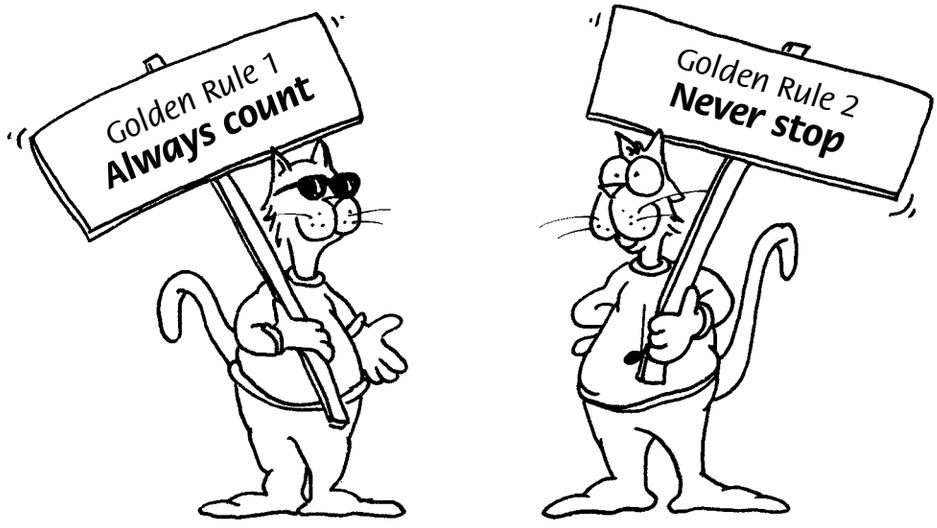
Stage 1

The Golden Rules

There are two golden rules of sight-reading – know them as well as you know your own name and you'll end up sight-reading music as well as you are sight-reading these words!



Playing the notes is not really a big problem in sight-reading. Playing them in time is not so easy. That is why it is important that you **always count**.

Music only really makes sense when it keeps going – if music is played with pauses and hesitations it doesn't sound much like music. Try singing *Happy Birthday* with lots of pauses and you won't be very pleased with the results. That's why you must **never stop**.

Remind yourself of the two Golden Rules every time you sight-read.

Just a quick word about why it's so important to be a good sight-reader. Imagine what life would be like if you weren't very good at sight-reading words. You'd have great trouble reading a book, the back of a cereal packet or the instructions for your favourite computer games. Because you can read words fluently you can read almost anything you want.

It's the same with music – the more fluent you are the more music you will be able to play. You'll be able to learn pieces more quickly, accompany and play duets with your friends and play for the family Christmas carols. And of course you'll be able to get higher marks in music exams!

Prepared piece

1 How many beats will you count in each bar?

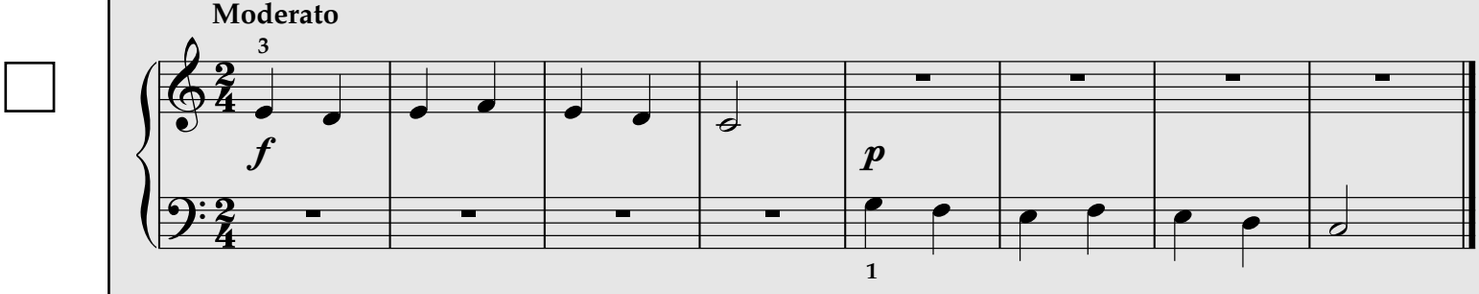
2 Can you spot any patterns in the piece – rhythmic or melodic?

3 Can you name all the notes in the piece?

4 What do ***f***, ***p*** and **moderato** mean?

5 Think about both hands' position. Place your hands over the correct notes before you begin.

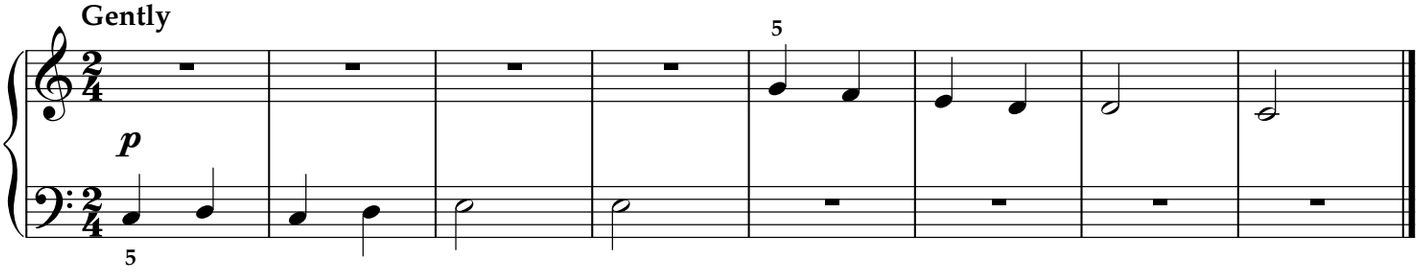
6 Hear the piece in your head before you play it.



Going solo

Remember to prepare each piece carefully before you play it.

1



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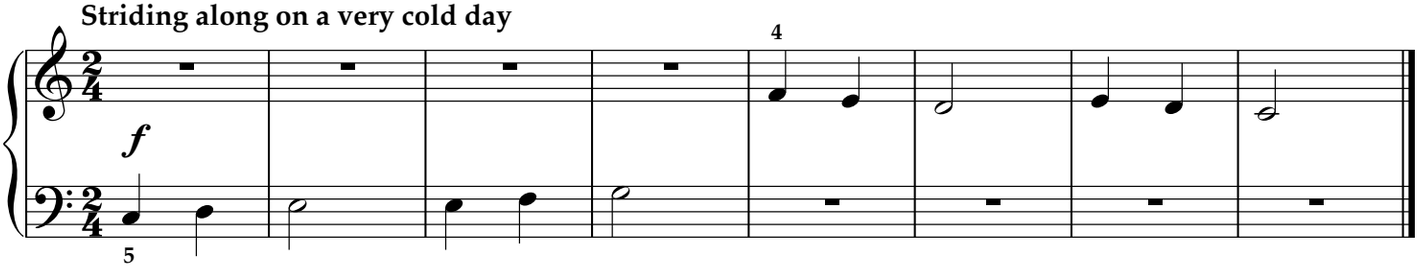
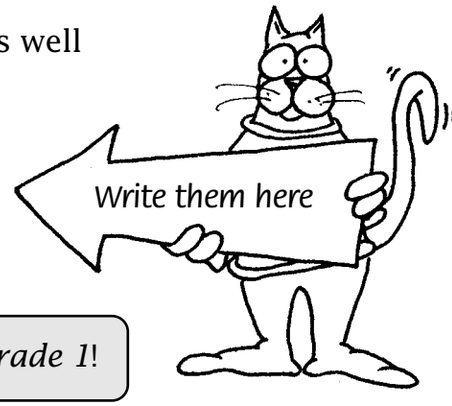


Teacher's or pupil's comments box:

By now you should know the two golden rules of sight-reading as well as you know your own name!



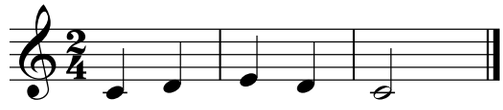
Golden Rule 1 _____

Golden Rule 2 _____

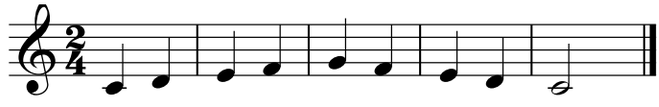
Now you're ready to progress to *Improve Your Sight-reading Grade 1*!

Microscales

It's always important to know the key and the scale of each piece that you play. Scales are fun and easy to play. You'll eventually learn the whole scale for each key, but a good way to start is by learning microscales. These patterns are made up of the first three notes of the scale, and give you a very clear sense of the key that the piece is in. Here's the microscale of C major:



Easy! Once you're happy with the three-note microscale you can try the five-note version. Here's the five-note microscale of C major:



You'll soon be able to play the full eight-note version! Whichever piece you're sight-reading or learning, always play the microscale first.

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