

# Right@Sight

Grade 8

## A note to teachers

Sight-reading is one of the most important skills for any musician, and certainly not to be seen as a chore necessary only for passing exams! Right@Sight will help to develop and improve that skill, providing a structured approach and opportunities for regular practice. Hints are provided for the earlier pieces to focus attention on notation, form, texture, interpretation and technique, prompted with questions (left-hand column) and information (right). These should also help to encourage greater musical awareness in all of a student's performing.

In an examination, half a minute will be given to prepare the sight-reading, and the examiner is likely to remind candidates that they may play the music during this time. Encourage your students to try out the opening, the ending and any awkward-looking passages so that they are well prepared before the test starts. Instil careful attention to the fundamental elements of Time, Rhythm and Key – though the key signature comes first on the staff, it is often the first piece of information to be forgotten in performance!

Becoming a good sight-reader needs daily practice, and regular 'exercise' with Right@Sight will prepare students to tackle whatever music they may want to play. Towards the end of the section with commentary, some pieces go a little beyond the standard expected for the grade, so as to stretch players' ability and enable them to face any sight-reading test with increased confidence: to play it right – at sight!

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### Key to symbols

1 Exercise number

T Time

R Rhythm

K Key

? Questions

! Watch out

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## Getting started

1

Follow the **TRaK**

? What differences do you notice when you compare bars 1–4 with bars 9–12 and 17–20?

Are there any changes of clef?

Can you study the fingering carefully?

Are there any changes of hand position?

Look at the time signature **T**; tap the rhythm **R** of the first few bars; and name the key **K**.

Find all the accidentals. Play the double sharps in bars 5, 11 and 14 (LH) and bar 12 (RH).

In bars 7, 8, 15, 21, 22 and 23 notice how one hand takes over from the other.

Be particularly careful that the left hand is ready for the correct first note in bar 5.

The semiquaver groups (RH) should begin with the 2nd finger playing the black key, and the thumb prepared underneath for the following note. Be ready to use this fingering wherever the pattern occurs.

Try out bars 15–16 and 23–24.

Use the pedal appropriately and then play lightly (*leggiero*) bringing out the playful (*giocos*) character of the piece.

**Allegretto (giocos)**

*p leggiero*

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- T** Is the piece simple or compound?
- R** Can you tap the rhythm of the first two bars?
- K** What is the key?
- Are there any modulations?
- ?** What differences do you notice when you compare bars 1–4 with bars 10–13?
- Are there any clef changes?

Is the texture homophonic or contrapuntal?

Give the value of the beat.

Look at the rhythmic variation in bar 11 (LH).

Note the B $\flat$ . Find any other accidentals.

Look at bar 5, for example.

In bar 7 notice how the left hand imitates the right hand.

In the second half of bar 9, the left hand should continue the descending scale passage without a break when taking over from the right hand.

Explain these two terms.

Make sure that the semiquaver scale passages are played *legato* in contrast to the *staccato* notes. Play very rhythmically and precisely.

**Allegro scherzando**

The musical score is for a piece in 12/8 time, marked 'Allegro scherzando'. It consists of four systems of music, each with a treble and bass clef staff. The first system starts with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The second system begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The third system also features a forte (*f*) dynamic. The fourth system is marked fortissimo (*ff*). The score includes various rhythmic patterns, including semiquaver scale passages and staccato notes. A large watermark 'SAMPLE' is visible across the page.

On your own now ...

The following pieces do not have hints to help. Give yourself half a minute to try out any difficult-looking passages and decide on the character of the music. Then play through each piece without stopping. Remember that the most important thing is to keep to a regular pulse, without hesitating, and to keep going. Don't stop to correct mistakes. For a really good mark in the exam you will be expected to observe the expressive details and to give the music a sense of shape and purpose.

Remember ... follow the **TRaK**, look ahead, keep counting and keep going!

**Allegro scherzando**

Musical score for measures 1-4. The piece is in 6/8 time and B-flat major. The first staff (treble clef) begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic. The second staff (bass clef) features a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The music is characterized by light, playful rhythms and articulation.

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Musical score for measures 5-8. The dynamics increase to mezzo-piano (*mp*). The melodic lines in both staves become more active, with some slurs and accents. The eighth-note accompaniment continues.

Musical score for measures 9-12. The dynamics increase to forte (*f*). The music features more complex rhythmic patterns and slurs, maintaining the playful character.

Musical score for measures 13-16. The dynamics reach fortissimo (*ff*). The piece concludes with a final cadence in the right hand and a sustained bass line.