



# Inspiring Artistry Repertoire Project

A Piano Magazine subscriber-exclusive digital resource

**Lynn Worcester Jones presents:**

***Le sommeil de l'enfant, Op. 35* by Teresa Carreño**

## Preparation and Presentation

**Context:** pieces that are helpful to have experienced or played before approaching this one

- Edvard Grieg: Arietta Op. 12, No. 1
- Robert Schumann: “Träumerei” from *Kinderszenen* Op. 15, No. 7
- Felix Mendelssohn: “Venetian Boat Song” from *Lieder ohne worte* Op. 19, No. 6
- Frederic Chopin: Waltz in A Minor, B. 150, Op. Posth.

**Get Ready:** creative activities to explore before the first encounter with the score to prepare a student for deeper engagement and more immediate success

- Learn about Carreño’s life and experiences as a concert pianist and singer: known as the “Valkyrie of the Piano.”
- Learn about lullabies, an ancient form of song and meant to soothe and protect a baby during sleep.
- Listen to Brahms Wiegenlied (Lullaby) Op. 49, No. 4 for piano and voice with German translation to hear the tenderness of the vocal line. Re-familiarize the student with this famous lullaby melody.
- Sing any other lullabies that the student knows, such as Hush Little Baby and Rock-a-Bye-Baby.

**Initial Focus:** features to pay attention to first; priority steps in reading and absorbing the music

- Map out the overall ABA + Coda form (A mm. 1-60, B mm. 61-80, A mm. 81-94, Coda 94-end).
- Observe the stark key change from F Major to B Major and back to F Major (A-B-A sections), while listening to a recording. Warm up with scales and triads.
- Use color-coded tape to label all repeated phrases to help the student see repetitions; First A section: mm. 1-6 are repeated 2x in mm. 16-22, mm. 41-46; & mm. 7-15 are repeated 2x mm. 22-27 and mm. 47-54.
- In the B section, learn the RH melody first and notice the two-measure phrase lengths which create 8 + 8 + 4 measure phrase lengths.

**Coordination Essentials:** physical skills and drills for common technical challenges in the piece

- Practice the soprano and bass voices together with accurate fingerings .
- Practice harmonic blocking (beats 1-2-3 together, beats 4-5-6 together) within short phrases to anticipate chord shapes and changes and to build muscle memory.

- Practice LH leaps with a closed hand position (left hand 5 finger on bottom note of jump chords) to avoid tension.
- Cross-rhythms (mm. 44, 45, 91, 93) can be measured out and practiced from slow to fast with metronome hands together, and then practiced at tempo alternating hands until the cross-rhythm feels seamless.

**Expressivity:** ideas to connect with the expressive and musical nature of the piece

- Create a storyline with lyrics for this lullaby in the A section and contrasting B section. The A section can reflect on the blessings of the baby's life, while the B section can harken back to the protective magic of lullabies in ancient times to keep the baby safe during sleep.
- Imagine yourself soothing a baby to sleep with a lyrical singing voice and mimic that tenderness in your playing.
- To create your expressive *rubatos*, embrace the repetitive nature of melodies and lean into the lilting feel of 6/8.

**Look Forward:** approaches to set up for success with refinements that will need attention a few weeks down the road

- Continue to spot practice the cross rhythms first (four measures total) so those become seamless and easy to play.
- Focus on finger legato to connect the melodic line, especially on the double-stemmed soprano notes that almost always fall on the strong beats, beats 1 and 4.
- To create beautifully shaped phrases, have the student play just the soprano (voice 4) at a quicker tempo to create beautiful phrase beginnings and endings.