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About *Piano 101*

Piano 101 is a group course designed for adults with little or no keyboard experience who want to study piano for fun. Its easy-to-use format also is effective in private lessons. Specifically, it can be used for college piano classes for non-music majors, continuing education classes and music dealer in-store programs.

Piano 101 is easy to use. There are two books in the series, each of which contains 15 units. In college classes for non-music majors, each unit is designed to be covered in one week, thus one book fills a semester of study. Together the two books cover all materials needed for an entire year of study. However, teachers who are using the book in college classes or other situations should move at a pace appropriate for each individual class.

The title page of each unit contains the objectives for the unit, a space to record assignments and a section called “Did You Know?” This section briefly introduces elements of music history or music theory of general interest to piano students. Major headings (including all new concepts) are identified by a check mark (✓). Measures are numbered in all examples to promote ease of use in the classroom.

The student begins to play music immediately. Repertoire has been carefully chosen to appeal to adults who are playing the piano for

fun and includes tasteful arrangements of familiar music. A section of supplementary repertoire has been included in each book for those students who need additional music or for teachers who like a wider choice of music for students. The supplementary repertoire was chosen to represent a variety of levels and can be used throughout each book.

Each unit balances new information with materials that reinforce concepts presented in previous units. Written review worksheets appear periodically throughout the text.

Theory, technique, sight reading, repertoire, harmonization from lead sheets, ear training and ensemble activities are taught thoroughly and consistently throughout the text. The emphasis on ear training and harmonizing melodies from lead sheets will be helpful to those students who are interested in playing by ear.

Upon completion of *Piano 101*, Book 1, students will have a strong grasp of keyboard skills, piano repertoire and musical styles, and will be ready to begin *Piano 101*, Book 2. Upon completion of *Piano 101*, Book 2, students will have strengthened these skills, laying a strong foundation for further study and simply playing the piano for fun and enjoyment. Students who are interested in popular music may also study selections from Alfred’s Basic Adult Piano Course, *Greatest Hits*, Levels 1 and 2.

About the Teacher’s Handbook

The Teacher’s Handbook for *Piano 101* serves as an aid in curriculum development and daily lesson planning. The Handbook contains suggested daily lesson plans for the entire year, suggested assignments following each lesson plan, teaching tips for each unit, suggested examinations for the entire year and answer keys for all written exercises and review worksheets. It also suggests ways to successfully integrate keyboard and computer technology into the curriculum.

In addition, the Handbook contains helpful information on teaching adults. Topics covered include:

- ✓ Goals for Adult Students
- ✓ Types of Adult Students
- ✓ Expectations of Adult Students
- ✓ Teaching Adults — The Role of the Teacher
- ✓ Learning Characteristics of Adults with Implications for Piano Teaching

- ✓ Practice and Performance
- ✓ Teaching Adults in Groups
 - Advantages of Group Teaching
 - Organizing the Lessons
 - Classroom Management

Beginning teachers of group piano for adults and schools that have a large number of faculty and/or graduate assistants teaching group piano especially should find the Handbook useful. The suggested curriculum is flexible and should serve only as a general guide. It will need to be adapted for each school's overall program as well as for each individual class.

Goals for Adult Students

Although adult students begin piano study with a variety of expectations (see Expectations of Adult Students, page 8), successful classes involve many types of activities. Some general teaching techniques follow for various areas within the class.

Solo Repertoire: Most adults begin piano study wanting to play a specific piece or a certain style of music. Some wish to play for their own enjoyment while others like performing for others. Each unit in *Piano 101* has at least one solo repertoire piece that may be used for performance or study. While students will not perfect the piece in every unit, the repertoire can be used for analysis and developing practice techniques. In addition to repertoire for study and analysis, students should always be working on repertoire to perfect. A section of supplementary repertoire is contained in the back of each book for those students who need additional music or for teachers who like a wider choice of music for students. The supplementary repertoire was chosen to represent a variety of levels and can be used throughout the book.

Did You Know?: Adults enjoy learning information and facts about music. Each unit contains a section called "Did You Know?" This section briefly discusses elements of music history or music theory of general interest to piano students. It can serve as a springboard for further class discussion. Teachers may want to prepare additional information about the topic of the week to share with students in class and be prepared to recommend further reading materials on the subject.

Rhythm Reading: A strong rhythmic foun-

ation (including the ability to keep a steady beat) is the basis for secure performance at the keyboard. Rhythms and note values are introduced systematically throughout the text. Suggestions for counting are given but the approach used is left to the discretion of the teacher. Specially designed rhythm reading exercises promote rhythmic security. Encourage students to count aloud during rhythm drills. The rhythm examples are short, but they may be combined to make longer exercises. Regular performance with the CD and General MIDI disks also aids with developing rhythm skills.

Ear Training: Ear Training exercises provide an effective way to add variety to the class. Since music is an aural art, this aspect of training should never be neglected. Vary the way in which answers are given in class. Sometimes answers can be discussed immediately; other times wait until all examples in a particular exercise have been heard before discussing answers. Students can play some of the ear training exercises on the piano; others can serve as additional rhythm reading exercises. Adults who learn to listen to music effectively are more likely to attend concerts and recitals.

Review Worksheets: Written review worksheets, designed to be submitted to the teacher for feedback, appear periodically throughout the text. These worksheets can be completed in class and checked as a group or completed outside of class and checked by the teacher as a written assignment. Adults will find worksheets helpful for reviewing concepts such as note reading, musical terms and symbols, scale fingering and other theoretical principles.

Reading: The reading approach is eclectic, combining the best elements of intervallic and multi-key reading. Students begin by learning three important notes: middle C, F below middle C and G above middle C. Steps are introduced by filling in the notes between middle C and the G above middle C; skips are introduced by filling in the notes between middle C and the F below middle C. The reading range is expanded through intervals (2nds, 3rds, 4ths, 5ths). It is further expanded by reading through intervals from C and G an octave higher and from C and G an octave lower. Reading exercises are designed to promote movement over the entire keyboard while maintaining the advantages of playing in familiar positions. Short reading examples appear throughout the books. These examples are a mixture of familiar music and newly composed pieces.

Technique: Technique is developed in a systematic way throughout the entire book. In addition to scales, arpeggios and chord progressions, technical exercises reinforce theoretical concepts and provide students with the skills to perform at the keyboard. Technical exercises should be memorized quickly so that the student can focus on the development of physical movements and listen to the sound being produced. Some technique examples can be effectively taught by rote. All examples (including repertoire and reading examples) in the book are carefully fingered to aid the student in developing good technique.

Duets: The duets in *Piano 101* are teacher/student duets. Student parts are limited to five-finger positions and are notated on the grand staff within the student's reading range. The teacher parts expand the harmonic interest in the music thus motivating the student. The use of duets will improve rhythm skills and enhance performance skills from the very beginning. In addition, they reinforce important musical principles such as dynamics, phrasing, touch and other elements that constitute good musicianship.

Ensemble Repertoire: Each book of *Piano 101* contains two four-part ensembles. These ensembles are excellent vehicles for working on listening and balance between parts. Introduce all four parts of the ensembles in class and then assign each student a specific part to practice. The difficulty levels of the four parts of

the ensembles vary so care should be taken to assign parts that match the students' performance abilities. The process of putting the ensemble together in class is invaluable for working on tempo control and balance. The ensembles can also be practiced with the General MIDI Disks or Compact Discs.

Theory: Some adults really enjoy studying music theory and analysis; others have trouble understanding why it is useful. Theoretical principles are introduced and then applied to performance at the keyboard to promote musical understanding. The written review worksheets are a good way to determine if students understand concepts.

Harmonizing Melodies from a Lead

Sheet: Some adults begin piano study wanting to simply play from a lead sheet (adding left-hand chords to right-hand melodies). Once students understand chord structures, this skill is taught using letter-name chord symbols. The ability to play from a lead sheet opens countless possibilities for repertoire that otherwise may be unavailable or too difficult to play in its original form. It is also a useful skill for students who want to improvise. Before developing an arrangement from a lead sheet, it is important that the student be able to play (and finger) the melody as well as build each chord used in the example.

Chord Progressions: Chord progressions aid students in developing a feel for the keyboard and a sense of key. As new chords are introduced, students are assigned to play chord progressions that illustrate how the chords function in harmonic contexts. Chord progressions should continue to be practiced for several weeks after they are introduced.

Scales and Arpeggios: The study of scales and arpeggios is essential to both the technical and musical development of students. Once they are introduced, they should continue to be practiced throughout the remainder of the year. Many adults enjoy practicing scales while others question their usefulness. It is best to relate them to warming up for a workout and as a skill that is needed to effectively perform repertoire at the keyboard.

Types of Adult Students

Playing the piano is fun, but *learning* to play the piano can be hard work. Some researchers have suggested that learning abilities decline beginning around the age of 25. However, many factors such as prior education, home environment, health and diet enter into adults' abilities to learn. Actually, children may learn more quickly than adults, but adults retain knowledge longer than children. Adults at any age can learn to play the piano.

Almost all adults have an interest in playing piano. It is not uncommon to hear an adult say one of the following: "I've always wanted to play the piano, but I was never able to do it as a child." or "I took piano for a while as a child, but I remember very little. I wish that my mother (It is interesting that fathers are never mentioned in this context.) hadn't let me quit."

There are at least three different categories of adult students:

Beginners: This group includes college non-music majors, adults who never had previous opportunities to study and teenagers. Playing piano has been a life-long dream for many of these students. College students may need an elective in their course schedule. A change of life style (such as children being grown up, a spouse having died or a divorce being finalized) gives other adults an opportunity to study. Teenagers simply may decide that the time is right for lessons. For this group, piano provides an enriching use of leisure time, may increase self-esteem or serve to counter loneliness.

Retreads: This group includes any adult who had lessons as a child. They often feel underconfident in their abilities and what they remember. It is not uncommon for them to tell the teacher that they remember nothing, but in reality they do. The challenge is to determine what they remember. Some may have had unpleasant experiences in piano lessons as a child and need to overcome these bad memories.

Senior Citizens: This group has more time to practice and more disposable income than any other group. They are often devout students and look forward to lessons for the social aspect that they provide. Typically, this group wants to play songs from their era.

Adults are motivated to take lessons for a variety of reasons. Some want to take piano to achieve a specific goal such as playing by ear, accompanying their singing or playing a specific piece. Others are looking for an enjoyable hobby or leisure activity. Piano may become a social contact for this group. Others view piano as a way to change their lives and provide a distraction from loneliness or as a retreat from a difficult and frustrating job. Finally, another group takes piano simply to expand their musical knowledge.

Expectations of Adult Students

Because adults choose to study the piano on their own, they come to lessons with preconceived ideas about what they want to learn and how they want to learn it. Consequently, the focus in most adults lessons should be on enjoyment and playing music. Most adults have no desire to become a concert pianist and many times come to lessons wanting to play a specific piece (many times Beethoven's *Für Elise*, the first movement of Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata* or Pachelbel's *Canon in D*). At best, adults have a particular style of repertoire that they want to play (pop, sacred, classical, patriotic or folk) or want to learn to play from a lead sheet.

It is important that adults leave the first lesson being able to play a piece on the keyboard and have a positive feeling for beginning piano study. Since adults expect to make more rapid progress than children, the teacher should determine their expectations prior to beginning instruction. Without being discouraging, the teacher must be realistic in helping students establish both short and long range goals and honest about the length of time and amount of practice that it will take to reach these goals.

Some adults want instant fun at the piano and may not understand the discipline necessary to play the instrument. The teacher should make the student aware that playing piano is a motor skill that takes time to develop. In addition, for long range enjoyment, sight reading and technical skills must be developed systematically.

Some adults will study for several years, but generally adults tend to study for only a year or two due to work schedules and lifestyle demands. This often requires the teacher to be more flexible with adults than with children in terms of regularity of practice and attendance at lessons. Since frustration with slow progress is one reason adults quit lessons, the teacher must encourage adults to be patient long enough to achieve their goals. An encouraging atmosphere is necessary as piano playing is often not as easy as it looks to adults and coordination and physical problems may be a source of frustration.

Teaching Adults — The Role of the Teacher

Some teachers enjoy the challenges of teaching adults while others prefer working with children. Teaching adults can be very rewarding. Adults are interested in lessons and usually highly motivated. In addition to work and family responsibilities, studying piano is a commitment of time, money, energy and effort. Teaching adults provides an opportunity to meet one's contemporaries including community leaders with a variety of interests. Adults who study piano are more likely to support the arts both financially and by attending arts events than those who don't participate in music study.

The teacher's role is one of piano study partner, resource person, facilitator and guide. Many times lessons are more informal and more relaxed than lessons for children. The teacher should work together with adult students to set goals and base lessons on past life experiences. Individual differences must be taken into account in planning lessons. Other considerations in teaching adults include:

1. Adjust to the adults' needs for keyboard instruction. This is sometimes difficult for classically trained teachers who find that adult needs don't follow set guidelines.
2. Music is the real motivator for adults. Offer adults choices in repertoire and activities in lessons.
3. For most adults the majority of lesson time should be spent on playing familiar music and working on sight reading skills. Theory, technique and comprehensive musicianship skills should support these goals.
4. Avoid excessive talking in lessons or letting the lesson turn into a counseling session on personal problems.
5. Avoid working to polish every piece to a performance level. Some music should be studied for concept reinforcement, teaching practice skills and just for fun.
6. An important part of lessons is to help students develop a sense of pride in their accomplishments. Avoid letting adults get discouraged with slow progress by bolstering confidence, spirits and attitudes in lessons.
7. Keep adults informed as to your goals for them by giving an overview of materials and objectives for them. This calls for a logical teaching approach that relates to their prior experiences and current interests.
8. Let adults set their own pace in study but assist them in making this pace realistic. To provide personal satisfaction with study, they must be intellectually challenged with music that they like.

Learning Characteristics of Adults

WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR PIANO TEACHING

Adults come to lessons with a variety of learning characteristics that have been shaped by prior educational experiences and their own learning styles. While music fundamentals are the same for adults and children, the approach to teaching adults must be different taking into consideration these learning characteristics. Some typical characteristics of adult students follow.

1. Adults are responsive, willingly accept suggestions and often ask perceptive questions.
2. Adults are usually highly motivated and never pose discipline problems.
3. Adults are not accustomed to being a beginner in new activities and bring many ideas, experiences and a variety of accumulated information to lessons.
4. Adults have highly developed motor skills for other things, some of which can be applied to the piano and some which may work against playing the piano. Sometimes it is difficult to adapt to the new skills used in piano playing as they are accustomed to using their bodies in specific ways.
5. The adult body is a size, strength and height that lends itself to playing the piano.
6. Adults are able to concentrate for long periods of time and usually focus very intensely. Consequently, it is easy for the arms, hands and even the entire body to become tense.
7. Adults may be very critical of themselves and are sometimes overly self-conscious. Some adults are perfectionists and expect too much, too soon. They are often more inhibited than children.
8. Adults sometimes have preconceived notions of how successful they will be with a new learning task and have high expectations for progress.
9. Adults are often established as an intelligent person in their own field of work. Piano playing requires them to combine this intelligence with motor skills.
10. Adults ask intelligent questions, many times bringing up musical issues beyond their current level of playing ability.
11. Motivation for adults to approach a new learning task is usually intrinsic rather than extrinsic.
12. Adults grasp facts and concepts more quickly than they can execute them at the piano, while children usually develop at the same rate in cognitive understanding and physical skills.
13. Adults often like to set their own pace in learning. They are capable of setting their own goals and have an understanding of what it takes to achieve them. They often question how things relate and fit into context.
14. Adults frequently ask why they are doing something and what the results will be. They feel free to express their own opinions, including their likes and dislikes.
15. Adults have long attention spans for interesting activities.
16. Adults can read materials on their own and respond to verbal communication.
17. Adults often put a label on every new piece of knowledge and each activity that is done in the lesson.
18. Adults sometimes let side interests alter their attention from the matter at hand.
19. Adults are highly motivated to learn piano, yet they have many other priorities that may interfere with regular practice and lessons.
20. Adults need lessons that are structured to make them feel successful since they may lack confidence in their ability to learn.
21. Adults usually learn better when the atmosphere is people-centered rather than focused totally on the subject matter.

These learning characteristics have certain specific implications for piano study. Some of these implications follow.

1. Experience with a musical concept should always precede definition.
2. Since adults have larger hands and are stronger than children, they can play octaves and chords more easily. They also have the strength to control tone production and color.
3. Written explanations can be longer and more detailed in adult materials than with children.
4. Teachers will want to identify each adult's individual learning style and take advantage of it during instruction.
5. Adults often enjoy music appreciation activities and other information related to music.

Practice and Performance

Adults have busy schedules and piano practice sometimes gets short-changed. The teacher should stress the importance of regular practice and encourage the adult to schedule shorter periods of practice on a daily basis as opposed to longer irregular periods. When adults come to lessons without having practiced, the teacher should plan activities (such as sight reading, ear training and music appreciation study) that make the students feel successful. Some time in unprepared lessons can be spent in an actual practice session, which in turn will help make home practice more productive.

Some adults are embarrassed to play for anyone including the teacher. While teachers should encourage adults to perform if they so desire, it should not be mandatory. Many teachers schedule special performance activities for adults including adult piano parties and adult performance classes. Some adult students even form their own performance groups which can serve as a motivating factor in continuing piano study.¹

Teaching Adults in Groups

Advantages of Group Teaching: Music educators and piano teachers have enumerated the many advantages of group teaching including the valuable learning atmosphere that it fosters. Many adults enjoy the social aspects of the group environment. Studies have found that group instruction is effective in developing both performance and musicianship skills. Advantages of group instruction include the following:

1. Provides confidence in playing for others.
2. Aids students in developing rhythmic security.
3. Provides opportunities for supervised practice.
4. Stimulates critical listening as students hear other students perform and comment on these performances.
5. Allows students to broaden their musical experiences.
6. Exposes students to a variety of piano materials.
7. Provides a friendly-competitive atmosphere.

¹ Jane Michelle Conda, *The Late Bloomers Piano Club: A Case Study of a Group in Progress*, Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Oklahoma, 1997.

8. Allows the teacher to present music fundamentals in a shorter time than if he/she were making the presentation to individual students.
9. Fosters an atmosphere that is conducive to effective teaching of functional skills such as sight reading, transposition, harmonization, improvisation and composition.
10. Facilitates the performance of ensembles including duets and multiple piano ensembles.
11. Encourages students to develop skills in solving their own problems.
12. Establishes a sense of group spirit and group dynamics that increases motivation.
13. Allows students to learn from peers as well as from the teacher.
14. Provides a setting where drills and exercises can be more interesting and motivating.

Organizing the Lessons: Group teaching usually requires more advance planning than private instruction. Once groups are established, the teacher should set goals for them based upon previous experience and students' learning styles. These overall goals help with the planning of weekly lessons. The following items should be considered when planning lessons:

1. Each lesson must be planned carefully to include a variety of activities.
2. All students should be involved in every activity either as a performer or as a listener. They should be able to make constructive comments after each performance or activity.
3. The order of activities should be structured to build upon each other in a logical fashion. They should be so carefully interwoven that the student is hardly aware that activities have changed.
4. The teaching pace should be controlled so that average students are successful at most activities. Fast students may be assigned additional materials that utilize the same concepts being studied in the class. The lesson plan should be developed so that the slowest student in the class will be successful with one or more activities; however, the slowest student should never set the pace for the class.

5. The teacher must carefully work out verbal cues to begin and end activities together. Chanting, singing and verbalizing during playing activities are useful for keeping students together and maintaining steady tempos.

The success of group instruction depends on the effectiveness of the teacher as the leader. The classroom atmosphere should be enthusiastic with a mutual understanding and respect among group members. The teacher may share authority with the group to promote discovery learning and participate as a group member in the search for knowledge. The teacher's wording of questions should encourage communication and responsiveness while leading to the appropriate response in a timely manner. The teacher must be sensitive to any tensions among group members or frustrations of individual students within the group. Lesson plans may need to be adapted to deal with such issues.

Classroom Management: Inexperienced teachers often feel insecure teaching groups due to the fear of problems related to classroom management. The suggestions that follow will aid in making classes more efficient and effective.

1. Plan ahead — Be totally organized for each class. Plan more activities than you will need for the class and establish a priority order for them. Do not be afraid to alter the lesson plan if the class needs to move in a different direction.
2. Maintain eye contact with students — Avoid getting so involved with the equipment or the lesson plan that eye contact is lost with students.
3. Give specific feedback — Give concrete suggestions rather than suggestions like "that needs more practice." Tell students what and how to practice. Expect the same kind of suggestions from class members.
4. Avoid too much talk — Keep instructions and suggestions short, specific and directed toward the student and the music. Eliminate extraneous talk and instructions.
5. Plan shifts in pace and mood — Alternate high-energy teaching with more subdued times. Even plan some supervised practice time (especially for those teaching in electronic piano labs).

6. Anticipate the students' arrival — Be in the classroom when the students arrive, with the room and music ready for the group.
7. Always include everyone — Always include everyone in each activity. Challenge the faster students while at the same time work to avoid frustration in the slower students.
8. Use humor — Humor can add interest to the class and alleviate difficult situations. Avoid sarcasm and ridicule. There is a thin line between humor and sarcasm.
9. Be imaginative — Avoid setting a classroom routine that is predictable. Change the order and presentation of materials frequently.
10. Cultivate enthusiasm — Your enthusiasm for music and piano should be contagious. This enthusiasm, like a coach, can be conveyed through your voice, actions, level of intensity and facial expressions. Capitalize on this enthusiasm by making sure that students leave the class feeling positive about music and themselves.
11. Begin and end on time — Start promptly and end the class on time. This gives a message to those who are continually late.
12. Avoid solving all problems at one time — Get your major points across first and then work to refine points later in the lesson or during another class period.
13. Encourage self-discipline — Piano is an excellent vehicle for promoting self-discipline. Encourage students to establish specific practice routines.
14. Teach the whole class — Avoid giving a series of private lessons.
15. Work for variety in the class — Maintain interest through a variety of activities and music. Be sensitive to the reaction of the class and change activities if necessary. Each class should combine something new with review.
16. Understand the operation of teaching equipment — Be thoroughly familiar with the capabilities and operation of all equipment you will use in teaching.

Effective Use of Technology

IN TEACHING GROUP PIANO

This is the first group piano course for adults, who want to play piano for fun, to be fully supported by Compact Discs and General MIDI (GM) Disks. Each example in the text that contains an accompaniment is identified by an icon that shows the disk number and TRACK number for the example:  **1-1 (43)**. The first number after the icon denotes the CD/GM disk number. The second number is the TRACK number on the CD and the Type 0 MIDI file on the GM Disk. The third number (in parentheses) is the TRACK number of the Type 1 MIDI file on the GM Disk. (See MIDI disk documentation for more information on MIDI file types.) Accompaniments range from simple drum patterns to full orchestration. They were especially created to

enhance the musical performance in a stylistic manner rather than detract from it. These accompaniments add musical interest and motivate students to complete assignments both in the classroom and in the practice room.

Technology can serve as an aid to both study and performance of materials in the textbook. In no way is it designed to replace an effective teacher. Most colleges and universities use digital pianos for teaching group piano to adults. Good digital pianos have a similar feel and touch to acoustic pianos, but also may have other features to enhance study such as a variety of instrument sounds, on-board sequencers and auto-rhythms. Newer models are MIDI-compatible.

Teachers will choose to use either the Compact Discs or General MIDI Disks based on the equipment in the classroom. The Compact Disc recordings serve as an effective performance model for student listening and discussion. In addition, students may play along or clap rhythm patterns with the discs.

General MIDI Disks provide the maximum amount of flexibility for classroom use. The tempos can be adjusted to play slower or faster without changing the pitch. Most of the examples are recorded on four tracks allowing teachers to use only those tracks needed for the particular exercise.

The right hand of examples is recorded on one track; the left hand is recorded on a separate track; a third track contains an accompaniment; a fourth track is a rhythm background. Some individual examples may alter this format to fit the specific exercise.

General suggestions for using the disks in teaching follow:

1. Play all tracks of the disk to serve as a performance model for musical elements.
2. Ask students to play with the disk to promote steadiness of tempo and to provide musical interest.
3. Adjust the tempo of the disks to aid in practice and performance.
4. Play only the accompaniment and rhythm tracks as an accompaniment to student performance.
5. In harmonizing melodies from a lead sheet, play the melody on the disk while the student provides the accompaniment.
6. In reading and repertoire examples, play one hand of the piece on the disk while the student plays the other hand.
7. In teacher/student duets, play the teacher part on the disk while the student plays the other part.
8. In ensemble repertoire, play other parts of the ensemble on the disk as the student plays the individually assigned part.
9. In rhythm reading exercises, play one hand on the disk while the student taps the rhythm of the other hand.

The Curriculum

The curriculum that follows is designed to serve only as a model. It will need to be adapted to fit the curriculum of various schools and adjusted for individual classes that are able to move faster or need to move slower. The curriculum is organized by unit in the following manner:

1. Lesson Plans and Assignments are provided for two days each week. Teachers will need to adapt the model curriculum for classes that meet only one day a week. If classes

are not required to cover a specific amount of material each semester, teachers should feel free to pace classes based upon the abilities and interests of the students.

2. Teaching tips are suggested for each unit.
3. Suggested exams are given following units, 5, 10 and 15. These may be modified to fit individual programs.
4. Answers for review worksheets and written exercises are supplied as a courtesy for the teacher.

Playing on Black Keys

UNIT ONE

DAY 1

Lesson Plan

1. Discuss course objectives and requirements.
2. Determine music and keyboard background of class members.
3. Discuss objectives for the week (p. 4).
4. Discuss “Did You Know?” — The Power of Music (p. 4)
5. Introduce **How to Sit at the Keyboard, Hand Position** and **Finger Numbers** (p. 5).
6. Introduce **Basic Note Values** (p. 6) and **Rhythm Reading #1–4** (pp. 6–7).
7. Introduce **The Keyboard** (p. 7).
8. Introduce **Two-Black-Key Groups** (p. 8).
9. Introduce **Three-Black-Key Groups** (p. 9).
10. Introduce **Dynamic Signs** and **mf** (p. 10).
11. Introduce **Two by Three** (p. 10).

Assignment

1. **Rhythm Reading #1–4** (pp. 6–7)
2. **Two-Black-Key Groups** (p. 8)
3. **Three-Black-Key Groups** (p. 9)
4. **Two by Three** (p. 10)

DAY 2

Lesson Plan

1. Review **How to Sit at the Keyboard, Hand Position** and **Finger Numbers** (p. 5).
2. Review **Basic Note Values** (p. 6) and **Rhythm Reading #1–4** (pp. 6–7).
3. Introduce **Rhythm Reading #5–6** (p. 7)
4. Review **The Keyboard** (p. 7).
5. Review **Two-Black-Key Groups** (p. 8).
6. Review **Three-Black-Key Groups** (p. 9).
7. Review **Dynamic Signs** and **mf** (p. 10).
8. Review **Two by Three** (p. 10).

Assignment

1. **Rhythm Reading #1–6** (pp. 6–7)
2. **Two-Black-Key Groups** (p. 8)
3. **Three-Black-Key Groups** (p. 9)
4. **Two by Three** (p. 10)



Teaching Tips

1. Try to determine what types of music individual class members enjoy and would like to play. This information can be useful for class planning and for choosing individual supplementary repertoire.
2. Since this unit is very short, you may want to only spend one class meeting on it and quickly review the concepts in the next class before beginning Unit 2.
3. Use the CD/disk with all examples in this unit to promote steadiness of tempo and to add musical interest.

The Staff

UNIT FOUR

DAY 1

Lesson Plan

1. Review **Playing in G Position** and **Ode to Joy** (p. 23).
2. Review **Positions Using All White Keys Moving Up** (p. 24).
3. Review **Positions Using All White Keys Moving Down** (p. 25).
4. Review **Technique** (pp. 26–27).
5. Discuss objectives for the week (p. 28).
6. Discuss “Did You Know?” — Musical Style Periods (p. 28).
7. Introduce **The Staff, The Treble Clef Sign** and **The Bass Clef Sign** (p. 29).
8. Introduce **The Grand Staff, Middle C on the Grand Staff** and **New Dynamic Signs** (p. 30).
9. Introduce **New Time Signature** and **Gradual C** (p. 31).
10. Introduce **F Below Middle C** and **F Below** (p. 32).
11. Introduce **G Above Middle C** and **G Above** (p. 33).
12. Announce date and contents of **Examination #1**
 - a. **When the Saints Go Marching In** (p. 47) or other solo repertoire (teacher’s choice) — Students play one solo repertoire piece. Memory should be optional.
 - b. **Rhythm Reading** (p. 48) — Tap any or all of the rhythm patterns hands together.
 - c. Identify and play notes in C Position and Middle C Position from flash cards.

Assignment

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|--|---------------------------------|
| 1. Ode to Joy (p. 23) | 4. Technique (pp. 26–27) |
| 2. Positions Using All White Keys Moving Up (p. 24) | 5. Gradual C (p. 31) |
| 3. Positions Using All White Keys Moving Down (p. 25) | 6. F Below (p. 32) |
| | 7. G Above (p. 33) |

DAY 2

Lesson Plan

1. Review **The Staff, The Treble Clef Sign** and **The Bass Clef Sign** (p. 29).
2. Review **The Grand Staff, Middle C on the Grand Staff** and **New Dynamic Signs** (p. 30).
3. Review **New Time Signature** and **Gradual C** (p. 31).
4. Review **F Below Middle C** and **F Below** (p. 32).
5. Review **G Above Middle C** and **G Above** (p. 33).
6. Introduce **3 Important Notes** and **Fiddle Tune** (p. 34).
7. Introduce **Right Hand C Position** and **Right Hand Middle C Position** and **One Step at a Time** (p. 35).
8. Introduce **Left Hand Middle C Position** and **Skip Around** (p. 36).
9. Introduce **Slur & Legato Playing** and **Waltzing Alone** (p. 37).
10. Begin **Review Worksheet** (p. 38) and bring completed worksheet to next class.

Assignment

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|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Gradual C (p. 31) | 5. One Step at a Time (p. 35) |
| 2. F Below (p. 32) | 6. Skip Around (p. 36) |
| 3. G Above (p. 33) | 7. Waltzing Alone (p. 37) |
| 4. Fiddle Tune (p. 34) | 8. Review Worksheet (p. 38) |

Teaching Tips

1. This unit presents the first introduction to reading on the staff. Review naming notes and playing the corresponding keys on the keyboard for the next several lessons.
2. The **Review Worksheet** (p. 38) can be collected as homework and graded to check the students’ understanding of theoretical information.
3. This unit is long. If students are having trouble with any of the concepts in this unit, you may want to spend a third class period on it.
4. Use the CD/disk with all examples in this unit to promote steadiness of tempo and to add musical interest.