

George Litterst Group Teaching Presentation: ***Putting it all Together: Using Personal Computers in the 21st Century Piano Laboratory***

Reporter: Lisa Zdechlik

In this session, George Litterst presented some of the newer possibilities for using computers in the classroom, highlighting some of the instructional applications of the program, *Home Concert 2000*. Most music educators are familiar with traditional computer applications in the keyboard lab such as music theory, ear training, and composition programs, but not all have considered the Internet resources that are available once you introduce computers in the classroom. In this session, George introduced participants to some of the Internet resources available for instruction including online lessons, long distance instruction, research, grading, and feedback.

To demonstrate the potential of videoconferencing with students, George arranged a videoconference with Laura Beauchamp-Williamson (the absent co-developer of this conference) and her newborn baby girl, Rebecca. The windows program *Polycom* was used to access Laura and Rebecca in South Carolina. This gave us perspective into where the future is going with internet based instruction such as online lessons and videoconferencing. George made the interesting point that in teaching class piano, we have already begun to learn how to teach at a distance in that we are not at the "site" of every student. So if we think about projecting that distance a little farther and put that individual student in a window (the computer screen), long-distance piano instruction is not such a fanciful idea.

What does putting it all together in a 21st century piano laboratory look like? Put a computer and a digital keyboard together, add the program, *Home Concert 2000*, combine with a Standard MIDI file, mix in one student or more, and you have created a dynamic learning environment. *Home Concert 2000*, which George co-developed with Frank Weinstock, can be used for instruction in music fundamentals or to support and enhance keyboard performance within the class piano curriculum or the private lesson. *Home Concert 2000* will open any Standard MIDI file. Consider the resources at hand then from the thousands of Standard MIDI files accessible on the Internet to the Standard MIDI files available with most current piano methods.

When you open a file in *Home Concert 2000*, the program displays the separate tracks of the MIDI file on the computer screen. When you select a track, the program will transcribe it into an electronic picture of music notation, displaying the music on the computer screen. As you begin to play, each progressive measure is highlighted, indicating your place in the music. As you approach the bottom of a page, the program will turn the page, displaying the bottom of the current page and the top systems of the upcoming page.

What the program is fundamentally able to do is called "score following." The score following task is able to figure out 1) location, 2) changes in tempo, and 3) changes in the dynamic level. George first demonstrated the ability of the program to follow the score

and track what the performer is doing in terms of tempo using the Duncombe piano composition, *Fanfare*, and a Standard MIDI file from Alfred Publishing Company. As he played, George deliberately altered the tempo in a number of places. The program, like a sensitive accompanist, responded to all his tempo changes, whether subtle or dramatic.

In working with *Home Concert 2000*, a student can access three different modes: *Learn, Jam, and Perform*. Each time you click on one of the modes, some of the choices are removed because they don't apply to that mode. For instance, in the *Learn Mode*, the tempo is turned off so the software will not follow the performer's tempo. The objective in the *Learn Mode* is to learn to play the correct notes in the correct time. So if you are not able to play the correct note at the correct time, the program will pause and wait for you to get it right. Or, if you make a mistake, the program will pause and expect you to correct the inaccuracy before allowing you to continue. In addition, when you pause, a red light flashes on an "on-screen keyboard," assisting you by displaying the correct note.

George pointed out that concepts of musicality are magnified when using *Home Concert 2000* because the entire ensemble follows the performer's musical expressions. For instance, when the performer changes dynamic levels, the entire ensemble will follow the performer's dynamics, magnifying the changes. This mode then is particularly effective when helping the student decide on and refine his or her musical concepts of a piece.

In the *Jam Mode*, the performer can set the initial tempo, after which the program's "job" is to strictly maintain this tempo and not respond to changes in the performer's tempo. Hence, this mode can be used to develop an accurate, strict rhythmic sense. Another feature of the*Jam Mode* is that it allows you to place markers in the score. One such marker called "wait for soloist" enables you to create stopping places for the student. The "wait for soloist" marker might be used in the case of a student who was having trouble getting to a certain measure on time. For instance, if the student was experiencing difficulty getting to measure 10 on time, you could place a marker at this measure. Now, every time the program arrives at measure 10, it will stop. This pause allows the student to find her place, recompose herself, and then move on when she is ready. The point of this then is to gradually reduce the amount of pause-time until the student is able to eliminate the pause entirely and play through the problem.

In the *Perform Mode*, the program allows you complete freedom. It will follow both tempo and dynamics; you can even skip a measure and the program will follow you. The program also records behind your back without you even knowing it. A practice scenario in working with this mode is to challenge the student to maintain a steady tempo at 100%. After the student has played, ask him to use the program's playback feature and evaluate his performance for a 100% steady tempo. When introducing the concept of *rubato* to a student, the *Perform Mode* is particularly effective because it will follow the student's rhythmic nuances. George demonstrated this with Barbara Kreader's composition, "Longing" from the Hal Leonard Student Library. MIDI files are authored with a steady tempo so George first demonstrated the file at this steady tempo. Then, he re-played "Longing" in *Perform Mode* using *rubato*, the accompaniment taking time where he took time. This was an amazing demonstration of the potential of *Home Concert 2000* to help

students develop artistry and sensitivity in their performances.

Other features of *Home Concert 2000* include the ability to play one hand at a time in any of the modes, a looping function to repeat specified measures, and a piano roll that enables the learner to see a graphic notation of the score. In the remaining minutes, George fielded questions from participants; of course, the primary question was, "How much does this cost?" The price of an individual copy of *Home Concert 2000* is a surprisingly inexpensive $99.00; twelve copies sell for approximately $320.00. Check out the website www.timewarptech.com if you are interested in further details on *Home Concert 2000*.

In closing, George pointed out that once you attach a computer to a keyboard, it promotes a new level of interactivity. Once the learner has been introduced to the many possibilities of instruction with this technology, the teacher can step out of the way, allowing the learner to develop independence and critical thinking skills in his/her own performance and musical understanding.

Lisa Zdechlik, is Assistant Professor of Class Piano and Piano Pedagogy at the University of Arizona. An active performer, educator and clinician, she has presented workshops on pedagogical topics at the state and national levels. Her research involves the interaction between music analysis and performance and the applications of current technologies to music learning. Former faculty appointments include San Diego State University, Grossmont College and San Diego Mesa College. Dr. Zdechlik holds a D.M.A. in Piano Performance and Pedagogy from the University of Oklahoma, where she was recently awarded the 2002 Dissertation Prize in Education, Fine Arts and the Professions for her dissertation, *Texture and Pedaling in Selected Nocturnes of Frederic Chopin*.

Ann Milliman Gipson Group Teaching Presentation: *Facilitating Group Interaction Within the Piano Class*

Reporter: Lisa Zdechlik

Ann Milliman Gipson's session, *Facilitating Group Interaction Within the Piano Class*, provided participants with an expert model of dynamic ways to facilitate group interaction within the group piano class. Ann led the participants through multiple activities to demonstrate ways to structure the learning environment in a keyboard laboratory to promote collaboration, independence, and confidence in playing.

Ann opened her session with a discussion of the benefits of group interaction including variety in the lesson, motivation, and musical independence. Ann prefers variety in student groupings (individuals, pairs, small groups, large groups) and in the musical activities presented within a lesson (sight reading, harmonization, improvisation, technique, repertoire, and ensembles). Another reason to facilitate group interaction is for purely motivational reasons - because not all students particularly care to be in piano, group activities are a great motivator, bringing humor and laughter into the learning process as well as creating energy in the room. Anxiety is often dispelled when students interact with each other. Group activities provide students with opportunities to relax so they aren't as focused and intense, helping them to develop a more positive outlook in their progress. Group activities also promote musical independence, especially for secondary students who often depend on the teacher too much. Having to respond in a group and share in the learning process allows students to claim ownership for their own learning.

Ann set forth considerations to take into account when grouping students in the class piano environment. Personalities, musical and technical abilities, balancing group activities with individual work, and environmental issues all need to be carefully thought-out. The teacher must be sensitive to personality conflicts and the ways students interact and communicate with each other. In grouping students with respect to musical and technical abilities, it is advantageous to experiment with different pairings. Pairing a quicker student with one who is having problems is helpful because it gives the quicker learner an opportunity to verbally communicate and teach, while giving the slower learner a different perspective on the learning at hand. The fourth consideration in planning for an effective group lesson is awareness of environmental factors, including the previous class students are coming from, the temperature of the room, and the weather.

Ann followed this discussion with a teaching demonstration using a chord progression to illustrate how one might structure a lesson plan to provide for group interaction in different combinations: the full group, small groups, partners, and individually. Structured to be covered during three consecutive class periods, the lesson plan incorporates a variety of musical activities (harmonization, sight-reading, technique, improvisation, analysis, and repertoire) to effectively reinforce both musical concepts and group interaction.

On the first day of the projected plan, Ann begins with an introduction of the chord progression using Roman numerals (I - V4/3 - V6/5 - I - vi - ii6 - V7 - I) and a partner activity. In the workshop session, she instructed us to work with our partners and convert the Roman numeral symbols to letter names in the key of A major. As we worked out the chord progression, Ann strolled around the classroom, helping with difficulties that were encountered but also subtly staying out of the way of the concentrated learning occurring between partners. Ann then brought the class back together to discuss and confirm answers.

The next activity involved the actual playing of the chords; our instructions were to play from chord to chord without looking at our hands. Here, Ann's questioning of us was extremely effective, a reminder that students learn best when they are led to discover concepts, movements, etc. for themselves. Ann remarked, "think through how you are getting from chord to chord," which focused our attention on our hand movements. She continued to focus our attention by questioning, "What are you using as pivot notes or pivot fingers?" Ann indicated that at this point in the lesson, she would pair students and ask them to discuss the most challenging chords in the progression, perhaps guiding their discussions with comments and questions such as, "a difficult change is the move from the A major to the F# minor chord. How would you get there?" When she asked us that question, one solution that the class offered was to simply pick up the hand and move it down; another solution was to use the bottom note as a pivot; and yet another solution was to use the thumb to move. Abundant discussion ensued as the hand-movement problem was solved in a number of ways. The collaborative problem solving and divergent questioning employed in this activity opened the door for many "right" answers, and served as a reminder that what works for one student may not work for another one. At this point, Ann explained that students would be given time to individually practice the progression, applying different rhythms, e.g., a half-note rhythm in quadruple, then triple meter.

On the second day of the lesson plan, Ann reviews the progression in triple meter as the class plays with headphones unplugged. Their next task is to learn to play the chord progression without looking at the hands. To help us understand this process, we were again assigned a partner; partner *A* was the designated "player," while partner *B's* task was to watch partner *A's* eyes and count how many times partner A looked at the hands. Then, we switched roles. The outcome? The group's eye-consciousness was raised to a higher level - if you have someone staring into your eyes, it makes you very aware of what you are doing with your own eyes.

Once the class was able to play the chord progression smoothly without looking down, Ann introduced an improvisation activity. Ann requested that one partner play the chord progression while the other experiment with the melody. To focus students' listening on the interaction between the melodic improvisation and the harmonic progression, Ann suggested further discussion and exploration concerning what was happening in the improvisation: (1) If the chord progression gets to the end, but the melody doesn't sound like it got to the end, ask what the melodic partner might do to adapt the melody and (2) listen to see if the melody tones fit the chord tones. In this way, students are both

listening and evaluating the interaction between the improvised melody and the chord progression.

On the third day of the lesson plan, after students have had an opportunity to practice their improvisations, they share these creative adventures in small groups. Although Ann doesn't necessarily advocate using peer grading, she suggested that students be given the opportunity to listen, play, and evaluate the improvisations of their fellow students. Hence, students learn to evaluate the group process from different perspectives, playing the role of listener-evaluator, improviser, or harmonic accompanist. At the end of this activity, a member from each group would be selected to play for the entire class.
After the improvisation activity, the Beethoven *German Dance* was introduced.

Ann asked the group to compare Beethoven's chord progression with the chord progression we had been practicing. Because of the way that Ann had intricately developed the learning in this lesson, students now possessed the musical understanding and skills to make this comparative analysis and to critically analyze the interaction between the melody and the harmony. This lesson was a dynamic example of spiral learning, each activity creating a more profound level of understanding so that when students are ready to play the Beethoven *German Dance*, they already have a built-in knowledge of the composition.

After critical discussion, an ensemble activity ensued with the class divided into trios (using headsets) to play three parts: (1) the right-hand part (the melody played as written), (2) the left-hand part, (played as written or as the chord progression), and (3) a counter melody (generated from the improvisation activity). Before we began to rehearse, Ann established groundwork for the evaluation of the group ensemble. She asked, "What does a conductor listen to when listening to his/her ensemble?" The group responded, (1) keeping everyone together, (2) balance, (3) orchestration options, and (4) in this case, a melody with an active rhythm; hence, for the person improvising the countermelody, the challenge is to find something that complements the given melody. As students rehearsed the ensemble, the laughter and all-embracing energy in the room was an indisputable indication of the value of group interaction and learning. From the teacher's console, Ann listened to each group, gave feedback, and invited one group to share their ensemble with the whole group.

Ann summarized this session with the advantages of structuring learning in different combinations. In small groups, students can listen for corrects notes and rhythm and appropriate and steady tempo. As well, they can check for memory, hand position, and posture. In pairs, students can discuss fingering, compare chord choices in harmonization activities, and create accompaniment patterns. In large ensembles, students can work on developing continuity and steadiness. This session provided participants with a wealth of ideas and techniques to structure learning that promotes interaction within group piano courses. The musical activities and group techniques that Ann presented were engaging and creatively implemented, providing for collaborative learning, taking into account individual learning styles, and promoting independence in learning.

Lisa Zdechlik, is Assistant Professor of Class Piano and Piano Pedagogy at the University of Arizona. An active performer, educator and clinician, she has presented workshops on pedagogical topics at the state and national levels. Her research involves the interaction between music analysis and performance and the applications of current technologies to music learning. Former faculty appointments include San Diego State University, Grossmont College and San Diego Mesa College. Dr. Zdechlik holds a D.M.A. in Piano Performance and Pedagogy from the University of Oklahoma, where she was recently awarded the 2002 Dissertation Prize in Education, Fine Arts and the Professions for her dissertation, *Texture and Pedaling in Selected Nocturnes of Frederic Chopin*.

Martha Hilley Group Teaching Presentation: *Web-Based Instructional Support for Group Piano*

Reporter: Lisa Zdechlik

Martha Hilley is Professor of Group Piano and Piano Pedagogy at the University of Texas at Austin (UT Austin) and coauthor of *Piano for the Developing Musician* (PDM), now in its 5th Edition. She has created a groundbreaking website for the UT Austin group piano program that coordinates with the PDM text. In this session, Martha demonstrated the philosophies, techniques, and software underlying this innovative web-based instructional support, stressing that the techniques and ideas she was presenting could be used to create a website for any curriculum. She also suggested that pedagogy teachers incorporate this technology into their pedagogy courses because independent teachers of tomorrow need to know how to create a website for their studio as well as personalize tutorial help for their private students.

The principal software programs used in creating this website include *DreamWeaver, Flash, Shockwave, Peak, Director*, and *Powerpoint*. Martha gave a quick synopsis of the benefits and uses of each of these programs. *DreamWeaver*, web authoring software by *Macromedia*, was recommended because of its ease of use in creating a website. Icon driven, *DreamWeaver* displays a split screen that shows you what the icon does and displays HTML code at the same time. Hence, if something doesn't work, HTML code allows you to see why it is not working. *Director* is multimedia authoring software by which you can create sophisticated animation, video, and audio clips. *Director* plays off of *Shockwave*, a format for animation programs that allows files created with *Director* to be compatible with the web. With *Peak*, produced by *Bias*, you can import sound files from a digital keyboard into a computer. If you have *Director*, *Peak* allows you to save a sound file as an mp3 file. Martha also highly recommended using *Finale* or *Sibelius*, music notation programs, so students can notate their compositions. The program, *Premiere*, enables one to capture video and import it into a website; however the problem with this program is that the files are so large, e.g., two minutes of a video file is approximately 519 megabytes. Figuring out how to compress this type of file and still maintain quality needs to be worked out. Martha stressed the need for all musicians to know how to use *PowerPoint*, acknowledging this software as one of the most powerful teaching tools available to the music profession. Martha believes so strongly in *PowerPoint* that in advance of the conference, she sent a step-by-step tutorial, "Microsoft *PowerPoint* As a Resource," via email to all participants. This tutorial explained how to construct a studio page, develop a tutorial on the major pentascale, and import picture and sound files.

The PDM website is used to reinforce concepts that are already being taught in the group piano curriculum. Martha demonstrated some of the tutorials she has developed that focus on improvisation, sight-reading, harmonization, and keyboard theory. She began by showing the web pages that support the preliminary chapters of the text. The website is a dynamic tool for students at this stage in their learning because it reinforces concepts and skills that students are responsible for understanding in the preliminary chapters and it

provides additional exercises and practice drills. "The horrific page of whole notes," appropriately named by Martha's students, is an example of a reading exercise from these preliminary pages. In this tutorial, the screen first displays three rows of whole notes. A visual "tutor" in the form of a red square moves across the screen from measure to measure, highlighting each note to be read. Moving across the screen ahead of time, the red square prompts the student's eye and mind to move ahead to the next note. For students who have a tendency to get lost, the red square draws their eyes to each note and keeps them moving ahead, as well as training their eye-hand coordination. The program *Director* was used to create this shockwave movie.

Improvisation

In Chapter One of PDM, improvisation on the black keys is introduced with the intent to get students to respond to a given rhythm and play back an improvisation that imitates the rhythm. Sitting at their keyboard and computer, students see and hear the webpage. The webpage cues them to "Listen," to the musical question of two measures. This is followed by the cue "Play," which flashes on the screen to prompt students to answer with their improvisation. The tutorial was easy to follow and perfectly timed in audio and visual cues. For a student intimidated by improvisation, this activity presented a non-threatening way to develop improvisational skills.

Sight-reading

A problem familiar to all who teach group piano is that of never having enough sight-reading examples for students. Martha has solved this problem by compiling a sight-reading library of 3000 fourÐsix bar items for all four levels of group piano at UT Austin. The library includes original compositions written by Martha and her teaching assistants as well as several student compositions. Roland's *Visual Music Tutor* is used to generate these examples because it allows one to play a piece on the digital keyboard, save it on disk as a Standard MIDI file, open it on a PC in *Visual Music Tutor* and in the end - it shows up as manuscript, ready to be added to the sight-reading library.

Harmonization

The harmonization tutorials help students see relationships between a given melody and its harmonic possibilities. For instance, when students begin harmonizing with the I, IV and V chords, the web page allows students to interact with the melody and determine the harmonic options for each melodic note. When you click on a measure of the melody, a caption pops up above a specific note that reads, "I could use a I chord because **A** is the fifth of the chord; I could use a iii chord because **A** is the third of the chord; or, I could a V chord because **A** is the root of the chord." The point is to present to the student that s/he has options and that once the options are acknowledged, it is up to her/his ear and theory sense to decide which chord fits best. This tutorial also doubles as an ear-training exercise: when students click on "play," they can listen to the melody and harmonization with a background accompaniment. Another click allows students to see the Roman numerals used in the harmonization.

Keyboard Theory

Martha illustrated a keyboard theory tutorial that addresses the use of the common tones in chord progressions, helping students to see and hear common tones between chords. In this tutorial, three options are given: (1) spell the chord, (2) see the common tones, or (3) play the progression. In the first case, a progression is shown on the screen (I IV ii V7 I) and students are asked to spell the chord in "sync" with a background rhythm. In the second case, students see the progression notated on the screen and are cued to "listen as the progression is played." As the progression plays, a "circle", marking the common tone between each chord, moves ahead prompting the student's thinking to link chord tone to chord tone and see/hear the common tone between chords. Lastly, students are asked to play the progression.

Use of *PowerPoint* in Individual Instruction

Martha demonstrated how she uses *PowerPoint* in the individual studio lesson to provide personalized feedback throughout the week. Margaret Morris, a mythical high school student, is working on Gurlitt's *Whirlwind*. After Margaret's lesson, Martha sends a *PowerPoint* email intended to tap into Margaret's thinking and practicing of *Whirlwind*. The email revolves around what happened in the previous lesson and then gives suggestions or questions for Margaret to think about or focus on in her practicing. The message to Margaret reads, "After you left yesterday Margaret, I was thinking about the problems you had with the rhythm on pp. 28-29 of your Lesson Book. Why don't you get out your book and take a second look at this." Martha also makes specific comments about what was good in the lesson and what needs to be worked on. Most impressive is that embedded in the *PowerPoint* email is a sound file of an ensemble part for Margaret to rehearse with in her practice sessions. The instructions from Martha read, "click on the next listening icon when you are ready to hear the ensemble part I have written for you." Through this ingenious use of *PowerPoint*, Martha has built a library of tailor-made email messages that can be used with any student.

For those who are concerned that technology is going to destroy the human element and touch in learning, Martha's presentation was a perfect example of the way that technology and human touch can be creatively merged to create a learning environment that powerfully addresses individual differences and needs. I have no doubt that all participants left this session inspired to return to their schools to launch web-based instructional support for their group piano curricula and individual lessons.

Lisa Zdechlik, is Assistant Professor of Class Piano and Piano Pedagogy at the University of Arizona. An active performer, educator and clinician, she has presented workshops on pedagogical topics at the state and national levels. Her research involves the interaction between music analysis and performance and the applications of current technologies to music learning. Former faculty appointments include San Diego State University, Grossmont College and San Diego Mesa College. Dr. Zdechlik holds a D.M.A. in Piano Performance and Pedagogy from the University of Oklahoma, where she was recently awarded the 2002 Dissertation Prize in Education, Fine Arts and the Professions for her dissertation, *Texture and Pedaling in Selected Nocturnes of Frederic Chopin*.

Connie Arrau Sturm Presentation: ***Video Exceprts of American Group Piano Pioneers***

Reporter: Steve Betts

Video Excerpts of American Group Piano Pioneers, presented by Connie Arrau Sturm, featured portions of videotaped lessons by five group piano teachers. The videotapes were made in the late 1980s as part of Sturm's Ph.d. dissertation research.[1] Her research involved surveying group piano teachers listed in the *CMS Directory of Music Faculties in Colleges and Universities* to determine those group piano teachers who were regarded as "exemplary." The survey results indicated twelve teachers who received significantly more votes than others. Of these twelve, six agreed to participate in Sturm's study: Guy Duckworth, Martha Hilley, James Lyke, Larry Rast, Joan Reist, and Marienne Uszler. Two others of the twelve, AnnaBelle Bognar and Frances Larimer, agreed to participate in Sturm's pilot study. Through her analysis of the tapes Arrau was able to identify characteristic behaviors of these teachers. In her session Sturm used tapes of five of these teachers: Martha Hilley, Frances Larimer, James Lyke, Larry Rast, and Marienne Uszler.

The first video shown was of Frances Larimer, Professor Emeritus at Northwestern University, teaching a class of non-music majors. The concept taught involved the staff and intervals of seconds and thirds. Arrau used this segment to highlight one of the findings of her research - the teaching sequence of teacher direction, followed by student keyboard performance, followed by either more directions and performance or by a teacher question. The characteristic demonstrated by the exemplary teachers is that the sequence is fast paced and the directions are often short.

Larry Rast was the teacher shown in the second video. The students in this class at Northern Illinois University were learning major scales in tetrachord position. The students progressed around the circle of fifths, using the top tetrachord of the previous scale to become the bottom tetrachord of the next scale. The students discovered that the right hand fourth finger always played the new sharp. Arrau highlighted Rast's use of "Discovery Learning" and stated that the students were more apt to remember the information due to the teaching strategy.

The third video was of Martha Hilley, Professor at the University of Texas at Austin. Arrau stated her first reason for showing this tape involved students receiving different forms of information simultaneously and being asked to perform skills involving two of more simultaneous behaviors. In her research Arrau found that approximately one-third of lesson time involved activities of this nature.

The second reason Arrau mentioned for showing a tape of Hilley was the use of humor during the class.[2] Comments such as "If you don't shift both hands at the same time, you'll end up holding hands with yourself," or activities such as improvising a Country & Western song to demonstrate the I-vi-ii-V-I progression, added enjoyment to the class. Arrau did additional study of the videotapes to investigate the use of humor.

The longest excerpt showed Marienne Uszler, Professor Emeritus at the University of Southern California teaching a class for whom it was only their second session. After showing the tape, Arrau asked for audience comments regarding the teaching. Responses included comments concerning Uszler's enthusiasm, organization, use of student involvement, teaching the students to teach themselves, moving around the classroom, rapid pace, and holding students to high standards of musicianship.

The last tape showed a class taught by James Lyke at the University of Illinois. Of the five tapes, the physical setting of this class was unique, in that two acoustic pianos were used with the class gathered around them. The tape demonstrated one of Arrau's findings - exemplary teachers praised student behavior more than twice as often as they criticized or corrected it. The class maintained a positive atmosphere while making constructive suggestions for each performance. Additionally, Lyke was able to maintain involvement by the whole class, even though not everyone was playing.

Other findings listed on a handout distributed at the session included:

- Over ninety per cent of teacher behavior was directed to the whole class.
- Over two-thirds of student performance was by the whole class.
- Use of headsets varied from none to over fifty per cent of class time.
- An average class generated over fifty questions and student responses.[3]

References

1. Connie Arrau, *Classroom Behavior of Exemplary Group Piano Teachers in American Colleges and Universities* (Ph.d. diss., University of Oklahoma, 1990).
2. Connie Arrau Sturm, "Use Humor in Music Teaching and Get the Last Laugh," *American Music Teacher* 43 (October/November 1993): 12-15.
3. Connie Arrau Sturm, handout distributed at *Video Excerpts of American Group Piano Pioneers*, presented at the National Group Piano/Piano Pedagogy Forum, 03 August, 2002, Cincinnati, OH.

Steve Betts is Associate Professor of Music at Southern Nazarene University. His articles have appeared in *The Journal of Research in Music Education*, *The Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, *Keyboard Companion*, and *Keys*, and in 2001 he served as the Executive Director of the *National Conference on Keyboard Pedagogy*. He is the lead author of the *Time to Begin Activities Book* and co-author of the *Activities Books for Music Tree 1, 2A*, and *2B*, all for *The Frances Clark Library for Piano Students*.

Panel Discussion: ***How Do You Teach Beginning Teachers to Teach Beginning Technique?***

Reporter: Victoria Johnson

Panelists: Jane Magrath, University of Oklahoma, Sam Holland, Southern Methodist University, Mary Craig Powell, Capital University

Jane Magrath, Sam Holland, and Mary Craig Powell are well known for their successful teaching of beginning technique. The following is a summary of the panel discussion in which they shared their strategies for developing this expertise in novice teachers.

Jane Magrath described the technical approach she teaches in pedagogy courses as eclectic, which allows it to be used with any beginning piano method. She groups technical work into four categories: warm-ups (examples are five-finger patterns for young students and double thirds exercises for advanced students); scales and arpeggios; miscellaneous exercises (such as octave studies, chord studies, and expansion/contraction exercises); and etudes. The majority of technical exercises are taught by rote, sometimes with the aid of a chart guideline. The goals of this technical work are dexterity, sound control, and development of the hand.

Magrath encourages pedagogy students to consider early level technical work as leading towards general pianism. To this end, the pedagogy class generates a list of the skills necessary for performing an advanced level piano piece. This list includes not only technical skills such as playing legato and staccato, executing octaves, and maneuvering leaps, but also musical demands such as inflection, voicing within the hand, and projection of character. Magrath believes that it is crucial that pedagogy students develop a step-by-step routine for teaching these skills to young pianists.

In the very first lessons with young beginners, Jane Magrath uses rote pieces such as "Billy Boy" (in *Finger Starters*) and "Engine, Engine Number Nine" (in *Music Pathways Solos* A) by Lynn Freeman Olson to promote freedom at the piano. Students play these pentatonic pieces with "hammer taps," large forearm gestures with the third finger supported by the thumb. Once this movement is secure, students use smaller gestures called "wrist knocks" (also with a supported third finger) to play pieces including "Ebenezer Sneezer" (in Olson's *Songs for Our Small World*).

Later in the first semester of piano study, Magrath introduces five-finger patterns using Olson's "Just Like Me" (in *Songs for Our Small World*). The goals of this five-finger work are legato and an even touch. The piece is played hands separately then hands together, eventually in all major keys. The focus gradually shifts to phrasing, hand position, and endurance, and five-finger pattern variants are introduced. In assigning five-finger variants and other technical studies, Magrath encourages pedagogy students to ask the following questions: "What technical exercise should I give the student?" and "What should I ask him/her to do with what I've assigned?" Student teachers should have strong pedagogical reasons for assigning five-finger pattern variants and exercises, rather than

assigning them merely for the variety's sake. The early levels of Magrath's *Technical Skills* series provide many five-finger pattern variants. Additionally, pedagogy students can create their own combinations.

Jane Magrath introduces hand-over-hand arpeggios fairly soon in a young student's piano study, to promote coordination. She believes that they are motivational for the student, as they are physically fun to play and sound impressive. Chord progressions are also assigned rather early, blocked then broken. Students play these in many different keys, not just those found in the method book.

In closing, Magrath reiterated that she urges pedagogy students to ask themselves what their beginning students need to learn in order to eventually play the advanced repertoire, and then follow a step-by-step plan to move students towards that goal. This usually involves going beyond what is included in method books. Most importantly, when teaching beginning technique, Jane Magrath advises pedagogy students to "make it fun" and "make it sound good!"

In teaching beginning teachers to teach beginning technique, **Sam Holland** shares his wife's household rule: "Nothing stays that isn't known to be useful or believed to be beautiful." He believes that inexperienced teachers often clutter piano lessons with items that are neither useful nor beautiful, particularly in the area of technique. They teach as if shopping at a flea market, choosing a little of this and a little of that, without a clear vision of the desired result.

Holland believes that it is especially challenging for advanced pianists to teach early level technique because they are so far removed from the beginning. They often have difficulty cutting through to the fundamentals of technique that are important at both the beginning and end of piano study. Breaking these elements down so that young students can experience repeated success is a further challenge.

Holland pointed out that inexperienced teachers are frequently unaware of the psychology of teaching technique and do not realize that beginning technique can be taught very effectively in a group setting. He shared a video clip of Ted Cooper (of the New School for Music Study) teaching a group of seven year olds in their second year of lessons. In this particular lesson, the children were learning to cross the second finger over the thumb. According to Holland, the video excerpt showed the following characteristics of successful teaching of beginning technique:

1. It preserves what is natural.

2. It begins with sound and proceeds to feeling.

3. It includes lots of modeling, imitation, and rehearsal.

4. It finds the magic in something ordinary.

Holland concluded by saying that teaching technique cannot be experienced in the abstract. Instead, pedagogy students learn to teach technique by observing the pedagogy teacher and other experienced teachers. Most importantly, they learn to teach technique by doing it themselves, in supervised teaching situations and on their own.

Mary Craig Powell is a well-known Suzuki specialist, but teaches pedagogy through a variety of approaches. In her segment of the panel discussion, Powell focused on the Suzuki method of teaching technique, which is used by many traditional teachers.

According to Suzuki, the beginning is the most important time in musical study. The four variations on "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star" form the foundation of the Suzuki technical approach. The variations, all taught by rote, are played an average of three to six months by beginning students; the goals of this work are ear-training, technical development, and development of musicality. In her teacher training courses, Powell focuses on *how* to implement the Suzuki technical approach. She finds that although teachers know technique themselves, they need to learn how to communicate these ideas to the child. Therefore, she emphasizes a child-like approach to teaching technique, one that uses lots of imagery and creative ideas. She finds it important that teachers have several ways to reach the child, such as modeling, working on a closed keyboard cover, and having the child "take a ride on the teacher's wrist."

Powell addresses posture first, including bench height, foot support, distance from the keyboard, and sitting position. Next, hand position is discussed. Powell advises that the child should have a loose, natural hand that feels like a wet washrag or a stuffed animal; an arm resembling a straight road; and fingers that feel like rainbow arches or a bridge. The child first experiences these sensations away from the piano (on the closed keyboard cover, for example), since tension may creep in when the child approaches the piano.

Powell briefly described the technical focus of each of the four Twinkle variations. In Twinkle A, which begins with four sixteenth notes, students should move from the elbow; the speed with which this variation starts requires that students are loose and free. Twinkle B should be played with a wrist motion. For this variation, Powell uses the analogy of a "trampoline that gives a little and then springs back up." Twinkle C is played closer to the keys, with a bit of wrist and forearm movement. Finger legato is the focus of Twinkle D, with the wrist used for arm weight.

Additional topics that Powell addresses in teacher training courses are tone production, potential technical problems and possible solutions, teaching tools, balance, dynamics, and shaping phrases. She stresses that technical work is a "preview of coming attractions." In other words, concepts that will be found in the repertoire are covered much earlier in technique studies.

In summary, it is interesting to note that although the panel members come from different teaching systems and had not discussed their presentations before the conference, several common themes emerged. First of all, the advanced repertoire is used as a thoughtful guide to choosing what is taught as technique for beginners. Second, early technical work

begins with large gestures and progresses to smaller motions. Third, there is a focus on musical aspects of technique, such as tone production, phrasing, and balance. Finally, when teaching beginning teachers to teach beginning technique, all three panel members address not only *what* to teach, but *how* to teach it.

Victoria Johnson is Assistant Professor and Coordinator of Piano Pedagogy at Louisiana State University, where she teaches graduate and undergraduate piano pedagogy and supervises the group piano and piano preparatory programs. Dr. Johnson holds a Ph.D. in music education from the University of Oklahoma, an M.M. in performance from Bowling Green State University, and a B.A. in music and German from Luther College, with additional studies at the Westfalische Wilhelms-Universitat, Munster, Germany. She has written articles for *Keyboard Companion* and *Alfred's Piano Rendezvous* and regularly gives presentations on repertoire by women composers, musician wellness, and teaching beginning piano students. Dr. Johnson previously served on the faculties of Luther College, Decorah, IA, and the Harper Music Academy and North Central College Piano Academy in suburban Chicago.

Group Discussion: ***Share Your Favorite Technology and Non-Technology Pedagogy Projects***

Reporter: Erica Keithley

At this summer's GP3 Conference in Cincinnati, pedagogues were asked to share their favorite technology-focused and non-technology-focused projects in small group sessions. The following list describes the many projects suggested by instructors. The project topics cover a wide range and explore areas of intermediate and advanced repertoire, beginning methods, business and professional development, learning theories, teaching techniques, and observations.

Non-Technology Pedagogy Projects

Repertoire

Projects concerning standard teaching repertoire were very diverse and creative. Several favored projects required students to study and perform teaching pieces in mini-recitals:

- In-class recitals: Students learn and perform pieces from the teaching literature. They prepare a handout about the compositions that incorporates imagery.
- Design a theme recital: Students select a theme for a recital, such as music of spring, or pieces about animals, and choose repertoire to fit the theme. Music must be of appropriate specified levels. Students perform 10 of the selected pieces in an in-class recital.
- Record a CD of standard teaching repertoire: Students select two pieces from each level of Magrath's *The Pianist's Guide to Standard Teaching and Performance Repertoire* and record them on a concert instrument in one session. Students also edit the CD and prepare liner notes.

Other repertoire projects focused on honing students' skills in evaluating the level of difficulty of repertoire and identifying the teaching concerns associated with pieces. Understanding how to evaluate both the musical and technical difficulty of pieces and comparing pieces to determine which is most difficult were important skills that projects addressed. Also, developing the ability to finger passages, to apply information about performance practices, and to interpret an urtext score for an intermediate student were stressed.

- Leveling Repertoire: Students receive a packet of pieces which they must arrange in order according to level of difficulty from easiest to hardest. For help in leveling or to check answers students may refer to either *Intermediate Piano Repertoire* by Albergo and Alexander or *The Pianist's Guide to Standard Teaching and Performance Repertoire* by Magrath.
- Compose pieces at defined difficulty levels: Students write pedagogical piano pieces to match certain defined levels, such as those given in either of the books listed

above.

- Edit intermediate repertoire: Students select a composer and choose several teaching pieces to include in their new edition. Students then locate an urtext version of the scores and edit the music, adding fingerings, expressive markings, ornament realizations and other explanations of performance practice. Students order the pieces in the edition according to level of difficulty.
- Analyze repertoire from various style periods: Students receive a packet of teaching repertoire and must identify the style of piece. They then list performance practice concerns that they would address in teaching the piece.

Duet and duo piano music was also an important area repertoire addressed in favorite projects. Several possible projects were mentioned, including 1) doing a survey of teaching literature; 2) listing strengths and weaknesses of duets; 3) researching historical duet/duo teams.

Business and Professional Development

Most projects concerning business in the piano pedagogy world focused on exploring the challenges of creating an independent piano studio. Three interesting and down-to-earth projects proposed emphasize preparing for interviews, learning to adjudicate, and learning to teach masterclasses. Finally, the last project in this category is perfect for the pedagogy student who hopes to become the next Lynn Freeman Olson!

- Design a private piano studio: Students make a budget and explore the financial aspects of setting up an independent studio. They learn how to deal with tax forms, zoning laws, and other legal regulations. They also formulate studio policy statements and design promotional materials for the studio.
- Prepare for a mock interview: Students are presented with information about how job searches are conducted, what sorts of questions are typically asked, how to deal with difficult or awkward questions, and how to best present oneself. After sufficient instruction and preparation, students are given a mock-interview by a panel of faculty and students.
- Learn to adjudicate: After discussing the elements upon which a performance judgement could be based and studying the adjudication forms used by various organizations, students are asked to design an adjudication form. They then sit on a mock adjudication panel, watch a video of several student performances, and adjudicate the performances.
- Masterclass teaching: The pedagogy instructor contacts local independent teachers and arranges for pre-college students to come to campus for a masterclass taught by graduate students. Graduate students are coached on teaching techniques appropriate to the masterclass format. Students video tape the masterclass teaching performance and give a written analysis of their teaching.
- You the composer: Investigate music publishing houses and compose an elementary piece to submit to a publisher.

Methods

A general survey of methods is at the heart of most beginning piano pedagogy courses, both at the graduate and undergraduate level. Students are expected to analyze reading and counting methods used, list strengths and weaknesses, evaluate supporting materials, and determine the overall value of each series. Other favorite projects that deal with methods included:

- Design a new method: Students make an outline of the first book of their own new method, including what concepts would be introduced, sequencing and pacing of concepts, activities, and music used.
- Classroom debate: Students discuss in class which method they believe to be best.
- Compose pieces to fit method books: After thoroughly studying a method, students compose their own pieces to fit that series. They should indicate at what point in the book their piece would be taught.

Learning Theories

Much has been written in the past 20 years in the areas of philosophy, psychology and sociology of music. Many piano pedagogues at the GP3 conference expressed an interest in helping their students put the theories into practice in their teaching. In fact, some teachers believe that pedagogy courses should begin with an exploration of learning theories. This will give the students a framework within which to evaluate all other topics covered, like method series, teaching techniques, etc.

- Exploration of Learning Theories: Students give brief in-class presentations on the work and writings of various thinkers in the areas of psychology, philosophy, and sociology of music. Authors presented could include Jerome Bruner, B. F. Skinner, Howard Gardner, Carl Rogers, David Kiersey, Keith Golay, Parker Palmer, Thomas Gordon, etc.
- Applying temperament theories to musical learning: Students explore the temperaments described in Kiersey's *Please Understand Me* and look for ways to communicate musical solutions in ways appropriate to several different temperament types. The Kiersey sorter is available online at www.kiersey.com. Another valuable resource in applying learning theories to classroom situations is *Learning Patterns and Temperament Styles* by Keith Golay.
- Reflective Writing Projects: During the first week of class students write and essay on the topic, "Towards a Philosophy of Teaching," and the following week they write on the topic "Towards a Career in Music." For a final project at the end of the semester, students select one of the two topics to reconsider in light of their new knowledge and write an essay on the topic.

Teaching Observations

Like the survey of beginning piano methods, student observations are traditionally one of the most important aspects of pedagogy courses. Students are assigned to observe and

analyze the teaching of master teachers. Teachers observed may be applied faculty, off-campus independent teachers, teachers in university outreach programs, or even non-piano music teachers. Observation assignments may be short-term projects in which student attend only one lesson with each teacher, or long-term projects in which students view many lessons of the same instructor. Several teachers suggested interesting variations to the standard teacher observations:

- Pre-observation interviews: Students interview teachers prior to observing them teach. They use a scripted handout that guides questions. The goal of the interview is to prepare the student have deeper insight while observing teaching.
- Video critiques: Students watch short video segments of intermediate and advanced students performing. They then give suggestions on what aspects of piano playing they as teacher would address with the students and what repertoire they would assign next.
- Interaction Analysis: Students view a videotape of a group piano lesson and analyze the teaching according to Flander's types of activities.

Teaching Techniques

The vast number of teaching techniques employed by piano teachers boggles the mind, so a comprehensive list of projects that emphasize teaching technique is only an impossible dream. However, several excellent projects were proposed that focus student teachers' attentions on how they teach:

- Case studies of piano students: Teachers present students with a brief description of an intermediate or advanced piano student, which includes lists of his current repertoire and his strengths and weaknesses. Student teachers then discuss what pieces they would assign next, how they would address technical and musical weaknesses, how long they expect it would take to fix the problems, and where they would expect to see improvement. Student teachers design a six-month curriculum for the piano student and present this in class.
- Teaching memorization: Students read chapters of Seymour Bernstein's *With Your Own Two Hands* that deal with memorization and use his techniques to memorize a pieces. Students are then tested on the piece to determine how strong their memorization is.
- Making an abstract: Students design abstract reductions or maps of pieces to aid in the introduction or memorization of pieces. Rebecca Shockley's book, *Musical Mapping* is a great reference for this project.
- Task analysis project: Students analyze a musical task to identify as many of the necessary steps or concepts needed to accomplish the task as they can. This helps student teachers recognize all of the steps that must go into teaching a skill and understand the best sequence for teaching those steps.
- Long-term lesson planning: Students plan out 10 weeks of a group piano class, including pacing of material, grading, examinations, etc. Students then compare plans and evaluate.

Miscellaneous

Piano pedagogues seem to feel the need to put their students on the hot seat, as can be seen in the next three projects!

- Impromptu explanations: The pedagogy instructor prepares a stack of index cards with one teaching topic labeled on each. Students randomly draw a card from the stack and must speak for two minutes on the topic given. The goal of the activity is to give students practice in thinking on their feet and responding verbally to questions about teaching.
- Piano Potluck: This activity is a variation of the above impromptu explanations. Students submit a list of musical and technical problems that teachers must address in lessons. Each problem is placed on an index card. Students then draw on card from the stack and do an impromptu teaching demonstration on how they would address the problem with a student.
- Impromptu teaching scenario: Students must invent ways to teach a group class of pre-schoolers in various ways: 1) without using any traditional music teaching tools; 2) using tools that support rhythm; 3) using recordings or children's poetry.

Two other valuable projects that defy categorization are:

- Vocabulary for International Students: Students work on developing the vocabulary and mastering the grammatical constructs necessary to teach group or applied piano lessons.
- Reflective writing assignment: Students are assigned to write an essay about their own first two years of piano study. This makes them aware of how they were taught and draws attention to what they feel was most and least productive in their own childhood lessons. They can then choose whether to teach as they were taught or not.

Technology Projects

Technology has continues to change music education in profound and exciting ways. Comments made at the GP3 conference indicate that piano pedagogues feel a responsibility to provide their student teachers with the skills they will need to use technology productively in the classroom and private studio. However, it is not enough to know how to operate all of the latest programs and appliances; teachers must know how to use technology in a meaningful way. We should not use technology just to use it. We must ask ourselves: how will the technology support the pedagogy? Each of the following projects is designed to employ technology in the pursuit of pedagogical goals.

Equipment Explorations

Most conference attendees agreed that one of the most important skills students need is the ability to operate basic technology required for teaching both in an independent studio and in a college classroom. Many pedagogues structure the technology portions of their

courses based on what each particular class seems to need to learn. Some students are already quite adept at dealing with technology and are familiar with many software programs; others need to learn basic skills. From operating overhead projectors to exploring the intricacies of web page development, pedagogy projects run the gamut!

- Functional technology: Pedagogy students learn to operate and exploit the features of an electronic keyboard lab in their teaching, including overhead projector, visualizer, teacher controller system, and MIDI sequencer.
- Disklavier: Students explore the various functions and capabilities of the Yamaha disklavier. Determining concrete teaching applications to exploit the instrument's capabilities is emphasized.

Sequencing projects

Sequencing projects were among the most commonly mentioned technology projects. Many variations were suggested. Pedagogy student teachers use *Performer* or other sequencing programs to design sequences of standard teaching literature for use in private teaching or student practice. Ideas include sequencing right and left hand on different tracks so that students can play one hand while hearing the sequencer perform the other, creating practice loops in which one phrase or measure is repeated several times to aid in drilling sections, using notation functions to print out technical exercises, and creating new accompaniments for beginning level pieces. Other projects included sequencing hymn arrangements and accompaniments for standard teaching repertoire.

- Multi-voiced sequences Pedagogy students create a 32-measure sequence using eight tracks and percussion. Students learn how to edit and quantize their sequence. An in-class recital of sequences is the culmination of the project.
- Sequencing Projects for Group Piano Students: Fifth semester vocal majors in group piano class are required to sequence choral scores and accompaniments or four voice hymns. This is a valuable skill that students can use in their public school classrooms when they graduate.

MIDI Accompaniments

The vast and ever-growing body of MIDI accompaniments for methods, educational music, and group texts is an area in which teachers need expertise, a fact that is reflected in the application and evaluation projects below:

- Teaching with MIDI Accompaniments: At some institutions, student teachers are required to incorporate MIDI accompaniments into each lesson or class. They are coached on how to integrate MIDI accompaniments smoothly in the lesson, when to use them, and how to operate the equipment quickly.
- Analysis of MIDI accompaniments: Pedagogy students evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of select MIDI accompaniment disks. They are challenged to determine what makes a good accompaniment.

Software

Teachers have created several projects utilizing both music and non-music software programs.

- PowerPoint presentations: Pedagogy students receive a tutorial on PowerPoint and present a class project using slides.
- Notation Projects: Students use Finale or Sibelius to create scores for pieces that they compose.
- Database projects: Pedagogy students create a database listing titles, composers, publishers, and levels of difficulty of educational pieces. This project acquaints students with how to operate databases and produces a handy list of pieces that could be used in locating and selecting works for piano students.
- Music Theory and History software: Pedagogy students explore and evaluate various software programs that teach music theory and history. Some of the favorite theory and history programs were Alfred's Essentials of Music Theory, Music Ace, Music Kit, MIBAC Theory Lessons, Free Style, and Practicum musicum.

Business applications

A home computer is indispensable for the independent piano teacher. Teachers can use spreadsheet programs to keep track of student billing, databases to keep student information records, and word processing programs to design recital programs. Projects that develop skills in using a home computer in an independent studio include:

- Website development: Pedagogy students develop websites for use to advertise an independent piano studio or to provide information for piano students.
- Design a studio newsletter: Pedagogy students use desktop publishing software to create a "back to school" studio newsletter to be sent to parents and students.

In small group sessions at the GP3 conference, pedagogy instructors gave several suggestions of how teachers can continue to learn about current technology. Teachers can invite a technology expert to give a guest lecture to the pedagogy class, attend MTNA technology symposium or other educational events, or enlist the aid of technology savvy students. In addition, several books were mentioned to aid in the development of technology projects. They included *Teaching Toward Tomorrow* by Sam Holland, *Teaching With Technology*, and the *MTNA Guide to Instructional Software*.

Erica Keithley is currently a candidate for the Ph. D. in Piano Pedagogy and Music Education degree at the University of Oklahoma. Ms. Keithley has served on the faculties of the University of Illinois and Georgia Southwestern State University, teaching applied piano, group piano, music theory, and aural skills. She has also taught children in a variety of settings, including serving as faculty for the Illinois Summer Youth Music Camps for the past six years and teaching the demonstration group piano class for beginners at the University of Oklahoma.

Lynda Metelsky Presentation: ***Perspectives on Pedagogy Teaching: Testing and Evaluating Pedagogy Students at the Royal Conservatory of Music, Toronto***

Reporter: Thomas Swenson

Lynda Metelsky presented an intriguing perspective on piano pedagogy training in Canada at the 2002 National Group Piano/Piano Pedagogy Forum. Although her informative lecture outlined both general and specific elements of the system, this article will attempt to provide a general outline of teacher training at the Royal Conservatory of Music.

Metelsky is the department head at The Glenn Gould Professional School of the Royal Conservatory of Music where she teaches piano and piano pedagogy, and also coordinates the teaching internship program. Additionally, she teaches piano at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto, is a clinician for the Frederick Harris Music Company, and is a member of the College of Examiners for the Royal Conservatory of Music.

While many American piano instructors have used anthologies from the Royal Conservatory and the *Celebration Series* graded piano method, many of us are probably unaware of the unique examination system that underlies the regimented and rigorous system of our northern neighbors. Not only does the organization provide an examination system that will provide a constant level of evaluation throughout a student's training as a future performer, it also provides a similar benchmark program to train and certify piano teachers, culminating with the Associate of the Royal Conservatory of Music designation.

There are mainly two types of pedagogy programs offered - one at a graduate level through the Glenn Gould Professional School (the only one of its kind in Canada) and through the conservatory's community music school. It was the latter that Metelsky focused on.

An Associate Diploma (ARCT) with emphasis in Performance or Pedagogy is awarded to students passing a performance exam and its co-requisites, although students often pursue both diplomas. The ARCT not only requires a high-level of musicianship and artistry (demonstrated in the performance exam), but a thorough knowledge of music as an academic discipline: a written exams cover 4 areas - history, analysis, counterpoint and theory.

Metelsky stated that in order to begin the ARCT pedagogy diploma (commonly referred to as the "Teacher's Diploma) students must have minimally passed the Grade Ten Performance Examination with "honors." This performance requirement indicates that the student has already achieved many skills of a successful performer and possesses a relatively high level of knowledge concerning performance issues. Although the exams can be completed at age 18, many people wait until after an undergraduate or graduate degree.

The flexibility of the program, Lynda Meltelsky emphasized, certainly contributes to its success. Students can prepare for it at their own pace and in a variety of settings. They are allowed many choices throughout their preparation - and even in the actual examination - so that they can focus on their particular strengths or interests. With examination centers throughout the country, students usually prepare for the exams at home and take them at the nearest venue.

The performance requirements for the ARCT Performance Diploma include a concert etude (many by Chopin and Liszt), and one piece from each of five style periods. Representative literature from level ten includes Bach *Preludes and Fugues*, a complete Classical sonata, an advanced Romantic character piece, and a contemporary piece. The contemporary repertoire seeks to include very recent compositions by international composers, but with an emphasis on Canadian composers, thus encouraging the awareness of living composers. Although there is a separate list for those seeking just the teaching diploma, most students choose repertoire that is included in both the performance and teaching diplomas with the eventual goal of achieving both.

Regarding the theoretical component of the exam, Metelsky mentioned many concepts and ideas that are quite similar to the requirements of many American undergraduate music degrees. Knowledge of scales, harmony, counterpoint, and four-part writing are only some of the areas covered.

The music history component is divided into three subdivisions beginning with a broad overview and continuing with more in-depth studies of the styles of the 16th through 18th centuries, and 19th and 20th centuries. Both the theory and history components usually take about three years of preparation and are prepared for in conjunction with the piano exams (beginning between the Grade 6 and 9 exams).

The pedagogy component of the exams usually takes about one year of solid preparation. It is often prepared through private tutoring or small-group instruction. Although no specific texts are required in studying for the exam, a list of reading resources and practice exams are included in the published study guides. Teaching experience and observation are strongly encouraged along with reflective journals of those experiences. Metelsky showed some sample areas that are covered in the written exam: pedaling, teaching and learning styles, business aspects, etc.

I found that one of the more unique parts of the exam is the editing of a musical selection. Metelsky explained that this is done without the aid of an actual keyboard. The student must add whatever signs and symbols to the score they feel might contribute to a stronger musical presentation - dynamics, fingering, articulations, phrasing, etc. She revealed that this portion allows students to assimilate the knowledge they have acquired and use it in a creative and logical manner.

The oral portion of the exam is called the "Viva Voce." Included in this portion are some listening tests, sight-reading, technical requirements, repertoire, and questions. These questions are often open-ended - allowing students to display prioritization skills,

individuality, and creativity.

The student must be prepared to discuss current teaching methods, collections, and contemporary compositions. Lastly, the student prepares 27 junior and intermediate-level pieces from the syllabus. Although they may only play one piece from each category, they will be asked to discuss pedagogical aspects and supplemental materials they might use.

Preparation for the "Viva Voce" exam usually is done in an individual lesson situation, or possibly in small groups. With each student preparing so many pieces, it can be difficult to do in a larger teaching environment. Each student tends to pick different pieces, which requires individual attention in dealing with the artistic, theoretical, and pedagogical goals. As is common elsewhere, without assistance students often perform these intermediate pieces in a pedantic, non-expressive manner. Metelsky emphasized that the evaluators for this oral exam look at each student's ability to communicate in age-appropriate language, their professionalism, enthusiasm, and musicianship. It is not expected that they will know the answers to each and every question but, rather, that they have begun to explore the various facets of piano teaching. The punctuality, attire, and organization of the student's materials demonstrate this professionalism to a certain extent.

Most Canadian teachers were brought up in this system, which translates to a strong understanding of the philosophy. But to become an examiner requires more than just knowledge and understanding of the system. The examiners must apply, interview, attend a summertime training program, become an apprentice for at least two exam sessions with an experienced examiner, and go through a trial period before becoming a full-fledged examiner. This intense training - which helps to maintain a reliable standard between different examiners - is obviously part of what makes the system so strong. In addition, each examiner must attend at least one workshop presented by the College each year as "professional development." The critique sheets, which are provided to each person taking an exam, are regularly reviewed by the chairperson of the College to insure the highest quality of comments and any necessary feedback to the examiner.

Not only does the ARCT diploma serve as certification for independent teaching in homes and community schools, but they are also sometimes used in lieu of an audition for further academic study. The diploma is often a requirement to be a member of local and regional music organizations. Although not a bona fide degree due to its limited scope, the ARCT diploma with emphasis in Pedagogy has contributed a great deal to the consistently fine training of pianists in Canada.

Metelsky briefly spoke about the Glenn Gould Professional School's Masters program in Pedagogy - which has similar requirements to many programs in this country. This school is housed in the same building as the Conservatory with many of the same faculty, but is able to award undergraduate and graduate degrees. It is built around a two-year curriculum that culminates in a recital, thesis, or lecture-recital. There are weekly master classes, observations, and student-teaching opportunities. Courses in library

studies/research methods, theory, history, literature, pedagogy, and a couple of elective classes complete the coursework. The students usually teach only one student each year - a university secondary keyboard major - due to the way the university is structured. Although they would like to recruit more younger students from the community, the community music school associated with the university relies on these students to fill their own programs. Technology is the main area that Metelsky would like to see improved. Group piano lessons for pre-college students are a rarity in Canada. There is such a strong tradition of individualized lessons that it will probably be quite some time, if ever, before it gains popularity.

In conclusion, I offer several personal observations. Having been a piano student of a teacher that was very involved in the Minnesota Music Teachers Association, I grew up taking theory and performance tests nearly every year from sixth grade up through high school. Following my masters degree, I taught at a large community music school and often referred to those practice exams, technical requirements, and repertoire selections to guide me in bringing up a new generation of musicians. Even today, teaching college students, I think my sequencing of skills is partly a result of having been cultivated in such a system. Certainly many other regions and states offer similar curriculums and guidelines. Many of our "current" teaching methods, strategies, and traditions are tested and retained in this global cyclic process. I mention the term "global" because for the past century students and teachers have traveled throughout the world sharing their gifts and insight. Understanding alternative methods for preserving the music we love and cherish challenges our philosophies and energizes our teaching. The Royal Conservatory of Music's ARCT Teachers Diploma offers a unique perspective on a well-established curriculum. Most Canadian piano teachers are certified through the ARCT diplomas. The music-training program used throughout Canada offers not only a somewhat flexible curriculum for music students, but also is a model for training piano teachers.

Thomas Swenson, Instructor of Piano and Theory, is completing his Doctorate of Philosophy in Music Education with emphasis in Piano Pedagogy at The University of Oklahoma. He has also studied at Minnesota State University, the State University of New York at Stony Brook, Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music, and the University of North Carolina at Greensboro . An active solo and collaborative performer, his main teachers have been Dr. John Salmon, Dr. Jane Magrath, Dr. Barbara Fast, and Mr. Howard Lubin. He has taught piano and music theory at UNCG, NC A&T State University, and The University of Oklahoma along with serving as assistant conductor of the Cincinnati Men's Chorus, and director of music at several churches. In 1999, he performed at Texas Christian University as part of the Teachers Program of the Van Cliburn Institute. Many awards and scholarships have been bestowed on his piano students at the Music Academy of North Carolina, where he has served as recital coordinator, faculty representative to the board of directors, directed the outreach program, and led numerous master classes. While working on his coursework in Oklahoma, Mr. Swenson has been featured at the 2001 Symposium of World Music, the National MENC 2002 Convention (Nashville), and the Oklahoma Music TeacherÕs Association State Convention. An article will be published January 2003 in The Piano Pedagogy Forum (a web-based periodical). A past Vice President of the Greensboro Music Teachers Association, he is currently a member of MTNA.

Group Discussions: ***How Do You Test and Evaluate the Work of Pedagogy Students in Courses and Internships at Your Institution?***

Reporter: Christopher Hahn

The question posed for the final afternoon of the conference involved the use of evaluation in pedagogy programs. One participant said, "the very challenging demands to work with different teachers and teaching types, and different student's personalities and learning styles, makes having a standard procedure of evaluation almost impossible." The process of testing and evaluating a student's learning and development as a teacher can be a delicate topic that often is based on subjective standards or opinions rather than objective facts. In the discussion groups, various ideas were shared about ways to make the task of evaluation clearer for the teacher and the student. Also addressed were ways to deal with internships and the observation of student teachers.

The discussion groups addressed many areas, but the comments primarily focused in two categories: providing suggestions and feedback for student-teachers; and providing grade evaluations of both pedagogy courses and student-teaching.

1) Suggestions and Feedback for Student-Teachers

Situations for Observation of Teaching

The following represents a compilation of responses from the participants at the conference regarding teaching opportunities that are in place at their institutions.

Internships are being incorporated into pedagogy programs through community music schools, preparatory programs, and independent studios. It was mentioned that in some cases the pedagogy students are responsible for finding a supervising teacher. For experience in teaching the applied lesson, other colleges utilize secondary piano students. These internships give a much-needed teaching opportunity for pedagogy students, and can be individualized in many instances to fit the student-teacher's needs. Most of the internships are included as a segment of pedagogy class. Susanna Garcia from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette suggested that internship opportunities could be made available in public school systems that are adopting group piano labs into their curriculum.

The primary difficulty with internships as indicated by most discussion groups is finding time to schedule lessons and to evaluate the student-teachers. Also troublesome is that some teachers do not like being observed while they teach which poses obvious impediments to a student-teacher who wants to learn by observation.

Teaching Assistantships are incorporated at many of the colleges represented at the conference. Regarding the evaluation of assistants, many schools indicated that they require new TA's to arrive one week early for a 4-day intensive training workshop. In

regard to assigning final grades for group piano situations, most institutions adopt a policy where the final will be graded by a team consisting of a faculty member and the TA responsible for the class, and any discussion regarding the final grade occurs at this time. In a smaller group piano situation, some schools use a team-teaching approach: the faculty member demonstrates for 2 weeks, then helps the TA for 2 weeks, then functions as an observer thereafter, with the TA doing the bulk of the teaching.

Observation of Pedagogy Students by the Professor

For this process, the two options most commonly discussed were live observation and the use of videotaping.

Live observation by the professor could include the following:

- a demonstration class taught by the student-teacher
- student-teacher private lessons every other week
- the pedagogy class watches the student lesson and make comments during class time

It is helpful to set up a 15-minute meeting immediately after the student-teaching to discuss the lesson. Some suggested having the student keep a journal to be handed in periodically or to email the professor to give feedback. At some institutions, both the professors and graduate students evaluate the undergraduates.

At Ohio University, Gail Berenson said that students were assigned a student at the lower level, and every other week she observed the lesson. From the same discussion group, Meg Gray noted that she teaches a 45-minute demonstration class each week, then observes each pedagogy student teach one student from the class every week. She is able to compare the lessons in class because the students all teach the same lesson plan each week.

Videotaping was a popular choice for observation among the groups, and some professors are able to get load credit for the time required for watching the tapes, depending on the number of students enrolled. In larger group piano situations:

- 2 videotapes are required from each TA per semester
- a written evaluation is provided to the TA by the professor
- one-to-one discussions with TA

Before submitting the tape to the professor, it is important that the students observe and critique the tape themselves and write a review of their teaching. Martha Hilley emphasized this by saying "although I give my comment sheet at the end of the class, I tell the students not to read my comments until they have watched their videos and made their own assessments." In order for the student to benefit even more from videotaping, Hilley stated that "two video cameras are better than one - to tape not only the teacher, but the reactions from the students as well. The student-teacher needs to learn to read the

body language of the class."

Another approach to reviewing video tapes as suggested by Tim Shook from Southwestern College in Winfield, Kansas is having the student-teacher critique the tape according to a personalized evaluation form which highlights the areas each student feels are important to cover in a lesson. At some institutions, internship students meet as a class and together they watch a tape each week and make comments in a friendly environment. The importance of peer review and evaluation should not be overlooked, but should not be implemented during the first semester, giving the students a chance to settle into their teaching style.

2) Grade Evaluations

Many participants agreed that there is great difficulty in assigning grades to a process that is inherently subjective. Each group indicated some level of dissatisfaction with assigning grades, and instead encourages and emphasizes discussion and feedback in the classroom.

The most common evaluation of pedagogy students as indicated in the discussion groups is based on class projects. In a performance situation such as group piano, more specific definitions are needed in grading, such as correct notes and rhythms equate to a "C" (meeting acceptable standards), whereas the inclusion of articulation and musical nuance is a "B" or an "A". In each case, the ideal situation would focus away from the grade and more toward the goals of the class from both the teacher and student point of view. However, it is essential to a student's progress that a grade be assessed and awarded, as this is the only measure of a student's grasp of the material covered, and it is the only method for a teacher to ensure the assigned work is being done.

Marcia Bosits and Linda Christensen led a detailed and thorough discussion within their group, and summarized the evaluation of pedagogy as having two distinct points of view. The student-teacher feels if he/she puts forth a full effort, then he/she deserves an "A". The supervisor, however, wants to honestly reflect each student-teacher's current teaching skill and to develop strategies for improvement. This discussion group indicated in clear terms what they felt to be the best kind of evaluation, which includes motivating student-teachers to want to develop specific aspects of their teaching, and involves the pedagogy student and the teacher in pinpointing the areas for improvement.

a) Grading Courses in Piano Pedagogy

<u>Projects</u>

Some voiced the opinion that it is difficult to make changes to the standard class projects that are assigned to pedagogy students, or to leave some out at the inclusion of others. Popular assignments included writing reviews of teaching literature and method books. For such projects, Lori Rhoden emphasized that the key element in reviewing method books is to develop the students' ability to recognize "what is being taught?"

An extensive and broad range of projects from one group consisted of the following ideas:

- Studio brochure with policies
- File of method books
- Write a syllabus for a pedagogy class
- Write a "philosophy of education"
- Write an application for a mock-grant
- Graduate masterclass (adjudicating experience)
- Write an article for a keyboard magazine
- Prepare a pedagogy workshop
- Compile bibliographies of specified topics
- Use "Scribe" software to evaluate videotaped teaching
- Compositions for a pedagogy method
- Write literature reviews
- Compile videotape of their best teaching clips
- Analysis and/or study of intermediate repertoire
- Lecture-recital
- Business organization

Testing in Pedagogy

In the area of pedagogy, the creative mind should be fostered more than the art of recollection. In light of this, it would seem as though traditional testing does not have a place in a pedagogy course. As one participant remarked, "the pedagogy instructor teaches *principles*, not facts for regurgitation".

Although the common feeling among the groups was that projects are more appropriate to effective learning, the overwhelming majority of participants said that tests are given at their institution as it reinforces learning. "Take home" exams administered for completion in the final weeks of class offer a chance for reflection on what the student has learned that semester, and how he or she can apply this to future teaching. A number of teachers at the conference give oral exams in place of a final to help develop the student's ability to think on their feet. It could also be applied in a situation where the teacher becomes the student for the exam, requiring the student to be resourceful and creative in thinking up a solution to the problems encountered in the "lesson-exam".

Some Ideas for Testing

Another group had some interesting ideas to share for assigning grades that would stress the importance of playing musically:

- Listening tests of teaching repertoire from anthology CD's
- Playing tests for teaching repertoire (in class)
- Tests on teacher duets

It was pointed out that grading other faculty member's student can be a tricky situation - if necessary, have those who are weak with advanced literature perform intermediate literature.

b) Grading of Teaching

In this aspect of evaluation, a variety of opinions circulated through the discussion groups. Bosits and Christensen, as representatives of the programs at Northwestern University and Wayne State University, clearly pointed out that "we recognize grade expectations are high, and we must explain our criteria in as much detail as possible."

With the necessity of assigning a grade for each student, it should be determined what is most important for each student's development. Should the focus be on the sequencing of the lesson, the organization of the lesson, or the overall content of the lesson? Perhaps a plan can be developed for him or her at the beginning of the semester. This will allow a clearer idea of what is expected of the student and how you will help them to achieve these goals. Ann Gipson says evaluating teaching improvement is difficult and suggests giving sequential steps to the student. This will provide a grade based on improvement within the standards and guidelines that you provide rather than subjective grading based on the student's relation to other more or less experienced individuals in the class. Most groups felt that an A- was "a good grade".

The teaching process is based on trial and error while engaged in the teaching situation, and how the student assimilates information and adjusts his or her approach. Because of this, it is important to note where a student comes from and where they end up after a given period of time - this is the only fair assessment of their learning. The teachers see discussion and feedback as the cornerstone to the learning of their students, and grading is seen as generally unimportant from the teacher's standpoint with the exception of providing motivation. In the end, however, the teacher has a responsibility to give the student-teacher an indication of where they are in their field in relation to their colleagues and as such the grading element is considered important by participants of the conference.

Criteria for Grading Students Teaching in Pedagogy Courses

The group led by Michael Benson and Lori Rhoden submitted the following as a possible grading checklist:

- How is the student-teacher introducing a concept?
- Is the student-teacher diagnosing problems?
- Is the student-teacher finding the essence of problems?

The use of a checklist is highly recommended for grading as it will clearly show what is positive about the teaching and the issues that need to be addressed, as well as provide the student with the important criteria that is being graded.

Some questions to ponder based on comments from other discussion groups:

- Should feedback have a negative or positive slant to it?
- Is teacher modeling used in your current situation? If so, does it work? If not, could it be incorporated?
- Would a pass/fail approach be more useful in some situations?
- Is parental feedback considered important with internship and demo class teachers?

All conference attendees agreed on the importance of documenting grades, keeping clear grade books, reasons for assigning a poor grade if necessary, and keeping grades on file for up to two years.

What the Pedagogy Students are Saying

At the conference, many of the participants were graduate students and/or student-teachers. The design of the small-sized group discussion provided an important interaction between the teachers and the students. Not only were the teachers able to hear the concerns of other students, but it allowed the students to have a voice in shaping their future education.

As it pertained to the grading and evaluation of their courses, one student felt that the lack of specific tests was frustrating, and would like more feedback. However, teachers in the group responded with frustration at having so much important information to cover in only two semesters. They feel there is no time for tests and that group projects, presentations and observations are more effective. Another student expressed disappointment that their graduate teaching assistantship experience consisted of no feedback due to the fact that she had only been observed once.

The students at various programs around the country gave a brief sketch of their current pedagogy class situation and how they are graded:

- Class sizes are very small
- Not many grades are given
- Class discussions and participation is a large part of the grade
- Final exams are administered
- Observations and presentations are important

Summary

Most attendees could relate to the topic of grading in pedagogy classes and internships. In academia, grading is a necessity that is deemed important by students and administrators alike. Yet most professors and teachers, especially in a discipline as subjective as the arts, felt it represents an inappropriate measure of achievement. Professors and supervisors must be sensitive to all learning styles in the classroom and should grade students according to individual progress in their teaching. A more personalized approach can be

helpful in planning what each semester's goals will be based on the experience of each student-teacher.

Christopher Hahn, pursued his early training through the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto, Ontario and received the Associate Diploma in performance with first-class honors. Mr. Hahn has since furthered his study of performing and teaching in Canada, the United States and France. He has earned the Licentiate Diploma in performance from Trinity College of Music in London, England, and in 2000 he received the designation Fellow of Trinity College, the highest honor given by the College. In addition, he holds an Honors Bachelor of Music from Wilfrid Laurier University in performance and music education, and a Master of Music degree in performance from Michigan State University. Christopher has served as an adjudicator for MTNA, presented workshops at the OMTA state convention and at the Glenn Gould Professional School, and has been published in American Music Teacher. He has recently been invited to join the esteemed College of Examiners of the Royal Conservatory of Music. Mr. Hahn has taught for the Community Music School at Michigan State University, the Flint Institute of Music and at Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp in Michigan. Currently, Mr. Hahn is pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in performance and pedagogy at the University of Oklahoma where he serves as a graduate teaching assistant in applied and group piano. This past year he was appointed by the faculty as lecturer in undergraduate piano literature. He is also on the faculty at Oklahoma City University where he teaches group piano.

Group Discussion: ***Self-Selecting Small Group Discussions***

Reporter: Karen Beres

In this final forum for discussion at the 2002 conference, participants were encouraged to select a group in which to participate whose description most closely matched their own teaching assignments. Choices for group selection included:

- People who teach at undergraduate institutions whose loads are limited to the piano area.
- People who teach at undergraduate institutions whose loads include work in other areas (theory, aural skills, music appreciation/history, administration).
- People who supervise graduate students.

While topics of successes and concerns varied greatly amongst the groups, as one might expect from a population whose members teach in such varied job situations as those listed above, some common subjects were examined as well. A summation of each group's minutes, taken from written and typed notes of group reporters, encapsulates some last thoughts shared by conference participants in these concluding discussion sessions.

People Who Teach at Undergraduate Institutions Whose Loads Are Limited to the Piano Area

How Do You Fill Your Load?

Load credit appeared as a topic of concern in all three of the discussion groups. Concerns voiced by this gathering included inconsistencies and lack of understanding from administration in addressing what duties constitute a full load, particularly in the area of classroom keyboard teaching. Ways of measuring a full-time group piano load varied greatly, ranging from 12-16 contact hours per week. One unique situation at TCU was mentioned in which class piano falls under the supervision of the preparatory division, and the appointment is not counted on the load credits of the teachers at all. However, instructors are paid a separate salary through the prep department for teaching class piano sections, and quite a few adjuncts work in a split capacity between the music school and the preparatory department.

How Do You Use Performance Skills in Class Piano?

A few younger professionals in the group expressed a need for understanding ways in which their performance background and knowledge could be applied to their group piano teaching. Responses from experienced teachers touched on the idea that the classroom is yet another "performance venue" in which a teacher who possesses a high level of performance skills can relate more successfully to students and in turn can be a more effective classroom teacher. Also, several group instructors spoke about

maintaining performance schedules in addition to teaching a full course load.

How Much is a Piano Student Expected to Practice?

Instructors shared guidelines of recommended hours of practice time and phrases used to convey practice expectations in course syllabi. The most popular ranges of anticipated student practice time ran from 2 hours of outside student preparation for a 1 credit course, to 2 hours per day for music education majors and 4 hours a day for performance students. On class piano syllabi, expressions conveying the necessity of practice included "Thirty minutes of practice a day are expected and required in order to pass" and "Expect to spend a minimum of 30 minutes a day in keyboard practice."

How Are Secondary Piano Juries Conducted and Graded?

Standards for juries differed quite a bit, from a requirement that students play a jury consisting of three pieces, one from memory, for a panel including two faculty members, to a school in which no jury is demanded of secondary students and grades come solely from the studio teacher. Consensus at a number of schools is that graded juries create a suggested grading range, in which the studio teacher may use his or her discretion to assign a semester grade no higher or lower than one letter grade away from the letter grade assessed by the jury.

People Who Teach at Undergraduate Institutions Whose Loads Include Work In Other Areas (Theory, Aural Skills, Music Appreciation/History)

How Are Loads Filled and Load Credit Assigned?

The balance of loads between studio teaching, classroom instruction, and accompanying assignments represented a main area of discussion for this group. One important issue addressed by the participants centered on what to do when piano studios must continue to accept new students after course teaching assignments have already been made and the professor's schedule is full. Group members suggested dropping or transferring non-music major piano students and counting the extra hours of class teaching as overload. Strong support from the administration was identified as crucial in running a music department where many of the faculty loads are divided between several assignments.

How Is Accompanying Handled as Part of Load Credit?

Accompanying assignments at several institutions counted for 2 hours of credit for four hours of accompanying, and at another school, 1 hour of credit equaled three hours of playing. Other schools hired accompanists outside of load credit and paid additional salary for the supplementary duties. Accompanying was identified as one area in which consistency of load credit may need to be addressed, as the guidelines for load credit vary greatly.

Do Faculty Teaching General Education Courses Enjoy Their Assignments, and Should All Faculty of a Small Department Do So?

The majority of opinions offered in this discussion group supported the idea that all members of a small department should be assigned teaching duties outside of his or her main area of expertise. Experiences teaching outside of the major area were seen as positive, and faculty members in such departments expressed the feeling of being a member of a team and part of a liberal arts philosophy. Concluding remarks from the group recommended this type of position as one that is wonderful for young professionals learning how to teach. The diversity in teaching assignments makes life interesting, and participants felt involved in the pedagogy of teaching at all times.

People Who Supervise Graduate Students

How Are New Teaching Assistants Trained?

Concern for the training of inexperienced and experienced teaching assistants alike occupied the beginning minutes of this group's conversation. Training requirements for incoming TAs included a one-semester, 2-hour course consisting of one hour per week with the supervising teacher and one hour observing a class piano instructor, and a university-wide "Graduate Applied Teaching" course at another school. A third school required all new TAs to take a 3-hour class with their supervisor, for which they had meetings every week. Other scenarios encompassed day-long orientation meetings, intensive training sessions during orientation week followed by periodic meetings with the supervising teacher, and observation assignments in the teaching area throughout the semester. While many new TAs are encouraged to take pedagogy courses, it is not a requirement at all schools, and it was noted that attempts to make it a requirement are sometimes met with resistance from applied faculty who view it as taking away from "precious practice time."

How Are TAs Evaluated?

Most supervisors visit classes taught by TAs periodically. Studio piano TAs are less likely to be observed than those teaching group piano, and supervisors suggest sitting in on juries of secondary students in order to gain perspective on the ability of their TAs in teaching studio piano. Group piano observations were examined in greater depth, with various suggestions made on the topic of scheduled or drop-in observations. Possibilities for combining the two types of observation included:

- letting TAs know that supervising teachers may drop in at any time, and perhaps asking for a lesson plan when doing so
- requiring a certain number of teaching videotapes per semester, also involving self-evaluation
- saying that observations will take place during weeks 7-9, etc.
- schedule a personal observation and videotape at the same time (one former TA really

appreciated this)

Acknowledgment of how frightening it is for TAs to be observed was made, and teachers noted that the situation can be very hard no matter how nice the supervisor may be to the TA during and after the observation experience.

How Do You Handle Lesson Plans With Your TA?

Some instructors give very detailed plans, especially at the beginning of the term, then give students increasingly greater freedom to develop his or her own style and approach to teaching further into the semester. Some former TAs remembered wishing for more guidance at the beginning of the term, but later found that they learned a lot by having decisions in planning and pacing left up to them.

Summary

Ideas for investigation that evolved from the three discussion groups highlighted the need to address disparities in load credit assignment for applied and classroom teachers and to design suggested guidelines for equipment necessary in keyboard programs, particularly in the area of group piano teaching. Future exploratory surveys addressing the existing disparities in load and equipment were proposed as possible activities for future conference meetings.

One conference participant shared her thoughts concerning the valuable ideas that she took with her from the 2001 GP3 Conference. Upon hearing the way that other schools were implementing improvements in the group piano and pedagogy areas and handling issues that also were occurring at her school, this professor took ideas from the conference back to her dean, saying, "This is what other schools are doing. We need to start making changes in order to keep our program at the forefront of the field." Based on the data from the conference, changes were instituted at that school. Hopefully, forums such as this last self-selecting small group discussion hour provided the opportunity for similar exchanges of ideas among participating teachers. Through these times of group interaction and sharing of ideas at the 2002 GP3 Conference, the process of change will continue for the related fields of group piano and piano pedagogy.

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Using the Internet to Create Multimedia Databases for Repertoire Selection - www.pianorep.com

by Kathy Winston

Repertoire Selection

Perhaps the most difficult part of our jobs as piano teachers is repertoire selection - what to choose for whom. We have been blessed with the largest body of instrumental literature, second in size only to the vocal repertoire. But with this expansiveness comes an immense responsibility, for repertoire selection is not an easy task nor is it an unimportant one. Retention, for example has been linked with repertoire selection, as has student motivation. And how often have you encountered a transfer student who was extremely lacking in a specific technical skill and you wondered if large repertoire gaps contributed to that problem?

Motivation behind repertoire selection can be quite varied. You may choose repertoire to help a student work on a lacking technical skill. Or you may choose repertoire to motivate an uninspired student, or a student who has learned one sonatina but needs to learn three more just to work on form. Repertoire selection is extremely important. In fact, the process of repertoire selection has been referred to as the single most important task in a music educator's career. However, what are we doing to teach future piano teachers about repertoire selection? And what are we doing to help ourselves with repertoire selection for our students? We often teach pedagogy student to choose repertoire based on what is familiar, what they know or have been taught. This is usually done in the traditional way of just exposing students to as many beginning and intermediate pieces as possible in one semester. But this creates a problem, for how can we (and how can we expect our pedagogy students) remember every single piece sight-read during a 50-minute class session and 10 years down the road recall that single piece for a student who needs help with 2-note slurs? Or, more importantly, how can we expose our pedagogy students to the entire repertoire? Certainly ideal, but this is not possible. In the Preface to the First Edition of Hinson's Guide to the Pianist's Repertoire, Freundlich (1987) writes:

“No single musician can successfully encompass the entire piano repertoire. It is, in fact, by far the largest devoted to any instrument, second only in scope to that for voice. Not only it is beyond the capability of any single pianist to master more than a very limited segment of the repertoire but it is also equally difficult to have even a cursory acquaintance with its scope and be able to sift out material for study and performance from the mass of works accumulated over the years without some organized guiding hand to lead the way.” (p. xiii)

So, it's been documented - we have a large body of literature; it's impossible for us to know every single piece of music written for the piano and even more difficult to match up that perfect piece with every student. Past pedagogues have addressed this issue, most importantly in the form of a written index, meaning a book that describes pieces either though annotation, or leveling systems, or both. Perhaps the two most widely used

written manuals are Maurice Hinson's *Guide to the Pianist's Repertoire* (Hinson, 1987) and Jane Magrath's *The Pianist's Guide to Standard Teaching and Performing Literature* (Magrath, 1995). Other indexes include those by Morhange-Motchane (1982), Bauer (1994), Thompson (1976), Albergo & Alexander (1984, 1993), Pierce & Fuszek (1982), Kern & Tutus (1964), Newman (1965), Maxwell (1983), Friskin & Freudlich (1973), Miller & Wallingford (1975), and Canady (1974). Although helpful in many ways, these indexes are not ideal. For one, they lack the all-important audio aspect of music, and secondly, we can only look up pieces in these indexes using one criterion at a time, for example: composer, or level of difficulty, or time period. However, what if we had an early-intermediate student who needed a 20th-century piece to work on 2-note slurs in C Major? Well, chances are you cannot think back to your pedagogy class to remember what pieces emphasized these concepts, and perhaps you haven't built up a large library of early-intermediate pieces and can just "dig" through your files. And as helpful as the written indexes on your library shelf are, there's no way to look up all of these single ideas at once, and find that perfect piece for your student.

Databases on the Internet

However, there is one solution to this problem of repertoire selection, and it lies in two great tools called the Internet and databases. Perhaps you are familiar with databases, maybe you've worked on some of the more common computer programs such as Microsoft Access¨. A database is simply a collection of data, stored in such a way that it can be retrieved in a multitude of ways. The most common example of a computerized database is a computerized library card catalogue. Here you can search by author, or subject, or title, or all three. The power behind the database is the ability to combine searches or cross-index data.

Now, why combine a database with the Internet? To understand this, you must first understand the two main types of Websites: static and dynamic. Static Websites are simply regurgitation of information. Publication of static Websites is similar to publishing traditional printed word. Static Websites can display information - printed word, audio files, images, etc. However, static Websites are just that - static - they do not change. Dynamic Websites, on the other hand, are programmed to interact with the user. A common example is the www.amazon.com Website. You may go to this Website looking for a specific book, but just know the book's author. You can enter the author's name on the Webpage, and the Amazon.com site will search its database to come up with possible titles of the book you are looking for. Also, when you buy the book, Amazon.com will ask you to enter your information, such as name, address, etc. This data is sent back to Amazon.com and stored in their database. The next time you access this site, Amazon.com will immediately retrieve your information, greeting you with an enthusiastic "welcome back, (your name)!". This demonstrates the power behind a database interacting with a dynamic Website.

However, how can we use such dynamic Websites in the field of piano pedagogy? While writing my dissertation at the University of Texas at Austin, I explored that question in detail, and developed a dynamic Website to aid piano teachers in intermediate repertoire

selection. Before you read any further, please explore this Website at www.pianorep.com. This will enable you to fully understand the remainder of the article.

www.pianorep.com

As you can see from the website, www.pianorep.com, this is a collection of data about 150 intermediate solo 20th-century piano works. You may search through this database, cross-indexing data as desired. Now you can go back to the problem of finding an early-intermediate piece in C major emphasizing 2-note slurs. (There happen to be four pieces in the database that fit these criteria: *First Sonatina* by Olson, *March* by Shostakovich, *No. 1* by Stravinsky, and *Sonatina No. 1 in C Major* by Vandall). If you click on one of these entries, you will find a visual representation of the piece, an audio representation, and a short description of the piece including technical demands, leveling, key, publisher, etc.

How did I and, and more importantly, how can you create such a database? First, let me point out that this Website and database were created for 20th century intermediate solo piano repertoire. However, this database was designed so that it can be modified for other time periods, or other instruments. The power of a database lies in the amount of pieces in the database. So, if you'd specifically like to add to my pre-existing database, simply fill out the form on the Website. This database is hosted by the University of Texas department of music, and is free for all to use.

Web and Database Design

To create such a database, you must become proficient in two things: Web design and database design. Web design enables you to create the visual components of the WebsiteÑwhat you and the users see on their computer screen. I created this Website using a software package developed by Macromedia: Dreamweaver¨ and Fireworks¨. Deramweaver is a software program that allows you to create Web pages from a graphical standpoint. For example, you can just drag and drop images, table, text, etc. on a template, and Dreamweaver organizes this data for you and creates HTML code for the Web browser to read. (HTML stands for HyperText Markup Language and is the programming language used to create Web pages; a Web browser is a program such as Internet Explorer¨ or Netscape¨). You do not need to know HTML code when using Dreamweaver¨. Macromedia Fireworks¨ is a program that lets you develop graphical designs. For example, I used Fireworks¨ to create my menu navigation bar. An excellent tutorial for learning Dreamweaver is *Dreamweaver 4 Hands on Training* by Garo Green and Lynda Weinman.

The second part in creating an online database is database design. The simplest solution is to find a pre-existing database program that can interact with a Website (for example, Microsoft Access). Your data must be stored on a server, or a computer that houses the information for you. Somewhere in your HTML code, you must create a script that controls the data in the database, pulling up and displaying data as needed. To do this, you must use a programming language that acts as a "go between" from your HTML

code in your Website to the code in your Database. For this project, PHP was the language used. (To learn some basic PHP code, try reading *PHP essentials* by J.C. Meloni).

For my database project, I was fortunate enough to work with David Hainsworth, a computer programmer who works in the UT department of music. David and I decided not to use a pre-existing database program, but rather create our own database to conform to the specific demands of intermediate piano repertoire. To develop the database, I first came up with the data fields that I wanted to analyze the pieces according to. You can see all of these data fields on the Website, www.pianorep.com. Some examples of the data fields are composer, title of piece, level, key, mode, technical issues, rhythm, harmonic content, publisher, etc. In all, I came up with 21 data fields that I deemed useful for piano teachers. David then took these 21 data fields and programmed (using PHP as the language) a series of linked data tables. He then downloaded MySQL, which is a platform for development data management systems. MySQL is an open-source (meaning free) tool that can be downloaded and used by anyone. MySQL was used to manage the data. This newly created database was then linked to the HTML driven Website that I had created in Dreamweaver.

Analyzing and Entering Pieces into the Database

After creation of the database, the real pedagogical work begun. I analyzed over 150 intermediate pieces by the 21 data fields. To make the database initially well balanced, I decided not to choose more than 10 pieces by any one composer. I also looked for pieces to analyze that emphasized a certain pedagogical technique, or emphasized a certain 20th century style, or were written as "lead-in" pieces to the more advanced literature. (Some pieces fit all three of these categories). I recorded the first four measures of each piece on a MIDI keyboard and transferred these MIDI files into MP3 format, a format that is identical to all Internet users. I also scanned the first four measures of each piece. Each publisher was then contacted and asked if visual copyright permission could be granted for this project. Only some publishers granted copyright permission, and only the files of those publishes are visible on the Website.

After analysis of the repertoire, the data about the pieces were entered into the database from a secure administrative Web page. The data entered was stored in the database, ready to be recalled by users of the Website. A user input form was also created for the database, allowing piano teachers to add information about new pieces. This information is sent to me via e-mail and I in turn add the new repertoire into the database. In summary, databases on the Internet can be a powerful tool for piano teachers. The Internet itself is a wonderful vehicle for musicians, allowing information to reach a wide public base. Uses of the Internet within the piano profession will only continue to grow, uniting all of us who work in the field. For now, the possibility for further Web database development within the field of piano pedagogy is endless. How wonderful would it be to have our entire genre categorized and available for searching from any home computer! Hopefully, this idea will only continue to grow, but for now, enjoy the work I have done one my database (www.pianorep.com), and continue to add pieces for all to learn about.

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An Explanation for Memory Loss in Performance

by Jennifer Mishra

Why Memory Lapses Occur: Some Speculations from Musicians

In writings on the subject of the memorization of music, there is an implicit understanding that memory lapses will occur. Many methods, techniques, and activities may help reduce the chances of memory loss during performance, but memory slips seem to be, overall, unavoidable. Yet, few writers have speculated as to the cause of such memory lapses.

One problem in determining why memory lapses occur is that an interruption during a performance of a memorized piece of music is not necessarily caused by the inability to recall the music. As Rider[1] pointed out, "memory has been blamed for breakdowns actually caused by inadequate technical skill." No research exists to determine whether interruptions generally termed "memory lapses" would have occurred regardless of the presence of the printed music. Both Binkowski[2] and Jacobson[3] have suggested that technical insecurities lead to memory lapses. Binkowski noted that passages, which contain complicated harmonies or key changes, are more susceptible to insecurities leading to a memory lapse. Jacobson noted that music which is either technically, intellectually, or musically difficult can lead to slips in memory. Technical insecurities, though, may only indirectly cause memory lapses. Binkowski also argued that anxiety, possibly caused or increased by such technical insecurities, is the cause of memory lapses.

In addition to the various physical manifestations of anxiety - shallow breathing, cold hands, stiff legs, sweaty palms, slight tremor in hands or legs, and confused speech - the performance situation itself is full of added distractions not normally encountered in a practice setting. The performer, for instance, may not consciously notice distractions caused by a member of the audience, yet unconsciously the distraction may upset the performer's concentration resulting in a memory lapse. Foster[4] described an experience following a memory lapse at a piano competition:

One of the judges called afterwards... He asked whether the old man in the audience had caused my lapse in concentration; I replied, "What old man?" Apparently just before my memory slip, an elderly gentleman had entered the right side of the hall, seating himself in the front row. He then stood up, removed his coat, shook it, and draped it over a chair before sitting back down. Presumably this jarred my concentration, even though I have no conscious memory of the incident.

According to Jordan-Anders[5], many lapses in concentration during a performance stem from poor practice habits. "Practice time spent automatically repeating music without thinking creates a mental vacuum, which nature abhors. This vacuum will be filled with such thoughts as, 'What's for dinner?'..." In a performance situation, the vacuum is filled with more dangerous thoughts that may lead to self-doubt and eventually perhaps a

memory lapse. Self-induced distractions include questions of self-doubt that a musician may ask prior to or during a performance. Questions such as "'Do I really know what is coming next?'"[6], "Where does the piece start? How many times do I play the A section?", and "What is the next note?" may disrupt concentration. According to Jacobson, poor learning habits are also a reason for poor concentration during performance. Performing requires intense concentration. If such concentration has not been a part of everyday practicing, the performer may be unable to concentrate during the performance.

Though experienced performers may be able to extricate themselves gracefully from a memory lapse, slips in memory can be devastating to the younger performer who may simply have to stop and restart the piece. The problem with memory slips, though, is that they happen at unexpected moments. Further, a performer could have played a piece of music perfectly from memory during a dress rehearsal and then have a devastating memory slip in performance. It is difficult to prevent what cannot be predicted. Yet, various activities are advocated to combat memory lapses in performances.

One activity which may help solidify memory and prevent memory slips in performance is a preconcert performance. Many teachers hold a dress rehearsal or a master class to give students a "dry run" at their piece. Generally, these preconcert performances take place in front of a small, sympathetic audience who will be uncritical of memory slips or technical errors. The audience can be friends, family, or even the family pet or a tape recorder. Even a small, sympathetic audience will engender performance anxiety, which may help "set" a memory[7]. Performances should also take place in as many locations as possible; e.g., churches, school music classes, and school choirs. De Sesa[8] advocated simulating as closely as possible the performance setting even down to the lighting, applause, bowing, order of program, and intermission. Duplicating the performance setting during practice is a way of duplicating the disruptions that could possibly throw off concentration and lead to a memory slip. This same idea motivated Foster to encourage her students to practice with the "television on, conversation in the background, or younger siblings running through the room". The concept of practicing the performance, advocated by Ford[9] and Magrath[10], is an informal extension of the preconcert performance. An audience is not generally present when a performance is practiced, but the performer practices everything as if it were the performance. Magrath even suggested wearing the shoes that will be worn in performance. For pianists, the performance instrument may be unfamiliar and an added distraction. Ideally, the performer has played the performance piano even if just prior to the performance, but this is not always the case. To prevent memory slips due to distractions caused by playing a different instrument, Magrath advocated performing on as many different pianos as possible. If a pianist has played on many different instruments, performing on an unfamiliar instrument will be less problematic.

Many of the above suggestions appear to be based on common sense and experience, but there is no research to substantiate that these activities actually reduce memory lapses in performance. Since there are so few studies in musical memorization, a look at findings from another field, which has for over a century been researching memory - specifically memory failure - may explain why memory lapses occur and suggest ways to prevent

them.

Why Memory Lapses Occur: Explanations from Psychology

In 1885, the German psychologist Ebbinghaus developed a way of studying what, up until that point, had been thought to be unstudiable -- memory. More specifically, he studied the process of forgetting. He conducted a series of studies on his own memory for long lists of nonsense syllables. Ebbinghaus would first measure how much time he needed to memorize a list of nonsense syllables, then he would test his retention over various time spans (from 20 minutes to 31 days). After each test, he would measure how much time he needed to relearn the list. After a long series of such studies, Ebbinghaus was able to describe patterns in his own forgetting. He developed a "forgetting curve" which showed that most forgetting happened relatively quickly and that as time passed, the rate of forgetting slowed down. For many decades following Ebbinghaus' experiments, the process of forgetting was ascribed to decay.

The theory of decay stated simply that if a memory were not used, it would fade away. The passage of time, in essence, is what caused forgetting. In 1932, a psychologist by the name of John McGeoch disputed the theory of decay. To McGeoch, the passage of time was not a cause of forgetting because forgetting was not a passive process, but rather an active one. To illustrate his point, he likened the process of forgetting to the process of oxidation that creates rust on metal. It is true that when metal is not used for a period of time, it rusts. However, rust is not *caused* by the passage of time. It is caused by oxidation, which is an active process in the metal. In other words, something other than time was causing the rust. McGeoch[11] challenged the theory of decay and presented his own theories to account for forgetting.

Interference was one of the causes for forgetting presented by McGeoch. In his view, forgetting occurred when new information obscured the old information making the latter difficult to retrieve. Though McGeoch did not conduct experiments to substantiate his theory, many other psychologists did. After decades of research, it is generally accepted in psychology that such interference plays a role in forgetting. Not only retroactive interference, where new information makes retrieving old information more difficult, but also proactive interference, where previously learned material makes retrieving new information more difficult. McGeoch's theory seemed so plausible that for many decades, research in forgetting focused almost exclusively on proving the connection between interference and forgetting. So much emphasis was placed on McGeoch's theory of interference that psychologists seemed to forget that McGeoch had proposed a second theory of memory failure, namely that of altered stimulus condition. In McGeoch's view, people can appear to forget information when trying to recall in a different setting or context from that in which they learned the information. As with interference, this is a retrieval failure rather than forgetting because, in theory, the information is still there; it is just unavailable. When learning information, connections are made between the information and the context or setting in which the information is learned. If recall is attempted in a different context or setting, certain features of the context that prompt memories may be absent and thus the information may appear to be forgotten. Stimulus

condition, or context, can be defined as both the environment in which an event occurs, or it can refer to a person's internal context, which may include mood or psychophysiological state. Only within the last two decades have psychologists begun in earnest to study the effects of changing contexts on memory retrieval. Evidence now exists to substantiate the theory that, in both humans and animals; recall is better when the testing context is the same as the learning context. The connections between information to-be-learned and physical or emotional contexts may be considered counter-intuitive to some because context is seemingly irrelevant to the actual material being encoded and recalled. Yet, many researchers have found that changes in seemingly irrelevant cues in the environment affect the ability to recall information. In the light of the possible effects of context on memory retrieval, let us return to some of the suggestions from music teachers and performers to aid memory.

Context-Dependent Memory and Music Memorization

The theory of altered stimulus condition or context dependent memory may have practical implications for the remembering of memorized music. McGeoch's theory of altered stimulus condition predicts that recall will diminish if there is a difference between the learning and testing contexts. In the memorization of music, the practice context(s) can be considered the learning situation and the performance context can be considered a memory test. Very often, both the external, and environmental context, and the internal context of the performer are different between practice and performance. Many teachers and performers advocate practicing in the performance context thus making the practice context more similar to the performance context. In theory, if the practice context is the same or similar to the performance context, fewer memory failures should occur in performance.

Anxiety is one aspect of internal context with which most musicians have experience. Rarely are high or even moderate levels of anxiety experienced during day-to-day practicing, but many, if not most, performers experience levels of anxiety ranging from mild to debilitating during performance. Physiological manifestations of anxiety may appear during performance that are absent from the practice setting: muscular tension, shaking or cold hands, shallow breathing, stiff legs, sweaty palms, slight tremor in hands or legs, or confused speech. One reason kinesthetic memory is seen as less than reliable is that muscles feel tense when the performer is anxious and may respond differently. Though anxiety may, in itself, be seen as the cause of memory slips, an alternative hypothesis is that memory slips may occur because the performer's internal context at the time of performance is different to that at the time of practice. The anxiety experienced at the time of performance can, at least to some extent, be simulated in the practice setting by playing in mock recitals or for family, friends, pets, or tape recorders. In theory, the internal context of the learning condition (practice) has been made more similar to that of the test condition (performance); thus better recall of memorized music might be predicted.

The physical environment of performance and practice can also be vastly different. Some features of the physical environment appear to be related to musical production, such as

instruments (especially for pianists) and acoustics. However, other environmental features seemingly unrelated to the music, such as decor and lighting, exist in both the practice and performance contexts. It is possible that these features, as well as the musically "relevant" features may have an effect on memory. As with internal context, practicing the performance is seen to aid recall. Practicing in the performance setting is the most obvious way to reduce contextual differences between practice and performance settings. Dress rehearsals and mock recitals are often held in the performance context in order to "get the feel" of the room. Though playing in the performance setting will replicate many contextual features of the performance, other features such as lighting, applause, order of program, and intermission, which may seem irrelevant to the music, may also be important to the overall performance context. Even where practicing in the performance context is not possible, simulating other aspects of the performance context at home, including practicing wearing performance clothes or performing in a distraction-filled room, may aid memory.

Intuitively or by direct observation, performers and teachers have noticed that practicing in the performance context aids recall during performance. Davis[12] spelled out the connection between context effects and musical performance:

Retrieval, remembering, is state and context dependent. We remember much better when our internal state is the same during retrieval as it was during encoding... In addition, we remember much better when we are in the same physical environment we were in when we memorized... This is part of the reason that memory fails when students try to perform in an emotional state (high anxiety), or physical spaces (a hall) that are different from the one they learned in. Memory is enhanced when the practice situation is as close to the performance situation as possible.

Since it is quite common for music to be memorized in one context and then recalled (performed) in a different context, McGeoch's theory of altered stimulus condition would predict a decrease in memory, or more memory lapses, because of a shift in context. Theoretically, one way to reduce such effects is to practice in the performance context or to make the practice environment similar to the performance environment. Teachers have already advocated some activities that may serve to make the performing and practice environments more similar. Mock recitals and dress rehearsals may actually take place in the performance context, while performing for friends and family, even if not in the performance environments may result in an internal state similar to that encountered during performance.

Ideally, musicians want a guarantee that memory will not fail in performance. However, the human memory is complex and the best we can hope for is a deeper understanding of the limitations of memory and the factors, which influence memory. One influential factor is that changes in seemingly irrelevant features of the physical environment can impact memory for music.

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How Do You Recognize Expert Teaching?

by Scott Donald

How do you recognize expert teaching? Each individual looks for particular qualities in a student's performance to determine the strength of a teacher. How do you determine whether a teacher has done an efficient job preparing a student for the multifaceted requirements of music performance? When observing master teachers, how do you incorporate the positive aspects into your own teaching? As we attempt to develop and improve our own teaching, what are the things that we should strive to emulate? What aspects of instruction make an individual an expert teacher?

Observation of expert teaching is certainly an excellent way to determine what models of instruction to follow. The information we are able to glean from teaching demonstrations is not limited to the insights into a particular piece the student has prepared and performed. The elements of the lesson we should be observing is the overall flow and structure of the learning situation. How are expert teachers able to focus on specific aspects of the student's performance and structure a sequence of events that will successfully bring the student to a better understanding and better performance of the music.

At the 2001 National Conference on Keyboard Pedagogy, attendees were able to observe expert teaching at its best. What was most fascinating is that despite the fact that all these teachers were very different in their own personalities and teaching style and there were different ages and levels of students; the overall structure and approach to teaching was consistently the same. Each expert teacher was able to set the student up for success through a series of carefully planned and executed tasks that were goal oriented. The teaching was student-centered and designed to provide the students with the necessary tools to be independent learners.

Other than direct observation, there is a variety of published works that address effective teaching. Different sources of information offer suggestions on what "works" and what does not "work". There is a fairly substantial body of literature available that addresses teacher effectiveness; however, much of the research literature on the topic is outside of music. In fact, there are several different areas of research on effective teaching strategies.

Fundamental Principles of Proactive Teaching

One effective teaching strategy is the structuring of learning situations by determining the desired outcome and, through the use of successive learning tasks, leads the student to the desired outcome. This technique is refereed to as proactive instruction. It is difficult to determine what makes an expert pedagogue due to the complex nature of the observation. Experience does not necessarily guarantee expertise; however, one important aspect noticed in expert teaching is the use of a purposefully structured learning situation that will most likely elicit a correct student response. The learning sequence is arranged

specifically to bring about opportunities for student success. As stated previously, this technique is referred to as proactive teaching. The term "proactive" is used because the structure of any learning task is arranged prior to meeting a terminal objective. An ideal application of this in private instruction would be in the presentation of new material. The teacher should analyze the musical score to determine what would be the challenges in the score that could cause difficulty for the student. Determine what the end result should be for each challenge and determine a logical progression from the most basic element of the particular problem. If it is a rhythmic element, then the student should be able to internalize the rhythm before adding the difficulty of finding notes and rhythm. If it is a technical issue, devise a plan for feeling the technic in the hand and fingers before putting together with the entire piece or section.

A proactive teaching approach can also be utilized for diagnostic purposes in a lesson. An application of this in private instruction would be after the student has played, (1) the teacher assess what areas need to be addressed, (2) determines the ideal outcome of the task, (3) and plans a strategy to meet the specific outcome desired. It is important that you are specific about the terminal goal to insure that you are able to break down the task to its most fundamental concept. This is one of the most difficult steps in this process. The teacher needs to be aware of the root of the problem not the "symptoms" of the problem.

One of the most consequential aspects affecting the success of any instructional paradigm is the order in which sequential tasks are presented to the learner. By using successive approximations, the teacher is able to analyze and break down a particular problem or element of performance to its' most basic concept and then increase the difficulty of the task incrementally to meet a desired outcome. In a related study, researchers found that students following an instructional task hierarchy in teaching novice guitar lessons performed accurately 76% of the trials and were better able to perform a simple song without pausing when changing chords than students taught by teachers who were given no instructional sequence (Duke & Madsen). Expert teachers are able to structure the learning environment in a systematic manner that provides a series of tasks leading to a terminal goal. Frequent successful performance trials provide opportunities for students to recognize their own accomplishments and progress. Proactive teachers are able to structure a sequence of tasks that shape successful or correct student responses. The outcome may be reinforced contingently and specifically by the teacher. Students' self-perceptions of success are greatly enhanced and become more apparent.

Teacher Presentation

Not only is the organization of proactive teaching important, but also the manner in which material is presented. There are so many facets to teacher presentation it is hard to know where to begin when you look at expert teachers. It is relatively easy for expert pedagogues to agree on inefficient aspects of teaching but disagree sometimes on the good things. There are several techniques for teacher presentation that appear to be most beneficial and present in expert teaching.

Make sure instructions or directions are concise, direct, and clear. Teacher presentation

can benefit greatly from simply being more specific in directions or corrections and responses to student performances. Instruction or "talking time" is minimized by substituting teacher performance or modeling of the correct playing (Kostka).

Feedback should be specific whether it is approval or disapproval. A large portion of lesson time involves a liberal use of disapproving verbal reinforcement while relatively little time is spent on verbal teacher reinforcement (Speer). The use of teacher praise during this process is important. Be specific. Praise seems to be most effective when it is contingent, specific and credible (Brophy). By structuring the lesson so that there are frequent successive approximations of a terminal goal, you provide an opportunity for more approving feedback and increase the ratio of student success to failure. Be specific in your approval by refering to a particular element, measures, or section of the student performance. Disapproving comments are specific also and intended to provide corrective feedback to a relevant problem.

Most successful teachers are able to structure frequent successful performances (Buckner). Utilizing proactive teaching results in lessons that have been structured to provide frequent, successful performances in which the student is able to observe their progress and is motivated to work in a similar manner during their practice time.

Learning episodes are shorter and more frequent in the lessons of effective teachers than in less effective. Using shorter performance episodes provides nearly twice as many performances that are devoted to the accomplishment of musical or technical goals. The ratio of successful to unsuccessful trials is higher among successful, efficient teachers. The overall structure of a effective lesson is one where progress shifted frequently utilizing simplification of performance task components, repeating the subskill for mastery, and then putting the sub-skill into context or moving on to a new aspect of performance (Siebenaler). Teacher inactivity was negatively related to student success due to longer playing episodes where the student continued in struggling performances of the music.

Summary

In conclusion, be proactive by planning the manner in which the lesson will proceed by devising task analyses to meet a terminal goal through the use of successive approximations. Be specific and provide as many opportunities for success as possible. Through the use of sequential patterns of instruction, present the material in brief segments to provide as much student interaction and opportunities for the student to observe progress being made. By structuring the learning environment in a logical progression of events the student will more than likely have ample opportunities for success and positive feedback from the teacher. It is important that your feedback be specific in approval as well as disapproval and contingent on the student meeting the performance objectives. Use similar tasks that can be transfered to other learning situations or similar pieces. That way the student learns to approach new music in a systematic way and as a result become independent learners.

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Internet Resources for Piano Teachers Part 1

by Mary Rose Adkins

Piano teachers are always looking for better materials and methods for presenting musical concepts to their students. Whether the lesson setting is private or group, beginning or advanced, child or adult, the piano teacher has the same goals and concerns. Students must learn notation, rhythm, and theory (scales, chords, intervals, etc.), while trying to grasp piano technique and perform the repertoire.

The Internet offers thousands of sites that deal with music education and even more specifically with piano teaching and performance. In this age of "Information Overload," the task of evaluating these sites seems insurmountable. As a music librarian and veteran piano teacher, I decided to evaluate and select Internet sites that would be useful and practical for piano teachers. The sites listed and described below have been placed in the two categories of theory and sheet music. They were chosen for content, ease of use, and the availability of free materials. The second part of this list, to be completed in the future, will address music history, composer biographies, and professional development in piano pedagogy.

There are some basic considerations that apply to all the sites:

- The web is always changing. Some of these sites may not be active when you look for them.
- The following free software will be necessary to view, hear, and print the music: *Scorch* (from Sibelius), *Adobe Acrobat Reader* (version 5.0 or above), and *Quicktime*. Directions for downloading appear on the sites that require the use of the software.
- The type of Internet connection will determine the amount of time for downloading and viewing music and theory materials. A dial-up connection will be slower than a cable (broad-band) or DSL connection. With a slower connection, try to save the materials and print offline.
- It is up to the individual user of these sites to observe the copyright policies and conditions as listed on each site. At the time of publication, all the sites listed below allow free printing and distribution of the information for noncommercial use when proper attribution is noted.

Theory Sites

The sites vary in level of difficulty and method of presentation. The descriptions will include whether the sites are interactive, offer worksheets, and an approximate level of difficulty or age.

PracticeSpot: Ideas and Resources for Great Music Lessons www.practicespot.com

This is a very comprehensive site developed by private piano teacher Philip Johnston in

Australia. The free resources, listed on the home page, cover rhythm, note reading, theory, sightreading, scales, and more. The text seems to target children rather than adult learners. The drills allow the user to set limits so that beginning students can work without dotted notes or more difficult time signatures. The "Notereading Wizard" is interactive - students get their scores and the correct answers. There are numerous theory worksheets available for free printing. The "Online Scales Manual" could be very helpful to visual learners. The scale is shown with fingering on the keyboard. This site is definitely worth the time. Some students and parents would enjoy using it at home for further reinforcement.

Ricci Adams' Musictheory.net www.musictheory.net/

Ricci Adams is a computer science major at Millikin University who developed this site while in high school. Although Mr. Adams is not a music teacher, his site is frequently recommended by music teachers and it is deserving of the recognition. The site consists of three areas: Lessons, Trainers, and Utilities. The lessons and trainers are presented in a very attractive, easy-to-understand slide show format. There are several lessons, beginning with the staff and going on up to chord construction. The vocabulary is better suited to adult learners, but a younger child could learn with assistance from the teacher or parent. The Trainers are interactive drills with the correct answer displayed immediately when a wrong answer is submitted. By choosing "Settings" the drill can be customized for the level of the student. The score is posted on the screen and the results can be printed. The Utilities include a chord calculator, matrix generator, and staff paper generator, including plain, piano, SATB, and custom. The Trainers and Utilities can be downloaded to your computer and used offline.

Piano Pedagogy Plus! www.pedaplus.com

Piano Pedagogy Plus! by Dr. Jon Ensminger, faculty member at Northland Baptist Bible College, Is very extensive and covers repertoire and technique as well as theory. To find the theory downloads, click on "downloads" on the left side of the screen and choose "worksheets". The worksheets cover various subject and levels of difficulty. They are available in Scorch or Acrobat Reader Pdf format. The advantage of downloading in Scorch is that the student can hear the notes, but in both formats the worksheet must be printed to fill in the answers. I recommend the pdf format because it includes a heading and place for the student's name with clear directions. Both versions save to your machine easily for use offline. To access Dr. Ensminger's personal method of teaching technique, click on "articles" and choose "technique." Various technique topics are covered and video segments showing proper hand positions.

Theory on the Web: an On-line, Hypertext for Music Theory www.smu.edu/totw/

This site is an interactive, hypertext instruction method designed by Dr. Robert J. Frank, Assistant Professor of Composition and Theory at Southern Methodist University, and was presented at the 2001 Texas Music Educators Association Conference. It is a very thorough course with interactive drills at the end of each chapter. The student is given an

immediate response. The correct answer is not given, but the student may return to the question to try again. The text of each chapter includes musical examples that can be heard using QuickTime. The terminology and vocabulary used in the lessons is best suited to the older student.

Introduction to Music Theory and Aural Skills www.murraystate.edu/qacd/cfac/music/mus109entry.htm

This online distance education course from Murray State University supervised by instructor John Steffa is offered in two ways: tuition based for credit, or free without credit or assistance to anyone interested It is a very well designed course of interactive lessons consisting of ten chapters covering all aspects of music theory for the beginner. It is perfect for the older beginner in a private or group setting.

Sheet Music Sites There are so many sites offering free downloads of sheet music that it is very difficult to choose sites to list and recommend. The criteria for inclusion in this list was the ease of navigation and use and the amount of free material available. Most downloads require Scorch or Acrobat Reader.

Sibelius Music www.sibeliusmusic.com

This site boasts the largest collection of self-published sheet music on the Internet. Music is downloaded and viewed by using their free software Sibelius Scorch plug-in, which is available on this site. To get the most from the site, begin by clicking on "First Time Visitor" to get site navigational directions. Then return to the home page and choose piano under "Browse Instrumentations" to get a list of over 3000 titles. Choose "Other Instrumentations" to find lists of piano ensemble pieces. All the lists indicate if the download is free or must be purchased. Scorch allows you to see the music and listen to it while a cursor moves from measure to measure. The pieces can also be transposed before printing.

Sheet Music Online www.sheetmusic1.com

This site is in its 8th year and offers sheet music, piano benches and supplies for purchase as well as public domain sheet music, theory worksheets, and tests at no charge. The company is located in Milwaukie, Oregon, under the direction of Dr. Rein Peter Vaga. Choose no. 3, "The Music Racks" to access the classical piano free downloads and educational resources. The worksheets are very good and offer basic teaching materials for students of all ages from beginning to elementary levels.. An extra bonus is the Private Student Assignment Page that can be saved and printed in Acrobat Reader. The classical music downloads are intermediate level pieces by Bach, Mozart, Burgmuller, etc. This site distinguishes between viewing and downloading. Be sure to choose download to print or save in Acrobat Reader.

The Sheet Music Archive www.sheetmusicarchive.net

Downloads of free editions of public domain classical music are available from over 70 composers in Acrobat Reader Pdf format. Free downloads are restricted to two per day. This site offers a CD-ROM of the entire collection for $19.95. Click on "Info" to get more information about the site. Any piece of music that you view is counted as a download. The files can be saved as a pdf file and printed offline.

Music-Scores.com www.music-scores.com

This site offers over 800 classical sheet music files, 275 of which are free to non-members. Click on "First Time Visitors" to get site navigational directions, and on ÔFree Sheet Music" for rules regarding downloads. Unlimited downloads are reserved for the paying members of Rubato at $20 per year. Other visitors to the site are allowed 3 downloads every 24 hours. To access piano music choose a composer name from the home page. This list will indicate the title, instrumentation, arrangement or original version, and free or restricted to Rubato members. Restricted pieces can still be viewed in Scorch and played with the cursor following the music. Free downloads can be saved and printed offline.

Easy Sheet Music www.easysheetmusic.com

This site offers five themed collections of pieces for elementary level students - Songs from Around the World, Popular Classics, Boogie & Blues, Opera Classics, and Mission Not That Difficult. The pieces are very nice arrangements, but the arrangers are not listed. Downloads are limited to 3 per day for non-subscribers. Subscription rates are $10 per year for the entire collection or $5 per book. The files can be saved and printed offline.

The Mutopia Project www.mutopiaproject.org

The Mutopia Project offers free music to download, print, and distribute. Read the home page for a very good explanation of public domain music. Choose "Browse the Archive" and select piano in the list of instruments to access the list of over 170 piano pieces. There are several options for downloading. Choose "Letter.pdf file" for best results. The image on the screen is not perfect, but the printed version is very clear. These files can be saved for use offline. The files can be searched in various ways and the option of seeing a fragment of the music is available.

Charlie's Piano www.charliespiano.com

This site offers about 500 files of free piano music, some of which are taken from the Mutopia Project. Click on "Free Sheet Music" at the top of the home page to view a list by composer. The pieces available are from well known classical composers, such as Bach, Beethoven, and Schubert, and some very nice Scott Joplin pieces. The level of difficulty is intermediate, beginning with the easier pieces by Clementi and Burgmuller.

There are several nice pieces for beginners arranged by Gilbert DeBenedetti.

247 Sheetmusic.com www.247sheetmusic.com/downloads/

Even though this site is limited in scope, the approximately 20 pieces available for downloading are worthwhile. The list includes Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, Debussy, and Joplin. They are Acrobat Reader Pdf files and can be saved and used offline. The search engine at the top of the page searches for sheet music to purchase at Sheetmusicplus.com.

All Piano Sheet Music www.allpianosheetmusic.com

The focus of this site is classical piano repertoire. The collection consists of over 600 scores in Acrobat Reader Pdf format. The majority of scores can only be accessed by subscribing members, but there are some scores available for free download. Scores are accessed by composer name, and titles available to everyone are marked as "Free Download". These files can be saved and printed offline. The fee for access to the entire collection is $9.95 per year plus a one time start-up fee of $9.95.

Miscellaneous Sites

There are some helpful sites that offer databases of musical terminology and give information about the piano, such as history and construction. If the teacher has access to the Internet while teaching, these sites could be useful during the lesson and as a general reference source for student and teacher.

Virginia Tech Multimedia Music Dictionary www.music.vt.edu/musicdictionary/

This database of musical terms was developed by Richard Cole, Department of Music, and Ed Schwartz, New Media Center, at Virginia Tech. The alphabetical list of terms appears in a frame at the left of the screen, and an alphabet at the bottom of the screen allows the searcher to go to a specific letter. When a term is chosen, the pronunciation is heard (using QuickTime) and a definition appears. With some terms there are musical examples to see and hear. The appendices are very thorough. Advanced students and adult beginners will really benefit from this site, as well as piano teachers themselves!

Learning Zone www.naxos.com/NewDesign/fglossary.files/bglossary.htm

The A-Z Glossary offers a medium-sized list of terms aimed at the younger student. When a term is chosen a pop-up window offers a pronunciation guide and definition. There are other options listed in the frame on the left. The list of composers is limited but understandable for the younger student.

Essentials of Music www.essentialsofmusic.com

This site is offered by Sony in cooperation with W.W. Norton & Company and built

around *Essential Classics*. It offers overviews of periods of music history, biographies of composers, and a glossary of 200 terms. There are some sound files (using Real Audio player) and pictures. Students at the intermediate level and above will be able to effectively use this glossary.

MusicPlay Piano www.musicplay.com

The main focus of this site is the piano, especially sales. Look at the two buttons on the left, "Piano Action" and "Virtual Piano," to give your students a visual tour of the construction and action of the piano. The piano action page uses animation to demonstrate the action of a grand piano. There are several drawings of the parts of the piano action. It is too detailed for young children but older beginners will understand it. The virtual piano is very easy to navigate. The student clicks on a part of the piano to access the description. All ages can understand and learn from the virtual piano, but younger children will need some assistance.

Conclusion

The Internet has become a part of our lives on several levels. The information available is overwhelming and can be erroneous. My purpose in evaluating sites was to offer piano teachers resources that could be used to reinforce their teaching. Of course there is no substitute for the interaction of student and teacher, but Internet resources in theory and repertoire can become a part of our vast body of teaching tools.

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Reaching for Worlds Beyond the Score*

by Ivan Frazier (*Presented at the Seventh World Piano Pedagogy Conference, Las Vegas, NV, October, 27-31, 2002; and published here by permission.)

At the 1999 MTNA convention in Los Angeles John Perry spoke frankly about his perception that while pianists - students and performers - perform at high technical levels, there is a growing sameness, a declining individuality in their performing. In company with other factors including pressures associated with judging advanced-level competitions Perry noted the double-edged advantages and disadvantages of so-called "urtext" scores and the subtle "tyranny" their popularity exerts over teachers, students, and performers. A central problem as he defined it is how to find the music in all that objective, sterile detail. He observed that perfection has not been an object of art. Communication is.

His insight causes me to reflect on the potential value of narrative modes of thinking. At the World Piano Pedagogy Conference in St. Louis I presented a paper which made some applications to piano pedagogy that I believed could effect greater sensitivity to the poetic and expressive content in music, enrich and facilitate student - teacher communication, and encourage individuality in performance. It is now published by permission in Piano Pedagogy Forum (Frazier, 2001).

In his writing over 1980's and 90's the highly influential psychologist and educator, Jerome Bruner (1986), has coined the term "narrative thinking" to describe the cognitive functioning involved in the creation of narrative, whether within the play of children, or poetry, or stories and novels. In operation narrative thinking embraces the particular, the concrete, the here and now, where the horizon of possibility expands, and the familiar seems new and strange once more (Bruner, 1990, 1996). Crucial to activating narrative thinking is the creation of gaps in meaning or action, which recruit the listener or reader to fill by finding implicit meanings, and multiple perspectives. A pivotal point here is Bruner's assertion that we accomplish this by recomposing narrative for ourselves as we receive it in the context of the here and now (1986, p.24). Leonard Bernstein framed the phenomenon in musical terms much like Bruner during his series of Norton Lectures at Harvard University in1973. One of the lectures was titled, "The Beauties of Ambiguity." In it he described "gaps" in compositions where the composer challenges the listener to bridge the distance between the expected and the unexpected. Listen to the opening three chords in Beethoven's Sonata, Op. 81a, where the dominant unexpectedly resolves to the relative minor. We compose the expected tonic chord internally, while receiving the unexpected, and recompose a new perspective for ourselves.

One of my piano concentration majors and I were discussing in his lesson problems of pedaling in the Pastorale movement from the *Trois Pieces* (Three Pieces) by Francis Poulenc. He created an arresting gap by asking, "Could the pedal want to change?" I suggested that we had created a metaphor from the riddle that asks, "How many psychiatrists does it take to change a light bulb?" For those who need the "punchline," the answer is "Only one, but the light bulb has to really want to change." We were asking,

"Does the pedal really want to change?" This idea unfolded a wide horizon of possibilities for pondering and experimenting with the prospect that the instrument might motivate the pedaling. Most of all it challenged both of us to listen to those passages much more intently than before.

This brings us to a very important point. The effort to bridge the gaps opened by narrative thinking activates intent in the student, the teacher, and in the performance. Uncovering a composer's intent from the blueprint of the musical score is impossible without activating intent. Intention drives the quest for musical meaning. Performance, how we teach it, and its traditions make an absorbing history of this quest.

The score itself cannot tell us everything, nor can it be entirely neutral. Even the most cautiously conservative urtext edition must fill some gaps for us. I tell my students that the ultimate urtext edition would be a photocopy of the composer's handwritten manuscripts! The line where the editor's "helpfulness" crosses over into artistic decision making may at times be difficult to see. However, as John Perry reminds us, this helpfulness can be beneficial if it provides some insight into the performing tradition represented by the composition and its composer. Musical performance skills, which include improvising, playing-by-ear, transposing and playing-at-sight are avenues through which musical narrative is received and composed. Even improvisation begins with an existing inventory of melodic and rhythmic motifs, which are recombined into fresh syntax, much the way an extemporaneous speaker uses his reservoir of words, phrases and definitions. Robert Weirich in the 1998 World Piano Pedagogy Conference conducted a masterful interactive session in which he promoted the use of improvisation as a means of developing skills needed to "speak" the language of music.

All of this in the light of narrative thinking persuades us that these four skills form a continuum with many parallels in function rather than a group of separated tasks. Such continuity may well be an inborn human trait. Howard Gardner (1982) observes that a five to seven year old child "sings while drawing, dances while singing, tells stories while playing." He calls it a golden age of creativity, "sparkling with artistry," exhibiting great expressivity (pp. 86, 128).

In this connection I am reminded of three experiences with my mentor, Guy Duckworth, in company with other doctoral students at the University of Colorado in the 1970's. All three illustrate connections among these skills.

First, during a seminar discussion Duckworth said, "If I wanted to increase my sight-reading skill, I would spend time transposing at the piano. If I wanted to increase my transposing skill, I would do some playing-by-ear, and if I wanted to play-by-ear more fluently, I would practice improvisation. (see figure 1)"
Figure 1.

KEYBOARD SKILLS

IMPROVISATION

PLAYING-BY-EAR

TRANSPOSING

SIGHT-READING

His statement recognizes that a principal barrier to fluent reading is the habit of focusing the eye on individual notes one at a time. Each step up this hierarchy shifts awareness away from individual details toward the relationships among them. Flexibility, fluency, and confidence are enhanced along the way.

Second, improvising after the style of a particular composition reveals as in no other way a student's grasp of the musical elements operating in that piece. I recall that Guy often would take the score away from me in a lesson order to, as he put it, "find out what it meant to me." Even though I was in that precarious zone between playing from memory and playing from score, he and I and the others in my lesson group learned from my improvisational bridges across my memory gaps precisely what I understood and how. The experience of working the piece in this manner revealed vividly the extent that I had integrated understanding, meaning and intent.

Third, I also remember from those days the best advice I every received for developing both an attitude and an intentional state for sight-reading. Duckworth simply said, "Improvise a piece like the one you see before you." I decided to test the idea with the third movement of Prokofieff's Seventh Sonata (a work on my DMA repertoire reading project). I was determined that rhythm and steadiness of tempo would be the top priority. The "notes," I thought, would be but a similitude of pitches on the page. While I did in fact play many wrong notes, I found myself most pleasantly surprised by the number of correct notes I did get. I felt very much "in the moment," my new attitude helping me maintain physical fluency. Pressure for detail relaxed as patterns, registers, chord shapes and silhouettes of phrase units emerged as more relevant priorities.

In my role as a teacher I need to be alert to opportunities where narrative modes of thinking may be invited. I continue to keep my log of experiences with students where narrative thinking is evident. So that I don't forget to do it - such moments are illusive - I take time to tell students why I occasionally open the diary and jot down key words and phrases right then. These short discussions are some of the most valuable moments I have shared with students. A teacher's role can be one of modeling and facilitating the application of narrative thinking skill in the three ways summarized by Jerome Bruner (1996): (1) Cultivate and use it; (2) Analyze and nurture it; And, (3) Cease taking it for granted.

I can think of no better conclusion to this paper than to quote Shelly Berg (1999), an eminent jazz pianist and educator at the University of Southern California who wrote," When I play I reach through the keys to find hidden worlds below. Like Alice, I disappear through the looking glass when I practice, where each solo can be a journey of

discovery. I love the hours spent practicing, because practicing is where I receive the keys to those other worlds."

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Ivan Frazier, a member of the UGA piano faculty since 1977 and formerly Keyboard Area Chair and Chair of Piano, teaches piano, pedagogy, and supervises the class piano program. A native of Utah, Dr. Frazier attended the University of Utah where, in the first Honors Program class at that school, he earned the Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts in piano and music education, and in music theory respectively. His Doctor of Musical Arts in Piano Performance, Literature, and Pedagogy was awarded in 1977 by the University of Colorado at Boulder. Frazier's principal teachers include Frederic Dixon (a student of Joseffy), Oscar Wagner, Guy Duckworth, all in piano; LeRoy Robertson (a student of Schoenberg & Bloch), in theory; and Alexander Schreiner, in organ. Dr. Frazier is active nationally as a performer, lecturer, and clinician. As a founding member of the Committee on Learning Theory in the National Conference on Piano Pedagogy, his work on that committee, and in the World Piano Pedagogy Conference, and MTNA Pedagogy Saturday programs has been of influence in piano teaching and teacher training across the country and beyond. Ivan Frazier's writings and research in piano pedagogy may be found in Keyboard Companion, Piano Life, Piano Pedagogy Forum (an Internet journal), Southeastern Journal of Music Education, and in Proceedings and Reference volumes of the National Conference on Piano Pedagogy. As a performer Dr. Frazier is active as soloist and collaborative artist. Concert and recital performances have taken him to many locations in the West, Mid-West, and South East. He is a founding member of the Artrazann Trio of Athens, Georgia, which specializes in trio literature for oboe, horn, and piano. He is heard on a compact disc recording released by ACA Digital Recordings in collaborative performances with David Stoffel, bass-baritone; and Milton Masciadri, double-bass.

Communicating and Interpreting Critical Commentary

by Amy Stanley, and James Douthit

Students and teachers devote a prodigious amount of time in the preparation of performances to be presented for adjudication. Yet, the actual time allowed for adjudication can be less than the length of the selection(s). Hence, an adjudicator needs to be efficient and offer educational suggestions. This article offers advice for the adjudicator to consider when writing evaluations for participants. It also suggests a framework for the teacher's and student's interpretation of those written comments made by the adjudicator.

Suggestions for First-Time Adjudicators

Imagine this scenario. A young high school piano contestant enters the audition room. She has meticulously prepared her program throughout the past nine months specifically for this moment, but is all too aware of the fact that she has only a limited time to display her efforts and talent. Suddenly, all of her anxieties rise to the surface, overriding her usual focus and clarity. She timidly approaches the piano and briefly glances at the judge, who is still frantically finishing the evaluation of the last performer. After waiting patiently for what feels like hours, she is given the signal to start. As she begins her hands and knees shake out of control, her mind races wildly, and she subsequently rushes through the first piece, forgetting her well-learned musical gestures. With each solo, her lack of control becomes increasingly obvious as she attempts to avoid memory slips and she senses the judge's apparent disapproval as he squirms in his chair. After each mistake, she envisions the situation as a musical catastrophe and dwells on all the possible negative comments the judge could be writing. After performing, the student suppresses her impulse to cry and leaves the room with scant eye contact from the judge and a peremptory "Thank you. That will be all." A week later, her teacher, who is rather new to the field, receives the comment sheets showing a score of 72 out of 100, but with only one comment: "Phrasing, deary." The student communicates to her that the performance was not her best, yet is aghast at her low score. As a result, the entire experience was nothing more than a stress-inducing and uninformative experience for both teacher and student.

Unfortunately, a scenario similar to this did happen. The teacher consequently dropped her membership from the local organization and now harbors strong reservations about entering her students in any festival or competition again. Though it was the responsibility of the teacher and student in question to deal with proper preparation, stage deportment and performance anxieties, the judge's job was to provide thorough and constructive criticism for any points deducted as well as pointing out areas of strength. Here was a moment when a judge could have been a true facilitator for learning, yet he chose to be far less than that. Perhaps he was fatigued or behind schedule, but his unwillingness to provide articulate and instructive prose made it a negative experience for the student and teacher alike. Adjudicators have the opportunity to share instructive insights and to provide motivational advice that can enhance the growth of both the

student and teacher. Although adjudicators are required choose a winner or to assign a score, the evaluation systems and criteria are subjective and require interpretation. The very nature of interpretation lends itself to controversy, but exemplary judges know this and can still navigate the treacherous waters diplomatically. Verbal and written comments that can be constructively utilized by the student and teacher can promote and encourage positive musical growth.

What ARE the qualities of a good judge?

When asked this question, festival coordinators will initially mention the more obvious qualities that they would like to see, such as promptness, courteousness, the ability to stay within the time limits of the festival's schedule, legible handwriting and quality as well as quantity of written comments. However, these coordinators may want to expand this list to include more criteria:

- Willingness to address the positive aspect of a student's playing *first* and then to offer constructive, not destructive, criticism.
- Willingness to address the student with age-appropriate wording, when possible, so that the teacher does not need to explain the written comments to the student and parents.
- Awareness of one's personal nonverbal cues and how this may be interpreted by the performer.
- Ability to make the performer feel at ease. One smile, a little eye contact and some humor go a long way.
- Ability to separate age and height of the student with the level of competition for which he/she is entered. Students who begin piano at a later age and enter the festival or competition at a lower level should not be judged harshly. Likewise, younger students who enter into an advanced level should be assessed *at that very level* without age and size factoring into the critique.
- Ability to maintain balance and perspective with regard to one's own criteria versus those of the specific festivals or competitions.

As a judge for any festival or competition, one should first find out from the coordinators what the primary objectives are and direct his or her scoring and remarks to reflect those particular goals. One need not compromise his or her standards or aesthetics to be invited to judge again. If it is a real *competition*, then choices do have to be made and some students will have to be eliminated from the next stages. If it is a festival wherein the student competes against a standard, rather than other contestants, then there is certainly less pressure to make the "right" decision because comments are rarely challenged. However, the judge is still professionally obligated to give *substantial* and *constructive* feedback. It is of primary importance that the judge realize his or her potential to spark a participant's appreciation as much for the creative process, *if not more than*, for the goal. Doing so helps to set the stage for a more positive learning experience, regardless of the ranking or outcome. If the old adage is true that one learns more from his or her mistakes than from successes, then adjudicators should take into account the fact that students certainly can benefit from many other aspects of the experience beyond receiving a score

or prize. A truly effective judge understands Alfred Einstein's famous quote: "Not everything that can be counted counts and not everything that counts can be counted."

Suggestions for Teachers New to the Field

Teachers can lay the groundwork for the student's interpretation of comments by competition or festival judges. Explain to the student before the event that there are many ways to analyze a performance and that each judge will convey unique and individualistic ideas in his or her comments, just as every player will present his or her own style of performance. Remember that students are very trusting of and greatly value their teacher's advice and opinions. Through a filter of time and long acquaintance with the teacher, they begin to process the meaning and content of the criticism and suggestions. However, a student does not have the benefit of developing the same long-term, trusting relationship with a judge.

One helpful activity that can be employed in the studio is the rehearsal of a competition or audition performance. Ask the student to perform the audition as you write comments. Write with a loud and exaggerated volume as the student plays. When trying this the first time, write only positive comments for the student, employing a noisy and aggressive writing style. Asking students to stop and start (as many adjudicators do) is also good practice to include in this activity. When the student has finished the performance, ask him or her to imagine what you have written on the comment sheet. Students will typically go through their performance pointing out the mistakes, yet ignoring the many positive aspects of *the audition*. When you reveal the positive writing you have produced on the critique sheet, students will be amazed to learn that they were projecting negative feelings onto their "pretend" judge even before they read the critique.

Students with experience in critiquing the performances of others can generally receive feedback in a more constructive manner. Therefore, master classes or studio performances can yield a myriad of ways to reinforce the concepts involved in critiquing a performance. Students critiquing their peers will generally have little to say when first asked to analyze the presentation of their peer. However, stronger pressing of the issue will generally lead to a lengthier verbal response. When asked to comment on a particular performance, many students will say, "That was nice" or "That was beautiful." Encourage students to develop their rationale for deciding what makes a performance "nice" or "beautiful." Offer suggestions for explaining or expanding their description using music vocabulary, such as a "beautiful legato sound" or a "nice pianissimo contrast." Likewise, ask students to suggest some specific areas of improvement for their peers. In gaining a more discerning ear in the analysis of other performances, students will build and strengthen their own problem solving skills and practice techniques.

Following the competition, make sure you receive and review the judge’s comments *before* the student has the opportunity to read them. Students are eager to learn of their ratings or performance critiques, but a "pre-reading" by the teacher can greatly aid in focusing the comments of the judges, summarizing the content and sorting perceptions of inadvertent negativity. When discussing the summary with the student, remember to

emphasize both the positive comments and the negative comments. Positive comments can reinforce the great strides made in their artistic efforts, yet students tend to hear only the negative comments.

The teacher should identify commonalties in the remarks of the judging panel. If all of the judges specify the same areas of strengths and weakness, then these items might garner more relevancy than a comment made by an individual adjudicator. Finally, realize that just as each performance is specific to the day, time, place, mood, motivation, and preparation of the performer, the judge experiences the same uniqueness. Even the most professional judge experiences a bad day and may reflect this in the critique. Students should be counseled that each competition is a chance to add something new to their artistic development and that judges, like artists, are entitled to their individual form of expression. While this does not entitle adjudicators to be harsh and unprofessional (and we would prefer to think that this did not exist within our profession), it is best that students learn to find value in both positive and negative comments and opinions of others. Most importantly, the crucial component of artistic development is nurturing one's own sense of self-esteem and musical expression.

Amy Stanley is currently Assistant Professor of Music and Coordinator of Keyboard Studies at the State University of New York at Geneseo. She completed her Bachelor of Music and Master of Music degrees in piano performance from Texas Christian University under the tutelage of Mme. Lili Kraus. After an extending period of study and performance in Germany, Ms. Stanley went on to earn the Doctor of Musical Arts Degree in Piano Performance and Literature from the Eastman School of Music, where she studied with and served as a teaching assistant to Anton Nel. As a member of the New York State Music Teachers Association and the National Guild, Ms. Stanley is active as a recitalist, collaborative pianist, and adjudicator in the Northeast.

James Douthit is an Assistant Professor of Music at Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania, providing instruction in keyboard and theory. Dr. Douthit holds piano performance degrees from Mars Hill College, Northwestern University, and the Eastman School of Music. His teachers have included: Rebecca Penneys, Kenneth Drake, Gui Mombaerts, and May Jo Gray. Active as a performer, Dr. Douthit has performed extensively as a soloist and collaborator. He lectures frequently on the compositions of the nineteenth-century pianist and pedagogue, Theodor Leschetizky. In addition to his performance activities, Dr. Douthit has adjudicated a number of competitions at the local, regional, and national levels. Dr. Douthit is currently president-elect of the Pennsylvania Music Teachers Association.

New Teaching Methods: The Fastway Piano Course

by Bonnie Woodruff

Piano Pedagogy Forum endeavors to make new ideas in piano teaching methodology available for review by readers. Presentation of articles on new and innovative piano teaching methodologies in this journal does not reflect endorsement by Piano Pedagogy Forum or its editors.

The Fastway Piano Method is a practical course in piano that unifies into a single program the technique of the past and the present viewed from a point-of-view of the present; that the study of present day technique is not a breaking away from the old but a natural continuance and development of the same fundamental principles. It has developed from forty years of teaching experience. Materials may be downloaded by students from the internet and teaching advice and lesson/practice check-ups are done by telephone. E-materials may be viewed at www.FastwayPianoMethod. For further information, please contact the author.

The Fastway Piano Method philosophy consists of:

- Chopin & Liszt Learning And Teaching Techniques.
- Dynamic Finger Power.
- Most Accurate Kind of Motion.
- Development of Intelligent Self-Control.
- Development of a Professional Quality.
- Precise & Sharpened Hearing Developed.
- Both Hands working equally well.
- Artistic Substance In Every Sound.
- Rapid-pace results.
- Art of Touch.
- Having proper energetic balance.

The "controlling purpose" of the Fastway Piano Course consists of the following:

Exercises: Well founded musical figurations that bring about the immediate ability to cover the entire keyboard even for youngest beginning student. Exercises based on the Harmonic Series; non-harmonic tones adjusted to any given harmony by "Pure" and "Impure" adjustments; scales and chord tones connected by harmonic and non-harmonic links; contrapuntal exercises and many others to help coordination and speed up the ability to play difficult passages with clear accuracy but also with a sense of abandon.

Points of Musicianship: This section includes among other things a study of the relationship of the tones within the Harmonic Series and the Major Scale including at least ten other scales derived from the Major scale; The study of Chords, their names (the names given chords in this program are those names which best describe the structure of the chord), and uses from the Triad through the thirteenth; The study of Harmonic

Devices, Cadences, and Keyboard harmony; Six types of irregular resolutions of the dissonant tones of the small major seventh chord. Twelve ways of modulation; The harmonic structures necessary to shape sections, phrases, and periods; How to develop larger units in form; The study of various contrapuntal devices and their use in improvising as well as many other points of musicianship.

Letter Notation: A system of writing music notation with letters in combination with all musical signs of notation; Written for both bass and treble clefs it is a musical shorthand system for any music. This system acts as a reading-readiness program for those who may have trouble in fluent sight-reading and also facilitates note reading for the early beginner. Letter Notation makes the learning of difficult pieces easier and faster for the adult or younger beginner and keeps the interest of the student as the lessons progress toward reading of standard notation. The system has proven to be a "Life Saver" for many and an educational musical enrichment for all. Note Reading & Related Subjects: Note reading is presented with two diagrams containing four simple steps. The nature of these diagrams and the method of introducing the subject makes unnecessary the use of the worn out rhymes and limericks of the past used as a "Crutch" for the teaching of staff notation. Key signature, time signature, and the subdividing of beats in simple time, compound time, and irregular time is simultaneously presented along with other signs, symbols, and expression marks necessary to intelligent sight-reading. The selected compositions, by their very nature, will illustrate the technique of sight-reading with intelligent musicianship.

For more than the last two hundred years Music has been essentially chromatic. The Chromatic exercises presented in this program are neutral exercises which have, in the manner presented, never been put in print before. Hundreds of technical problems developing from difficult Chromatic passages are solved through these unique exercises and small Etudes.

Playing by "Sense of Touch" exercises, cadences, scales, harmonic and non-harmonic adjustments, passing tone scales derived from major, minor, diminished, and augmented triads and other musical figurations followed by "Letter Notation" form a better medium of approach to the piano for the beginning student (child or adult) than the numerous teaching methods, books, and piano theory courses on the commercial market.

All music grows out of the relationships of the tones in the Harmonic Series. A vibrating body whether it is a column of air inside an organ pipes, a string on a violin or piano gives out besides its fundamental tone a series of partial tones or overtones -- exercises in this program are constructed from the lower notes of the Harmonic Series and gradually advance through the higher notes. Practice of these exercises is musically sound and has absorbing interest.

The theory and Technique of music is still in its primary stage and is in a constant state of development. Contrary to the belief of some programs assumes there is still a great deal of development yet untouched in the equal tempered system.

The program is concerned with the music of the composers not the ideas of academic theorists, adjudicators and so-called mater class teachers. The program brings the practice of music back to its original natural origin -- SCIENTIFIC, INTELLECTUAL, and AESTHETIC: It brings balance to the present day hodge-podge of teaching ideas and methods so diversified because of the loss of musical direction. Here is a return in truth and fact to a rational background in music that gives a basic for teaching, performing, improvising and constructive criticism.

Analysis of music starts with the reading of the simplest of pieces and continues through the most difficult. By observing the habits and customs of good composers the student will learn good usage of Chords, Figurations, Cadences and will gain skill in improvising at the keyboard. Analysis will help discover the meaning of the music, the "WHY" of it all; There will be a more intelligent understanding, appreciation, improved interpretation and the recognition of beauties hidden and lost to those who have been deprived of this study. The musical knowledge now developing should be applied to every note in every piece. No person can properly call himself a musician who is not aware of the inner relationships of the music he/she is teaching or playing. The following are some of the steps included in Musical Analysis:

- A. The structure, derivation, and name of every chord.
- B. The relationship of every chord to those, which precede and follow.
- C. The relationship of every chord to the key or tonality (if any).
- D. The analysis of the same function, when present of apparently different chords.
- E. More than one analysis for the same note, chord, cadence or passage when more than one is possible.
- F. A complete explanation for every non-chordic tone.
- G. The relationship of every tone to the scale or system from which it is derived.
- H. Discover the Harmonic Basis of the form and general harmonic trend of the composition.

A piano theory program that offers less than has been stated here is in all respects unfair and unjust to both teacher and student.

For further information on the Fastrak Piano Method, visit: www.FastwayPianoMethod

The following are the individual books included in the Fastway Piano Method:

Book One: Introduction to piano and Book Two Musicianship Training, and Book Four Black Key Technique for Beginners.

Book Two: Continued study in Musicianship Training.

Books Three & Four: Continued Musicianship Training (which also included continued study in Books 8, 9, 10).

Books Five, Six & Seven: Continued study from Book One, page 14 in Black Key Technique.

Books Eight, Nine & Ten: Continued Musicianship Training, from Book Two in Tonal Formulation (Using the Number System of the seven natural tones).

Book Eleven: Note Drills & Related Subjects (includes a small Music Terminology Dictionary).

Book Twelve: Continued study "Letter Notation Songs"

Books Thirteen, Fourteen: Continued study in Note-songs, "The Classics."

Book Fifteen: Continued study for the Church musician.

Book Sixteen: (Soon available) Popular Piano Styles, and continued studies.

Bonnie Woodruff, has over forty years of teaching experience with beginners and adults. She has attended the Pasadena College Conservatory of Music, and has completed training in the Yamaha Music Education system. She has been using the "Fastway Piano Method" for twenty years and currently teaches students privately, and over the internet with Netmeeting.

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Internet Resources for Piano Teachers Part II

by Mary Rose Adkins

The focus for the Internet resources selected for the second part of this article is the piano teacher rather than the piano student. Sites listed below are grouped into the following categories: comprehensive sites on piano education and business practices, piano repertoire, music history and piano history (including composer sites), and prevention and treatment of injuries related to piano playing.

Piano Education and Business Sites

Piano teachers and studios have joined the online community by posting their individual web pages outlining fees, policies, etc. These sites are too numerous to mention, but offer some good examples for piano teachers planning to launch their own web pages. The sites listed in this category were chosen for their depth, ease of use, and relevant information.

The Piano Education Page

The West Mesa Music Teachers Association offers this site of over 600 pages of free information updated monthly. Good starting points are "Getting the most out of Piano Education Page" and "Frequently Asked Questions." There are numerous section and links worth exploring, especially the following:

- Just for Kids: Meet the Composer offers short biographies, and Musical Reference Shelf has a glossary of forms and a dictionary of musical terms.
- Learning to Play the Piano: General information on getting started in piano lessons, such as finding a teacher and purchasing and caring for a piano
- Teaching Studio: Articles for piano teachers by artists and teachers with tips and suggestions on various aspects of teaching
- Artist/Education Review: Interviews with notable piano teachers from around the country
- Piano Learning Materials and Reviews: Reviews of teaching methods, software and other teaching materials by practicing piano teachers with full-time studios.
- Audition Room: List of MIDI files, alphabetical by composer, which can be downloaded and played on the computer

Be sure to read the copyright and reprinting regulations for this page before making copies.

A Musician's ABC, and Know Thy Piano by James Boyk

"A Musician's ABC" has a short entry for each letter of the alphabet. Some of the entries are Aphorism, Efficient Practice, Mozart, and Underground. "Know Thy Piano" is a

collection of short articles on pedal, interpretation and other topics related to piano performance. James Boyk is Pianist in Residence at California Institute of Technology.

Piano Practicing Principles and Methods by Dr. Brent Hugh

This site offers practical suggestions and methods to improve the quality of the practice session. "Piano Practice Principles" offers such simple and logical suggestions as "write things down" and "listen." "Piano Practice Techniques" covers practicing in sections, separate hands, and several other aspects of practicing. Piano teachers can use any part of this information in their own lessons or have older students read it themselves. Dr. Hugh is Assistant Professor of Piano at Missouri Western State College. He offers a bi-weekly email newsletter of practice tips for anyone who wishes to receive it.

Pronouncing Dictionary of Music and Musicians

This dictionary of 30,000 entries was prepared for the announcing staff of WOI Radio at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa. The dictionary includes a file for each letter of the alphabet and is available in WordPerfect or Acrobat Reader (pdf). This site can serve as a reference source for teachers and advanced students.

Piano Home Page of Dr. Martha Beth Lewis

Dr. Lewis has a Ph.D. in musicology and is an active teacher, lecturer and recitalist. This site offers extensive information and guidance in piano pedagogy, including business practices, copyright info, and numerous questions and answers. Select "Piano Pedagogy" to access an extensive list of articles with philosophical and practical teaching tips for rhythm, pedal, technique, etc. The information on business practices can be very valuable for beginning teachers and piano pedagogy students.

Music Graphics Galore

Programs, informational brochures, advertisements, letterheads, and web pages need graphics that look professional. This site offers hundreds of free icons, clipart, graphics, backgrounds and images. Select "Keys/Pianos" in the right column to access piano graphics. Select other musical symbols in the left column. Read the copyright disclaimer carefully at the bottom of the page.

Piano Repertoire

Piano teachers are always searching for repertoire of all styles for all levels. Contest lists from organizations can be a good source for quality titles and they are often listed by difficulty level. At this time searching the Internet for contest lists is tedious and time consuming. There is no master list that links to contest lists all over the country, but many state and regional organizations have their contest lists posted on their web sites. The sites listed below are lists and/or small databases of selected piano repertoire that may be

helpful for the piano teacher.

Piano Repertoire Search Engine

This database contains approximately 5200 works and is updated frequently by its owner, Eric Brisson. The web page design is very simple and consists of the following search criteria: Composer, Nationality, Title, Key & mode, Duration, Date, and Work type. Titles listed in the search results can be selected to find publishers and availability for purchase, including links to two online music stores.

Database for 20th Century Intermediate Piano Literature by Kathy Winston

This database covers over 150 intermediate works by 57 composers of the 20th century and was created as part of a DMA dissertation at the University of Texas at Austin. In addition to the database of compositions, there is a glossary and an alphabetical biographical list of composers. Ms. Winston gives her definition of early intermediate, intermediate, and late intermediate. (Click on the words "intermediate level" in the first paragraph.) The search results include an opening theme with the option to hear it, a detailed description of the piece including level, techniques used in the piece, pedagogical issues, publishers, and much more. There is no menu or print icon, but each page can be printed with the Ctrl + P keyboard command.

Women in Music: Compositions for Intermediate Level by Dr. Lora Deahl, Dr. Kay Etheridge, Beverly McGahey, and Lea Schmidt-Rogers

This list includes intermediate level music for different instruments, but the largest section is for solo piano, with a small list for 2 pianos, 4 hands. The composers are listed alphabetically, and titles listed include publishers and some live links to publisher sites. The list appears as part of the web page for the San Diego Branch of the Music Teachers Association of California.

Music History - Style, Composers, the Piano

One of the most difficult concepts to teach, especially to younger students, is the historical style of a piece. Piano teachers often give background information to the student about the stylistic traits of a period of music or of the composer of the piece. There are too many sites on individual composers to list, but for ready reference purposes the sites listed in this category may be helpful.

Music History 102: A Guide to Western Composers and Their Music from the Middle Ages to the Present

This concise description of each period of music was designed, compiled, and created by Robert Sherrane, Cataloging Librarian at The Julliard School and is a part of the Internet Public Library web site. It includes sound files and numerous live links to definitions of

terms used in each period. It is an excellent source for all music teachers and older students.

Worldwide Internet Music Resources: Composers

This list is offered by the Music Library at the Indiana University School of Music. There are 165 links to individual composer pages and 22 links to composers lists. This site is an excellent place to begin a search for information on a composer.

The Classical Music Pages

This web site in Berlin was created by Matthew Boynick, an orchestra conductor. "Musical Epoch" and "ComposerÕs Name" both lead to a database of composers offering pictures, biographies taken from the New Grove, and a bibliography.

DW3 Classical Music Resources

This site from the Music Library at Duke University describes itself as "the most comprehensive collection of classical music resources on the Web with links to more than 3,000 carefully selected, non-commercial pages and sites in over a dozen languages." For composer information select "Composer Homepages" or "Chronologies and Necrologies" for links to quality sites. The composer homepages list is organized into the general historical periods of music, while the chronologies and necrologies list includes links to several composer databases.

The Classical Music Navigator

This site by Dr. Charles H. Smith at Western Kentucky University has five very helpful sections. The composers list is alphabetical and gives the nationality, style/period, notable works, and influences of 444 composers. The Geographical Roster is a list of composers by country, and the Basic Library of Notable Works offers lists of works listed by instrument. The Glossary and Index of Forms & Styles of Music are also worthwhile.

Learning Zone from Naxos

Select "Composer" to access an alphabetical list. Each brief biography includes a black and white sketch of the composer and a discography that links to purchase options. From the main Naxos page select "Artists and Composers" from the list on the left to access color portraits of composers.

Dr. Estrella's Incredibly Abridged Dictionary of Composers

Dr. Steven Estrella has compiled a database of over 500 composers. Each entry includes links to websites, and a list of books, CDs, and sheet music available on the composer. Some entries include pictures. The menu on the left of the screen allows searching by

date or name. The music timeline is organized into the historical periods and composers' names are live links to their biographies.

History of the Piano

This history portion of the UK Piano Page, sponsored by the Association of Blind Tuners contains links to several articles and chronologies of the piano. Some of the topics covered are manufacturers, the history of pitch, and historical tunings. The article "History of the Piano from 1709 to 1980" by David S. Grover is very detailed and worthwhile for piano teachers.

The Piano Page

The official page of the Piano Technicians Guild has information about the organization, the piano industry, and buying a piano. The Virtual Piano Museum has several articles on the history of the piano in various countries and through various styles.

Ornamentation (from Dolmetsch)

This extensive article on ornamentation by Dr. Brian Blood is a part of the Dolmetsch website. It is very detailed and suited for teachers and advanced students. There are other components on the Dolmetsch site under the Music Theory button. From their home page (www.dolmetsch.com/) select "Resources" and then "Music Theory" from the menu at the top of the page.

Prevention and Treatment of Injuries Related to Piano Playing

One of the occupational hazards of instrumental musicians is the risk of injury, especially repetitive motion injury. Piano teachers must be aware of the causes of injuries and the ways to prevent it to protect themselves and their students.

Musicians and Injuries

This site is authored by Paul Marxhausen, supervisor of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Engineering Electronics Shop. It offers basic information on instrumental injuries and how to prevent them. There is an extensive list of recommended books and tapes and several links to online articles. Injuries related to piano playing are very well represented. Online discussion groups are listed by instrument.

Music and Health: Piano Teaching, Anatomy/Biomechanics and Musicians' Health

This site approaches piano teaching from the view of musicians' health and anatomy in an attempt to "foster an interdisciplinary approach to the understanding of piano technique." Author Richard Beauchamp is a piano performer and teacher in Edinburgh. There are 4 categories on the site: Musicians' Health, Anatomy/Biomechanics, Piano Teaching, and

The Proprietor. The sections under Musicians' Health are very extensive and lead to articles, lists of organizations, other sites, and recommended reading.

Playing the Piano, Playing...With Fire? by Jonas Sen

This study of injuries and other occupational disorders related to piano playing was originally written as an MA dissertation at the City University in London. The document covers the description and treatment of the injuries/disorders, treatment of mind and body, and includes a bibliography.

Conclusion

This second part of the list of Internet resources for piano teachers can provide assistance to the piano teacher in preparation and planning. The subjects covered are very important elements in successful teaching, requiring a great deal of time and study. Some of the sites listed can serve as ready reference tools for teachers and students to access information quickly and efficiently, especially in the areas of composers and historical periods of music.

Looking to the Future

The list of Internet resources for piano teachers in this two-part article is the end product of researching and evaluating web sites in several categories. While there were numerous sites in music theory, downloadable sheet music, and music history, access to repertoire or contest lists and professional organizations is either lacking or very difficult to find. This problem could be addressed by a national web site that serves as a gateway to the individual web sites of regional, state, or local organizations. These individual web sites could then post information about the organizations, calendars of events, and repertoire lists for contests. Local organizations or a consortium of private piano teachers could provide space on their web sites to individual piano teachers. Piano teachers can list fees, business practices, suggested links or resources, calendars of events, and other important information for their students and parents.

When this type of organizational structure is in place, the piano teacher can take better advantage of the power of the Internet. Presently, there are some organizations and piano teachers using the Internet in this manner and new sites are appearing daily. In the field of piano pedagogy the online future holds promise for a productive and successful relationship with the Internet customized to meet the needs of piano teachers and students.

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Incorporating Functional Musicianship Skills in the Studio Piano Lesson Using the Standard Teaching Literature

by Michael Benson

While visiting with independent piano teachers at professional meetings and conventions around the country, I often ask them to complete a questionnaire regarding their teaching objectives and music education values. In their written remarks, they often comment on their belief that they are doing a fine job of teaching piano skills but wish they had "more time" in the studio piano lesson to incorporate and teach functional musicianship skills. Many of these teachers go on to explain how the inclusion of music education computer software in their independent studio allows them to provide certain educational experiences before or after the lesson and allows the primary focus of their teaching to be on "playing the important piano repertoire." Alone, the educational music software cannot answer all of the student's questions or fulfill certain musical teaching objectives. The primary purpose of this article is to submit my personal rationale for how and when to teach functional musicianship skills (i.e., sight-reading, keyboard theory, composition, improvisation and accompanying) in the studio piano lesson of a beginning piano student or a transfer student (e.g., lower intermediate level) utilizing the standard teaching literature.

First, why comprehensive musicianship through functional skills?

Functional skills can assist the traditional piano student through:

- developing an awareness and theoretical understanding of the piano literature,
- learning, memorizing, and performing music more confidently,
- broadening student performance learning experiences (e.g., improvisation, accompanying)
- motivating student progress,
- nurturing independent musicianship and life-long learning

So, in detail, what are the musical parts and pieces of standard functional skills?

Sight-reading

5-finger melodies

Duets, Ensembles (two or more parts)

Repertoire

Rhythm drills

Accompaniments

Keyboard Theory

Harmonization

- Single chord tones (root of chord)
- Primary chords
- Simple accompaniments
- Secondary chords, secondary dominants
- Major and minor keys

Transposition

- Pieces based on major and minor pentascales
- Simple melodies and pieces emphasizing intervalic reading
- Simple accompaniments
- Repertoire

Harmonic/Roman Numeral Analysis

Musical Form

Ear-Training through rhythmic and melodic dictation

Composition

Composer-style

Pentascale/5-Finger melodies

Using primary chords

Using secondary chords

Free or improvisatory

Improvisation

Black key 5-finger patterns

Scales

Simple melodies (antecedent-consequent phrases)

Counter-melodies

Composer-style

Pop, rock, jazz, folk and blues

Second parts to pieces

Playing by ear

Accompanying

Second parts to pieces (improvised)

Written accompaniments for pieces

Duets

Ensembles (two or more parts)

Having elaborated a bit on what may be defined as "functional musicianship skills," what are the musical skills emphasized by incorporating these music activities into the studio piano lesson? By incorporating "functional musicianship skills" into the traditional piano lesson, the teacher is able to emphasize:

- Major and minor pentascales
- Major and minor scales
- Major and minor key signatures
- Modes
- Intervals
- Triads in major and minor keys
- Chord progressions in major and minor keys
- Rhythmic and Melodic notation and dictation
- Musical Styles and Form

These are the building blocks of music education and when taught systematically, allow the beginning and intermediate piano student to become more independent and musically proficient.

Which of these skills would I incorporate with beginners? Why?

In his book, *The Process of Education*, Jerome Bruner states, "...any subject can be taught effectively in some intellectually honest form to any child at any stage of development." I begin my answer to this question with this quote because I believe it is true. Experience has taught me that there are many ways to measure student success and that a grade in a class or winning the local piano competition does not always reflect the knowledge (or lack of knowledge) gained by the student. As Bruner states, any subject can be taught to

anyone at anytime in his/her respective lives. Music is an example of a subject that may be taught to all ages and at all levels.

So, having shared a bit of my teaching philosophy, I believe that all of these functional skills may be taught to beginning piano students. **Why**, because students are capable of "performing" or approximating these musical activities from the first lesson. Susie comes for her first piano lesson. She is excited to even sit at the piano, let alone play the instrument. The first thing we do in the first lesson emphasizes improvisation, interval awareness, and transposition. First, I ask her to listen to me play two notes and then perform those two notes as she heard them. While the musical trials are many (for dynamics etc.), there are multiple opportunities for Susie to play the instrument she has dreamed of playing. Second, we perform question and answer musical examples on these two notes. Finally, we move or transpose these two notes to another pair of white keys somewhere on the piano. This is not all I would do in the first lesson, but I believe this is one way to emphasize "functional musicianship skills" in conjunction with Susie's introduction to piano lessons. Susie is listening and repeating musical phrases, not knowing anything about the piano, as well as having positive musical experiences during her first piano lesson. There is no music score, no "sit this way" or "sit that way", just music and listening as well as opportunities for creative meaningful music making. These initial skills are being experienced/learned without explanation for now and will be explained in subsequent lessons.

Seibenaler, in *Training Piano Students and Piano Teachers*, discusses Jellison's questions concerning the inclusion and merit of "functional skills" in the music curriculum. These questions are:

- Will the skill result in rewarding or positive consequences in the home, school or community environment?
- Does the skill improve the quality of life of the student, now and in the future?
- Will the skill prepare the student to be maximally independent?

I believe these are important questions when considering all activities incorporated into the traditional piano lesson (not only functional musicianship skills). A piano lesson with time constraints of thirty minutes to an hour must emphasize skills which transfer from: 1) one lesson to another, 2) one piece to another, and 3) one teacher to another. These skills enable the piano student to grow outside the watchful eye and ear of the teacher and as the questions above suggest, prepares the student to be "maximally independent."

How would I incorporate such skills into the lesson of a transfer student, lower intermediate level, who plays quite well but has never been asked to sight-read or to analyze one of his/her repertoire pieces?

Before answering this question, I would like to share a personal definition of "lower intermediate" or "early intermediate" level student.

Musically, the "lower intermediate level" student should:

1) be capable of finding starting pitches without asking for teacher guidance

2) have the ability to recognize and perform correctly appropriate rhythmic durations (whole, half, quarter, dotted quarter and paired or single eighth notes as well as the rests associated with these note values)

3) be capable of explaining and performing accurately the time/meter signature

4) have the ability to understand introductory musical expressive markings (e.g., *piano, forte, decrescendo, crescendo, staccato, legato, andante, allegro, a slur*) and perform them in a convincing musical manner

5) be able to perform a piece without stopping

Musical examples of "lower intermediate level" repertoire are:

Air in F Major by Johann H. Buttstedt (1666-1727)

Minuet in C Major by C.P.E. Bach (1714-1788)

Air in D Minor by Henry Purcell (1659-1695)

German Dance, WoO 8, No. 1 by Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827)

Suite in C Major, movements I, II, and III by Johann W. Hassler (1747-1822)

The Hunt by Cornelius Gurlitt (1820-1901)

Rigaudon by Alexander Gedike (1877-1957)

Soldier's March by Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975)

Climb Up On An Elephant arr. by Nancy Telfer (b.1950)

Dorian Invention No. 6 by Pierre Gallant (b.1950)

Having shared a few of my personal repertoire favorites from the Eighteenth- through Twentieth-century for the "lower intermediate level" student, now I can share how I might work with a transfer student to begin incorporating functional skills into the lesson.

As mentioned above, "...any subject can be taught effectively in some intellectually honest form to any child at any stage of development." Bruner's statement also applies to

the "lower intermediate level" transfer student. If Johnny transfers to my studio and he is performing the *German Dance*, WoO 8, No.1, by Beethoven, I can begin working with him on functional skills immediately. Using musical concepts Johnny already understands, we can begin to explore numerous functional skills. The first step might be to have him write down the note names of the left-hand chords on the score. Second, construct a C Major scale and write it out on staff paper in treble and bass clef, identify the chord tones associated with the C Major scale, and ask him to play the left-hand chords blocked (i.e., all notes together). Finally, show him how the left-hand chords he sees, hears, and performs relate to the C Major scale he has written out on staff paper.

We could stop here and would have emphasized key signature, intervals, the C Major scale, major triads, a seventh chord, and chord progressions or Roman numerals, but what if we go a step further and ask him to transpose the piece to the key of G Major? This way we could identify what he knows and what questions Johnny may have concerning functional skills. In the last eight years I have asked my independent studio and group piano students to compose music in the style of (in this case) Beethoven. So what are the characteristics of a German dance? As defined by The *New Harvard Dictionary of Music*, a *Deutsher Tanz* is a late 18th and early 19th century dance for couples in fast triple meter. Now Johnny has composed his own German dance and transposed one of Beethoven's finest didactic pieces.

At this point, the transfer student who knew very little about functional skills has been introduced to many activities but there is still sight-reading, accompanying, improvisation and modes to consider. Those issues may also be addressed with this piece. Since there are repeats in *German Dance*, there is an opportunity to have him improvise. Improvisation for Johnny might be as modest as using different dynamics or articulations or as challenging as having him add ornaments to the half notes in measures 1 and 3 (right-hand). Johnny might also be asked to improvise/compose a new right-hand part to go with the left-hand accompaniment. As for sight-reading, he might sight-read and compare other German Dances from WoO 8, by Beethoven. Are there similarities? Are there major differences in length, difficulty, etc.? The accompanying part of functional skills may also be addressed using *German Dance*. I would ask Johnny to accompany me with the left-hand chords arpeggiated in both hands. He could also change the accompaniment pattern to an *Alberti bass* and experience another stylistic musical trait of the 18th and early 19th centuries. As for minor scales or key areas, Johnny could be directed to play *German Dance* adding e-flat and a-flat. Then not only is he sight-reading in c-minor (harmonic), he is also performing the piece in variation and this could lead to a very interesting student composition or improvisation. Finally, if he were asked to play the piece as written and add f-sharp, he would get to hear c-lydian mode.

Along with the introduction to these skills, Johnny knows something more about functional skills and musical concepts than when he walked in the door for the lesson. Now, how do these skills help him become "maximally independent?" How do they apply to a performance situation? I am confident that Johnny will develop an awareness and theoretical understanding of other piano pieces based on these early positive experiences with functional skills. It will help prepare him to memorize with more

confidence, will broaden his learning experiences in music, and hopefully motivate his musical development because he is learning to become an independent musician as well as a life-long learner.

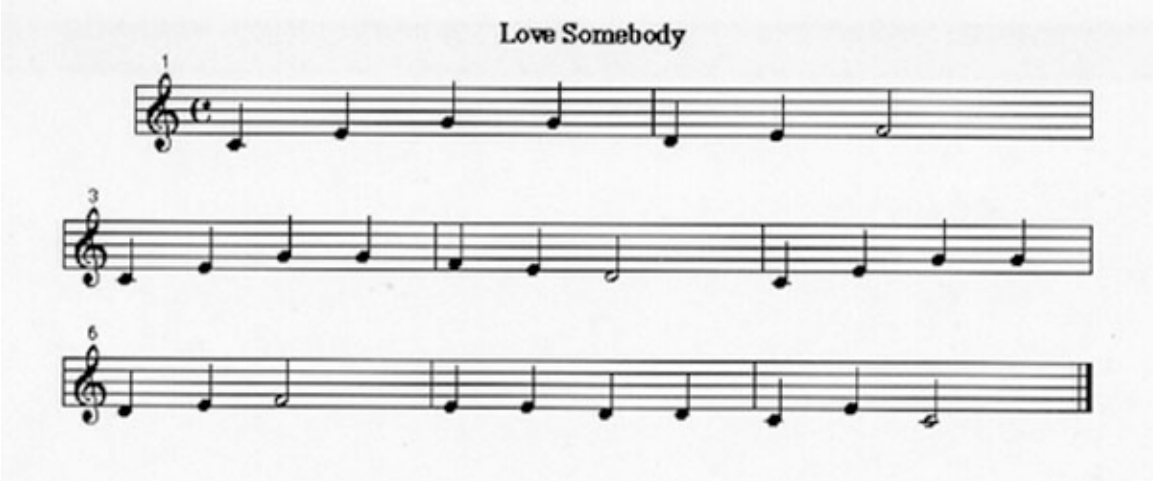
How do I incorporate functional musicianship skills into the studio piano lesson utilizing the standard teaching literature?

Below are musical examples that I regularly use to introduce and develop certain "functional musicianship skills" with beginning piano students.

Example 1: Love Somebody from Alfred's Lesson Book, Level 1A, p. 47

Sight-reading: right-hand part, rhythms etc. Duet part: as written for teacher (accompaniment) Harmonize: primary chords or chord tones Transpose: major and minor pentascales Compose: right-hand pentascale piece in C Major Introduce: whole note rests, reinforce dynamics

*Note: I exclude the left-hand/bass clef part so the student will be able to compare their composed left-hand chord symbols/Roman numerals/notes ("C" & "G") with the example in the method book. I introduce harmonization by having the student choose between "C" and "G" to accommodate the right-hand melody in each measure. I usually play both left-hand notes for them and ask them to choose which accompaniment note(s) they believe sounds most appealing. This formula works well for most two-part beginning piano pieces. I have no personal research to support this assumption, but as they understand and develop these skills they usually enjoy performing their own renditions of these compositions more than the written model.



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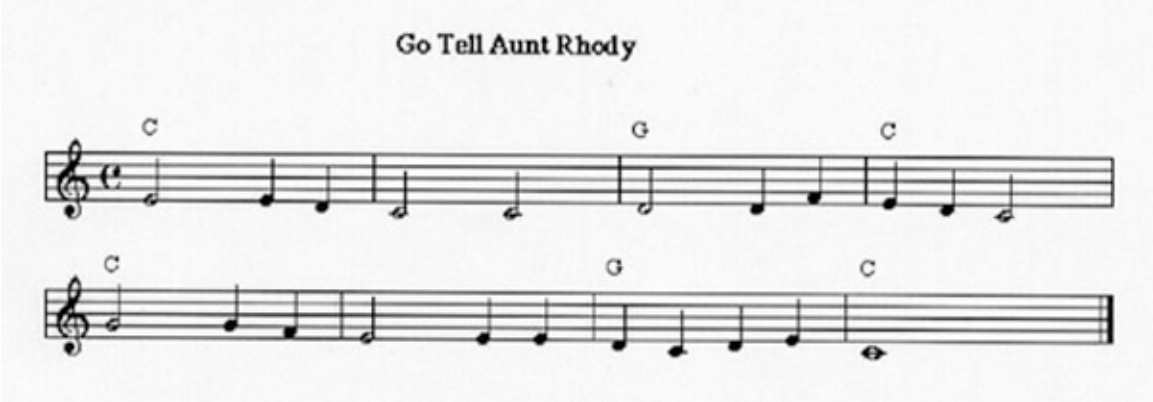
Example 2 is (Go Tell Aunt Rhody) another example of a major pentascale piece that could be developed like Love Somebody. I have provided chord/guitar symbols and at this point expect the student to play single chord tones in the left-hand as the

accompaniment pattern. When introduced, this example is more of a sight-reading piece to hear if a student comprehends or is able to transfer the information from Love Somebody to another piece.



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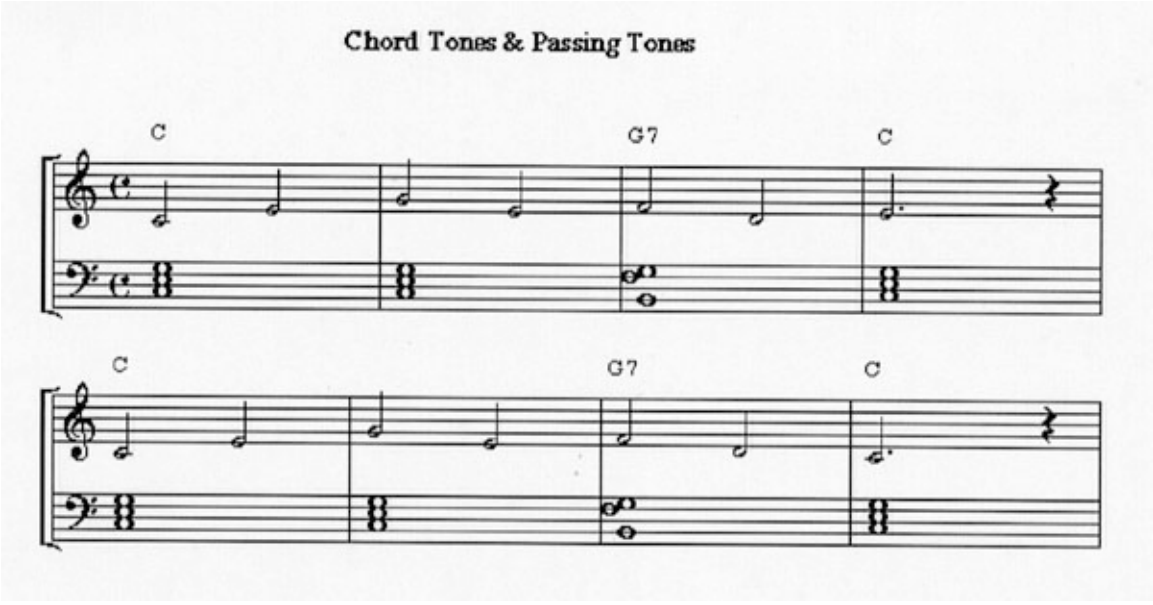
Example 3 (Chord Tones & Passing Tones) is an example I use to develop improvisation. Also, this example lends itself to transposition and by the time the student can perform the left hand chords proficiently, I am able to have them play chords with the right-hand and improvise, in this case, with the left-hand on a C Major pentascale. All of these examples are taught with both left- and right-hand performances in mind. In other words, I supervise the students playing melodies and chords/single note accompaniments with both hands.



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For beginning piano students, these activities take time. I value these functional musicianship skills and work with my students weekly and in group piano/theory lessons to improve and help them transfer this information from one piece to another. I believe,

although I have no data to support these claims, that as the students understand these concepts, their musical progress motivates their practice and musical growth. I have heard examples of intermediate level compositions from my piano students that provide me with evidence that they do understand these musical concepts and that the acquisition of these skills was worth the time spent in the studio and group lessons. As the questionnaire's reveal, the most common reason for not including functional musicianship skills in the studio piano lesson is "lack of time" or need for "more time" during the traditional studio piano lesson. While I understand the decision of teachers who choose not to include functional musicianship skills during the studio piano lesson, I would encourage them to spend the time needed to organize these opportunities for their students. It takes time to explain "how" and "why" these skills are important to a student, but as the compositions by my students exhibit, is worth the lesson time to develop these functional musicianship skills early in a student's musical education.

In many states where I have lived and taught piano there are music exams that have been developed to assess student progress associated with the functional musicianship skills discussed above. These musical competency tests are given concurrently at state conventions around the country and are generally associated with professional music organizations. These pre-college exams emphasize harmonic analysis/music theory, harmonization of melodies using primary chords (i.e., I, IV and V), realizing figured bass, interval recognition or aural training, and composition. These exams have taken a great deal of time and effort to develop and reflect the movement in music education to include functional musicianship skills in the studio piano lesson. In many cases, independent piano teachers choose to purchase computer instruction software that leads the student through sequenced music theory materials that provide immediate feedback. While I use many different types of technology in my independent piano studio and university classes, music education research supports Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI) as long as it coincides with teacher instruction and feedback. These CAI music education software programs aid the preparation of the next generation of musicians and college music majors as well as life-long learners but do not allow the teacher to be a part of the learning process. I would encourage all independent piano teachers to teach these skills during the studio piano lesson as it is in the best interest of the students and allows them to communicate their knowledge of functional musicianship skills. Furthermore, I sincerely enjoy hearing my student's compositions and improvisations and believe that it adds a dimension to the piano lesson that is educational and motivational for the teacher and student.

In his book, Developing Talent in Young People, Benjamin Bloom found that a common factor for high achievers in several areas (including piano performance) was multiple positive experiences during the earliest stages of learning. Other motivational factors discussed by Bloom, included curiosity, discovery learning, and recognition for personal achievement in these earliest learning environments. I believe this is important because the functional musicianship skills developed by teaching these musical concepts not only develops "talent" but also helps a person to be "maximally independent." And that, I believe, is the short-term and long-range goal of every teacher who chooses to teach functional musicianship skills.

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Teaching Sight-Reading: Old Saws and New Tools for Effective Sight-Reading Skills

by Kenneth Saxon

I was asked to join a contemporary music ensemble as a student. During my tenure in the group, I received some hard knocks and tough lessons in sight-reading. As a student pianist, I had almost no experience playing with a conductor and scant experience reading music with an ensemble. To say that the music we played was difficult would be a gross understatement -- frequently in manuscript, it was often practically illegible. Despite these difficulties (and at the first rehearsal!) the conductor raised his baton, and boom, we were off to the races. Maintaining the beat in tempo was the number one priority, and I was frequently left at the gate, struggling with notes and rhythms while the beat and the ensemble simply left me behind.

As I gained experience in similar situations, I became better able to maintain a steady beat, and I found that maintaining the beat was the key to playing correct rhythms and notes. I began to understand the advantage instrumentalists received from years of ensemble playing, the ability and even necessity of sight reading without stopping or losing the beat. I realized that the techniques I learned reading thorny contemporary scores worked just as well for traditional literature, and best of all, could be taught in a straightforward manner to my piano students by encouraging them to follow a few simple guidelines.

Student pianists face two distinct disadvantages:

1. Pianists are not forced to learn to keep going and so they don't. Rarely do they rehearse with ensembles. If they did, they might learn the craft of sight- reading as other instrumentalists learn it, with an ensemble encouraging their continuity and a conductor dictating their beat.
2. Pianists' hands are not within their field of vision when they look at the music nor is the music in their field of vision when they look at their hands. A student who struggles with sight-reading always seems to have his eyes in the wrong place.

Below, I have outlined the guidelines I ask my students to follow during sight reading practice. Of course, sight-reading must be practiced regularly! However, little progress is made by practicing the wrong way.

Keep your eyes strictly on the page.

Teachers are frequently heard making this demand when they witness their students looking back and forth from score to keyboard in a confused manner. We teachers need to do more than just blurt this out during the particularly frustrating moments of a lesson.

Take the time to establish the importance of "eyes on the page." If the student still struggles, break the task down into manageable sections by asking him to play just one

measure with eyes strictly on the page, followed by two measures, then three measures, etc.

Although I've tried blocking a student's view of his hands with a book, I don't find this technique as effective as breaking the music up into manageable units along with frequent gentle reminders to look up at the music. Students often continue to glance down despite an obstruction placed between them and the keyboard.

If a student is extremely handicapped by the habit of glancing up and down, be sure he is assigned music that doesn't require the hands to shift positions on the keyboard. Again, break the task down into manageable sections.

To progress in sight-reading, students absolutely must be able to keep eyes on the page. First, make sure the student is accomplished at reading music that does not demand changes in hand position. In my experience, the ability to read music with eyes strictly on the page is simply a matter of encouragement, discipline and practice.

In addition, encourage students to keep their eyes strictly on the page anytime they are using the score. The habits of good sight-reading should be maintained as long as the music is used, whether for accompanying or just during the process of learning a new piece. A clear differentiation needs to be made between pieces played with the score and pieces played from memory.

Poor sight-readers always seem intent on learning the hardest repertoire around, and it is in the process of learning a new piece that they often reveal their worst reading habits. The teacher is told, "I knew it by heart at home," but in the lesson, the piece is a mess both with and without the music. The student doesn't know whether to look up or down and neither way is effective.

When I audition transfer students with poor reading skills and inappropriately difficult repertoire, I emphasize the importance sight-reading will play in my studio. In addition, I try to gauge their willingness to compromise on repertoire before I take them on. By selling the student on the idea that with the right tools, they can really make progress in sight-reading, and by choosing repertoire that is rich in content, if not in difficulties, I find most transfer students more than willing to make the changes I suggest.

Keep the eyes focused on the beat.

In the beginning, students should be encouraged to keep their eyes focused on each beat as they are playing it. Students are frequently told to look ahead while sight-reading. This time honored instruction may cause some problems for the student trying to develop good reading skills. The confusion of looking at one thing while playing another can cause the reader to lose the beat, the rhythm and/or get entirely lost in the music. In addition, trying to force the eyes ahead tenses them so that they do not respond in an optimal way to the demands of seeing the music.

Sue Haug in "Sight Playing and Visual Perception: The Eyes Have It" (*The American Music Teacher*. December/January, 1990/91) points to research that demonstrates how advanced readers' eyes move in a rapid and elusive fashion back and forth across the page. I think this sophisticated behavior is a result of good habits, practice and skill. I do not think it is a regulation that a teacher can enforce upon a student's reading practice. However, teachers should be able to point students in the proper direction, and orienting the eyes on the beat can serve as a good starting point.

Teachers might also suggest that the student try to consciously relax their eyes before beginning. Next instruct the student to train their eyes on the notes contained in each beat. The best way to keep your students' eyes on the beat is to have them counting out loud! With practice, the student will soon begin to group notes within the beat together. This skill can serve as a starting point from which the eyes can gradually develop the more sophisticated skill of roaming freely across the score.

Count out loud!

This really encourages eyes on the page. Students seem to be almost incapable of counting out loud and looking at their hands at the same time! It also keeps the reader focused on the beat and the rhythm as opposed to a specific note or notes that might tie them up and cause a pause.

Very few students like to count out loud, and some will insist that they cannot. Tell them that playing and counting at the same time is something they must learn to do by practicing it at home. Then cajole, encourage, applaud, whatever works for each student.

Keep Going

Counting out loud and "eyes on the page" are powerful tools to help the student keep going. Students seem to place the greatest value on playing the correct notes, regardless of any rhythmic or metric mistakes. Point out that stopping for a wrong note creates additional rhythmic and metric mistakes that can be avoid by continuing. Instrumental majors can be encouraged to keep going as they would in their ensembles. Relate their piano playing to their ensemble reading. Class piano students can learn the value of continuity by reading and playing together as a group.

Help students value the ability to keep going by first encouraging them to keep the beat. Maintain a hierarchy where the beat is most important, the rhythm comes second and the notes come last. First, praise students' ability to keep going despite some wrong rhythms and notes. Next, point out their progress when the beat and the rhythm are being adhered to. Never stop a student while they are reading because of a wrong note or accidental. Notes can be corrected later. The student who can keep the beat and play correct rhythms will dramatically improve their note reading accuracy.

Read by intervals.

Here is another tool that encourages continuity and "eyes on the page." The student who reads note-by-note will always have a tendency to look up and down as they locate each note first in the music and then on the keyboard. Compared to students who read note-by-note, students who read by interval are less likely to look down at their hands, even when they make a mistake. As the student measures intervals visually, they perform a similar process on the keyboard, measuring intervals with fingers and hands.

Method books that gradually introduce intervals to the student are one of my preferred materials for teaching reading. Students can learn the visual line-space relationship of a second as they gain the tactile sense of seconds on the keyboard. Visually, the interval of a third is line-line or space-space, and on the keyboard, the fingers learn to play a skip. Simplistic as this may sound, it is vital to emphasize this sort of relationship between the visual and the tactile from the start. Even more advanced students may need a dose of this sort of teaching to get them moving.

I remember teachers telling me that if I would group more notes together I could improve my sight-reading. Unfortunately, at that time, I'd never even heard of intervallic reading, and I wasn't counting out loud. Unable to group two notes together in an interval, I was hardly prepared to group multiple notes into phrases and chords. I feel that the essentials of sight-reading are to be found in simple yet fundamental ideas like intervallic reading. Sometimes, the time it takes to insure that a student understands a concept like intervallic reading, "eyes on the page" or counting out loud can mean the difference between success and failure.

Give the student something they CAN read.

Practicing sight-reading requires that a great deal of reading material be kept on hand. These materials need to be divided into levels of difficulty. It is best to have a generous amount of music as well as a wide variety of music for each level.

Start each student at a level where they can read successfully (placing the highest priority on a steady beat without pauses and playing correct rhythms). Give the student plenty of material to read at that level; yet don't hesitate to move on to the next level if they are not being challenged. Keep the idea of a steady beat foremost in the students mind. When they are able to keep a steady beat and read correct rhythms and notes with relative ease, it is time to increase the level. However, if a student can’t keep a steady beat, you may need to lower the level.

The main problem here is financial. I maintain a lending library for the purpose of sight-reading. In addition, I have each student invest in one or two sight-reading books, and I simply circulate the books among my students as necessary. Sight-reading books, method books and graded solo literature all make good reading material. These types of pedagogical material are both plentiful and graded into recognizable levels for easy

assignment.

Go over sight-reading frequently at lessons and make new assignments at every lesson. Also, try to allow time for students to read sections of new repertoire pieces during their lessons. This is an important activity providing as it does the opportunity to continually access the relationship between a student's reading skills and their repertoire level. It is another way for the teacher to see that good reading techniques are used at all times.

These simple directions have led to dramatic improvements in my students' reading abilities. With success has come an enthusiasm on the students' part that makes the entire process more pleasurable and effective. Whether the student is a beginner, a class piano student or a transfer, this enthusiasm keeps students interested and engaged and helps them get excited about a skill some thought they might never acquire.

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Assessment Techniques and Procedures in Collegiate Class Piano

by James Douthit

Introduction

Class piano presents a variety of challenges related to the assessment of the progress and achievement of the individual student. Often, the level of student is as varied as the course material itself. Even with the administration of placement examinations, the mixture of students within one section of class piano can vary from those who have no piano background to those who have studied many years. Many colleges and universities have programs that necessitate the placement of students with varying levels of skill and background. Developing a grading approach, which is fair across the span of these skill and background levels, is necessary in order to preserve the academic integrity of the course. This article will examine three testing procedures that are commonly used in the class piano setting to grade the performance of the individual student: the placement examination, quizzes, and unit tests or exams.

The Placement Examination

The first testing procedure facing the class piano student is usually the placement examination. Many academic institutions require freshmen and transfer students to participate in an examination to determine their placement in the class piano sequence. The materials in this examination are critical in assessing the proper placement of the class piano student. Placement examinations should be structured, organized, and scored similarly to the eventual examination that the student must complete to successfully demonstrate their keyboard proficiency, i.e. the final exam or keyboard proficiency exam.

Placement exams that prioritize repertoire over the functional keyboard skills of harmonization, transposition, score reading, and sight-reading can lead to the erroneous placement of students into courses for which they are not prepared. As one example, in the ideal world, students performing repertoire of the early to late intermediate level are able to identify the tonic and dominant harmonies of the keys in which they are playing. However, it is more common that the student can perform repertoire above the level in which they can cognitively comprehend the various components of music theory, keyboard skills, and technique. Students who play well but have little or no theory background can grow from their participation in elementary class piano levels. While the repertoire of the beginning levels may appear too simple for them, they need the slow and careful introduction of the skills of harmonization and transposition and can utilize the beginning level material to practice their sight-reading. Students with more advanced repertoire backgrounds can be utilized to perform the "teacher accompaniments" to many of the exercises and ensemble pieces found in the early chapters of most class piano texts. When initially placed too high in the class piano sequence, students who have some background, but are weak in skills and fundamentals may slow the pace of the class and eventually affect the amount of material covered in the semester. A thorough explanation

of the placement procedure together with the class content and objectives generally leads students to an understanding of their placement and individual goals for the semester.

Assessment at Specific Intervals

The administration of announced quizzes at a specified time gives the students small objectives to master before tests with larger amounts of content are attempted. A simple check of a technical exercise, theory skill, or section of repertoire takes only a few minutes to administer, but yields several long-lasting results. First, the student becomes increasingly comfortable with the testing procedure. Many students feel a heightened sense of anxiety as test time approaches. Broken into smaller blocks of quizzes, the anxiety of the students can be eased by repeated exposure to the testing procedures. Additionally, the instructor can gain a more realistic picture of the progress achieved by the class before major tests are administered.

Written quizzes can be an excellent tool for assessing the level of comprehension of the cognitive areas of class piano. A small written quiz gives the student an opportunity to illustrate their cognitive understanding of the class topics. Interval identification, chord spelling, and many other theoretical skills can be brought into clearer focus if the student has the opportunity to complete written exercises. For beginning piano students, a quiz labeling finger numbers, note names, or counting syllables can provide mental organization for the barrage of information foisted upon the unsuspecting novice. An open book quiz affords the students the opportunity to relate the material in the text to problems or questions that might require them to paraphrase or rethink the material in a slightly different manner.

Performance quizzes can provide excellent opportunities for students to become comfortable playing in the group setting. Creating an environment conducive to supportive performance opportunities allows the students to effectively demonstrate their skills to their peers. It is imperative to offer an explanation of the varying levels of skill that the students possess. The class members are generally supportive of their peers who might be at a slightly lower level, while in turn; the students at a slightly lower level can be motivated by hearing their classmates in short performances. Accompanying and harmonization skills can be reinforced as classmates participate as singers while a student provides a harmonized accompaniment complete with introduction. Quizzes give the student a greater motivation for preparation and when properly administered can provide a wonderful learning experience for the entire class.

Tests

Major tests should be announced well in advance with the testing materials clearly delineated along with the criteria used to evaluate the progress of the student. A testing sheet (see Example 1) can convey all of this information to the students and (when given to the student in advance) can provide a useful tool as the student prepares for the examination. The testing exam sheet should include: the time, date and place of the examination; the material to be covered by the examination; and the criteria upon which

each activity will be evaluated. The student can bring the sheet into the examination and simply give it to the instructor at the start of the exam. As the exam progress, the instructor can use the exam sheet as a scoring device. This can provide both numeric and qualitative for the student.

Pretest simulations can prepare the student for the examination process. Each student in the class can be given an exam evaluation sheet to use in the adjudication. One student may play the exam as the other students rate their peer on the exam sheet they are given. Instructors may discuss the content with the class, or simply pass the examination sheets to the student who has demonstrated the practice exam. This activity encourages students to utilize objective tools in their evaluation process. As they relate their evaluations of the practice exam to their own potential exam performance, students can "step outside" of their efforts and gain a more realistic picture of their own performance. Students who have taken the practice examination can read their evaluation sheets from their classmates. This will reinforce points that the instructor has made in class or generate new ideas for students to consider as they prepare for the real examination. When utilizing this activity, it is essential to remind the class that all comments should be constructive in nature and should support the work of each student.

Flexibility in testing material can compensate for the variety of skill levels found within the class piano setting. For example, a section on harmonization in the chapter may include several melodies to be harmonized. Allowing the student to select two out of the given six for the examination will accommodate the varying levels of the skill in the class while maintaining the focus on the objectives of the chapter. Another method, which adds flexibility to the testing procedure, is allowing the student to pick one melody to harmonize while the instructor may pick the other melody to be demonstrated. This allows the student some flexibility, but ensures that all of the examples will be practiced in anticipation of the examples that may be chosen by the instructor.

Allowing students to select their own repertoire examples within a chapter or unit can accommodate the variety of skill levels that are often found in the class piano setting. For the students that play beyond the average level of the class, this will allow them to choose repertoire from more advanced chapters, but ensure that they have achieved the relevant keyboard skills covered in the chapter. For students with less than average skill level, it allows them to choose pieces that they can comfortably prepare and execute during the brief timeline of the semester. The prerequisite that the instructor preapprove exam repertoire can greatly assist students in their repertoire selection and ensure that their repertoire can be adequately prepared and performed during the preparation period for the examination.

The environment surrounding the exam can have a strong effect on the performance of the student. Students can be divided in the time allotted for the class period, so that each student has 8-10 minutes to present their examination individually to the instructor. If necessary, allotting more than one day for the exam or utilizing outside times such as office hours or other prearranged appointments can accommodate larger classes. Informing the students of the exam procedure before the first exam of the semester can

greatly assist the students in their performance. Students should be well aware of the materials they will need for the exam. The use of paper clips or post-it notes can aide students in locating their material quickly without having to turn through each page of the chapter or unit. As students enter the room they can submit their examination sheet to the instructor, take their seat at the piano or keyboard, and begin the examination.

Encouraging the student to use the keyboard they find most comfortable can eliminate last minute confusion. If students have had little or no experience on the acoustic piano, they will generally perform best on the electronic piano they have been accustomed to using during class. Students with more keyboard performance experience may prefer the use of the acoustic piano.

As students are made aware of the exam process, they should be told that the exam procedure will move along at a reasonable pace; however, they should feel as comfortable as possible as they are presenting their material. Students who feel rushed in the exam process can become extremely nervous, which adversely affects their performance. Likewise, students who come into the exam and flip lethargically through every page of the text to find their examples, and then start by counting the notes from middle C and reviewing the number of each finger can delay the exam schedule and force the students at the end of the testing period to rush through their exams.

Finally, the attitude of the instructor administering the examination can greatly influence the outcome of the tests. Instructors should greet each student in a positive and supportive manner. Encouraging the students to sit comfortably at the piano with good posture can be a good beginning to the testing procedure. As students begin the exam, many will indicate they are nervous. Supportive phrases may be utilized, such as: "Your practice exam was well prepared" or "Play each item just as you did in the quiz." Allowing the students to choose the first item of the examination gives them the opportunity to play exercises with which they are most comfortable. Though some students may choose begin with the most difficult items in order to feel more relaxed and confident at the end of the examination.

Conclusion

Even for advanced pianists, increasing the level of keyboard skills is a very difficult and time-consuming task. It is unlikely that the improvement of all students will be confined to the fifteen weeks they are enrolled in the class piano course. However, as academia necessitates this confining time line, it becomes necessary to grade those enrolled in the class with a fair, yet substantive assessment. Keyboard skills are extremely useful to musicians in all career areas. Careful thought and planning of the assessment tools and procedures utilized can greatly assist the instructor in designing a course that will be effective and practical in the education of all musicians.

Class Piano Examination Sheet Example *This example can be viewed with Adobe Acrobat Reader 5.0. To obtain Adobe Acrobat Reader 5.0, visit www.adobe.com.*

(Example)

CLASS PIANO EXAMINATION SHEET

Name_____ Exam Date _____ Time _____ Place _____

TECHNIQUE (20 points)
Perform the following exercises found on p. _____ of your text.
_____ _____ _____ _____
Demonstrate the exercises in the following keys _____

Hand Position and Posture	(5 points)	
Fingering	(5 points)	
Accuracy	(5 points)	
Steady Rhythm	(5 points)	***Number of points awarded:*** _____

HARMONIZATION (20 points)
Perform the following exercises found on p. _____ of your text. _____ _____ _____

Melodic Accuracy (Pitch and Rhythm)	(5 points)	
Chord selection	(5 points)	
Appropriate use of chordal accompaniment	(5 points)	
Coordination of harmonies and melody	(5 points)	***Number of points awarded:*** _____

TRANSPOSITION (10 points)
Perform the following exercises found on p. _____ of your text. _____ _____ _____

Accuracy of transposed notes	(4 points)	
Steadiness of rhythm	(4 points)	
Cognitive knowledge transposition process	(2 points)	***Number of points awarded:*** _____

SCORE READING and/or SIGHT READING (10 points)
Perform score reading excerpts _____ _____ _____
Perform a musical example at sight.

Steadiness of rhythm	(4 points)	
Pitch accuracy	(4 points)	
Musicality	(2 points)	***Number of points awarded:*** _____

REPERTOIRE (40 points)
*Perform your **preapproved** repertoire selection.*

Pitch accuracy	(10 points)	
Rhythmic Accuracy	(10 points)	
Musicality and expression	(10 points)	
Technique and pedal	(5 points)	
Improvement	(5 points)	***Number of points awarded:*** _____

Total number of points awarded: _____

General Observations:
_____
_____

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Learning to Listen and Learning to Teach

by Kenneth Williams

Integrating theoretical studies in piano pedagogy and practical teaching experiences into a curriculum that prepares pianists for effective teaching is a formidable challenge for any pedagogy instructor. Yet theory and practice are both essential in coursework for piano pedagogy. Structuring observation and intern experiences presents logistical problems such as matching pedagogy students with master teachers and laboratory students at the appropriate levels. The availability of resources for intern teaching experiences varies from one institution to another. Valuable information on structuring intern teaching experiences appears in the reports of the committee on intern teaching of the National Conference on Piano Pedagogy. While there is no substitute for the benefits of live teaching experience, coursework in piano pedagogy can develop essential competencies in students even when opportunities for intern teaching are limited. In teaching graduate level pedagogy courses, I include activities designed to develop critical listening skills through structured listening to recorded performances in which students describe in very specific terms the differences between two performances of the same work. I have found that projects in directed listening provide one solution to the dilemma of developing practical competencies for teaching when intern teaching experiences are limited. Furthermore these activities focus on perhaps the most essential competency for effective teaching -- the ability to listen critically and to effectively describe what the performer is doing.

Critical listening for teaching differs from other types of listening and hearing in both intensity and purpose. Critics, adjudicators and audience members listen in distinct ways. When the piano teacher listens to a student perform, she is continuously making judgements and comparisons between what she hears and what other sound alternatives are possible. Critical listening is an intense process that simultaneously involves both acoustical hearing and auditory imagination. Even before the teacher learns to decide what to change in a performance or how to bring about change in a student's playing, it is crucial that the teacher has developed finely tuned habits in critical listening. Developing skill in critical listening is analogous to developing critical thinking skills and should not be overlooked in the process of training piano teachers.

The primary objective for projects in critical listening is for students to become aware of exactly what artistic decisions the performer has made with regard to the interpretation of a particular work. Even when listening carefully to recorded performances, it is easy for students to confuse observations about the composition itself with interpretive decisions made by the performer. In assigning listening projects, I choose standard repertoire at the late intermediate or early advanced levels for which several recordings by famous artists are easily available. Movements from Baroque keyboard suites are especially valuable since there are so many possibilities for variety in touch and articulation and in ways to vary the repetition of sections in the piece. Slow movements from sonatas in the Classic style offer insights in the different ways performers handle balance in typical textures with melody and accompaniments. Waltzes and preludes by Chopin offer opportunities to

detect differences phrasing, voicing and rubato.

In order to focus on interpretive details rather than features of the composition, the student must first become very familiar with the piece. I provide students with multiple copies of an urtext score for the work and instruct them to practice the work enough to understand the structure and the musical and technical challenges and to get a sense of how they would interpret the piece. It is especially effective to do a stylistic analysis as a class by discussing the melody, harmony, form, rhythm and timbre of the work itself. After becoming thoroughly familiar with the piece, the student listens to two recorded performances. I instruct the students to mark each urtext score to indicate all of the dynamics, articulation and phrasing, rubato, voicing, ornamentation and other interpretive details that are apparent in the recorded performances. By adding expressive markings to the urtext score, the student is essentially creating an edited score based on what she hears in the recorded performance. The student then writes a detailed comparison of the two performances addressing all of the aspects of musical interpretation. The written portion of the listening project is a valuable exercise in technical writing; that is, using precise terminology to describe what a performer is doing. Ideally the clarity of thought required for effective written communication will transfer to the teaching situation so that the teacher has a command of language for teaching. The written exercise affords the pedagogy student the luxury of time to choose words carefully - a luxury that is not available in an actual lesson. Honing language skills can be especially important for pedagogy students who speak English as a second language. Even native English speakers benefit though from the attention to communicating effectively about musical performance.

After describing all of the interpretive details observed through listening, the student must identify how the overall impression of each performance is different. The type of language required for this part of the exercise is more descriptive than technical. Whereas listening for particular details of interpretation challenges the students to listen analytically, identifying the overall impression of a particular performance challenges the students to synthesize the various details into an artistic whole.

The critical listening project is not a simulated teaching experience, but an exercise that develops some of the most important components of the teaching process. The exercise differs from the actual lesson in many ways. Unlike a real piano lesson, the pedagogy student can listen to the recordings over and over like the instant replay of a football game. The pedagogy student is not listening to detect errors since the performers are esteemed artists rather than struggling pupils. The student is not required to recommend strategies for solving technical problems such as improving voicing or balance. Some students tend to make judgements about aspects of a performance that they consider stylistically appropriate or inappropriate. I emphasize that these judgements are not part of the exercise. Students are instructed to restrict their comments to observations of what they hear. The exercise simply focuses on critical listening in an unusually intensive way and therefore isolates the type of thinking required for the first step in the teaching process.

This exercise in critical listening requires the pedagogy student to engage in a type of listening that tends to be neglected in other parts of the music curriculum. Courses in aural skills train students to listen for intervals, chord qualities and rhythmic subdivisions. Through applied piano study, students learn to listen to their own playing and what effect particular adjustments in technique have on tone production. In preparing performances, students often listen to multiple recorded performances of a work and decide which aspects of the interpretations they might want to incorporate into their own interpretation. But that is a selective process that is closer to modeling and imitation rather than analysis and description. The tremendous advantage to exercises in critical listening within the piano pedagogy course is that the exercises encourage students to synthesize the aural skills that they develop in other parts of their training and apply them to practical situations. Score study based on visual observations tends to focus on features of harmony and form, but teachers must develop skills in aural observation that focuses on interpretive details.

The great learning outcome from exercises in critical listening is that students gain awareness of their own tendencies in listening. Students have often remarked that they had never listened so intently before for specific details such as voicing or articulation. Some students tend to offer a general impression of a performance without understanding how it was achieved. Others can give detailed accounts of minute details but struggle to articulate how those details comprise an artistic product. This kind of self-awareness as it relates to listening is essential in developing effective teaching. Listening projects in pedagogy courses are especially appropriate for students who have had some intern teaching experiences that involve primarily error detection and correction. Comparative listening develops the skills that pedagogy students will need in teaching beyond the elementary level. Students often remark that they enjoy the challenges in critical listening and find the process itself to be inspiring and enlightening. Teaching begins with listening, so learning to listen is a valuable step in the process of learning to teach.

Kenneth Williams directs the graduate programs in piano pedagogy and coordinates the class piano program at The Ohio State University in Columbus. Recent articles by Williams are published in *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education*, *College Music Symposium* and *Keyboard Companion*. He received the 2002 Article of the Year Award from the Music Teachers National Association for his article in *American Music Teacher* titled "Cross-Cultural Communication in the Music Studio." He has presented lectures and recitals for state and national meetings of the Music Teachers National Association, the 2000 meeting of the European Piano Teachers Association in Budapest, Hungary and the 2002 meeting of the International Society for Music Education Seminar on the Education of the Professional Musician in Norway. He holds the Doctor of Music degree in Piano Performance and Pedagogy from Northwestern University.

Finger Joint Laxity: A Challenge for Piano Teachers

by Kevin Hampton

At one time or other, we've all had students whose finger joints collapse, whose wrists are not supple and responsive, and whose forearms are actively involved in producing sound at the keyboard. For most students, any one of these problems can be readily corrected. However, for others they persist, causing a good deal of frustration while impeding the technical and musical progress of that individual. I refer to students with joint laxity, or what is known commonly as double-jointed fingers. I have a vested interest in this topic because I, too, am double-jointed. Through experimentation, study, and research, I have been able to accommodate my joint laxity, understanding better the interconnections between the muscles of the upper torso, arms, and hands and how these affect playing the piano. I have also found specific technical exercises that have served to strengthen the independence and interdependence of my fingers, while gaining suppleness and freedom in my hands, wrists, and arms.

As many children progress into puberty, their joints tend to gain firmness, usually about the ages of ten or eleven. For some, however, this does not happen, and the joints of the fingers remain spongy. As such, my remarks from this point will be directed toward those students whose physical development and age would be about the age of twelve or older. However, their individual musical and technical development may be elementary, intermediate or advanced.

There are various aural and visual indicators that can point to joint laxity, and we as teachers need to be more aware of them. As we listen to our students play in a lesson or performance, certain sounds can indicate physiological problems such as joint laxity: inappropriate accents that do not match the meter, pulse, or articulations indicated in a given composition; unevenly matched tones in scales, arpeggios, or chords; or a seeming inability to produce gradual dynamic changes. If we hear such inconsistencies, we should focus our attention on the physical approach by which the student is playing the keyboard. Visually, it may appear that a student is playing with the forearms, pushing them downward, most often on notes which are played by the thumbs, the fifth, and fourth fingers. Such a physical approach will produce false accents, and the tone of a melody, scalar pattern, arpeggio, or accompaniment pattern will be inconsistent: some tones will not sound or lack focus. Another visual clue is often found in the wrists: they may be hyperextended, taking on the appearance of being humped upward. When this occurs, the bridge of the hand will almost always be in a state of collapse, and frequently, the shape of the hand may look gnarled or twisted out of alignment.

The hand is a marvel of intricacy: tendons, ligaments, and joints each play an integral role in the production of tone at the piano. The fingers in particular, have received much attention from pedagogues through the years: one has only to think of the plethora of methods and approaches having been, or continuing to be developed to address their training. The fingers, or phalanges, have several joints of importance for pianists, and laxity may occur in any of them individually or simultaneously. The fingers are attached

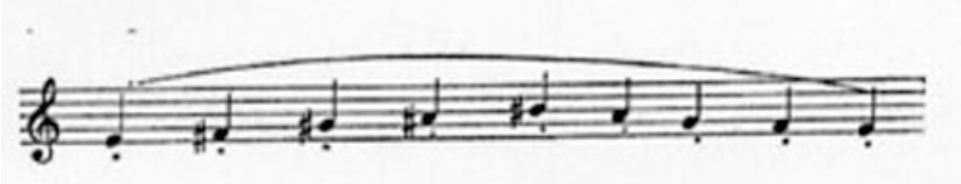
to the hand at the metacarpophalangeal joint. The joint in the middle of the finger is the proximal interphalangeal, and the joint at the end of the fingers is the distal interphalangeal. The thumb is unique in that it has only one interphalangeal joint, rather than two. These various joints allow our fingers to curve, straighten, or curl, depending on the motion indicated by the tendons and ligaments.

Through the years, the most common finger shape preferred by teachers is that of the rounded or curved finger. For students with joint laxity at the metacarpophalangeal joint, lifting the finger to strike the keys is often counterproductive: it will usually create tension in the wrist and forearm. Rather, one of the most useful approaches to finger motion is to have the student think of *pushing* the key downward with the finger. This motion can also be accompanied by drawing the finger pad slightly toward the palm of the hand. Such finger motion should also generate a supportive, slight residual action in the hand and wrist: a follow-through motion that responds to the finger motion. The natural weight of the arm is then transferred through the hand to the finger pad, sending the energy generated by the physical motion into the instrument, having been released from the arm and upper torso. (This drawing of the finger back toward the palm can be done at various rates of speed. It is very useful for clarity in scalar passage work, and for playing staccato from the fingers in passage work that requires a leggiero sound and approach.)

Laxity in the distal and proximal interphalangeal joints can be stabilized over time. Students can learn how to accommodate and support the joint(s) more efficiently. One helpful tip to consider in relation to the distal and proximal interphalangeal joints is this: allow the joint to collapse toward the fallboard of the piano, rather than backward toward the key surface. A collapse toward the fallboard will allow the impulse of the muscular motion to continue to move toward the finger pad, rather than stopping at the point of laxity.

I have found Chopin's employment of the five-finger pentachord, the last five notes of the B major scale, as well as Neuhaus's emphasis of this idea, including the substitution of B# for B-natural in a whole-tone pattern, to be very helpful in beginning technical development to address joint laxity with intermediate and advanced students. As Neuhaus referred to Chopin's incorporation of this pattern, it can be done with a slight portamento, using the wrist to allow the hand to drop into each note.[1] This can be an enlightening experience for students with joint laxity who are accustomed to playing from the elbow joint with the forearms rather than the finger. Such students often have stiff or rigid wrists. This exercise can begin to help them find suppleness and a feeling of lightness in the wrists. Once this has been accomplished, a legato touch can be introduced into the pattern, with the ultimate goal of extending this to scales. The pattern to which I'm referring is given in the following example.

Example No. 1

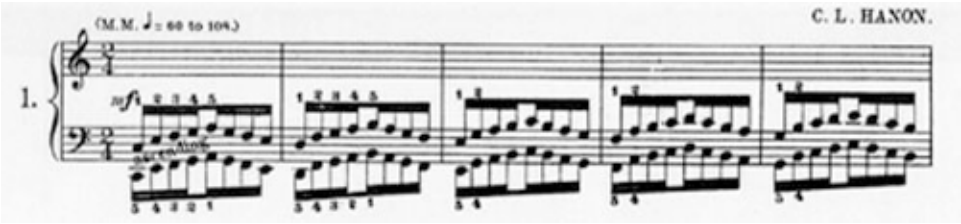


The whole-tone pattern with portamento approach to touch.

One of the scales which serves as a good starting point for teaching technique is B major. I often use this for beginning students as well because it is easy for them to grasp when taught from the perspective of two and three black-note groups. This scale also conforms most naturally to the shape of the hand. For students with joint laxity, it allows for the possibility of optimal separation of the metacarpophalangeal joint of the thumb from the same joint in the index finger. This separation is very important in helping the student begin to find proper weight balance in the hand. In particular, students with laxity in the thumb joints must learn how the thumb drops from the hand into the keys without allowing the wrist to also drop. Lateral separation of the thumb that occurs in pivot motion in scale playing will also grow more naturally as a result.

Placement and alignment of the upper body, arm, wrist and hand are critical for the fingers to have optimal weight support and range of motion. It is important not to allow a student to turn the hand from the wrist either outward, toward the right, or inward, toward the left. Students with joint laxity in the fourth and fifth fingers will frequently turn their hands outward, relying on the stronger index and middle fingers when playing. The five-finger, whole-tone pattern espoused by Neuhaus is a good starting point for teaching finger motion coupled with supportive, circular motion in the wrists. As the pattern is played in an ascending direction, the wrist begins to follow the direction in which the fingers are moving by circling slightly downward and to the right as the notes ascend, and over and to the left as the notes of the pattern descend. This wrist motion produces a flattened oval shape. More importantly, this motion allows the hand to provide stability and balance for the fingers. This wrist motion can then be transferred to other five-finger patterns in various keys. A good example of such employment can be found in the first exercise from Hanon's Virtuoso Pianist in Sixty Exercises, as seen below:

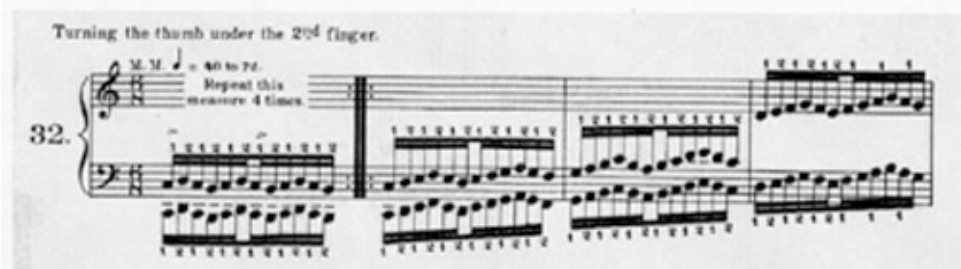
Example No. 2



This exercise requires a fluid, curvi-linear wrist motion. Used by permission, G. Schirmer Corporation.

Further stabilization of the thumbs' joints can be accomplished by incorporating the pivot motion necessary for transferring weight balance from one finger to another: the passing of the thumb or crossing of the third finger over the thumb in scalar passages. I have found Exercise No. 32, seen below, also from the Hanon 60 Exercises, to be particularly helpful. I also like to use combinations of fingers 1/3, 1/4, and 1/5 when working on this exercise.

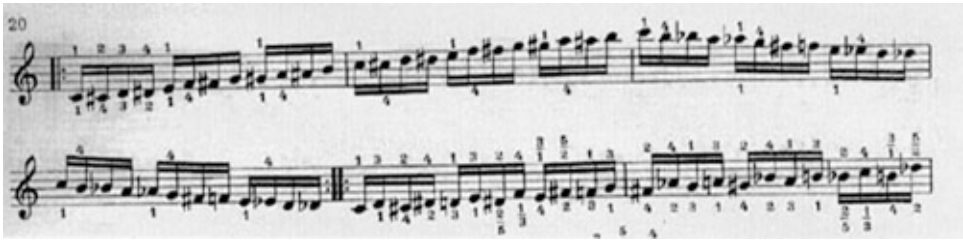
Example No. 3



This exercise can be used with the following finger combinations: 1/3; 1/4; and 1/5. Used by permission, G. Schirmer Corporation.

The chromatic scale, using a variety of fingerings, is another helpful technical study. Erno Dohnanyi developed a repetitive pattern of 1-2-3-4 for the chromatic scale that can be very beneficial in training finger interdependence in shifting weight balance from one finger to another.

Example No. 4



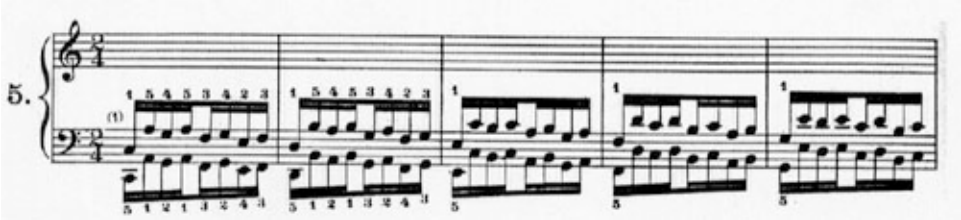
The chromatic scale fingering variation found in the first four measures of this example can be beneficial in developing stability and control over joint laxity in the distal, proximal, and metacarpophalangeal joints. Used by permission, Editio Musica Budapest, Erno Dohnanyi, Essential Finger Exercises.

I also like to do a variation on the common chromatic fingering of placing the third finger on the black keys: the fourth finger substitutes for the third, and the third finger substitutes for the second finger.

Rotation is an indispensable technique for any pianist, yet it is also one of the most challenging for students with joint laxity. There are myriad etudes to which one can turn for practice, particularly those of Czerny and Hanon. When working with joint laxity, a slight staccato touch on the moving notes in patterns involving rotation is the articulation

most likely to help the student achieve musical and technical success in performance. Exercise examples can be found in Czerny's Op. 261, numbers 5 - 7, and again, the Hanon 60 Exercises, No. 5, as seen below in the following example.

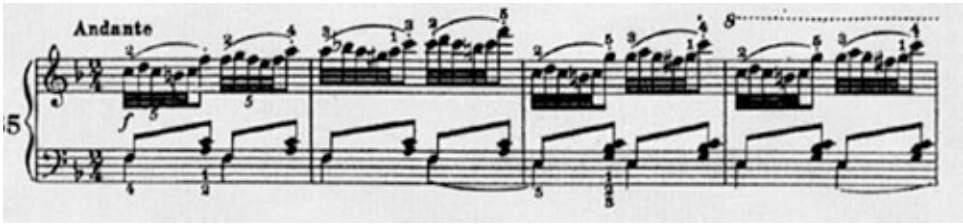
Example No. 5



This exercise is very good for introducing rotation into the technical development of students. Used by permission, G. Schirmer Corporation.

Rotation involves the expansion and contraction of the hand while transferring arm weight among the fingers. Hanon's Exercise No. 6 would be a good compliment to the previous example. Further study of hand expansion and contraction through ornamentation can be useful in training the student with joint laxity. The turn is a wonderful example. Usually, the middle fingers (2, 3, and 4) are involved in executing this ornament while the thumb acts as the pivot, allowing the hand to reach or expand outward from the contracted position. Czerny's study, Op. 261, No. 35 would be an appropriate for such technical development.

Example No. 6



The turn figure employed in this exercise focuses on the expansion and contraction of the hand. Used by permission, G. Schirmer Corporation.

Playing triads and chords can also be beneficial to strengthen joint laxity: a relaxed drop-release wrist motion should be employed, allowing the weight of the arm to sink into the finger pads. Staccato playing of triads can also be useful: they can be articulated with a slight pulling or flicking of the fingers toward the palm of the hand, the wrist being allowed to follow through in an upward motion as the bridge of the hand rises. This can produce a very clean sound while using finger, rather than arm motion.

The drop-release wrist motion, necessary to playing two-note slurs and longer, legato phrases, allows the hand to support the fingers' motion at all times. Coupled with the sensation of pushing from the metacarpophalangeal joint in the fingers, students with

joint laxity can develop muscle strength that will help stabilize laxity in the joints. The student will have better control over the sound produced at the instrument. Examples of repertoire that would be supportive in strengthening joint laxity could include:

Elementary Gurlitt: Songs Without Words Sheftel: For the Right Hand Heller: Etude, Op. 46, No. 11

Intermediate Clementi: Monferrina No. 6 Mendelssohn: "On Wings of Song" Prokofiev: Vision fugitif No. 10

Advanced Liebermann: Gargoyles, No. 3 Ravel: Prelude, from *Tombeau de Couperin*

As teachers, we need to be careful when selecting repertoire for our students. The technical requirements in a piece should be considered carefully, as much as the musical value. Certain works are simply disasters waiting to happen when assigned to students with joint laxity. I'm referring to works such as the first movement of the Beethoven Sonata Op. 13, the *Pathetique*; Ernesto Lecuona's *Malaguena*, and Chopin's Etude Op. 25, No. 12. These are good pieces for students whose technique is more fully developed, but they are hindrances to the technical and musical advancement for those with joint laxity. Why not incorporate more pieces by Burgmuller, Gurlitt, and Heller for example, into our studios as teaching pieces? Many of the works by these composers have solid technical value, in addition to musical worth.

It is my hope that some of the ideas I've mentioned here will stimulate your thinking, particularly when you encounter students with joint laxity. Such physiological problems give us an ongoing opportunity to rethink the teaching of technique.

Notes

1. Neuhaus, Heinrich. The Art of Piano Playing. Praeger Publishers, New York: 1973. P. 84.

A native Missourian, **Kevin Hampton** was a scholarship student of George Katz at Drake University and was a scholarship student of Thomas Schumacher at the University of Maryland at College Park. As a scholar of the Rotary Foundation International at the Conservatoire National in Toulouse, France, Hampton studied piano with Therese Dussaut, and harpsichord with Jan Wilhelm Jensen. While in Toulouse, Hampton performed at the Palais Niel, the Musee des Augustins, and the Salle des Synods in the city of Narbonne. As a frequent recitalist and chamber music collaborator, he has performed at the Kennedy Center (the first annual celebration of the birthday of John F. Kennedy), the Washington Arts Club, the Martin Luther King Jr., Library, the Eldbrooke Arts Series, the Charles Sumner School and Museum, all in Washington, D.C, the Montpelier Arts Center, Laurel, MD, the Fairfax County Library, Fairfax, VA, and the Des Moines Arts Center. Hampton has done extensive research on the stylistic evolution of George Walker, the 1996 Pulitzer Prize winner in composition, as seen in selected works for solo piano. His dissertation research developed the first comprehensive biography of Walker, based on interviews with the composer. Hampton has taught at Frederick Community College, Frederick, Maryland; Sweet Briar College, Sweet Briar, Virginia; and the University of Maryland at College Park.

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In this issue of Piano Pedagogy Forum, five articles from our back-issues have been selected as outstanding contributions to the piano teaching field. We are proud to present them again as part of a special "Best Of" issue of Piano Pedagogy Forum.

Paying Attention: What Cognitive Psychology Tells Us About the Capacity of Attention

by Sue Haug

"Everyone knows what attention is" wrote William James in **Principles of Psychology**, 1890. From the piano teacher who is concerned about the young student squirming on the piano bench, to the university lecturer who tries to keep the interest of her 8:00 a.m. class, to the exhausted student who drinks a pot of coffee in hopes of studying all night - everyone knows first-hand when attention lapses. We say that people "pay attention" or "command attention" or "give their attention." These verbs (pay, command, give) indicate an active process where the attendee makes a choice to attend to something. In cognitive psychology (cognitive psychology is the study of the processes governing human thought; how people acquire and use knowledge) attention is usually discussed in terms of allocating cognitive resources. This may involve selectivity (determining what to attend to) and concentration (the amount of mental effort required for a task).

Although people try to attend to several things at once, our ability to do so is clearly limited. An important theory regarding such cognitive limits is called the capacity model of attention. Psychologists use models and flow charts to illustrate their theories of how our cognitive mechanism works. The models of attention attempt to explain the limitations of attention, how the selection process may work and what causes failures. Capacity models of attention are particularly instructive for music educators who deal regularly with limits of students' attention as they try to think of and do many things at once (i.e., reading music or improvising, handling the technical aspects of their instrument, listening, making musical-aesthetic decisions, following a conductor or ensemble partner).

Daniel Kahneman's 1973 capacity model of attention is often cited in psychology textbooks. It assumes that there is a limit to a person's ability to do mental work, but that we do have some control over how we allocate this mental capacity. We know that humans can and do carry on multiple tasks. Witness the driver of an automobile carrying on a conversation on a cell phone while simultaneously reading a map, and drinking coffee. We also know that our ability to do multiple tasks successfully depends on the complexity of each task. If traffic gets heavy or if it begins to rain hard or if we spill the coffee, the task of driving becomes more difficult and our comfort with multiple tasks lessens (or we have an accident). We also know that the amount of attention we have can vary from moment to moment. If we are tired, for example, it is much more difficult to concentrate on driving, much less attend to another activity. We also know that things outside ourselves can impact our attention. A near accident has a way of suddenly increasing our attention. An interesting conversation or a book-on-tape can keep us alert when the monotony of driving might otherwise cause drowsiness.

Music teachers are well aware of the limits of attention and the challenge of dividing this limited mental capacity among many complex tasks. Kahneman's capacity model of attention offers insights into the reasons for these limits. I will describe the model below

in relation to the challenges of piano performance.

Arousal/Available Capacity

Kahneman's model assumes that all mental activities compete for a limited pool of attentional resources; however, this pool can be made larger or smaller depending on one's arousal. Imagine a box (which Kahneman labels capacity) representing the amount of attention available at any given moment. The volume of this box is variable, as represented by a movable top (labeled arousal). A person's capacity of attention increases with arousal up to a point as we become more alert and focused, but too much arousal can interfere with performance and decrease attention. Imagine that the top of the box collapses somewhat, causing a decrease in the volume of the box. As any performer knows all too well, attention is available in varying amounts at different times, depending on motivation, level of anxiety, and alertness. The movable line dividing arousal and available capacity represents this changing resource pool.

Diminished arousal is an all-too-familiar phenomenon when students "go through the motions" of practicing without really giving their practice full attention. In this unmotivated state, arousal and capacity of attention are much less than the amount which accompanies an important performance. Performers may be aware of their increasing attentional capacity as they focus on their playing more intently and juggle the various performance tasks much more efficiently. Unfortunately, most musicians have also experienced negative arousal in performance when anxiety creates lapses in concentration or distracting physical manifestations.

According to Yerkes and Dodson's 1908 law, performance is best at intermediate levels of arousal and most performers would probably agree that too much arousal can interfere with performance. It is very hard to concentrate on subtle musical choices when physical symptoms such as shaking hands, a dry mouth, or an upset stomach interfere. Much has been written about performance anxiety and how to keep maximum attention available for performance tasks by reducing physical and mental disruptions. These various symptoms of anxiety or distractions are labeled "miscellaneous manifestations of arousal" in the model because they are outside influences which impact attention (i.e., capacity) by influencing arousal. Performers who take beta-blockers before a performance are attempting to moderate the negative impact of too much adrenaline or arousal.

Capacity can also be limited by fatigue. The day before a performance it is tempting to practice an extra hour or two. Students study all night, hoping their additional efforts will mean more points on the final exam. The trade-off, of course, is that physical and mental fatigue does diminish attention. Through experience we come to understand our bodies and respect this fact of nature.

Motivation is a key factor in maximizing attention. Note the intense concentration exhibited by a young person playing video games. This same person may seem unable to concentrate for more than a few minutes at school or at the piano lesson. One of the ways that music teachers try to capture student’s attention is by selecting music which is

appropriate for their age and interests of each pupil. By assigning interesting literature, we hope to increase the likelihood that students will be motivated to practice and to do so with concentration. When literature is uninteresting to students, it is likely that their capacity of attention during practice is diminished. Even when the music is satisfying to a student, however, it can be difficult to maintain interest throughout the weeks or months it may take to master a difficult piece. During a lesson, an observant teacher can tell when attention is waning. Teachers of very young children know how important it is to move from one task to another relatively quickly to keep attention. It takes maturity to focus attention on a project for long periods of time. But every teacher has seen examples of how an especially appealing assignment can suddenly increase the attention a student gives to the task at hand.

Allocation Policy

Another part of this model is called allocation policy. A funnel at the bottom of the "arousal/capacity" box allows information to flow into a smaller container (labeled allocation) which represents the way we allocate our attention. This central funnel is where a great deal of our teaching efforts are focused. Most performance activities require that we attend to various tasks at once and this means making decisions about how to allocate attention. One way we deal with the multiple tasks involved in music-making is through automatic processing, made possible by our previous experience and practice. For example, by practicing a passage using the same fingering over a period of several days or weeks and/or by preceding the study of a piece with technical exercises which use similar finger patterns, the fingering choices become so automatic that we do not need to pay attention to those decisions. As a matter of fact, automatic processing happens so easily with motor skills that we may find it almost impossible to change a bad fingering choice after only a few days of practice. A skillful teacher tries to guide a student through early practice stages so that more skills become automatic, leaving attention for more sophisticated levels of thinking and listening. We also try hard to minimize the need for "unlearning" so that our students will not have to devote attention to correcting mistakes.

Guided practice is very helpful when a new piece is assigned as teachers help students pay attention to various features of the music in a rational order. What we are doing is helping students make allocation decisions. We know that most students cannot concentrate on everything required to play a new piece perfectly at first sight, so we help them decide what to think about first. Teachers often begin by having students look for patterns which are familiar, so that those things which can most easily be automated are attended to first. For a keyboard student this might include identifying scales or chords, finding repeated rhythmic patterns, noticing common finger patterns and blocking important hand shapes. We help students break down a larger goal into realistic smaller goals or practice strategies. This is a way to try to help them allocate attention to the most important things first.

Successful lessons consider the limits of attention. A teacher would not usually give a child four or five directions at once, but would ask that attention be focused on one new

thing at a time. Sometimes one element might need to be sacrificed in order to attend to another. Pitch and rhythm can be separated, for example, if a student is not able to attend to both simultaneously. Practice can be slowed down, giving more time to listen and control movements. Pianists practice hands separately to focus on fingering choices. A great deal of wasted or inefficient practice is the result of trying to do more than one can actually pay attention to. Performances are littered with unnoticed errors, often because pianists do not break their work into manageable practice steps or because they try to go too fast too soon. Students often misjudge how much they can control (i.e., think about) at once. Discussing this allocation funnel is a way of reminding students of a very real human limitation and it can be enlightening to have them make conscious allocation decisions. Group lessons provide a perfect opportunity to discuss what one should think about during performance and to assess the results of a particular way of thinking.

Practice goals should also take allocation of attention into account. It might be helpful for students first to consider how many different things they must think about when playing a piece and then decide how many of those elements could be practiced separately (to give that element undivided attention). If done thoughtfully, practicing becomes a series of small challenges, building one element upon another. Students often need to be reminded to practice short sections rather than to play from beginning to end of a piece. Practicing one section several times in a row is much more likely to lead to automatic processing than the same number of repetitions of the whole piece. Maintaining attention for a series of short goals is usually more attainable than keeping maximum concentration for a long movement.

Momentary Intentions/Enduring Dispositions

Even with maximum capacity and allocation of attention, performances can be disrupted by outside forces. The Kahneman model calls these outside influences which compete for our attention "enduring dispositions." These include involuntary responses to sudden noises, light, or motion. No matter how hard one is concentrating on a task at hand, a loud noise is likely to be startling and demand attention. Loud coughing, a flash of a camera, or a sudden movement in the audience is hard not to notice when one is performing. An enduring disposition means just that - it is enduring - and people are programmed to react to these things because they may represent danger. These are instinctual reactions. But while we cannot help but notice such movements, noises and lights, we can learn to control our subsequent responses.

"Momentary intentions" also impact allocation of attention. If we have been thinking about a problem at work, it is unlikely that we will be able to turn those thoughts off suddenly to begin concentrated practice. Elementary school children often cannot focus on school work the day before a major holiday. Our personal lives and work pressures will affect how we are able to allocate attention for practice and performing. But within these limitations, we can control how we allocate our attention.

Monitoring Activities and Responses

As we are involved in a complicated task, it is essential to monitor our success/failure. We may decide that the task has exceeded our attention, so take some action to gain control or reduce the demands. For example, pianists can reduce demands on attention by slowing down or by practicing one part at a time. We try to reallocate attention by circling a fingering or a dynamic marking in the score, expecting that this visible sign will bring our attention to a problem spot. We notice when our concentration has lapsed and we take a short mental break or repeat an activity with a new goal in mind (thus, altering our allocation policy). This is an important part of the allocation model. Kahneman labels this control mechanism the "evaluation of demands on capacity" (represented by arrows at the bottom of the model).

As an outside observer, an experienced teacher can assist by helping to students to allocate attention to varying problems. Sometimes students hear mistakes, but cannot determine what is causing the problem. Practicing can be very frustrating under these circumstances. A skillful teacher can help students find the root of problems and can suggest when and how to reallocate attention to solve them. Slowing down or playing hands separately are solutions which even advanced pianists need to be reminded of occasionally. By asking leading questions, we can focus students' attention on problem areas or, if the student is performing successfully, on increasingly more complex issues.

The Kahneman model is a useful tool for diagnosing problems of attention and addressing the high demands which musical performance places on our cognitive system, although it is not the only model which cognitive psychologists have proposed. Another model of attention attributes interference to incompatible activities rather than insufficient capacity. If the same mechanism is needed to carry out two or more activities, a bottleneck may occur when those two things happen simultaneously. For example, we have difficulty listening to two conversations simultaneously and so we either block out one or shift our attention from one conversation to the other. The bottleneck (or filter) theories have been very influential in explaining sensory processing, but seem less relevant to complex musical processing. For while it is obvious that our attention is limited, it is also obvious that we can and do attend to many things simultaneously in musical performance.

The Kahneman model for attention illustrates the ways in which an individual can gain control or at least influence the attentional processes. It also helps to explain how the system can fail. Arousal can be reasonable, capacity high, and allocation of resources sensible; however, if the activities demanded of the system exceed the limits of attention for that individual, the performance will suffer. Learning to maximize attentional capacity and to allocate this attention efficiently is an important aspect of musical study. This model provides a common-sense way of thinking about how to structure practice to achieve the greatest result with the least frustration. Performance problems are usually problems in thinking. By putting the spotlight on how/what we are thinking when doing a particular task, we are more likely to identify potential problems and find solutions.

Sue Haug, Associate Professor of Music at Iowa State University, teaches piano and piano pedagogy and is head of the Department of Music. She has been on the ISU music faculty since 1975 and has served as department head since 1991. She holds undergraduate and masters degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the Doctor of Musical Arts from the University of Iowa. Dr. Haug performs regularly as soloist and accompanist. Most recently she and colleagues at ISU have developed (and toured with) an original music-drama on the life and music of Clara Schumann and a sequel, on the music of Johannes Brahms. She has also presented many lecture-recitals, including J.S. Bach's Goldberg Variations and the music and life of various composers such as Lili Boulanger, Edvard Grieg, Clara Wieck Schumann, Fanny Mendelssohn-Hensel, and Franz Liszt. Her research has focused most recently on sight-reading at the piano and cognitive psychology as it applies to the learning of music.

The Virtuoso Teacher

by Christopher Berg

My intention is not to present steps to good teaching. I don't talk about ways of approaching rhythm, interpretation, the importance of sight-reading, or how to get your students to practice. I am not writing about pedagogy in the traditional sense, the "what" you tell students to do. I want to explore the relationship between teacher and student in a way that will be helpful to teachers regardless of the specific content of their pedagogy. I want to offer teachers a different way of thinking about their work - a way that may help them and their students achieve their full artistic potential. That is the way of the true virtuoso.

Virtuoso teaching is more about helping students move towards conscious change than it is about getting them to do certain things. This advice is true for a teacher's development too. The best way to use this material is to read it over occasionally but not to try to "do" certain things. Rather, let the material sit with you, think about it, and one day an opportunity will present itself for you to respond to your students in a different way and for you to take a step forward into the unknown with them.

I once had a student who studied at a conservatory in Asia as a boy. During our work together I learned that his teacher would beat him whenever he made a mistake. The result was an adult who beat himself verbally whenever he erred. This created incredible tension within him, which only increased the chances that he would err and ensured that this cycle would never be broken.

Years later, while living in Switzerland, I met a retired Anglican priest. He told me that he enjoyed playing the piano but that he couldn't read music. I learned that he did have lessons as a youth, but every time he missed a note while reading music, his teacher would swat his hands with a ruler. The result was that he became "blind" to written music. Students will learn through violence but what they learn is *never* what their teachers intend. Pedagogical violence is more than physical abuse. Pedagogical violence ranges from physical abuse through manipulation, arrogance, rudeness, to the inability to really "see" or "know" the student - in short, any act that treats the student as an object. Anat Banial, a well-known teacher of the Feldenkrais Method, states that ". . . violence distorts functioning in some way."[1] I would add that students are usually unaware that their functioning has been distorted.

If these teachers could have known the destructive results of their pedagogy, would they have persisted? The likelihood is that the damage they caused would have been invisible to them. Either it would not manifest itself until years later, or the teacher would attribute its presence to the student's lack of talent or industry.

It is hard for me to imagine anyone teaching this way today. But I must ask, are there things we might be doing now that will have effects on our students we can neither imagine nor see? Are they learning hidden lessons from the *way* we are teaching them?

And if so, what can we do to understand our own teaching and how can we change it for the better?

We need to carry within us a model for good teaching. How can we approach the teacher/student relationship so that it will flourish? Some of us may have had the wonderful fortune to work with a teacher who taught us with compassion, respect, high standards, who could see what we had to offer, what we needed, and how we could best learn. But others among us most likely had teachers who were gifted in some areas and blind in others.

While musicians spend thousands of hours studying and practicing their instrument, their teaching skills are neglected and left to develop haphazardly. Mastery of an instrument or voice does not automatically make one a good teacher. Yet almost all musicians will find themselves teaching others in a one-on-one setting. It is disturbing to see creative and intelligent artists approach their teaching without the creativity, intellectual integrity, compassion, insight, and flexibility they often bring to their performances.

The private lesson is a unique phenomenon in education. The relationships teachers have with their students are long term, close, and intense. While some students will be trusting and vulnerable and others headstrong and defiant, they all are trying to learn something of paramount importance to their lives. But it often seems as if the students who succeed do so in spite of the way they are taught. Despite good intentions on behalf of teachers and players, their efforts at improving their work will be limited if they cannot better understand the process of teaching and learning, and the medium in which these things occur: the private lesson.

If the process remains invisible, it is immune to contemplation and change. Yet change is the means whereby we improve: if a thing cannot change, it cannot get better. How can our teaching change so that we are able to see beyond the confining walls of our own experiences as artist, teacher, and student?

How can we develop healthier and more positive relationships with our students so that the act of teaching does not interfere with act of learning? A healthy student/teacher relationship will increase the possibility of joyous learning and the teacher bears most of the responsibility for the health of this relationship. The following are offered as suggestions to serve as catalysts to your own imagination so that the lessons you give may emerge as works of art, as finely shaped as any piece you might perform. This is the way of true virtuoso teachers. I hope that you and your students will flourish in your studio and that you can help them become independent and creative learners.

Your Relationship With Your Students

Know your students. Talking to your students is one way to begin the lengthy, rewarding and necessary process of learning to know them. They will surprise you if you let them. Ask them questions. Listen to them. Why are they here? Find out what they think about what they are doing. They may be working under some false assumption that

is creating a problem. Find out their goals, how they think they can best reach them, and what they perceive to be their problems and their strengths. How do they best learn? Some will be able to respond to your suggestions instantly. Others will need more time to process and absorb the material. Do they seem to be convergent or divergent thinkers? (A convergent thinker tends to be able to generate or focus on only one solution to a problem while a divergent thinker can generate many possible solutions and then chose among them.) Is a student more verbal, aural, visual or kinesthetic? Some will flourish by hearing things. Others may prefer detailed explanations. Still others may learn more through a demonstration. Dominance in one area has little to do with their level of musical talent, only the way in which they learn best. Even if they are inarticulate about their work you will have learned something about them.

Your ability to know your students has everything to do with your openness and willingness to observe individual differences. You wouldn't necessarily force all of your students to move their hands the same way, or expect them to shape a phrase the same way, yet many teachers unknowingly require all of their students to learn in the same way, usually the way the teacher learned.

Unless you know your students, you will not be able to meet them where they are.

Meet your students where they are. Your work with your students needs to begin where the student is, not where you'd like them to be, where you might assume they are, or where some real or imagined syllabus says they should be. This means you must have cultivated the ability to discover and understand the root of problems and work to restore those roots to healthy function. It is the teacher who must discover and define the starting point of this work. The accuracy and integrity of this starting point has everything to do with the future of the student/teacher relationship. Unless you know where to meet your students, you will not be able to lead them into the unknown.

Lead them into the unknown. You job is to meet your students where they are and then lead them forward into the unknown. It is not to stand on the shore with them and say, "Swim across, by yourself, to that distant shore." Nor is it to perch yourself on that shore and say, "You must swim to where I am." Although these approaches often pass for good pedagogy, what they really do is relieve the teacher of the responsibility of guiding students over confusing, difficult, or even elementary terrain. There will be ample opportunity for your students to be on their own as they become more advanced. When it does become appropriate for students to become more independent and to take more responsibility for their learning, their success will depend on having acquired the necessary tools and direction.

Protect their passions. Students often lack insight into their work, or the depth that comes from experience, or a sense of artistic taste, or a sense of the connection between different areas. But one thing many of them do have is passion. This passion is precious and must be protected by teachers. It provides the energy that will help students through difficult times in their work. Off-handed dismissals of their ideas, likes and dislikes, are ways of extinguishing these passions.

Help the student learn to know about you. This means leading the student to an understanding of the language you use to teach. What terms do you use? What is important to you? How do you communicate? Bringing the student to an understanding of how you work is an important step, but remember, the lessons are not about you - they are about the student.

Remember that the lessons are about the student, not the teacher. Your job is to help your students learn, grow, and develop. It is not simply to present what you would do . . . they are not you. This does not mean that your experiences will not be relevant to them. They might be, especially your struggles and discoveries, but it helps to realize that you, as teacher and artist, exist with an entirely different sense of physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual sensitivities that have already been developed to a certain level.

Part of your job is to help your students refine and deepen the sensitivity and integrity of their abilities to respond to music on a physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual level and then to express those responses through performance in a way that is authentic and creative, rather than mannered, derivative, or manipulative. Expecting the student to be able to duplicate your positions, movements, sounds, phrases, musical ideas, or artistry, will only frustrate you both. Self-centered ability often forgets the paths that must be traversed.

Watch their faces. Students may not always be articulate about the impact your work is having on them, but you can almost always know by watching their faces. Your ability to do this is in inverse proportion to your own level of self-absorption.

Let students have their own experiences. Avoid setting up self-fulfilling prophecies for your students. This can happen, for example, when you present a new technique or concept prefaced by, "This is very difficult. It will take you years to master." If a student does express difficulty with an area of study, there is nothing wrong with letting him or her know that others have had the same experiences. Similarly, beware of saying something is easy. At times this will be helpful to students, especially when you can present new material in ways in which its simplicity reveals itself and can be grasped quickly by the student. If students experience overwhelming difficulty, however, their first response will be to assume that something is wrong with them. Sometimes it may be necessary to say that something is difficult or easy, but in these cases it is essential to explain why.

Understand the relationship between the student's experiences and your teaching. If your pacing is good, and your explanations clear and creative, students will have a better opportunity to learn with ease. If you move too fast and your explanations are confusing, the student will experience difficulties.

The more rigid and inflexible teachers are, the more alienated from the relationship students become. When a teacher is inflexible, or teaches a system and loses the ability to respond to individual students, that teacher's effectiveness in causing positive change is diminished. Inflexible here simply means predictable and unchanging in response -

whatever the situation. A consistent response of "Do what feels right" to problems, while clothed in the language of flexibility, becomes inflexible by nature of its unchangeability, its lack of direction, and the degree to which it is unable to address the real problem.

If the way you present information (tone, phrasing ideas, technical ideas) is always the same and does not take into account the context of where a student is, you may be doing the same thing with bits of information that unmusical students do with the notes, that is, to teach (or "play") them without regard to their context, deeper meaning, or how they relate to other "notes." This is not virtuosic pedagogy.

Cultivate a vision that explores the best of your student's potential. After I had been teaching for several years, I noticed that I would form within me an image, or impression, that contained the best of the student's potential. This image included information about repertoire, technique, musicianship, even performance. I began to notice that as their studies progressed, my students would have grown into that image. Since I did not tell them about it, I concluded that I was psychic. But that was not it. It was not until later I realized that my willingness and ability to hold the student's potential within me helped us both come closer to realizing it. You will be amazed at your students' abilities to grow into your vision of them, whether that vision is positive or negative. If you make assumptions that reduce a student, that student will find him or herself less able to develop freely. Your measuring of them fixes them and makes it more difficult for them to change.

Become aware of projection. Teachers and students regularly project elements of themselves or their past relationships with others onto one another. For example, a student may project onto his teacher aspects of his relationship with a parent. How the student relates to his teacher will then depend, in part, upon on the dynamics of this parental relationship. Reactions based on projection can take many forms, positive and negative. The student may react to his teacher with rebellion, unquestioned acquiescence or fear of authority. Or he may respond to his teacher with unearned respect, or an unquestioned and unproved assumption that the teacher's motivations have his best interests at heart, or that the teacher is wise.

Teachers also project things onto their students. A teacher who has disowned the role of his intuition in music making may respond negatively to a student with a highly developed intuitive side. Another teacher who has grown to believe that "thinking too much about things" will hinder her creativity may not be able to see clearly the gifts of a student who can and needs to think about what he is doing.

Teachers also project onto their students elements of their past selves, when they were students. Projection assures that the teacher will not be able to respond to the student as an individual.

Projection causes students and teachers to relate to one another with the weight of their respective pasts. It requires skill and psychological sophistication for teachers to understand this. Teachers must learn to recognize when a student's response to them has

more to do with the student's past experiences then the present. If you do not allow yourself to be drawn into a relationship with the student's past and you can respond to your students with an understanding of this phenomenon, your students will find less and less in you upon which they can project.

Even without your awareness, the effects of projection will eventually wear off, but with varying results. Teachers and students may become disappointed with each other as their idealized images of the other slip away. Or they can begin even more meaningful work as they learn to relate to one another as individuals.

Love your students. There is much to love in students: their openness and willingness to learn, their struggles to become unstuck, their trying, their inability to try at times, their passion, their fears. Understand, though, that this doesn't mean you need to have a relationship with them outside the studio, but if you are not able to love them, your ability to teach them will be mechanical.

Teaching And The Teacher's Role

Teach through positive movement. Students at all levels need to succeed. If you really know your students, you will be able to be provide them challenges that will be stimulating, while at the same time provide them with ways of successfully meeting those challenges. This is teaching through positive movement. If you do not know your students, you run the risk of giving them assignments that will teach them frustration and confusion. You can see this through your results. Over time, have your students progressed towards greater technical and artistic liberation, have they become more inhibited, or is there little perceptible change?

Don't confuse the types of teaching needed when you are presenting facts with when you are responding to the student's grasp of the facts. When it is necessary to present material for the first time, present it as an independent part of the lesson rather than as a response to the student - even if the need to go into the new material has arisen from the student's work. For example, when it becomes necessary to introduce a new technique, give some basic direction and advice (the facts) that can lead the student to its successful mastery. Later, after the student has had a chance to work with the material, you can respond in terms of his or her grasp of the facts.

If you ask students to do something for which they are not prepared and then respond to what they are *not* doing, you are teaching through negative movement. You can know the degree to which you do this by observing the number of statements you make to students that begin with the words "Do not . . . ."

This does not mean that you must pretend that everything is fine. It does mean that you must provide the student clearly defined means to achieve a clearly defined end. This is teaching through positive movement.

Good teaching means helping your students change the way they think rather than simply telling them what to do. While teaching may often consist of telling students what to do, it almost always involves helping them change the way they think. While it is folly to *tell* them what to think, you must provide them experiences and challenges that help their consciousness expand its current boundaries.

If you are not happy with the results you are getting, then maybe what *you* are doing needs to change. There is a time when a preoccupation with results is appropriate. But when there are important problems to be solved, it can be equally appropriate to examine the process and how it may need to change.

Albert Einstein once pointed out that it is impossible to solve a problem unless one can move to a higher level of consciousness from that at which the problem was created. This means that it is our *perception* of the problem and how we are attempting to solve it that need to change in order for us to be able to discover a solution. This calls for creative thinking. Problems are rarely solved without this fundamental change of insight. This change of insight allows us to change our process.

A change of consciousness rarely comes about through focusing exclusively on a desired result. It does come about by creatively exploring connections between different elements of the problem, or between things that do not initially appear to be connected. For example, suppose a student is not producing a good sound. Good teachers will quickly be able to discern whether the problem is that the student has not developed a concept of a good sound, or that he simply cannot reproduce what he hears in his inner ear, or both. But beyond this, creative thinking may reveal the real problem to be one of hand position, inhibited physical sensitivity, or even seating. Problems usually have simple solutions once one is willing to let their level of consciousness shift.

Know when to use the language of the means, and when to use the language of the ends. This is an especially divisive issue amongst artist-teachers. It comes down to knowing the difference between training and coaching, recognizing when one is needed and one is not, *and* being able to function in the space where the two overlap.

It is important to cultivate a series of fluid and creative responses based on where the student is and what he or she needs. In order for the student to become adept at recognizing the true cause of problems and then solve them, they must, over time, develop an understanding of the relationship between the means and the end. It is your ability to do this that will serve as a model.

If the only teaching you can offer a student is to evaluate his or her playing in terms of an end not yet reached, then you are like a doctor who can treat symptoms but not causes. Or if the only teaching you can offer is to define or demonstrate an end (a beautiful sound or melodic phrasing, for example), even if you present it with extraordinary eloquence and artistry, the student in need of training can only interpret and absorb your vision as process or means, which is what he or she needs. This is one of the main causes of the frustration and failure students experience. Conversely, if you have devoted your time to

discovering more efficient ways of teaching the means but have lost a vision of the end, you run the risk of involving the student in some meaningless mechanical activity.

A single-minded preoccupation with the end may cause teachers not to hear or be able to respond accurately to a student's questions or problems. Suppose someone asks, "How can I get to Venice?" and you respond with a description of Venice's beauty or show them pictures. You may have further inspired them to go, but you have not answered their question. Or suppose you say, "Venice is in Italy." You have given them some information but you still have not answered the question. Your answer can only lead them back to their original question: "Where in Italy is Venice and, again, how do I get there?" If you say, "Look at a map," or "You must find your own way," you have effectively devalued your role as teacher. Finally, suppose your answer is simply, "Go to Venice." Once again, you may think you have told them what to do, but you still have not really helped them. A more appropriate response might be "Where are you now?" or, "Oh, I see that you are in Berlin now," and then to explore ways of traveling from Berlin to Venice.

Each of these examples has its corollary in the world of music teaching. Good teaching does not offer students the *what* to do without the *how*. Good teaching is not circular and will never lead a student back to their original questions or problems. The path offered by master teachers will contain the seeds of the destination, *but information about the destination alone will only reveal knowledge of how to get there to those who have already been there*. Virtuoso teachers understand the implications of this statement. Those who are less fluent will be left wondering why their efforts and good intentions are not getting the results they expect. Your high standards mean nothing unless you can help a student get there.

The essential difference between training and coaching is that during training (or re-training), whatever area is under consideration must first be presented using a language that is primarily relevant to, or grows out of, the thing itself. For example, if you see the need to recommend a change in a student's positions or movements, either because what the student is currently doing is mechanically disadvantageous or damaging, or because you believe that a change will enhance certain musical qualities, you must cultivate a language that grows out of the thing to be changed, *not the result*. If you say something like, "You must hold the instrument in a way that's comfortable," or "You must move your fingers in a way that gives you a beautiful sound," you are saying things that are certainly true, but you have said *nothing* about how the student is to get there. It will be better to have cultivated the ability to discuss posture and movement on their own terms. Madeline Bruser writes in The Art of Practicing, "Every musician needs a working knowledge of the body mechanics involved in using his or her instrument. Posture and movement have enormous impact on one's ability to control an instrument and on how music sounds."[2] This is good training.

Later it will be right to discuss the relationship between positioning and movement to sound, or the relationship between an increased sensitivity to physical tension to an increased freedom of phrasing. This is being able to function in the space where training

and coaching overlap.

Finally, when it is time to focus exclusively on musical and performance concerns, teachers must ensure that their students can respond freely and effortlessly to suggestions and demonstrations. This is good coaching.

Understand the difference between mysteries that need to be solved, and other deeper mysteries that are not meant to be solved, but are meant to be lived in. Art is mysterious. There are some mysteries that are not meant to be solved, but are meant to be lived in, worked in, expressed, and tasted. But these mysteries can only be reached through other mysteries - mysteries that must solved if we are to progress. While master artists may only work within the former mysteries and mistake the latter for the former, virtuoso teachers understand the differences between the two.

Technique from music or music from technique? For advanced artists there is a seamless integration between technique and music: a musical thought is inseparable from its execution. Students, on the other hand, often have the perception of technique and music as separate entities that then grow towards one another over time. If you focus only on the music (the desired result) expecting technique to take care of itself, you will have split music off from technique as much as if you spoke only of technique. If you believe that "technique comes from the music" is an inexorable truth that applies to students at all levels, does that mean that seating or hand position can be explained in terms of phrasing? The unstated corollary here is that technical problems are the result of faulty or undeveloped musical ideas. In reality, the reverse is more likely true. During training, if technique is not working well, how can teachers know whether musical problems are the result of undeveloped musicianship, undeveloped technique, or a combination of the two? Madeline Bruser writes, "Regardless of talent, musical imagination, and exhortations from teachers to play with a more velvet or penetrating tone, if the body isn't working efficiently, the music that comes out will be only a fraction of what lives inside the person."[3] It is possible to have developed a technique that is not physically sensitive to the minute variations of force, pressure, or movement that are necessary to express musical refinements, regardless of what one's musical intentions are. A host of effective pedagogical tools, as well as solutions to problems, will remain hidden unless you have cultivated the ability to understand the difference between the means and the ends.

When a student is trying to learn a new technique, he or she must consider changes in positioning and movement, and possess a desire to make those changes habitual. This process may often be accompanied by an increased awareness of musical values. But when new habits are being formed, the brain is working under what is known as "conscious control," a learning stage where changes must be consciously monitored and corrected. This is its purpose: to allow us the opportunity to develop proper positioning and movements before habits are developed. When the cerebellum, which is responsible for habitual movement, finally does take over, a different system of control is in place: we no longer have to think consciously about what we are doing. If habits are efficient (and remember, the cerebellum can make ineffective or counter-productive technique a habit as easily as it can good technique) we can come closer to musical freedom.[4] When a

musical phrase is played with artistry, technique must be habitual and transparent. The belief in musicality as a panacea for technical problems leads one to the faulty expectation that musical vision can magically establish good habits.

That advanced players constantly make adjustments and refinements to their technique according to their musical ideas often leads them to assume that this process is valid for students in need of training or re-training. This assumption creates what is in effect a pedagogical hoax in serious music teaching, or at the very least, leads to bad teaching.

If you ask a student to give up something, you must replace it with something better, even if that something can only be a promise right now. During re-training it may be necessary for students to stop playing music for a period so they can focus on developing a more effective and responsive technique. Or they may need to work on easier pieces while they learn a new way of studying or approaching interpretation. Although it may be pedagogically responsible to ask the students to give up their old way of doing things, it can be difficult and disorienting for the student. This makes it imperative for you to use all of your artistry, eloquence, and patience to explain to the student why changes are needed and how these changes can lead them to a higher level of musicianship.

Understand the nature of improvement. How does one actually improve? How does the process of improvement work? And if we understand it better, can we improve at a faster rate?

1. Improvement means change. A repetition of what we are already doing offers no opportunity for improvement. Change occurs through choices we make based on our increased sensitivity to movement, tension, our awareness of proper use, and how these relate to sound.

2. Change is more effective when it occurs at those points of greatest leverage. This is where the art of good teaching resides. Good teachers have the sensitivity, openness, insight, and humility to discover those places in a student's musical understanding, technique, practice habits, or attitude that are blocking the development of future abilities.

3. The points of greatest leverage usually rest within a student's faulty grasp of the fundamentals or the student's default assumptions. A default assumption is one that is so deeply rooted in the student's psyche that it defies identification. These seemingly basic and elementary assumptions remain unchallenged or unquestioned. Habits and beliefs based upon those assumptions stubbornly resist change.

Understand the difference between mindful repetition and rote learning. While repetition is important - movements must be executed thousands of times before a player can attain competence - rote learning teaches the student to use one mindless response. Harvard psychologist Ellen J. Langer writes, " . . . when people overlearn a task so that they can perform it by rote, the individual steps that make up the skill come together in larger and larger units. As a consequence, the smaller components of the activity are essentially lost, yet it is by adjusting and varying these pieces that we can improve our

performance."[5] The subtle details of a movement become consumed by the larger movement and are thus unavailable for change. If flexibility and mindfulness are learned from the beginning, it will be much easier for a student to make both small and large scale changes in their playing. This flexibility and mindfulness often pass for talent by teachers who believe that talent cannot be taught.

The more mindful a student's practice, the more he or she will be able to trust that they have assimilated the details, and that during performance they can focus on musical values and release technical concerns. Students who have learned only by rote, often have the unsettling experience of becoming hyper-aware of what they are doing on stage. This is usually because things are not working and they are trying to make adjustments *during* the performance. This throws them back into the conscious control part of the brain, which functions more slowly than cerebellum. Performance then becomes erratic and the experience unpleasant for the student.

Understand the difference between information, knowledge, and wisdom. All good teachers must have in their possession a superior set of facts. This is information that has the potential to become transformed into knowledge through the student's experiences. Outstanding teachers provide their students with the means for this alchemy. Without these facts and guidance in their use, a student's movement towards knowledge will be impossible.

Wisdom comes more slowly - if it comes at all - usually after years of working with and developing knowledge. Virtuoso teachers understand that the most elegant expression of their acquired artistic wisdom and creativity can only appear as difficult or obscure information to students. A student's attempt to mimic the outward appearance of this wisdom will be mannered, contrived, unsatisfying, inauthentic, and probably meaningless.

Learn to recognize when it is time to teach a student on a different level. As a student's mastery of facts grows and deepens, it will be necessary to begin to respond to their work on different levels. ("Facts" can be any basic information: how to use the body, the notes of a piece, a concept of phrasing or sound, or an understanding of the form and structure of a piece.) In initial work it may be important just to recognize and respond to the student's understanding of the facts. Later, as the student works with the facts, these facts may become transformed into knowledge - something of intrinsic value and deep meaning the student feels he or she has discovered. At this point, the way you communicate with your students will need to change, but you are the one who needs to recognize this. As students work more with the knowledge they have earned, they may begin to transfer their knowledge and understanding of one area to another. Without this important step of transference, students will be able neither to solve problems on their own nor make important independent discoveries. As students become more fluent with the process of transference, their work can become more independent, creative, and eventually, an expression of artistic wisdom. Your ability to communicate with your students in a language that reflects where they are, while expressing where they need to go, will help them in this process.

The way in which you understand this process can either help your students move forward, or keep them stuck. Through their questions you can know if a student has begun to demonstrate mastery of a set of facts and seems ready to begin to transform them into knowledge. If you have mistakenly decided they still don't grasp them and insist on spending lesson time reviewing them repeatedly, you will hold your student back and frustrate him or her. Conversely, if a student's mastery of the facts is not good, or if they are trying to use inappropriate or erroneous facts, yet you insist they be able to work with them in a piece as if they were knowledge, you will be asking the student to do something for which he or she is not prepared. This most often occurs when students are assigned repertoire that is too difficult for them. It is a pedagogical non-sequitur for a student working on hand position or tone production to be assigned a difficult piece and for the teacher to respond to the student's problems with advanced musical coaching instead of appropriate training.

Know when it is necessary to change the facts. In their hunger for specific information, students and teachers will often cling to tired bromides about positioning, movement, or even interpretation. These irrelevant facts may have once been important but more thought and insight need to be applied to discover a new set of facts relevant and helpful to more advanced students.

For example, while training students it is important to give them clear guidelines about positioning and movement that are immediately relevant to them. There is no purpose in exploring all the numerous deviations and modifications to these guidelines right now - that would only confuse or overwhelm the student. But teachers often don't say later: "Remember when we talked about moving the fingers this way? Well, now you are ready for the next step and the rules have changed." This is one of the problems with method books: they present basic information that is usually relevant to beginners, but they never recognize the need to modify that information to accommodate the needs of students as they progress. If you look around at your fellow teachers you may notice that most of them are able to succeed best with one type of student. Your ability to recognize that changes are needed in the information you offer as students progress is the one skill that will allow you to successfully teach students at all levels.

Understand the difference between directives and principles. A directive is a simple statement such as "Keep your wrist straight." A principle is the soil out of which these directives grow: "Muscles work best when aligned with their joints." Directives are necessary and can help a student apply principles, but they are often presented in an inflexible or even capricious way. A deep knowledge of underlying principles will liberate students by helping them understand the *why* of your teaching, as well as provide them with a clear idea of what to return to on the many occasions when it is necessary to deviate from these principles.

Directives need to be fluid and may change from student to student. Principles are fixed. If you mistake a directive for a principle you may end up offering a student something that is inappropriate for them *and* you will not have given them means discover why.

Avoid tossing out negative directives ("Don't bend your wrist.") unless you have clearly explained the principles behind them.

Do not use "artistry" as an excuse for vagueness. If you consistently respond to students' questions or problems by saying, "There are no answers," or "You must find your own way," or "If you think of the music, things will take care of themselves," you are not offering any direction or guidance, even though these things may be true at some levels. Try to determine if this is a way for you to avoid the work of discovering and expressing a heretofore hidden truth. Vagueness, often masquerading as artistic intuition, can feel as rigid and unfair to students as inflexible pedantry.

Know when to get out of the way. When a student is working with a new technique, musical concept, or the relationship between the two, there is a period of gestation where new things are taken in, absorbed, and consolidated before they manifest themselves outwardly. Learn to recognize and honor this process. If you start to make corrections or add new material too soon, the student will become overwhelmed and may experience some internal crises and confusion. Your ability to "get out of the way" is a reflection of the measure of trust you have in your students.

Don't forget that you are a student too. If you remain open, your students will have much to teach you. They probably will never be aware of their role as your teacher, but they will offer you many lessons that can help you grow as a teacher. Your ability to continue learning will have a profound impact on your ability to teach.

Practical Matters

Clearly define the direction of the lessons. Framing your lessons with an expression of direction will help students understand the context of your work together. It will help if you can say something like, "This is where you are, this is where we need to go, and this is how we are going to get there." Understand, though, that this direction is always subject to change based on your increasing ability to know your students and to understand the real cause of problems.

When listening to the student perform his or her prepared work, listen attentively without interruption. This is the student's time. Do not do (or even think of) other things while the student is playing. Let the student have the experience of your clear focus on his or her work. Listen creatively, not only with your ears but with your entire being. When it comes time to respond to the student's work, be specific in the context of where the student is.

Be aware of the relationship between where the student is and the appropriate goals for that student. Lauren Sosniak, who has studied the backgrounds of successful concert pianists, found that "the pianists learned to work toward more difficult and distant goals as they learned to care about achieving those goals."6 The far-off goal of playing in Carnegie Hall *did not* serve as the stimulus for the day-to-day work of solving problems.

Rather, it was the ability to succeed at the day-to-day goals that opened up the possibility of caring about and formulating longer-term goals. As a student's facility, musical understanding, and ability to succeed expand, so will their goals.

When giving assignments, be specific. Say, "Memorize this piece and pay attention to the movement of the thumb as we discussed," or "Study the phrasing of the first section and pay special attention to the melody and the way harmonic tension builds and resolves." For advanced students, this may not be necessary - they will have enough experience and direction to know what to do. But students in need of training need specific guidance. They do not yet have the skills and experience needed to join the means with the ends. Avoid comments like "Look at this piece," or worse, simply not giving an assignment under they assumption that your students will know what to do.

Students need to know five things as they work. It is the teacher's responsibility to help their students:

1. know *what* to do (their objective) for each task or assignment
2. know *why* this is important
3. know *how* to best go about doing it
4. know how to *evaluate* what they are doing to see whether they have succeeded (the 5. ability to apply objective criteria)
6. know *what* to change and *how* to change if they see that they are not successful

Ask students to mirror back to you important ideas and assignments to ensure they understand. Asking whether they understand may not be enough. Ask students to reflect back to you the main points of the lesson before they leave your studio. You can dispense with this once the student can do this consistently.

Honor questions and problems. This means more than just asking, "Do you have any questions?" although this is important too. The way in which you respond to students' questions and problems has everything to do with creating an atmosphere conducive to or inhibiting to true learning. Do you always dismiss them with the same response ("It will work itself out.") or have you cultivated an environment of creative exploration and discovery? Can you answer questions using a language that helps explore the real problem, or does your answer confuse more than clarify? At times it may be necessary to respond, "I don't know, let's see what we can find out," or "That should be clear once we get to . . . ", but if these are your consistent responses, your students will eventually stop asking questions. Consider it a harbinger of the lack of trust your students have in you when they stop asking questions.

Remember that although a question can indicate confusion or frustration (and not always about the subject of the question), it may also indicate curiosity and creativity. Your students' questions have the potential to be important lessons for you.

Beneath the veneer of myriad details that serve to distract us, there are only three causes of problems between student and teacher, at least when it comes to presenting

information and learning how to use and process it. It is important not to get these mixed up:

- The student is not capable of understanding what you are offering at the moment. This usually means you have asked the student to do something for which he or she is not prepared. The solution may lie in the answer to the following, "What does this student need to know (or be able to do) to understand this and succeed?" (Where is the point of greatest leverage?) This could be anything from cultivating better study habits, to working on producing a better sound, to studying harmony, or to working on some easier pieces.
- The student may not be able to get the results you want because he or she is doing what you are asking. Does your explanation *actually prevent* what it is you are looking for? This can happen when your explanation of *how* to get what you want is, in reality, not aligned with *what* you want. This happens when teachers do not have a clear idea of how to teach the means. The real problem is often invisible to teachers because they are the ones who have created it. For example, a student with a faulty technique may not be physically sensitive to the subtle movements required to execute certain technical refinements, such as a delicate chord voicing. A teacher who only connects this inability with the student's level of musical understanding will spend lesson time trying to solve the wrong problem (or trying to solve problems in the wrong sequence), which will only make matters worse.
- The student is not paying attention to what you have been offering, is distracted, or is unable to practice. There are numerous causes for these, ranging from events unrelated to the lesson (concerns about other classes, relationship problems, and many more) to causes that grow out of the lesson (frustration, demoralization, confusion, and more).

Avoid global judgments about the student's work. A global judgment is a general condemnation of the student's work. These comments do not offer students anything specific from which they can discern a direction for change.

If you make statements like, "That was chaotic," the student can be left with a vague feeling of disapproval and many questions: "What was chaotic? Every note? Was it my technique, my musical ideas? Was it because I was nervous? If I knew what to do differently, and how to do it, wouldn't I? What criteria render this chaotic? What and how do I need to change?"

Students will be more open to your message if you can phrase things in term of your responses and criteria you have already established. This direct and discerning approach will increase the possibility of meaningful learning: "This sounds chaotic to me. Here's why: the melody comes out clearly sometimes but then disappears. You draw my attention to the bass line and then it's gone. Let's work on these problems."

If you are in the habit of consistently responding to students' work with a judgmental attitude, you will only add to the power of the student's own internal negative and judgmental voice. What are needed are ways to express discerning and intelligent

responses to the student's work that are honest, compassionate, respectful, and non-threatening. If your students trust you, your honest responses to their work will always be meaningful.

Good teaching also means reflecting back to the student the good things: "I loved the way you built that phrase and then backed off. You really took me someplace," or, "Your sound is great here!" When making a positive comment, keep the tone and do not qualify it by saying: "That was good *but*. . . . ." Your good intentions will disappear into the conjunction "but." Many teachers think good teaching is always letting the student know what's wrong or where their performances fall short. It's not. Help your students see what is good about their work.

Contemplate the purpose of perfection. A healthy attitude towards error and perfection is among the most valuable gifts you can give your students. If you convince your students that they are capable of flawlessness in their work in the hopes it will cultivate higher standards, you will end up with unhappy and frustrated students. Such an approach is often counter-productive. Frank R. Wilson, writing about juggling, says "Intuitively one might suppose that practice pays off by making movements more and more precise: you learn to toss the balls to exactly the same height all the time. That, however, turns out to be a terrible mistake, because this kind of practicing inevitably leads to serious limitations in a juggler's development. An inflexible routine built on the expectation of a long sequence of perfect tosses would be extremely vulnerable to deviations in the behavior of the object being juggled."[7] In other words, one purpose of practicing should be to develop the freedom to respond confidently when things *aren't* going perfectly. Madeline Bruser writes about the hidden consequences of the expectation of perfection: "The fear of not being perfect drives musician to overpractice without joy."[8] Your students will become much more relaxed, as both musicians and persons, if they can see that you have the courage to be imperfect. The true value of perfection lies in its ability to keep us humble.

When coaching technique or music, use a variety of approaches, and understand the benefits and limitations that inhere in each. Sometimes it is necessary to explain why you are asking your students to do something. Learn to explain the reasons behind your advice. This may be harmonic analysis, an explanation of muscle function, or a discussion of Baroque dance music. Sometimes simply sing the phrase in question, or ask the student to sing it. At other times it may be good to describe verbally what you want. And at other times it may be good to demonstrate the phrase on the instrument. Sometimes it is helpful to present a non-verbal demonstration of a passage, followed by a verbal description, and then a return to the non-verbal demonstration. Try not to get locked into only one approach, this will help you more quickly discover what your students respond to.

For example, if the only way you can teach interpretation is to sing or play a phrase and then ask the student to duplicate it, you may be helping a student who has not yet learned to make musical decisions and who needs a model. But this approach may not work as well with a student who is a divergent thinker, that is, a student who is capable of and

enjoys generating many possibilities and exploring them. In this case, verbally exploring the meaning of a phrase, or talking about what is important, will not limit the student to only one solution, yet will still provide direction. These students will usually do better when they are given choices and allowed and encouraged to make their own decisions. In this case, recognize your role in providing a framework within which their decisions need to be made. If a student then makes a decision that obscures rather than enhances the meaning of a piece, then there is the opportunity for deeper discussion and demonstration. The latter approach, however, may not be successful for students who are convergent thinkers or students who become paralyzed when confronted with too many options.

Be clear about the purpose of exercises. Once musicians reach a level of technical proficiency, the need to practice certain exercises may disappear. As a result, many teachers, thinking they have discovered a universal rather than a personal truth, fail to recognize the value of exercises for their students. A common explanation is, "Those patterns don't occur in music!" But that is not the point. The real value of exercises lies in the opportunity they provide students to solve problems by applying concepts and principles in a concentrated way. Once this has been done, some exercises may naturally lose relevance. Without an understanding of what ideas or principles need to be studied, exercises will not hold any value or benefit for a student.

Let students know both your expectations and their responsibilities. Students need to hear from you what you expect from them. Be clear about this. It is entirely appropriate for you to base a student's responsibility on where he or she is. Part of your work is to get them to the place where their responsibilities become broader and more inclusive. Again, this depends on your ability to truly know your students. If you do not let them know their responsibilities, your attempts to let them know that they are not doing their job will be disingenuous.

Make the consequences clear if students fail to meet their responsibilities. It is unfair for you to mete out consequences about which you have not informed the student. These consequences must never be stated as a threat, but simply as one action growing out of another: "In order for you to give your recital next semester, your program must be memorized by the end of this term."

When students are not doing their job, let them know. Be direct about this. You need to let them know that they're not living up to their part of the implied student/teacher contract. There may be a number of reasons for this, but if you have made assignments clear and confirmed their understanding, it is appropriate for you to have the expectation that they complete their work. Their failure to do so may be an indication that you're not doing your job as well as you could, they're not being honest with you, or that there is a deeper physical, technical, or personal problem.

The Integrity Of The Lesson

Rudeness is not the same as having high standards. Expressing yourself destructively through abusive, sarcastic, mean-spirited, or arrogant comments is not an expression of

high standards, but merely an expression of your inability to understand the true causes of problems or to express yourself creatively. Teaching through positive movement does not mean ignoring problems or the student's responsibilities. It *does* mean that standards can be very high because they can be clearly defined. A student's failure to meet them can then be understood and addressed with precision.

Students usually have great respect for their teachers and are not likely to challenge or question behavior that would be unacceptable in other relationships. I see two reasons or causes for intimidating and unethical behavior. The first grows out of the teacher's inability to get his or her point across in a way that is meaningful to the student. The energy of this frustration is not directed towards change, but rather, towards a more emphatic re-statement of material. This cycle can be repeated endlessly and, much like raising your voice to a deaf person, it will never work. It is better to learn a new way of communication. The second cause of much disrespectful behavior is that it is the way the teacher was taught. Teachers will unconsciously pass this on to their students, in part so they can believe that the way they were taught wasn't so bad.

Good teaching is not manipulative. Manipulation is "tricking" students into doing something. Good teaching is helping them change so they can do things out of their own free will and creativity. Be sensitive to the spontaneous emergence of students' ideas rather than trying to control or manipulate their ideas.

Do not talk about other students in a negative way. This is an important ethical issue. If you are in the habit of complaining about current or former students to another student, it will erode that student's trust in you. Students will have no choice but to think, "I wonder what (s)he is saying about me when I'm not there?" Students need to have trust in the confidentiality of the student/teacher relationship.

Do not introduce the comments of an absent third party into the lesson. This technique is usually used by teachers to express something negative without their having to take responsibility for it. ("Professor Johnson doesn't think your trills are very good.") The problem here is that the student is left with a vague feeling of inadequacy and disapproval, yet there is no one to whom the student can respond to ask for clarification

Avoid global judgments of other performers. If you have a consistent pattern of comments to your students that implies that no one is good enough, you need to be aware of the dangers. Your students will not be able to be themselves when you are present and they will learn this attitude from you. This is one of the most pernicious and hidden causes of performance anxiety. If a musician listens to a performance with a judgmental and destructively critical attitude, his or her psyche will have little choice but to assume that others attend his or her performances with the same attitude. This can create unnecessary internal anxiety that may not manifest itself until the musician is on stage.

The Final Lesson

Finally, learn to let go. There will be a time when it is right for your students to leave you. If you can acknowledge this with grace and encouragement, it will be among the most important lessons you can teach your students. Your chances for extraordinary teaching will be increased if your motivation is always to try to do what is right for the student.

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1. Frank R. Wilson, *The Hand*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1998), 252.

2. Madeline Bruser, *The Art of Practicing*, (New York: Bell Tower, 1998), 64.

3. Bruser, 64.

4. For further discussion of habits and the role of the central nervous system in practicing, see Christopher Berg, *Classic Guitar Technique: Process and Essence*, (Pacific, MO: Mel Bay Publications, Inc. 1997), 18-23.

5. Ellen J. Langer, *The Power of Mindful Learning*, (Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc.), 17-18.

6. Quoted in Wilson, 281.

7. Wilson, 109.

8. Bruser, 19.

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Learning Styles and Piano Teaching

by Susanna Garcia

As teachers, we often find ourselves amazed by a student's strengths. Just as often, though, we may be baffled by their shortcomings. Our favorite strategies work wonders with some but fail miserably with others, and may leave us at a loss regarding a course of action. We may even conclude that a particular student can't learn certain skills. On many occasions, I have heard teachers make remarks such as: "My student makes up songs all the time but can't read a note of music," or, "My student can sight read anything but can't memorize at all." On some level, these conclusions admit to a failure of both teaching and learning. Acceptance of the notion that a student can succeed at some facets of music making but not at others may inadvertently deny that student total music literacy. More problematic may be the fact that only certain types of students are successful in our studios. These are the ones who happen to respond to the manner in which we present information or behave in the lesson as we would have. With other types of learners, we may feel frustrated by our lack of success.

These difficult experiences are not unique to piano teachers but shared by all who teach. Through learning styles research, teachers are finding ways to turn these failures into successes. Many educators believe that a better understanding of how students obtain, process and internalize information will result in more effective and efficient teaching. This management of information by a student is referred to as the student's learning style. There are many theories of learning style, mostly familiar to educators, but largely unknown to music teachers. Such theories have considered analytical vs. global learning styles, personality types, multiple intelligences, and learning modalities. This article focuses on modality theory and provides help for teachers who wish to identify a student's learning style and adapt their teaching to better match the student's needs.[1]

What are learning styles or modalities?

A modality is any of the sensory channels through which an individual receives and retains information. These sensory channels are visual, auditory, and tactile/kinesthetic. Everyone has a dominant modality, but in time learns to integrate the other modalities. Adults routinely transfer information from one modality to another. In children, however, the dominant modality is the most efficient channel to receive and retain information. Students often show a secondary modality which is excellent in reinforcing information.

VISUAL: A visual student actually thinks in images and must convert information into pictures. Information is best presented through visual means, by reading and writing or looking at pictures. These students tend to be successful in school because testing is done in a visual format. They will conform to classroom standards such as sitting quietly, writing neatly and organizing material well. They are neat, meticulous and like order. As a pianist, this student is often the one who can sight - read well, but if you asked her to sing the melody that she just played, she just might not be able to. This student might

play very accurately, but might have difficulty playing expressively or may have trouble memorizing her music.

AUDITORY: An auditory person learns best by hearing or listening, then repeating what they have heard. They are often talkative and may hum and subvocalize. They are easily distracted by sounds. They may have difficulty writing. In their dress, they may not match, although they may think that they do. As a piano student, the auditory student may be the one who can play just about anything by ear, but is stymied by reading even the simplest music. He would prefer to guess at what comes next rather than read it. This student may change notes or rhythms in a piece, preferring his improved version to the composer's.

TACTILE/KINESTHETIC: Tactile/kinesthetic students learn through their body or sense of touch. They learn best by doing, thus whole body movement is the preferred method. These students benefit by a game format using materials that they may manipulate. They often enjoy dance or athletics. The kinesthetic student may appear disorganized or restless, often lacking a sense of the consequences of their actions. These students may have difficulty in traditional classroom settings and are sometimes assumed to have learning disabilities. You might recognize the constant fidgeter or the one who can't keep from playing while you are speaking. These students delight in playing the same piece over and over again, never seeming to tire of it.

Teaching through modality strengths capitalizes on individual differences and results in an increased rate of learning. The teacher must be able to determine each student's dominant modality and learn strategies for presenting information through this modality. Consideration of the student's dominant modality demands flexibility in the teacher's habits of presentation. Teachers, however, tend to teach through their own dominant learning mode. In language reading, auditory teachers tend to prefer phonics. Montessori methods are favored by kinesthetics. Visuals prefer approaches that depend on recognition of words and their configuration such as in whole language learning.[2] As piano teachers, it is reasonable to expect that we would also teach through our most comfortable learning style, approaching the introduction of new material in the same way with every student. A visual teacher might insist that a student read through a new piece before hearing it. An auditory teacher might teach more by ear, with far less emphasis placed on deciphering notation. A kinesthetic teacher might be inclined to demonstrate a great deal and teach by rote. We probably can see ourselves in these descriptions and we can see our students in them as well. When our teaching style and the student's learning style do not match, frustration sets in with both teacher and student and effective learning is thwarted.

What does the research say about learning styles?

Learning style research is extensive, especially in language reading. Generally, studies are done by administering a test such as the Learning Style Inventory (LSI) which identifies the student's preferred and secondary modality. The LSI has been used to examine and compare the styles of underachievers, students in alternative education,

students with disabilities, the gifted, good and poor readers, good and poor students in math, students with high and low self-concept, and students with strong hemispheric inclinations. It has been consistently found that **whenever students were taught through their identified styles, statistically significant increases occurred in achievement**. In addition, students evidenced improved attitudes and reduced numbers of discipline problems. Further gains were made when the material was reinforced through the student's secondary learning style.[3]

Additionally, research by Marie Carbo and Kenneth and Rita Dunn, indicates that beginning readers are usually tactile/kinesthetic. In their studies, it was indicated that at age 6 or 7, children are, in this order, kinesthetic/tactile, visual, then auditory.[4] The visual mode grows stronger as children get older as they adjust to language reading. But when a child is not able to integrate the visual modality, they are frequently unsuccessful in school. It is Carbo and the Dunn's contention that such students are often treated as learning disabled, when it is really a matter of a mismatch in learning styles.[5]

Research specifically related to music learning is limited, but one study of third graders confirmed that students learned simple rhythms in less time and with fewer errors through their preferred modality.[6] (Persellin, 1988) In another study, first graders scored significantly lower in recall of rhythmic patterns when the patters were presented visually only. (Persellin, 1992) The first graders seemed to quickly lose interest or become frustrated using only visual iconic stimulation. As expected, the number of students showing preference for the visual mode increased each year until the fifth grade. As the students matured, visual icons were helpful in allowing the subjects to recall patterns.[7] In this study, it was noted that first graders benefited from singing games, moving, and listening to music and suggested that teachers may want to consider spending more of their time teaching young children rhythm patterns through auditory and kinesthetic means prior to teaching notation. Notation may be introduced to children when they have had many auditory and kinesthetic experiences in music. Introducing notation after an aural vocabulary has been acquired may give the written note or icon more meaning. Such approaches may be seen in the methods of Carl Orff and Emile Jaques-Dalcroze.

How does a teacher evaluate learning styles?

Resources for learning style testing are many and range from sophisticated testing to simple observation.

The Learning Styles Inventory determines not only the student's modality preferences, but also his or her preference regarding the amount of available light, the necessity of food and drink consumption, the temperature of the room, the formality of the setting, or the benefit of quiet vs. music during studying.[8] It asks multiple choice questions such as:

I can follow directions most easily if the teacher

a. says them aloud

b. writes them on the board

c. shows us how.

It also asks questions in a true-false format such as "My room or desk is usually disorganized." A disadvantage of this test is its biased format. The student must either read the question (visual) or be read the question (aural).

Another test, the Barbe-Swassing Test of Learning Modalities is administered without the necessity of reading.[9] The test format requires manipulation of objects.

For something simpler and less expensive, the internet has many sites providing a wealth of information about learning styles, as well as short questionnaires that are immediately scored on-line. These web sites allow one to determine the dominant and the secondary learning styles of the student quite easily. If you search the term "learning styles" on any search engine, you will come up with a wealth of sites but I have included a few direct links to such on-line tests:

http://www.hcc.hawaii.edu/intranet/committees/FacDevCom/guidebk/teachtip/vark.htm

http://www.howtolearn.com/personal.html

http://snow.utoronto.ca/Learn2/mod3/miinventory.html

http://snow.utoronto.ca/Learn2/resources/styletests.html

You might also use personal observations to determine learning styles, being careful to avoid bias. Observable characteristics of an auditory preference may include the student's ability to follow short verbal directions, to repeat simple sentences of eight to twelve words, or to sound out words and still retain the storyline. Contrast this with the ability to follow written or drawn directions, place pictures in proper story sequence, or discriminate between letters or words that look alike such as "fill/full; spot/stop. This would indicate a visual preference. Tactile/kinesthetic characteristics might include good handwriting, interest in drawing and crafts, and good physical coordination.

Learning style preferences can be seen in the musical behavior of our students (Table 1). Subsequent to several years of testing and observation, I have constructed a list of observable characteristics of piano students. In these descriptions, the natural inclinations of students with a single highly dominant modality preference can be seen. This list is intended to help the teacher identify the student's preferences. Armed with this knowledge, the teacher can use the student's natural strengths in planning teaching strategies which will address both weak and strong areas. This is the fundamental tenet of learning styles theory. Rather than assuming, for example, that a highly aural student will never become an excellent reader, a teacher sensitive to learning styles will engage the aural mode in the teaching of reading.

Table 1. Learning Styles and Characteristics of Piano Students

VISUAL	AUDITORY	KINESTHETIC/TACTILE
Good reader. Plays with note accuracy.	Heavy reliance on playing by ear. Might guess at notes rather than figure them out. Frequently changes notes in the piece because they "sound better".	Plays by feel. Is willing to repeat a pattern over to "get it in the fingers". May have a difficult time relating to notation presented in a conventional way
Dislikes playing by ear.	Often makes up songs or likes to improvise. Enjoys "picking out" songs.	Loves to keep playing the songs that have already been learned.
Sometimes demonstrates a lack of sensitivity to the sound quality or to phrasing. Might not be able to sing the melody that was just played. Might hold the pedal down inappropriately. May play mechanically.	Generally expressive player, careful about how it is sounding.	Will play with great enthusiasm. How it feels to play may be more important than how it is actually sounding. May "bang" things out.
Has trouble memorizing.	Memorizes well, can fake if necessary.	Memorizes easily, but tactually.
Lacks attention to fingering. May have difficulty learning a piece because of lack of consistent fingering.	May be more willing to work out different fingerings if the new fingerings affect the quality of the sound.	once it is in the fingers, is virtually impossible to change.
Can focus on details. Prefers to start from the beginning and work to the end, gradually mastering each section.	Likes to get a general sense of the whole piece, often with inaccuracies, before refining.	Likes to get a general sense of the whole piece, often with inaccuracies, before refining.
May have awkward technique due to over-reliance on the printed score. Generally unaware of how the body "feels".	Generally willing to work on technique.	Is generally comfortable at the keyboard. Is willing to work on technique if you are not trying to "unlearn" something. generally very aware of how the body "feels".
Learns best by following written instructions and reading music. Enjoys workbooks, written theory and "drill and practice" software.	Learns best through demonstration and imitation. Tape recording music and instructions may be most effective. Aural application of information is the best for them.	Learns best through demonstration and repetition. Games and movement activities are often necessary for understanding. This student often responds well to a chord approach, where they can "see and feel" the structures on the keyboard.

Teaching To A Student's Learning Style

Modifying the presentation of a concept to suit the student's learning style is really quite simple. It doesn't require much other than sensitivity to the student's needs and the ability to be flexible. It is important to remember that the way we present information, while seeming to be the best, most logical way, may not be the best for an individual student. Awareness of modality preferences will enlarge our own repertoire of teaching strategies and may result in comprehensive musicianship for all our students. Here are three examples of teaching through the learning styles.

In teaching steps and skips, effective teaching results in a student's learning to read, hear, sing and play those intervals, a comprehensive approach requiring mastery of visual, aural, and kinesthetic tasks. When a student is visual, the most effective first step is presentation of the visual icon (the lines and spaces) in conjunction with the physical configuration on the keyboard. This should be followed by reinforcement through the student's secondary modality, then finally, the remaining one. An aural student may be first approached by listening to the intervals and matching them in singing games. If the student's secondary modality is kinesthetic, playing the intervals at the keyboard while continuing to sing could be the next step. Later, the student can be introduced to the notation of the intervals. A kinesthetic student would benefit from activities such as walking on an enlarged floor keyboard and/or a floor staff. At the keyboard, playing the intervals using all the different fingering combinations allows the student to learn the "feel" of them. Notation and aural discrimination should follow these activities in the order of the student's secondary and weakest modality.

Understanding, executing and reading rhythms can be approached in much the same way. A visual student will retain information best when it is accompanied by a visual representation. If you are teaching the counting of the rhythmic pattern "two-eighths," the student will be most successful if she can see the icon while learning to execute the rhythm. For the aural student, listening to a piece that uses the rhythm while counting aloud will increase understanding and retention. For this learner, the visual representation of the rhythm should follow, not precede this type of activity. Clapping games or movement exercises incorporating the rhythmic pattern are a necessity for the kinesthetic student. Dalcroze exercises are excellent for large motor interpretation of rhythmic patterns. In these exercises, student perform the rhythm with their whole body, walking the rhythmic pattern while clapping the beat. This is always done with musical accompaniment and the student is often called upon to make choices based on aural and visual stimulation, making it an excellent method for all three types of learners.[10]

It is important to reiterate that we should not accept our students' weaknesses as unalterable. Teaching through modality strengths actually enables us to effectively address these. As a further example, I will describe this approach in three "classic" situations.

When working with a visual student who plays mechanically, you may begin with a scan of the score for information given visually such as intervals, notes, rhythms. Reading through the score is often what a visual student likes to do as an initial activity. We can use this visual strength to help him play more expressively. For example, during the visual scan, have the student locate the melody. This can then be isolated, played at the piano, then sung or worked on for phrasing, noting at this time any visual cues which focus on expression. These interpretive markings or dynamics could lead to a discussion of the mood of the piece using highly visual imagery. The student may be asked to draw a picture that represents the mood of the piece. Visual students also enjoy diagramming the musical shape of phrases. I have seen these activities transform the performance of visual students who may need help connecting with the emotional qualities of the music.

When teaching an aural student who may have difficulty with reading, model the sound by playing for them, asking them to listen for familiar figures such as scales, triadic patterns or frequently recurring rhythms. The student may then be asked to play, by ear, the identified figures. This can be followed by locating the figures in the score, a meaningful action connecting the notation to their familiar world of sound. Other scores can be examined for the same figures, emphasizing the notational aspects or a now familiar sound. A song using such figures can be improvised or composed, then notated. For aural students, sound must always precede notation. Exercises which ask students to discriminate between differing sounds, then matching those sounds with the written icon are effective techniques to improve reading skills.

There are many ways to work with kinesthetic students who might have trouble focusing during the initial reading through of a new piece. Rote presentation of the various elements of a piece is highly effective. (In this discussion, rote does not refer to simple mimicry, but to informed imitation.) Physical repetition of these small units is vital. Later, when the student sees the score, the motor aspects will have been already rehearsed. Activities at the piano should be alternated with whole body movement activities. Walking and clapping the notated rhythms prior to seeing them is important and allows the student to later associate the printed music with a kinesthetic activity. These activities get the student off the bench and will cut down on fidgeting. For kinesthetic students who may "bang," moving or acting out the musical sense of the piece will encourage musicality with more sensitivity to phrasing, dynamics, and tempo.

10Emile Jaques-Dalcroze was a Swiss musician and composer who developed a method of music education called Eurhythmics. A Dalcroze education comprises the basic elements of music: rhythm, dynamics, tone and form. The system is based on the kinesthetic sense. For practical applications of Dalcroze exercises, see Findlay and Abramson.

Ten Tips For Teaching Through Learning Styles

In general these simple suggestions offer a starting point for any teacher interested in modifying their approach to embrace a wider range of teaching styles.[11]

1. Evaluate the materials you currently use for their learning style bias.

2. Order, design and create needed materials.

3. Exclude poorly written and/or dull music. Use high interest repertoire, especially expressive music which conveys clear moods, tells stories, or describes familiar experiences.

4. Instruct more through modeling rather than verbal directions.

5. Provide recordings of repertoire being learned.

6. Simplify directions and provide concrete examples.

7. When appropriate, de-emphasize reading skills that require a highly analytic style.

8. When appropriate, eliminate/abbreviate skill work and replace with movement activities.

9. Consider exploring computer software to provide additional high interest activities for all learners.

10. Incorporate rote teaching techniques into every lesson.

Teaching with sensitivity to learning styles is effective and gratifying, and the benefits are many. The three modalities serve as reminders of the many aspects of good musicianship. For the teacher, learning styles theory creates a framework for consideration of each student's learning patterns resulting in improved analytic and diagnostic skills. It creates opportunities for more students to achieve a higher degree of musical success through its varied approaches. Finally, it rejuvenates as we constantly search for the best, most effective means to reach our students.

Notes

1. Learning styles or modalities in this article are those set forth by educational theorists W.B. Barbe and Raymond Swassing and further developed by Marie Carbo and Kenneth and Rita Dunn.

2. Barbe, Swassing, p. 14.

3. Carbo, Dunn, Dunn, pp. 254-257.

4. Ibid., p. 55.

5. Ibid., p. 49.

6. Persellin and Pierce (Persellin, 1988) This study examined the relationship between preference for learning modality and the learning and short-term retention of musical rhythm patterns. Fifty-five third graders completed the Swassing Barbe Modality Index. These students were also presented two-measure rhythm patterns through their visual, auditory, and kinesthetic modalities. Analysis indicated that children who preferred on the modality index one modality over others tended to prefer that same modality when learning simple musical rhythms.

7. Persellin (Persellin, 1992) The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of three rhythm presentation modalities on the recall of rhythm patterns. Seventy first graders, 70 third graders, and 70 fifth graders were tested either visually, auditorily, kinesthetically, or with combinations of these modalities. Each child was asked to memorize and clap six rhythm patterns of increasing difficulty, which were presented either iconically (visually), by playing a resonator bell (auditorily), by patting the child's hand (kinesthetically), or through combinations of these treatments. Grade level was significant ($p < .0001$). Test scores from students who were presented rhythm patterns using a multimodality presentation indicate that students were not confused by the multisensory input. The first grade visual test results were significantly lower ($p < .05$) than results with older children. These findings suggest that the incorporation of learning modalities into music teaching methods could result in more efficient learning of rhythm patterns. Although the visual method for first graders was not as effective as other presentations, older children were successful with all combinations of teaching presentations.

8. This test, listed in the bibliography, can be purchased for about $50.00.

9. It is priced at $160.00.

10. Emile Jaques-Dalcroze was a Swiss musician and composer who developed a method of music education called Eurhythmics. A Dalcroze education comprises the basic elements of music: rhythm, dynamics, tone and form. The system is based on the kinesthetic sense. For practical applications of Dalcroze exercises, see Findlay and Abramson.

11. Adapted from Carbo, Dunn and Dunn, pp. 110-116.

Resources

Web Sites of Interest:

http://www.learningstyles.net/ The website for the International Learning Styles Network at The Center for the Study of Learning and Teaching Styles at St. John's University.

http://www.howtolearn.com/personal.html Contains a personal learning styles inventory.

http://www.ldpride.net/learningstyles.MI.htm The site for the Island Adult Development Association - a registered non-profit association for adults with learning disabilities and attention deficit disorder. It contains information on learning styles and multiple intelligences. Links to a test based on Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences.

http://www.hcc.hawaii.edu/intranet/committees/FacDevCom/guidebk/teachtip/teachtip.htm Faculty Development page for Honolulu Community College. From learning styles to stress management to dealing with problem students, this web site is a fantastic resource for all kinds of teaching tips.

http://snow.utoronto.ca/Learn2/introll.html A nice general information website designed for learners with disabilities.

http://www.dalcrozeusa.org/ The website for the Dalcroze Society of America. An excellent resource for anyone interested in additional reading or attending a workshop.

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Tests

Learning Styles Inventory for grades 3-12 (Must send off for scoring) Learning Styles Inventory - primary version. (Can be scored by the user)

Contact Learning Styles Network 8000 Utopia Parkway Jamaica, N.Y. 11439 (718) 990-6161 ($45 + $10 shipping)

Modality Kit by Barbe and Swassing. (Zaner-Bloser) $160. (800-421-3018)

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The "Building Blocks of Reading": Suggestions for Developing Sight Reading Skills in Beginning Level College Piano Classes

by Laura Beauchamp

Introduction

Those of us who teach beginning group piano for undergraduate music majors face quite a challenge. Our classes include students who are expected to become functioning pianists in a very short time, but who have little or no piano background. Further, many of these students will have to demonstrate a predetermined level of competence before being granted their degrees. Preparing beginning piano students to pass their proficiency exams is a big responsibility.

In my experience, when music majors don't pass their piano requirements it is usually because of poor reading skills. Students in this predicament are often quite adept on their primary instrument, but at the piano quite the opposite is true. Weak readers can often play scales, arpeggios and chord progressions adequately, but their performances of repertoire and other reading-oriented requirements exhibit some all-too-familiar characteristics:

- Inability to maintain a five-finger position
- Hesitations before shifts and/or chord changes
- Constant moving of the eyes back and forth from music to the keyboard, checking to see if the hands are in the right place. (Some students will do this even when an example stays entirely within one five-finger position)
- Lack of understanding and application of basic fingering principles

In an effort to develop better reading skills in my beginning level classes, I have become more diligent with the way I approach sight-reading and technique from the very first class period. Although much of what I've been doing is not terribly unique, the difference has been the way I now breakdown reading into its basic components, the amount of class time I devote to it, and the types of assignments I give.

The "Building Blocks" of Reading Piano Music

Few musicians would dispute the fact that a keyboard score is more complex than music for most other instruments. If beginning pianists are going to attain an acceptable degree of fluency reading at the piano, it is essential that we allow enough time for them to develop security with basic concepts and skills related to reading. I call these the "building blocks."

The remainder of this article presents teaching approaches, class activities, supplementary materials and practice assignments for the five building blocks outlined below. For ease of discussion, the building blocks are numbered and will be treated sequentially, however

this is not meant to imply a suggested teaching order, as most of these areas are best dealt with simultaneously.

Obviously, many important issues could be written about with respect to class piano, but this discussion will be limited to the development of reading skills. For the most part, the students being considered are music majors at the beginning level.

Building Block No. 1: Grand Staff Knowledge. Many non-piano music majors lack fluency in one (or both) clefs and need a crash course on the grand staff.

The Basic Approach: Learn the *Line*, Not the Name!

This strategy is for students with no prior piano reading experience, or those in need of a quick review. The amount of time spent on it will depend on the students. In my experience this approach also works well with private students, especially teenagers and adults. Briefly, the goal is to develop an automatic physical response to the keyboard location of notes on the staff.

Once students have memorized the names of the piano keys, I tell them that when reading piano music from the grand staff, it's more important to know *where* a note is than *what* a note is - knowing the letter name of a note doesn't help you if you play it in the wrong octave. For dramatic effect I usually show them a busy-looking page from a Beethoven sonata and tell them that pianists simply don't have *time* to pay attention to individual note names. Fluent readers of complex piano music "sense" where the notes are, and over time their eyes, ears and hands have become familiar with most of the patterns in front of them.

I explain to students that the lines on the staff represent every other white key on a piano keyboard. If they know where the bottom line of each clef is, they can easily negotiate their way around the grand staff without worrying about letter names.

Referring to each clef as a "range" of notes on either side of middle C, we locate and memorize the first line of each clef on the keyboard. The bass clef range usually needs more attention, so when finding low G we call it "G for the ground floor." The treble clef range is not usually a problem, as most students remember the E above middle C.

Once students know where the line notes are, finding the spaces is easy because they're in between the lines. Also, ledger lines are not problematic when staff reading is approached in this manner, because you simply "add a line" above or below a clef range.

To ensure that my students are secure with this I do a lot of in-class drill, assign independent flashcard practice, and depending on the students, request that they work on one of two software programs: *Music Ace*, by Harmonic Vision, and *Keyboard Kapers*, by Electronic Courseware Systems (ECS).

Suggested Class Activities

One of my first drills is to have the class "play the lines" of each clef range up and down until they are oriented to its position on the keyboard. For variety, we will call out line numbers, say "bottom, next-to-bottom, middle, next-to-top, top," or say the note names. Initially, I play along through the lab system while students are on headphones so they can check accuracy and self-correct when necessary. I gradually extend the range in these keyboard drills to include at least two ledger lines above and below each clef range.

After the students can find the grand staff notes on the *keyboard*, I use the Visualizer to do a lot of staff-based note reading drills. (Depending on their situation, teachers without this piece of equipment can using large flashcards, overheads, or even notes written on the blackboard.) I work first with notes in each clef range separately, then choose notes randomly from the grand staff.

Listed below are three basic note drills I do in class:

- **Name Only.** Students name the notes as they appear on the Visualizer staff. (I move very quickly.) My weaker students have told me this helped them keep up in the first few weeks of theory class, where fluency with grand staff was assumed.
- **Name and Play.** This reinforces both the name and the location of grand staff notes. I turn the volume down on my keyboard so the class can see the displayed notes but not hear them. This prevents weak readers from relying on their ear to find the notes.
- **Play Only.** This further reinforces note location and prepares students for the reality of reading piano music - you can't be fluent if you have to think of a note's name before playing it.

Over time I gradually decrease the amount of time each note is displayed on the Visualizer, and speed up the appearance of the next note.

Suggested Practice Assignments

Depending on the needs of the students, I assign some combination of the following:

- Timed flashcard drills using a basic set of cards that includes ledger lines
- Homemade note-playing drill sheets. These gradually increase in difficulty, and will include fingering, accidentals, intervals, and short melodic patterns.
- Selected lessons and games in *Music Ace*.
- Selected drills in *Keyboard Kapers*.

(To give credit where it is due, my approach to teaching line and space recognition has been heavily influenced by *Kelly Kirby Sight Reading*, a short book that was part of the *Kelly Kirby Kindergarten Method* published by The Frederick Harris Music Company in the 1950s.)

Building Block No. 2: Security Within Five Finger Positions. This includes both reading and technique. In my classes five finger security is addressed through ear training activities and technique drills, and by playing countless sight reading and transposition examples.

While students are gaining security with the grand staff, they should also be developing their ability to read, hear and play five-finger oriented reading examples.
My first goal in this area is that students become totally comfortable with intervals through a fifth. I like to give their hands and ears a lot of experience playing and recognizing intervals before they have to read them from the staff.

Suggested Pre-Reading Interval Drills

- **Playbacks.** This activity is best done through the headphones, first hands alone, then hands together. With everyone in a five-finger position, I give the starting note, then play one or more notes to be played back. I initially start out with patterns of repeated notes and 2nds, then gradually introduce 3rds, then 5ths, and finally 4ths. Over time I increase the length of the patterns from a few notes to one or two measures. For variety I'll have the students sing the solfege of the pattern while playing it back. Rhythms are usually quite basic.
- **Interval Chains.** After naming the starting note, I'll call out a series of intervals for the students to play (keeping them within a 5-finger position), then ask them to name the last note they played. If they all say the same note, I know they're on track; if not, I repeat the example or do a similar one. I *insist* students do this activity without looking at their hands.
- **Solfege Singing.** With everyone oriented to the tonic after a short vocal warm-up, I have the class put their hands in a five-finger position and close their eyes. As I name each interval in a series the students are to sing the notes in solfege while "ghost playing" on the piano.

Intervallic Reading from the Grand Staff

In my classes I use a lot of supplementary reading material, especially in the first semester when students spend most of their time in five-finger positions. My sources include multiple copies of sight reading books and beginning methods, overhead transparencies of selected examples, and handouts of various patterns and melodies. Early on the reading and transposition examples I choose have very basic rhythms, easy key signatures, and feature a lot of parallel or similar motion. I introduce hands together coordination into the sight reading with carefully selected examples, being sure to find music that has more than blocked chords in the left hand.

Suggestions for Sight Reading in Class

To help my students develop a sight reading "routine" I do a lot of reading *with* them in class, which allows me to guide them through important preparatory steps. When looking at an example together, we first tap and count it until secure, especially if there are rhythmic complexities or coordination challenges. We then discuss the music in terms of

its melodic direction and shape. I usually ask questions like the following:

- Do you see scales or triads?
- What is the general direction of the notes?
- The example seems to be in G major but what five-finger position(s) do you play in? (The position and the key signature are not always the same...)
- Can you identify and locate the starting note and finger in each hand?

Before playing, I often have students "ghost play" while naming intervals or counting outloud, and we frequently sight-sing melodies, especially for harmonization examples. When students are ready to play the example I usually set the tempo and play along so they can hear me through their headphones. I do this for several reasons: it communicates to them what is an appropriate sight reading tempo, it allows them to assess their accuracy, and it forces them to keep going.

As long as a realistic tempo is selected, teachers can use MIDI recordings to provide the performance model while students sight read. The advantage to using disks is that the teacher can get up and circulate the room while the students play, observing things like posture, hand position and fingering that are often hard to see from the console.

While playing sight reading examples, I have students either name intervals, sing solfege or count out loud. Depending on the technical difficulty of the excerpt they will transpose it to several keys, and as with other reading and technique drills, I discourage them from looking down at their hands. To prevent this common problem I frequently have students sight read from overhead transparencies. Besides preventing "rubbernecking," overheads serve another purpose-they improve posture because students have to sit up and hold their heads higher than usual to read the music!

Suggestions for Assessing Sight Reading Progress In Class

In our curriculum students are always given 5-10 minutes to practice sight reading examples before playing them for quizzes, tests and exams. To prepare for these events, I do a lot of timed activities in class. I give the students several minutes to look over the music, and when the time has run out I have them record themselves while sight reading. (Most laboratory keyboards have some sort of record feature.) They can only make one recording - retakes are not allowed.

To reinforce the importance of choosing an appropriate sight reading tempo I will often give the count off and play the examples along with the students while they are recording. Almost without fail, they tell me my tempo was slower than the one they were using!

To assess progress and provide individual feedback on a recorded sight reading example, I will ask the class to work on their own for a few minutes so I can use the lab controller to listen to their recordings with them one at a time. While this can be time-consuming with a large group, I value the one-on-one contact with each student.

To assess the class's sight reading without taking valuable class time, I tell everyone to leave their recorded performances in their keyboard's memory for the remainder of the

class. After everyone has left I quickly go around the lab and listen to the recordings.

Most lab controllers allow teachers to listen to more than one student. Some of the newer systems can even be set to "scroll" through a class; they will give the teacher several seconds on each person while working their way through the lab automatically. With sight reading, listening to the students *while* they play helps teachers monitor a class's progress and make on-the-spot decisions about the types of instructions to give, or which example to use next. When "eavesdropping" on a class like this teachers should make sure that the students continue to hear just themselves and not everyone else, which would be too distracting.

Building Block No. 3: Security with Keyboard Topography. Weak readers often look down at the keyboard when shifting positions because they don't gauge distances well; they also tend to be uncomfortable playing in and around the black keys. In short, their hands haven't memorized the geographic "feel" of the keyboard.

Because there is so much physical memory involved, developing security with keyboard topography takes consistent practice over an extended period of time. In my experience it is rare for beginning students to instinctively feel their way around a keyboard. What follows are suggestions for helping students develop security with the geography of the instrument.

The Black Keys are Your Friends...

In his book and video *Mastering Piano Technique* (Amadeus Press) Seymour Fink advocates an orientation toward middle D as a means of centering oneself at the piano. Orienting in this manner makes students aware of the bilateral symmetry of the keyboard. As Fink puts it, "C may be the center of the tonal system, but D is the center of the keyboard."

This highly insightful approach to keyboard topography involves playing in contrary motion from middle D. One of Fink's first exercises is to have students play Ds and G-sharps with finger 3, moving away from center of the keyboard and back in. This promotes lateral motion of the upper arm and encourages students to play "in on the black keys."

Another exercise involves playing a chromatic scale in contrary motion starting on D, which makes the mirrored relationship of black and white keys in each hand immediately apparent. Expanding on this idea, students can practice chromatic major thirds in contrary motion from middle D, and even root position triads. (Be careful with triads: one hand plays major, the other minor.)

Fink's exercises are easily presented in a private or group teaching situation. In my experience they help students become comfortable with the location of white and black keys, and with the "highs and lows" of the keyboard.

Eyes Closed Drills with Triad Shapes

I like to reinforce both triad knowledge and keyboard topography by assigning students to practice playing and naming major triads up and down the keyboard chromatically - C, D-flat, D, etc. Eventually we will do the same for minor, augmented and diminished triads. Students are to do this with their eyes closed, hands alone, then hands together.

After first and second inversions have been introduced, I have students play these shapes chromatically as well, again with eyes closed. Inversions will present more of a challenge obviously, but they pay off in the long run, especially in terms of left hand security.

Helping Students Shift Position Comfortably

Beginning piano students need help learning how to shift from one hand position to another. Naturally, the more developed their awareness of keyboard topography is, the better off they will be. In my classes we talk about "anchor notes" and "creeping" when dealing with shifts of position. These are just informal ways of describing finger substitutions and contractions.

To illustrate with a specific example, an early lead sheet my students play is the first example on p. 72 of *Alfred's Group Piano for Adults, Book 1.* The root position left hand chords used are F, E-flat and C.

To teach them how to shift from F to E-flat, I have them play the F chord and "feel" the B-flat underneath finger 2 with their eyes closed. B-flat becomes the "anchor note" that will help them "creep" to the E-flat chord without looking at their hands. In this shift, finger 2 will be replaced by the thumb. Once the thumb is on B-flat, their hands should be able to feel the E-flat triad.

For the shift from the E-flat chord to the C chord the process is similar; the anchor note is G, first played by finger 3, then by the thumb.

When the left hand shifts from a C chord to an F chord at the end, the the anchor note is F. I remind the students that when playing a C chord, finger 2 rests on F. By quickly contracting their hand they can replace finger 2 with finger 5, form a new five-finger position and be ready to play the F chord.

I make sure students can do shifts like these back and forth with their eyes closed before assigning hands together practice on examples of this type.

Building Block No. 4: Security with Basic Accompaniment Patterns. Weak readers often have trouble playing examples that feature broken chords, Alberti bass, split bass, and waltz patterns. The problem is often technique, not reading. Beginning piano students should be given considerable experience with these basic accompaniment styles.

Once students have learned the basic primary chord progression (I-IV-V) folk songs can be very useful for presenting basic left hand accompaniment patterns - blocked chords, broken chords, waltz style, alberti bass, and split bass. To develop their left hand technique and improve hands together coordination, I have students harmonize, transpose and improvise with numerous folk melodies, most of which are in five-finger positions.

When a song is familiar to the class I usually assign it by ear; if the students don't know it well enough I provide a notated version.

Folk songs are also a great way to develop sight reading and transposition skills. Over time I have compiled a series of examples that I keep handy to reinforce and supplement what is being presented in the textbook. For example, when waltz style accompaniment patterns appear for the first time I will pull out my file of waltz style reading excerpts to use in class or assign for extra practice.

I like to have many versions of a single folk song, in different keys. I notate the melody as a lead sheet with Roman numerals and as a lead sheet with letter symbols, and I'll also notate several versions of it on the grand staff, each with a different accompaniment style in the left hand.

With many notation software packages available now, teachers can easily compile a series of professional-looking examples that will suit their needs.

Building Block No. 5: Understanding of Basic Fingering Principles. Weak readers often get "stuck" because they don't naturally apply basic fingering principles: five finger groupings, thumb crossings, extensions, contractions, substitutions.

Personally, I think it is easier to teach fingering to students who have never played the piano before. It is usually the self-taught players and those who quit after a year or two of childhood lessons who have the hardest time breaking their old habits. Because they don't apply basic fingering principles, these students' performances of reading-oriented piano requirements are often weaker than those of the total beginners.

Fingering becomes more of an issue when the repertoire and reading examples starts to move out of five finger positions. At this stage I remind the class of two important principles usually adhered to by publishers of educational piano music:

- Absence of a finger number means maintain the previous five-finger position.
- Presence of a new finger number implies something different: a shift of position, a scale crossing, an extension, or a contraction.

As each new fingering issue occurs in the text I discuss its implications and make sure students circle important finger numbers on their music. I also have them write in the name of the fingering principle being used so they will begin developing a vocabulary with which to discuss elements of a piano score.

The "Stop Routine"

A teaching strategy I use in dealing with fingering and topography issues as well as certain practice steps is something I call the "stop routine." If a new repertoire piece or reading example has something that needs special attention, I tell the class that we will be doing the stop routine as we read through it, which means "pay attention or you'll miss something." (In a lab situation its sometimes hard to prevent the quicker students from ignoring you because they assume everything is easy, but I try to establish early on that when it comes to the stop routine, I expect everyone in the class to listen carefully and

follow my instructions.)

Basically, the stop routine goes something like this: after any necessary preparatory steps, we begin to play. When we arrive at the spot right before the "complication" I say "Stop." The students freeze in position while we discuss what's happening in the score and what they will have to do. I give them a moment to explore the fingering issue and find the next note and then I'll say something like, "OK, have we all got finger 2 on that B-flat?" If enough heads nod, I'll give a "Ready, Go" and we continue playing. We will repeat this process for each issue that comes up as we work our way through the music. Sometimes I'll tell the students to play a shift or a crossover 5 or 10 times while we are in "stop mode" so they will remember it when practicing on their own.

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Teaching Adults: the Rewards and the Challenges

by Ramona Kime Graessle

One of the significant trends affecting music educators in this decade is that adults are living longer, retiring earlier, and maintaining healthier lives. There has also been a growing shift from a linear life plan - one that reserves education for the young, work for the middle aged, and leisure for the elderly - to a blended life plan - one that blends education, work, and leisure at all points throughout life (Cross). As a result, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of participants in adult education.

For piano teachers, this growth in adult learners provides the potential to increase income by tapping another segment of the population. Teaching adults can provide the opportunity to develop rewarding relationships and friendships, and the desire and motivation of adult students can be energizing for teachers. Adult also students benefit from the relationship. In addition to fulfilling what is often a life-long dream to play the piano, studying music may help relieve stress and, for retired adults, can fulfill intellectual, physical, and social needs no longer found in the workplace.

The concept of andragogy

Malcolm Knowles, one of most widely known and respected scholars in adult education, has developed theories on adult learning. In addition to his important writings on the subject, Knowles suggests that the term "andragogy," as opposed to the term "pedagogy," be used when referring to the teaching of adults, emphasizing the difference between teaching adults and teaching children. "Pedagogy" is a Greek word made up of the stem *paid*, meaning "child," and *agogus*, meaning "teacher of," the literal translation being "teacher of children." Knowles feels that the term "andragogy," with its prefix from the stem *andr*, meaning "man," is a more appropriate term. (Elinor Lenz feels that, since *andr* refers to man literally as "male," the term "anthropagogy," with the stem *anthr* referring to "humankind," would be even more appropriate.)

CHARACTERISTICS OF ADULT LEARNERS

Learning abilities of adults

While many potential adult students feel that they are "too old to learn," studies have shown that intelligence doesn't diminish with age, although the rate of learning may slow down. In the end, adults tend to learn more thoroughly than do children, and they retain the knowledge longer. Recent research suggests that factors other than age have more effect on adults' ability to learn (Long) such as the learner's ability to choose his or her own pace, the home environment, quality of health and diet, and the amount and date of prior education. Slower progress by an adult often indicates a more methodical approach to learning, rather than a decline of abilities (Knowles).

Effects of physical aging on the learning process

Physical aging can have an effect on learning (Cross) such as the deterioration of eyesight and hearing. Most eyesight problems, though, can be easily remedied with bifocals or special reading glasses and better lighting directly on the music. Hearing problems can obviously affect piano lessons, both in hearing the music and in communication between student and teacher. As with eye problems, however, most hearing problems can be corrected. A frustration for many older adult students is that their psycho-motor skills often are not at level of their cognitive skills. They know what they are supposed to play, but their fingers don't always follow through with the desired result.

Goals of adult students

Adults are highly motivated to learn; they come to music because they want to, not because a parent is requiring piano lessons. They also often have greater self-discipline, drive, and enthusiasm. Adults come to piano lessons with developed work habits, and their goals are different than those of children (or rather of the children's parents!). Adults usually don't have dreams of playing in Carnegie Hall but rather are playing more for their own enjoyment.

Adult students' own frustrations

In spite of adult students' enthusiasm, they are often more insecure, more self-conscious, and especially fear making mistakes. Adults often lack confidence in their ability to learn, especially if they have been away from formal education for a long time. Adults who already have had exposure to many musical experiences may get frustrated if they can't reach their own standards. They may lack patience when their physical skills aren't at level of their cognitive skills. Sometimes life experiences can hinder the learning process such as poor learning in past music lessons that developed into bad habits. Adults also have many different roles and competing jobs; time can become a big issue, especially for working adults.

USING CONCEPTS FROM ANDRAGOGY IN TEACHING ADULTS

Sharing responsibility for learning with the adult student

Because adults learn differently than children, Knowles feels strongly that there also has to be a difference in the way teachers teach adult students. One of the primary concepts of andragogy is that learning is a joint process between student and teacher rather than one of teacher control. It clearly becomes a give and take relationship between two adults who negotiate, collaborate, and share responsibilities and decisions. It is important to set goals together; together the teacher and student can select music, set the pace, evaluate achievements, and even decide when a piece is "finished."

Creating a supportive learning environment

Because adults usually begin piano lessons with some amount of apprehension and a fear that they're "too old to learn," it becomes even more important to create a pleasant and comfortable learning environment suitable for them. Adults need help in overcoming their insecurities, and they need much praise and encouragement. It is important to help them recognize even their smallest accomplishments and to help them realize that mistakes are a normal part of learning. (I would like to insert here that many of the concepts of good andragogy should also be considered good pedagogy for those working with children. All students, regardless of age, need praise and encouragement and a supportive environment for learning!)

Being flexible in lesson times

A seemingly minor adjustment in teaching adults, but one that can have a great importance for the adult, is the flexibility of the teacher in setting lesson times. While lesson times for adults can often be arranged during the day for retired students and for adults with a flexible work schedule, non-retired adults will often need evening or weekend times, or a lesson time over the lunch hour. Adults often have family or job responsibilities which require an occasional adjustment to the normal lesson time, and some adults choose to take lessons on a biweekly schedule. These all require flexibility on the part of the teacher to adapt to the needs of the adult student.

Adding a social component

Adding a social component to lessons can be important to adults and has become a very important part of my studio. One of my students' favorite activities is our bimonthly "Adult Student Gathering" (the word "recital" was too intimidating for my students!). We meet at students' houses for a few hours on Sunday afternoons, and everyone brings *hors d'oeuvres* to share. It helps adult students when they realize that they aren't the only beginning adult piano student. I don't require students to play, but they all do, albeit reluctantly at first! Students can also choose to be "background" music to conversation, so that the focus is not on them, but eventually students become comfortable with others listening to them perform. As my adult students have gotten to know each other, they've become less afraid of performing, and they are wonderfully supportive and encouraging of each other.

Choosing appropriate music

Choosing materials appropriate for adult students seems like an obvious part of teaching adults, but I've had many adult transfer students who had been using children's method books. Simple writing and children's pictures can often be insulting to an adult. There are many adult method books available (see Appendix A), and more are being written all the time. There are also many good supplemental books available in a variety of styles to satisfy the musical interests of almost any adult student (see Appendix B). With some students, however, it can be a challenge to satisfy their musical interests and still find pedagogically appropriate music. Adults usually want to play music they have heard before (Moonlight Sonata is a favorite!), whether or not it's at their level, so the challenge

is to find simplified versions of those pieces. Often adult students can be satisfied with similar, but easier, music until they're ready for "that piece."

A word of warning is appropriate here. There are many poor arrangements and bad transcriptions of favorite pieces, both in classical and in popular music, and often such arrangements can discourage and frustrate even the most diligent student. I have had adults arrive at a lesson, eager to show me music they just found, but unfortunately, they sometimes bring in poor arrangements or transcriptions. I use that as an opportunity to discuss the problems with them, and I show them potentially awkward passages. Just because it says "easy" on the front cover doesn't mean that it's truly pedagogically easy. (I have avoided some of these problems by planning occasional trips to the music store with my adult students so we can browse through music books together. I can direct them to good arrangements and editions and steer them from making poor choices in music.)

Teaching adults can be a challenge, but applying concepts of andragogy can help the process be more effective and enjoyable. Adult learners are in the student role because they have chosen that role. As music educators we have an opportunity to expose those motivated adults to music in a positive environment. Through our involvement in the lifelong process of education, we can help adults grow in their love of music, whatever their musical interests, and, at the same time, provide enrichment and meaning for their lives.

References

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Knowles, Malcolm. Modern Practice of Adult Education (Rev. ed.) New York: Cambridge, 1980.

Lenz, Elinor. The Art of Teaching Adults. Troy, Mo.: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1982.

Long, Huey B. Adult Learning: Research and Practice. New York: Cambridge, 1983.

APPENDIX A - ADULT METHOD BOOKS

Bastien: The Older Beginner Piano Course

- variety of supplemental repertoire books
- many folk songs and familiar tunes, Christmas carols, classical pieces

Bastien: Piano for Adults

- variety of music including classic themes, folk songs, spirituals, ragtime, and

original music

Bastien: Piano: 2nd Time Around

- review course for adults

Glover: Adult Piano Student

- well-known melodies, some classical arrangements, many original pieces
- upper levels are primarily classical music; Repertoire includes other styles

Kern: Adult Piano Method Play by Choice

- many supplemental books in a variety of styles
- primarily familiar music in variety of styles and textures

Lancaster/Renfrow: Piano 101

- written for a class piano setting but works well in a private lesson setting
- wonderful teacher accompaniments in fresh, interesting styles

Noona: The Adult Pianist

- well-known popular melodies and classics; many original pieces
- wide variety of styles and textures

Palmer/Manus/Lethco: Alfred's Basic Adult Piano Course

- well-known folk, popular melodies, some original pieces
- variety of supplemental repertoire books

APPENDIX B - SUPPLEMENTAL BOOKS ENJOYED BY MY ADULTS

There are many reasons to use supplemental materials with adults. Because adult method books often include a large percentage of familiar pieces, adult students sometimes rely on their ear to learn pieces and don't always develop good reading skills. Beautiful but newly written music can appeal to adults while helping their reading skills. As with younger students, supplemental music can help adult students whose physical or cognitive skills need reinforcement before moving on to the next level. For adults, who often come to piano lessons with strong musical interests, supplemental music can provide pedagogically sound music matched to those musical interests.

While I haven't included duets in this list, they are wonderful to use for sightreading. Occasionally I have adults who know they won't have much time to practice for a period

of several weeks or months. Often they will decide that, rather than quitting lessons during that time, they want to sightread duets during each lesson. Much can be learned and yet the student doesn't feel guilty that he or she isn't practicing. Duets can also serve as a "less scary" alternative to performing solos at gatherings and recitals.

Alexander, Dennis. First Lyric Pieces. Alfred Pub. Co. (late elementary)

- original solos in romantic style (adults often prefer slow "pretty" music)
- simple, but beautiful pieces

Bastien. Older Beginner Piano Course. Levels 1-2. Kjos. (early to late elementary)

- supplemental books: Favorite Melodies the World Over, Solo Repertoire, Religious Favorites, Easy Piano Classics, Classic Themes by the Masters
- Favorite Melodies includes sing-alongs, Christmas, hymns, patriotic, classics

Faber & Faber. Piano Adventures, Levels 1-4. FJH Music Co., Inc. (early elementary to early intermediate)

- supplemental books to average-age method: Classics, Popular, Hymns, Ragtime & Marches, Rock & Roll, Jazz & Blues, Christmas
- no children's pictures, so appropriate for adults
- wonderful books to satisfy the variety of adults' musical tastes
-

Goldston, Margaret. Romances, Books 1-3. Alfred Pub. Co. (late elementary to late intermediate)

- original solos in romantic style; variety of moods
- very nice melodic pieces, even at the elementary level

Guryan, Margo, ed. The Collection: 27 Piano Solos. CPP/Belwin. (intermediate to advanced)

- primarily "the favorite standards" of all periods, mostly Classical, Romantic

Kern, Fred. Adult Play By Choice. Hal Leonard. (elementary to early intermediate)

- many supplemental books: Country, Standards, Movie Themes, Classics, Christmas Favorites, Sacred Inspirations, Broadway, Sing-Alongs
- includes fairly current popular music as well as older favorites

Magrath, Jane. Melodious Masterpieces, Levels 1-3. Alfred Pub. Co. (early intermediate to early advanced; levels progress in order of difficulty)

- pieces from all periods, but emphasis on music from Romantic period

- very popular with my adults

Mier, Martha. Romantic Impressions, Books 1-3. Alfred Pub. Co. (early to late intermediate)

- original solos in Romantic style; very melodic

Palmer/Lethco/Manus. Alfred's Basic Adult Piano Course, Levels 1-2. Alfred Pub. (elementary to early intermediate)

- supplemental books: Sacred, All-Time Favorites, Christmas, Country, Pop, Greatest Hits
- Greatest Hits includes current popular music and old favorites

Palmer, Willard and Margery Halford. The Romantic Era: An Introduction to the Piano Music. Alfred Pub. Co. (intermediate to early advanced)

- includes discussion of ornamentation, the piano, Romanticism, pedaling, rubato, life and music of each composer
- Romantic piano music in its original form, including some standards and many beautiful less familiar pieces

Rollin, Catherine. Spotlight on . . . Style. Alfred Pub. Co. (intermediate)

- series includes original music in the Baroque, Classical, Romantic, Impressionist, Jazz, and Ragtime styles
- Romantic and Impressionist books are especially enjoyed by my adults
- Romantic book includes pieces in preparation for the works of Chopin

Rollin, Catherine. Preludes, Books 1-2. Alfred Pub. Co. (intermediate)

- beautiful original piano solos; some modeled after specific classical pieces
- good for students who think they don't like fast pieces: many pieces are fast but all are still beautiful

Rollin, Catherine. Lyric Moments, Books 1-2. Alfred Pub. Co. (intermediate)

- beautiful original piano solos
- very popular with my students; they can satisfy an adult who can't quite play standard Romantic music

Small, Allan, ed. Standard Piano Classics. Alfred Pub. Co. (late intermediate to advanced)

- includes some of the favorites: "Fur Elise," "Moonlight Sonata" 1st mvt, easier Chopin

dances

- primarily Romantic composers and the "romantic" music of Schubert, Beethoven, and Debussy

Yeager, Jeanine. Personal Touches. Kjos. (intermediate)

- original music, mostly in Romantic style

Ramona Kime Graessle is Associate Professor of Music at Olivet College where she has taught piano since 1984. In addition to her college teaching, Ms. Graessle has a large studio of adult piano students and teaches *Kindermusik*, an international program of pre-school music classes. She holds degrees in music education and piano performance from Olivet College (MI) and Michigan State University, and a Ph.D. in piano pedagogy and music education from the University of Oklahoma. Ms. Graessle specializes in teaching adult piano students and has given several workshops on teaching adults for music teacher groups, both at the local level and at the National Piano Pedagogy Seminar in Oklahoma. She is a frequent clinician and adjudicator at piano competitions and festivals, throughout Michigan.