

Alfred's Premier Piano Course

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A Note to Teachers

The art of playing the piano requires three things: knowledge, musical feeling, and the physical skills to perform what is artistically intended, also known as technique. The development of technique is essential to future success at the piano. Developing technique is a result of first understanding, then practicing the correct physical movements many times.

The technical tools and artistic skills learned in *Alfred's Premier Piano Course, Technique Books 1A–5*, are enhanced and expanded in *Technique Book 6*. Each page in the Technique Book correlates with a specific page in the Lesson Book. When the Lesson, Theory, Performance and Technique books are used together, they offer a fully-integrated and unparalleled comprehensive approach to piano instruction.

In *Technique Book 6*, students encounter technical skills in four areas, similar to 1A–5:

- Playing Naturally
- Moving Freely
- Playing Beautifully
- Playing Artistically

The technical goals in *Technique Book 6* are accomplished through five types of activities:

Technique Tools from Books 1A–5* are reviewed and new technical goals for this level are clearly presented through appealing and descriptive exercises:

1. *Slur Gestures* (p. 4)
2. *Voicing the Melody* (p. 20)
3. *Building Scale Velocity in Flat Keys* (p. 24)
4. *Trills* (p. 30)

These Technique Tools should always be introduced to the student during the lesson.

Hands-Together Workshops focus on developing the skills necessary for coordinating hands-together playing (pp. 13, 14, 17).

Patterned Exercises provide students with the necessary repetitions to make the technique feel natural. Memorization, although optional, is suggested.

Artistic Etudes showcase a student's technique in an artistic musical setting (pp. 6, 22, 26, 40).

Masterwork Etudes, written by important composers and teachers from the past, provide training to play standard masterworks. Many of them also reinforce *Technique Tools* and *Hands-Together Workshops* (pp. 10, 15, 21, 31, 34, 36, 46).

The overall goal of the Technique Books in *Alfred's Premier Piano Course* is to develop the physical skills needed to play artistically, expressively and effortlessly.

* See *Technique Books 1A–5* for descriptions of Technique Tools reviewed in this book.

Artistic Etude 1

Form and Expression

Form describes the organization of a piece and provides a guide to playing the piece with proper musical expression. *Barcelona Reflections* is in **A-B-A** form.

Section A (mm. 1–16)

For the repeat of the **A** section, change the *dynamics* and/or the *heart* notes.

Section B (mm. 17–32)

When the **B** section begins, change the *mood*.

Coda (mm. 33–42)

Let the music build to a dramatic ending.

Think about how you will play each section for every piece you play. Your performance will then sound much more appealing and musically more interesting.



Barcelona Reflections

Section A

Lively

6

mf.

6

12

2nd time to Coda

* Barcelona is a major city on the east coast of northern Spain (Catalonia) and home to one of the most beautiful basilicas in the world, *La Sagrada Família*. The architect for the basilica was Antoni Gaudí and it is still under construction.



Masterwork Etude 1

Playing with a Warm Sound

When pianists play *espressivo* (expressively), they create a warm, beautiful sound that is not harsh. To create this sound, play with relaxed arms and hands as your fingers play deeply into each key.

Play *Prelude in D Minor* with this technique to achieve an expressive sound.



Technique Tip: Play the first LH whole note (sustained note) in each measure with slightly more weight.

Prelude in D Minor

(Introduction to the Art of Playing on the Pianoforte)

Muzio Clementi (1752–1832)

Op. 42

(adapted)

*Andante moderato
espressivo*

4

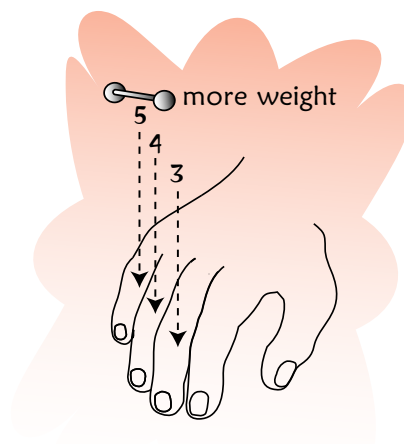
7



Technique Tool 2

Voicing the Melody

Voicing means to bring out the melody by playing it so that it stands out from the other notes played by the same hand. Usually this note is played louder. Play with more weight on the notes to be voiced as the melody.



1. Play the RH melody notes with added weight (*f*).

Allegro moderato

2. Play the RH melody with added weight (*f*) while you simultaneously and silently “play” the other RH notes. Pianists call the silent notes “the shadow.”

Allegro moderato

3. Play the RH melody in No. 2 with added weight (*f*) as you play the other RH notes softly. The soft notes were previously “the shadow.”

4. Finally, add the LH playing the bass notes. Remember to play all melody notes with added weight (*f*).

Allegro moderato



Masterwork Etude 3

Voicing

Use the *voicing* technique you learned on page 20 to play this etude. In the measures that include RH harmonic intervals, listen carefully so the top note melody sings out above the other RH notes.



Etude in D Major

Ludvig Schytte (1848–1909)
Op. 108, No. 7

Allegro moderato

5 *f* **mp** **4** **1** **4** **2**

Voice top note

5 **4** **3** **2** **1** **4** **2**

Voice top note (through m. 8)

9 *f* **1** **5** **1** **5** **1** **5**

13 **1** **3** **5** **1**

Artistic Etude 2

Changing Meters

Changing meters often can have an unsettling effect. When changing from $\frac{2}{4}$ to $\frac{6}{8}$, the eighth note pulse should remain the same. This is indicated by the symbol $\text{♪} = \text{♪}$ (see m. 2).

In **Section A** of *Whirlwinds*, the beat should remain steady.



Whirlwinds



Technique Tip: Stay close to the keys to play the *staccato* notes at a fast tempo.

Section A

Allegro giocoso (lively and humorous)

5

mf

1

1

1

5

1

5

2nd time to Coda

5

1

5

1

3

1

4

1

1

2

1

9

1

1

1

12

1

1

1

2

3

4

2

3

4

2

3

4