



Inspiring Artistry Repertoire Project

A Piano Magazine subscriber-exclusive digital resource

Craig Sale presents:

Running Along, from 24 Little Pieces, Op. 39 by Dmitri Kabalevsky

Preparation and Presentation

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

- Kabalevsky, A Little Porcupine, Op. 89, No. 8
- Köhler, Melody, Op. 190, No. 27
- Diabelli, Scherzo in C, Op. 149, No. 6

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

- In-lesson dictation activities: student plays hands together following the direction and intervals dictated by teacher (parallel motion)
- At-home activity: Student reads hands together in parallel motion from non-staff notation. (Slanting lines or arrows showing direction, numbers to indicate interval.)
- Improvisation/Composing: make a piece using both hands together playing in parallel motion.
- Improvisation/Composing: make a piece using slurs and staccatos at the same time in each hand.

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

- Articulation and gesture: student taps and counts the rhythm using flat hand on first note of slurs and on tenuto; tap lightly on fingertips on second note of slurs and all staccatos.
- Discover that both hands play the same direction and interval, aka parallel motion, Find the one place where they break this pattern.
- Discover starting position (including distance between the starting notes in each hand) and see when the hands need to move. Do they move in parallel motion?
- Intervallic reading: play both hands together while saying “up a 3rd, up a 3rd, down a 2nd,” etc. Include articulation in this reading step.

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

- Create a technical warm-up using white key triads to prepare for mm. 8-14. Start with both hands on C and play degrees 1 3 5 3 1 3 5 3 (with slur-short-short=short articulation) on each white key going down in 2nds.
- Regular-lesson dictation activities as described earlier.

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

- Explore the frequency of the 2-note slurs. How does the increased frequency in mm. 8-14 create more excitement? Notice the repetition of triad tones in these measures.
- Movement activities related to articulation and build of excitement: 1. student claps the first note of slurs and tenutos while the teacher plays the piece. 2. Student “walks” the articulation while the teacher plays it—flat foot on start of slurs and tenutos, tiptoes on second note of slur and staccatos.

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

- To build faster tempo, student plays and counts the piece on the fallboard trying faster tempi. This removal of the “sound” will focus the student on technical control of the fingers and make playing it on the keys cleaner and more controlled.