

Keyboard Kids' Companion

Created by Teachers & Approved by Kids

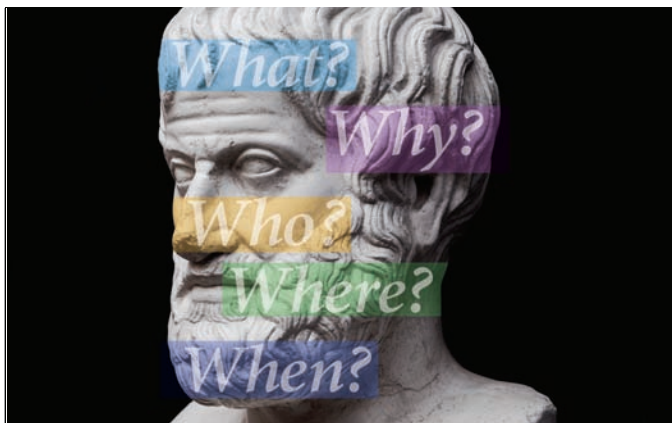
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5W1H Piano Practice Plan

You probably use the “5W” plan when you write a book report for school. The famous ancient philosopher Aristotle is believed to have first suggested what is now known as the “Five Ws” for solving problems and gathering information. News reporters, private detectives, and most other professionals have used the plan for thousands of years and added one “H.” It really works! To do any job well, including piano practicing, we have to answer **What, Why, Who, Where, When, and How** questions about the project.

What? Daily piano practice

Why? Like Olympic athletes, **consistent effort** toward building your skills and knowledge **is the only way to success.**



Who? You, times two! First, **at the piano, then you be the teacher:** Video record and review a piece after you feel it is polished. As you watch, ask yourself if your goals are met*. *Would you feel proud performing this in a recital? Would you enjoy hearing others perform like this?* Occasionally, record and review an entire practice session. *Do you see effective practice habits? Do you hear your skills building and your performance improving?* You have answered “Who” only after doing the “You be the teacher” activity.

Where? Your piano is likely in a room where lots of activities happen. To ensure you don’t have unnecessary distractions, ask your parents to help **keep siblings, friends, and even your phone somewhere else** during piano practice time.

When? The famous teacher Dr. Shinichi Suzuki said, “Practice only on the days you eat.” You need a **regularly scheduled daily appointment** with the piano. If it’s in your schedule, it’s more likely to happen! Many students find their best piano practice time right before or after school. Ask your parent or teacher to help you find the best time for your schedule this year. Make up a written weekly schedule and keep it where you can see it.

How? It is possible to spend a lot of time practicing and get worse. Be ready with a list of goals before you practice each composition or exercise. **Practice in sections, slowly, with goals in mind.** Continue to practice each hand alone to keep on top of details even after you know a piece. Increase the tempo little by little.

*Examples of goals: Correct notes/rhythm/other symbols, steady tempo, good hand position, dynamics, articulation, clear melody and quiet accompaniment, beautiful tone quality.

Back-to-School Symbol Review

Get ready for great practicing this school year!

Be sure that you know how to read the composers’ “codes” for beautiful playing. Choose from the word list below to solve this puzzle. You will have two left over.

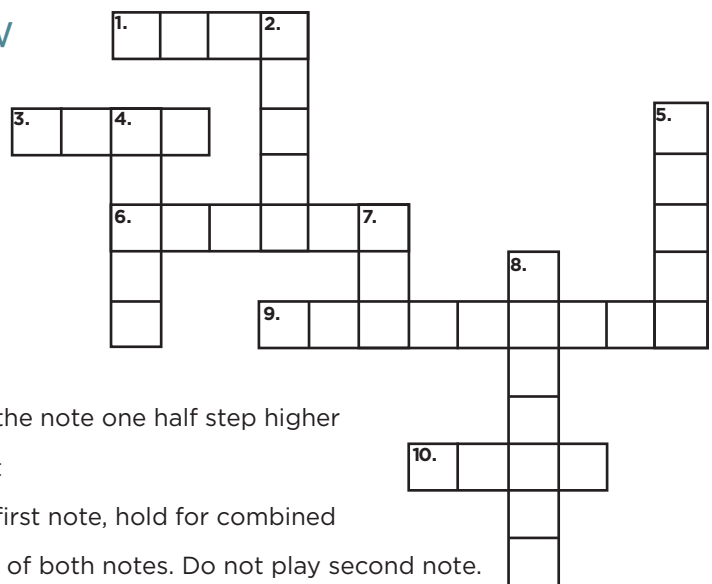
Accent, Bass, Crescendo, Fermata, Flat, Forte, Half, Natural, Piano, Repeat, Sharp, Tie

Across

1. Rest; Two beats of silence
3. Clef; notes middle C and lower
6. Play this one note extra loud
9. Get gradually louder
10. Play the note one half step lower

Down

2. Loud
4. Play the note one half step higher
5. Quiet
7. Play first note, hold for combined value of both notes. Do not play second note.
8. Hold this note for a little extra time



Halloween Music

Nothing sets the mood for a party like music. Try these scary-fun compositions to make up a Playlist for your Halloween party!

Tocatta and Fugue in D Minor by Johann Sebastian Bach
LISTEN: <https://youtu.be/CVbuhkLjs4M>

Sorcerer's Apprentice by Paul Dukas
LISTEN: <https://youtu.be/jNaNDXyXRfO>

Totentanz by Franz Liszt
LISTEN: <https://youtu.be/ScqeArnDoaE>

Danse Macabre by Camille Saint-Saëns
LISTEN: <https://youtu.be/71fZhMXIGT4>

"Dream of a Witches' Sabbath" from *Symphonie Fantastique* by Hector Berlioz
LISTEN: <https://youtu.be/cao6WyF-61s>

Night on Bald Mountain by Modest Mussorgsky
LISTEN: <https://youtu.be/SLCuL-K39eQ>

"Montagues and Capulets" from *Romeo and Juliet Suite No. 2* by Serge Prokofiev
LISTEN: https://youtu.be/p1_JUTA00SA

"In the Hall of the Mountain King" from *Peer Gynt Suite* by Edvard Grieg
LISTEN: https://youtu.be/xktTwsivb_w

"Infernal Dance" from *Firebird Suite* by Igor Stravinsky
LISTEN: <https://youtu.be/Y8Mdw0Qu57s>

"March to the Scaffold" from *Symphonie Fantastique* by Hector Berlioz
LISTEN: <https://youtu.be/R4T9rr-tmd0>



Composer Birthdays

September

- 8 **Anton Dvořák** (1841-1904) Czech composer
- 21 **Gustav Holst** (1874-1934) British pianist and composer
- 26 **George Gershwin** (1898-1937) American pianist and composer



Dvořák



Holst



Gershwin

October

- 9 **Camille Saint-Saëns** (1835-1921) French composer and organist
- 22 **Franz Liszt** (1811-1886) Hungarian pianist, teacher, and composer
- 27 **Niccolò Paganini** (1782-1840) Italian violinist and composer



Saint-Saëns



Liszt



Paganini

Scherzo A Musical Joke

- Q. Why are musicians the best cooks?
- A. Because they really know how to beat!

