



Inspiring Artistry Repertoire Project

A Piano Inspires digital resource

Molly Thomas Presents:

“Little Sister” from *Suite for the Young* by Norman Dello Joio

Process and Practice

Fully present: tips for maintaining focus and engagement over time

- Ask the student to play at different volumes in order to find an ideal dynamic level.
- Ask the student to keep the same phrasing and dynamic contrast while increasing or decreasing the tempo.

Break it up: useful practice segments; how to connect them and plug them back into the whole

- Practicing phrasing out of context will allow students to explore a 2+2+4 phrase.
- Add the challenge of asking the student to conduct the 3/8 phrases in one pulse per bar; if conducting is difficult for the student, have them tap the rhythms that occur in each hand.

Layers and outlines: tips for focusing on how the parts makeup the whole

- Ask the student to imitate an orchestra. Each part can represent a different family of the orchestra, such as string, woodwind, and brass instruments.
- Have the student play the left hand while singing the melody line. This activity will make sure that they listen to the left-hand harmonies while also being familiar with the right-hand melody.

Achieving flow: ideas for finding and maintaining tempo, managing modifications artistically

- Have the student put emphasis on the downbeat of each measure to create a stronger triple-meter feel.
- Add a metronome that puts the pulse on each eighth note at a slow tempo, then gradually increase the tempo and make the metronome pulse once per measure.

Make it mine: tips for developing and refining a personal, internal sense of the piece

- If the student has a sibling, cousin, or younger friend, have them imagine that this person is listening to them play. The song could mimic a lullaby or other pleasant song.
- Have the student imagine a music box with a small ballerina on top (or similar imagery), and try to mimic this sound quality.

Deep knowing: tips for securing memory

- Find areas where the student is playing a repetition in phrases (such as the beginning and ending). Compare the two sections to see what the student must change when playing from memory.
- Have the student analyze the piece, specifically examining areas that have multiple voices, such as measures 5-12.

Final stages: tips for ensuring performance readiness, maintaining freshness and spontaneity, and reinforcing an expressive personal connection

- Ask the student to play the piece transposed down an octave to explore a “Big Sister” character.
- Check the pulse. Have the student count out loud while playing. A way to make this more difficult is by having the student start by counting in their head, then stop them and ask what count they were on.