

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE	III
INTRODUCTION	IX

Part I In the Beginning: Preparing to Teach

CHAPTER	PAGE
1 IT TAKES 3 OR 4	1
Parent, student, and teacher roles and how they relate	
Strategies for developing good relationships	
2 THE PIANO STUDIO ENVIRONMENT	9
Pianos, electronic instruments, computers,	
and other teaching aids	
Ideas for creating a motivating and inviting environment	
3 THE BUSINESS OF PIANO TEACHING	17
Making it a business, not a hobby	
What it takes to be an organized,	
professional, and efficient teacher	
The many materials it takes to have a successful business	
4 TUITION: BEING PAID WHAT YOU ARE WORTH	51
5 STRATEGIES FOR ACQUIRING STUDENTS	63

Part II In the Present: Teaching Elementary and Intermediate Students

6 HOW STUDENTS LEARN	73
A brief introduction to learning theories	
7 NOW YOU HAVE THEM—WHAT DO YOU DO?	83
The importance of teaching plans	
and structured assignments	
How to construct effective teaching plans	
8 TECHNICAL TIPS FOR THE RIGHT START	99
It all begins with the hand shape	
9 REALISTIC PRACTICE GOALS: HOW TO ACHIEVE THEM ..	113
What constitutes realistic and effective practice	

10	PERFORMANCE PROCEDURES AND GOALS	121
11	THE TRANSFER STUDENT	127
	Repairing the “re-tread”	
12	STAYING IN TUNE WITH LEARNING STYLES: MATCHING YOUR TEACHING TO LEARNERS	149
	Guest chapter by Dr. Keith Golay	
13	METHODS AND MATERIALS.....	167
	A comprehensive review of leading piano teaching methods and materials	
	Suggestions for matching materials with students’ learning styles	
14	TECHNOLOGY IN YOUR STUDIO.....	207
	Guest chapter by Dr. Sam Holland	
15	THE “BLACK HOLE” OF PIANO TEACHING: WHY DOES IT EXIST?	241
	The causes and effects of “the black hole”	
	Solutions and remedies	

***Part III A “Grab Bag” of
Ideas for All Levels of Teaching***

16	SOLVING DIFFICULT PROBLEMS	253
	Guest chapter by Dr. Keith Tombrink	
17	GROUP TEACHING	269
18	THE CLASSICAL TEACHER’S GUIDE TO INCORPORATING JAZZ TECHNIQUES INTO THE PIANO LESSON	291
	Guest chapter by Dr. Lee Evans	
19	M. O. (METHOD OF OPERATION) FOR MOTIVATION	319
	What do you, the teacher, want? Getting it!	
20	TEACHING ARTICLES BY BAKER-JORDAN.....	349
	1. Tips for the Traveling Teacher	
	2. How to Teach the Dotted Quarter Followed by the Eighth	
	3. How Do You Integrate Composition and Reading?	
	4. How Do Your Students Practice to Maintain Contest and Recital Repertoire?	
	5. Aspects of Teaching Rhythm That Are the Most Difficult for Intern Pedagogy Students	
	INDEX	365
	APPENDIX.....	371

OTHER STUDIO ENHANCEMENTS

A variety of other items, limited only by the creativity of the individual teacher, can contribute significantly to a studio's overall effectiveness. For example, the items shown here relate to the *peripheral* environment and efficiency of a studio. Their contributions will be explained in more detail in Chapter 19, "M. O. for Motivation." The ones marked (P) are shown in photographs in Chapter 19.



These photographs may be viewed on the CD-ROM.

- Annual photographs of each student arranged in a composite frame and hung in the studio (P)
- Individual mail boxes for each student (P)
- A "Brag Board" (P)
- Achievement Stickers
- Variety of colored markers
- Studio competition posters (P)
- Studio calendar of events (P)
- Good art work
- Bulletin board for notices to parents
- Treats for students (P)
- Small refrigerator for fruit drinks (especially for students who come to piano lessons directly from school) (P)



A creative teacher who wishes to inspire and motivate students will have many more ideas with which to enhance his or her studio. Add any ideas that you can think of in the blanks below to save for future reference.

Marketing

What methods will be used to attract customers to the business and to sell the products/services?

Capital

How much money will be needed to set up the business; i.e., what will it cost to acquire the facilities, equipment, materials and supplies, personnel, licenses, etc., and to conduct the marketing?

How much will be needed to cover operating expenses until a positive cash flow is realized?

How much will be needed to support the owners?

How long will it be before the business pays for itself and supports the owners?

Where will this capital be obtained?

Over what time period will any borrowed capital be paid off?

Financials

Pricing. What will be the prices of the products/services?

Income. How many products/services are expected to be sold each month during the first year? What will the monthly income be from these sales? (How fast is the business expected to grow?)

Expenses. What are the expected monthly expenses of producing the products/services, conducting the business, and paying off borrowed capital during the first year?

Profit. What is the monthly profit expected to be during the first year?

Breakeven. When will the business break even, i.e., the point at which income equals expenses?

Cash Flow. What is the net accumulation of cash in and out of the business (assuming that the business operates on a cash rather than accrual basis) from month to month during the first year?

Living Expenses

Is the business intended to provide the owners with living expenses? How long will it be before the monthly profit from the business is able to do this? How will the owners support themselves during the interim?

Some of these items call for further elaboration.

Mission of the business. The mission is the purpose of the business, why it exists, what it contributes to society.

Income. Weekly income is calculated by multiplying the tuition rate by the number of students taught each week, and multiplying that figure by the length of lessons each student receives. Weekly income is then multiplied by 4.3 (the average number of weeks per month) to get the monthly income. The following table illustrates these steps. It is based on an example of 20 students, 15 of whom take a 1-hour lesson each week, 4 who take a 45-minute lesson each week, and one who takes a 1-hour lesson every other week. For the student who takes bi-weekly lessons, the “Lesson Time” figure is adjusted to show the fraction of an hour represented by spreading out his total time evenly from week to week.

Services Provided

The more services provided by a studio, the more its instruction should be worth. For example, if one teacher provides services that others do not—such as a well-equipped studio with a video camera for taping students' lessons, a computer for composing music or learning theory, an electronic keyboard for warming up—that teacher should be able to charge a higher tuition rate. If a teacher provides more music classes and musical activities than others, a higher tuition rate is warranted. Needless to say, teachers should constantly be thinking of ways to enhance the services and appeal of their studios in ways that justify a higher level of tuition. This is just good business practice.



What other services could you provide in your studio that would enable you to command a higher tuition rate?

The Work Involved In Teaching Piano

If a piano teacher did nothing but walk into the studio, teach the lesson, and walk out again, only a mediocre tuition rate would be justified. But piano instruction involves much more than just what a teacher does at the piano with a student during his lesson. Good teachers give advance thought and preparation for each student's lesson; they review music; they plan recitals and other music activities; they decorate their studio to provide a pleasant, inviting environment; they set up bulletin boards to help communicate with students and parents; they send out announcements; they may provide refreshments; they are constantly thinking of new ways to motivate their students. Good teachers also develop a relationship with their students and parents, dialogue with them, and sometimes even have contact during the week. The tasks are endless, so teachers need to think about their

The following is a partial list that hopefully will stimulate your thinking and lead to additional ideas.

Business cards
A logo for your studio
A slogan
Stationery
Brochure describing your studio
Posters and flyers
Newspaper ads
Ads in local throw-away papers
Press releases
Articles about your studio submitted to local newspapers
Announcements of recitals and performances sent to the calendar sections of newspapers
Your own web page
Seminars and get-acquainted events in your studio
Recitals
Studio newsletter published periodically, perhaps quarterly
Pencils imprinted with your studio name and phone number

Places to distribute brochures and flyers include:

- Doctor and dental offices
- Libraries
- Elementary and high schools
- Colleges and universities
- Music stores
- Churches
- Chamber of Commerce
- Organizations that have after-school activities for children
- Dance studios
- Local stores and shops, particularly those that have bulletin boards
- Civic organizations
- Social clubs whose members might include parents of potential students
- Children's organizations, such as Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts
- YMCA and YWCA

NETWORKING

Networking is getting one's message out through contacts with others who can help that person sell themselves or their products and services. Professionals and other people in business have long since come to appreciate the value of networking in their marketing efforts. Job seekers, for instance, often say the best jobs are obtained through networking

C H A P T E R

6

HOW STUDENTS LEARN

In order to “plan” a lesson effectively, one must have some idea of how students learn.

One of the primary reasons teachers lose students is because they often do not adequately prepare for each lesson they teach. This is especially true for the less-experienced teacher who may or may not have had any pedagogical training or, if pedagogy courses were taken, there may not have been enough emphasis on how students learn and on the importance of lesson planning to maximize learning.

Too often, teachers will teach from one or two of the more popular teaching series and, if doing so in conjunction with a pedagogy course, will make lesson plans and diligently study the teaching materials. However, after the pedagogy course has ended and the teacher is somewhat familiar with the materials, lesson planning often stops, and the teacher returns to being or becomes a “turn the page and let’s see what we have here” kind of teacher. This is *not* the best teaching. *Any* kind of lesson plan is better than no plan at all.

In order to effectively *plan* a lesson, one must have some idea of how students learn. To have a comprehensive picture of the many different ways in which people learn, an in-depth study of learning theories would be necessary. The reader is encouraged to do some selected reading about learning theories as interest warrants. In the simplest of terms, a learning theory is the study of the nature of the process in which learning takes place. There are many, many learning theories because there are many unique ways in which people learn. Learning theories have been developed primarily by educators, psychologists, and educational psychologists and can be of great value to the teacher who truly cares how people learn. Good sound lesson plans are the result of some knowledge of how students learn.

CHAPTER

7

NOW YOU HAVE THEM—WHAT DO YOU DO?

THE IMPORTANCE OF TEACHING PLANS AND STRUCTURED ASSIGNMENTS

What teaching materials are used is less important than how they are used!

Frequent reference to the material presented in the preceding chapter will be helpful to the teacher who is willing to invest the time learning to construct lesson plans to aid in achieving more effective teaching and learning. As stated at the end of Chapter 6, the stages of preparation and follow-through are considered to be the most important and should be well understood before trying to utilize the other stages of learning.

For the purposes of illustrating how lesson plans are constructed and how they work using learning stages, this Chapter will consist of the following:

Two elementary student lesson plans including:

- 🎵 teaching a specific musical element (preparation)
- 🎵 exposures to element
- 🎵 progression of element through learning stages leading to performance
- 🎵 sample elementary student assignment sheets

ELEMENTARY LESSON PLANNING

For the purpose of demonstrating elementary lesson planning, the hypothetical student will be a seven-year-old. The choice of materials used to make this exercise more meaningful could be any of the current sets of materials available on today's market. The purpose here is to show how lesson plans are constructed. It is very important to keep in mind that it matters less *what* teaching materials are used than *how* they are used!

Doing this several times and remarking to the student that he has been walking around all of his life just waiting to play the piano usually brings a smile to the student's face.

Some teachers have never been told about this or even thought of it. If this is a new concept, practice it yourself and see how effective it is. No one walks around with his hands at his sides with straight, rigid fingers. Nor are the fingers naturally rounded in a tight fist. The hands and fingers simply hang from the shoulder in a “ready to play the piano” configuration. Only when the student does something to or with the hands as the keyboard is approached or touched does the hand shape change to a less desirable one.

After having the student bring his hands to the keyboard several times (as described above), then more specific work should be done in preparation for playing with a good hand shape. It is helpful to write the following list in the student's notebook so that it can be referred to during home practice.

HAND SHAPE (for one hand)

- ♩_Thumb on corner
- ♩_Fifth finger (not “pinkie”) standing on its end
- ♩_Middle three fingers resting lightly on the keys
- ♩_Arch of hand rounded (young students need to have arch shown and explained)
- ♩_Wrist level
- ♩_Arm level from elbow to wrist
- ♩_Elbow extended slightly from the body

The author has a “pet peeve” about calling fingers other than how they are correctly known as related to piano study. The finger numbers are used in music editing, and it is strongly felt that they, rather than “pinkie” or “ring finger,” etc., should be used.



An important principle in teaching effective practice habits is to never ask the student to do *anything* in a lesson that was not previously assigned for home practice. However, be sure the student understands he is welcome to tell you if he can do more. But if he doesn't volunteer to play the piece at a more advanced goal, so be it. Give him praise for achieving the assigned goals, and move on.

Practice Lessons

Rather than showing students *how* to do something at the lesson, teachers often assume that simply telling students *what* to do will make it happen in home practice. Unfortunately, too many of us fall into the trap of “telling” too much about all aspects of our students’ playing. Telling students something is never any insurance that they will actually be able to do what they have been told if they have not experienced how to do it at the lesson. This is probably one of the weakest links in the vast world of teaching. When teachers wonder why students don’t learn, they often don’t realize that questions such as “Why didn’t you practice?” or “Why did you practice incorrectly?” should be returned to the teacher with “Why didn’t you teach me how to practice?” or “Why didn’t you show me?” Student learning is faster and more efficient when students are shown how to have structured practice and allowed to demonstrate structured practice during an actual lesson. While telling is important and not to be avoided, it is not the most effective way to teach. As the great piano pedagogue Frances Clark often said:

“Teaching is not telling; teaching is creating a situation in which students experience what you want them to learn.”ⁱ

To elaborate on Ms. Clark’s famous words, a better way to teach is to:

1. **Tell** the student what he needs to know.
2. **Show** the student what you mean through a demonstration.
3. Lead the student to **experience** what is being taught by doing it himself.

Observe the student while he is experiencing the element, and repeat the above three steps for any reinforcement that is needed. Like any other part of piano study, observing as he practices is essential. This means taking some time for it during an actual lesson, which is difficult for most of us because lesson time is so precious. Our typical thought patterns go something like this:

“I can’t take lesson time to listen to a student practice!”

“Practicing is for the student to do at home!”

THE AUDITION

The audition for the transfer student is less structured than for the beginner, since the former has already become accustomed to piano lessons. During the phone interview (usually with a parent), it is important to clarify that the student needs to bring some music he has learned recently and be prepared to play. It is recommended that you hear at least two pieces of contrasting styles from any student who has completed some or most of the early method books. Below is a sample form on which to record the results of the audition.

TRANSFER STUDENT PIANO STUDY INTERVIEW/AUDITION		
Student name: _____	Age: _____	Grade in school: _____
Conversation starters/questions (to student), Comments: _____ _____		
Look through student's current music and identify most recent works played. Comments: _____ _____ _____		
Look through most recent evaluations and discuss as appropriate. _____ Comments: _____ _____ _____ _____		
Repertoire played for audition		
Student's choice: _____		
Teacher's comments: _____		
Teacher's choice: _____		
Teacher's comments: _____		
Other aspects to be covered appropriate to level of student		
Technique and technique studies: _____		
Musical terms: _____		
Sight reading: _____		
General comments: _____ _____ _____		



Form 11-2
Sample Transfer
Student Piano Study Audition
Form

Sometimes transfer students are reluctant to play in the audition, especially if considerable time has elapsed since regular lessons were taken. Try to understand the anxiety of this student, and do as much as possible to help him feel at ease. As with most students, you will need to lead the conversation, which is indicated by the second item on the

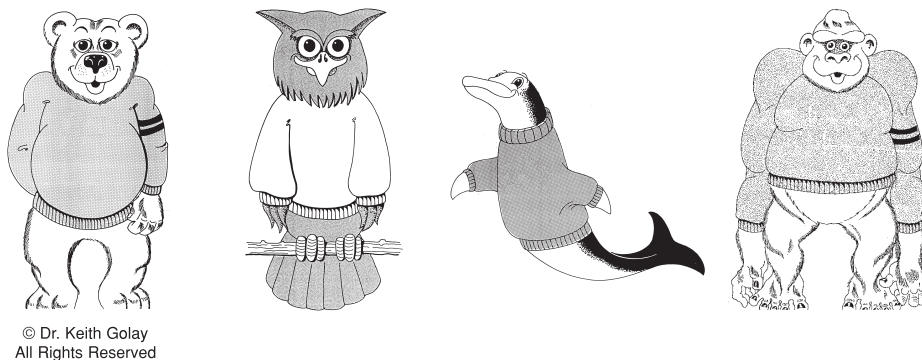
Where Does Johnny Fit?

The intent is to ask questions that will generate behavioral descriptions that match one of the four temperament types. What follows are three examples of open-ended questions that should produce the kind of information you need.

As you review the answers to these questions, you need to keep in mind the behavioral patterns of each type:

- ♩—The impulsive, spontaneous Artisans.
- ♩—The responsible, rule-governed Guardians.
- ♩—The analytic, theoretical Rationals.
- ♩—The romantic, diplomatic Idealists.

When I began doing workshops for teachers in the early 1980s, I found it quite useful to use animal names for each of the four types. It seems that people have more fun and find it easier to remember animal names. The Artisan is the “Ape,” the Guardian is the “Bear,” the Rational is the “Owl,” and the Idealist is the, “Dolphin.” It is frequently asked whether there is any real difference between male and female types. To date, no significant differences have been detected.



The young *Artisan Student* is highly active, easily excitable, likes taking risks and getting into mischief. They are playful and fun, bold and daring. They constantly test the limits, and they want to be free to roam.

The *Guardian Student* is a conformer and is usually seen as a “good” student. They like to know what is expected and enjoy following the rules. They tend to be a good helper around the house and don’t mind chores as much as other types.

The *Rational Student* shows a hunger for knowledge, is highly curious, and has unending questions of “Why?” This child is calm and emotionally cool. They are tough minded, autonomous, and strong willed. They question the limits and want logical reason for those limits.

some of their own.... Students can transpose as much as time permits and should create literally an infinite variety of musical examples of their own.... Encourage students to improvise many examples before attempting to notate one. Then they should proceed to notate these as quickly as possible. Again, keep your eye on the learning processes and your students will achieve better, more interesting products.^{vii}

Pace was also one of the first people to use and publish nominative counting as we know it today. He employs nominative and unit counting and, as with other skills, the introduction of new note values and time signatures occurs early.

The Robert Pace Keyboard Approach is a method that has stood the test of time and remains a landmark development in teaching materials.

ALFRED'S BASIC PIANO LIBRARY

by

Willard A. Palmer, Morton Manus, and Amanda Vick Lethco

Publisher:

Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.

P.O. Box 10003

Van Nuys, CA 91410-0003

www.alfred.com

Lesson*	Theory	Technique	Recital	CD	GM	Teacher's Guide
				Yes	Yes	
1A	1A	1A	1A			Yes
1B	1B	1B	1B			Yes
2	2	2	2			Yes
3	3	3	3			No
4	4	4	4			No
5	5		5			No
6	6		6			No

Alfred's Basic Piano Library method was one of the first to thoroughly correlate other core books with main books. As can easily be seen in this section, many other methods were designed likewise. This was a very valuable innovation that added much to piano pedagogy and educational piano materials.

AN OVERVIEW OF TODAY'S MUSIC TECHNOLOGY

DIGITAL PIANO

A digital piano is an electronic keyboard instrument designed to simulate the features of an acoustic piano and to expand them in many ways. In a digital piano, sound is produced by purely electronic means and must be heard through loudspeakers or headsets. Tone generators in digital pianos may use *digital samples*, sounds created by a *synthesizer*, or a combination of both. There has been extraordinary progress in the quality of digital piano sound and action since the early 1990s. Digital pianos are powerful musical instruments in their own right and acceptable substitutes for acoustic pianos and other instruments under certain circumstances. The detailed features of a digital piano will be described in a *specification sheet*. Outlined below, these features are the basis for evaluating the quality of a digital piano.



Photo courtesy of Yamaha Corp.

Figure 1
Digital piano

Sounds and Effects

Digital pianos may have only one onboard sound, but more typically have from six to several hundred. Sophisticated instruments include an array of piano and other keyboard sounds, strings, brass, synthesizers, percussion, and sound effects. In some instances, additional sounds may be available through the use of cards that are inserted into a slot on an instrument's front panel. The built-in sounds on a digital piano cannot be edited as they can be on a synthesizer, but they can often be combined imaginatively by *layering* and/or *keyboard-split*, and enhanced by onboard sound processors such as chorus and *reverb*.

Keys and Action

Digital pianos are available in models that range from 61 to 88 keys. Keys are velocity-sensitive; that is, the speed of a key's descent influences both quantity and quality of sound produced. This allows a performer to produce dynamic contrast and inflection by keyboard touch, but there are considerable differences between low-end and high-end instruments.

Problem solving now becomes a simple three-step process.

The Problem Solving Process

1. Define the problem.



2. Identify its causes.



3. Devise solutions that remove the causes and enable the student's present level of performance to progress to the desired level.



Defining Problems

A problem is defined in terms of the difference between the present and desired levels of performance. This difference usually involves one or more of the following factors:

♪ **Quantity**—The student is not able to play as many pieces as he should.

♪ **Quality**—The student is not playing his pieces as well as he should.

♪ **Time**—It takes too long for the student to learn a piece.

♪ **Cost**—For example, the student or his parents are unable to meet the cost of regular lessons, thus keeping him from progressing normally.

♪ **Scope**—The student is not learning all aspects of musicianship, i.e., playing the piano, music theory, sight reading.

TEACHING AIDS

Certain teaching aids can be very helpful to group teaching. These include:

- 🎵_A computer
- 🎵_A visualizer (electronic device that displays staff, notes, key signatures, etc.)
- 🎵_Cassette recorder/player or CD player
- 🎵_Variety of rhythm instruments
- 🎵_A projector, either an overhead projector for transparencies or, preferably, a video projector for showing videotapes and computer-generated images (particularly for sight-reading)
- 🎵_Keyboard games
- 🎵_A chalkboard or flip charts
- 🎵_A board with large painted staves and moveable notes
- 🎵_Flash cards

GROUPING STUDENTS

College and university students enrolling in piano instruction are normally screened before classes begin and grouped according to ability. Hence, the make-up of the teacher's classes and schedule are pre-determined by the school's curriculum, the number of enrollees, and their proficiency.

The independent studio teacher, however, is the sole decision maker in the grouping of her students. More often than not, she got into group teaching because she built up a large clientele and needed to create more teaching time. Fortunately, the large number of students gives her some flexibility in forming groups. Regardless of the number, however, care must be taken to group students together who have similar characteristics such as:

- 🎵_Age
- 🎵_Intelligence
- 🎵_Physical dexterity and coordination
- 🎵_Motivation
- 🎵_Practice habits

Obviously I am speaking in relative terms when I refer to similar characteristics. One has to be somewhat liberal in combining factors and in making distinctions among students or the teacher will end up with only one or two students per group and be back to private teaching.

ONGOING MOTIVATION

The items described in this section provide ongoing motivation from week to week.

AAA Club

One of my very favorite motivational techniques is a student AAA Club that I formed many years ago. “AAA” stands for music a student can play

Anytime, Anywhere, for Anybody.

I tell my students about this special club shortly after they begin study, and I encourage them to join. The objective is to have pieces ready to play at all times for parents, friends, guests in the home, school programs, church programs, etc. These AAA pieces do not have to be memorized, but they need to be ready for playing at recital level performance. The procedures of the club are simple, but the motivational rewards are great. I have yet to meet a student who doesn’t thoroughly enjoy being a member of this club.

To begin with, I give each student a “Piano Repertoire List” form (Form 19-13 shown on page 331) for keeping track of the pieces that reach recital level performance, and I place it as the last page in his three-ring notebook. I continually encourage him to be working on a new piece for the list at all times.

I often start a lesson with the piece that the student is working on for the AAA list. I always give one “freebie” practice, telling him beforehand that I will try very hard not to listen. During his “freebie,” I do other things such as writing on his assignment sheet or getting up and walking away from the piano—anything to show that I am not listening. Then I listen while he plays the piece for real. The piece goes on the list when both the student and I agree that it was played at level 10 on our 1-10 Quality Scale. Of course, the rhythm, dynamics, tempo markings, phrasing, tone, etc., must all be included in order for the piece to qualify.

Students love to see the list grow longer as time goes by. Often, especially with younger early and middle elementary students, more than

one piece may be in preparation for the list in any given week. When the list is full, I reward the student with a “crispy,” which perhaps is the greatest reinforcer of all! A “crispy” is a very new, crisp one dollar bill!



DO'S AND DON'TS FOR PARENTS

Do's

- 🎵 At the outset of lessons make clear to your child, in an enthusiastic manner, that music training is a long-term process, just like school, but with many high points of pleasure along the way.
- 🎵 Your child has his own unique pace, so avoid comparing him to siblings or neighbors' children who may appear to be playing better than he. Anticipate ups and downs in his attitude and progress, along with a number of "growing pain" periods.
- 🎵 Seriously contemplate how to help your child. Knowing when to help, when to be supportive, and when to withdraw to encourage him to help himself is a parental art in itself.
- 🎵 Stress that quality, not quantity, of practice is what results in real progress.
- 🎵 "Music comes to the child more naturally, when there is music in his mother's speaking voice," said violin educator Shinichi Suzuki. So be pleasant and encouraging about your child's practicing. Naturally, there will be occasions when you will need to be firm. But remember with "music in your voice," coach him, guide him, but don't police him.
- 🎵 When you help your child, be at his side—not at the other end of the room or in the next room. Teach him to treat the practice session with the same respect he gives to his lesson period.
- 🎵 During a crisis, always talk it out with your child in an atmosphere of mutual respect. If the issue is serious, you may need to discuss it with the teacher first. Allow your child to participate in the final decision so he feels that his voice has been heard. Teach him to interact constructively in group decision making.
- 🎵 A sense of humor is a powerful tool with which to resolve disagreements about practicing.
- 🎵 Always let your child feel you are proud of his achievements, even when they are small.

Don'ts

- 🎵 Never belittle your child's efforts.
- 🎵 Don't despair at temporary lapses in practice. Your child will make progress in the lesson itself, although less rapidly.
- 🎵 Don't threaten to stop his lessons if he doesn't practice. Threats can work during periods of high motivation in music but may boomerang during a "growing pain" period. The day may come when he will remind you of your threat and insist that you make good on it.
- 🎵 Don't criticize your child in the presence of others, especially the teacher. The teacher has skillfully built up a good relationship with your child, and his loss of face will tend to undermine it. Speak to the teacher, and only the teacher, privately about problems.
- 🎵 Your financial investment in your child's music lessons pays its dividends through the skills he acquires over the years, not by the amount of his daily practice, nor in how much he plays for you or your guests. Remember you are giving your child a music education for his artistic use, for his self-expression, and for his pleasure. Don't expect him as a child to be grateful for your sacrifices. His gratitude will come years later when he can play and enjoy music as an adult.

Piano Practice Assignment for _____

Student's name _____ Date of next lesson _____

After you play each new piece three times each day, put a ✓ in the box beside the piece. Be sure to study the “Bravo Box” on each page of the Lesson Book so you will get your stickers for each page.

		Practice Days					
		1	2	3	4	5	6
New Pieces — Lesson Book							
Page _____	_____						
Page _____	_____						
Page _____	_____						
Page _____	_____						
Page _____	_____						
Review Pieces — Lesson Book							
Choose three pieces from pages _____. Play each piece two times each day; then put a ✓ in the box beside the piece.							
Page _____	_____						
Page _____	_____						
Page _____	_____						

Theory Book

Do all written and playing work. Mark a ✓ when you have completed the week's assignments.

Pages _____ I have completed all theory ☐

MY OWN MAKE-UP PIECE

Make up a piece this week using sharps and crisp staccatos. Make it *f* (*forte*).
Write the title here:

PERFORMANCE PROCEDURE

1. Sit down at piano from left side of bench whenever possible.
2. Sit with good posture, feet on floor if they reach. Hands in lap.

3. THINK P S R

- P = Position:** Where is the piece played on the keys?
Find that place.
Do you use pedal? If so, be prepared.
- S = Sound:** What is the sound (dynamic level) of the piece?
What is the expression mark, if any? Think the sound, and try to hear it in your head.
- R = Rhythm:** This includes tempo. Think how fast the piece goes. Hear it in your head. Count the first two or three measures to yourself.

*PSR will usually take 15 or 20 seconds.
It's okay. Don't rush through it.*

4. Take hands to keys.
5. Play piece. No matter what happens, keep going.
6. Place hands in lap when piece is finished. Keep them there for at least a count of three.
7. Stand up, move to right of piano bench, face audience, smile, and bow.

REPEAT STEPS 3 THROUGH 6 if you are playing more than one piece, and bow only when all pieces have been played. Don't bow when playing for a judge.