

THE PIANO Adventures® TEACHER

FJH PEDAGOGY NEWSLETTER

August 2004 No. 5

**Composing—
Start Early!**

Review and Repeat

**Listen to Those
MIDIs and CDs!**

The Subject Is ... Fugue

Career Cues—Business

Teaching Student Teachers



THE F·J·H MUSIC COMPANY INC.

THE PIANO ADVENTURES® TEACHER

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The Piano Adventures® Teacher
is published three times a year by
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From the Editor

BY MARIENNE USZLER

It's exciting to think that we're producing our fifth issue! And it's equally gratifying to get comments from readers that the newsletter is filling some needs. I had the opportunity to speak to quite a number of teachers at the last MTNA convention in Kansas City, and I've also been keeping up to date on the website "conversations." So, in a very real way, we're learning from each other!

There seems to be particular interest in discussing how to make lesson plans. While some of this relates to organizing time efficiently, the greater concern is with sequencing what is taught and finding ways to vary what is taught. For that reason, many of you like the "How To" articles. These answer some common questions: "Is there another way to say that?" or "What else can I do when I teach this piece?" How-To hints give you new ideas, but they sometimes confirm that you're already moving in the right direction or finding your own way of going beyond what's on the page or in the method.

No matter how long you teach, you can always be stimulated and surprised by observing what others say and do. After watching another teacher interacting with students or after listening to someone else's "take" on a particular subject, I can't tell you how often I've said, "Now, why didn't I think of that?" It may be just a striking word, an expressive gesture, a convincing explanation, or a creative step beyond the expected or tried-and-true. But it's often an eye-opener. Or an ear-opener.

Students at all levels make the same mistakes and need the same advice. I don't believe that good teachers are merely patient. The most successful teachers are those who know a hundred different ways to say the same thing. They are ready with the next question, the next challenge, the next demonstration, and the next reminder—each reaching in another way for what will trigger a "connection" for the student in front of them.

How do you learn those hundred different

ways? I've spent my teaching life like a bag lady. I've watched and read everything I could, then stuffed my own bag with the bits and pieces I learned from others. The more that's in there, the better I can teach. If I'm searching for a magic word or if I seem to be dealing with a sphinx, I dig down into my supply, and I can usually come up with a trick or two. Even though the ideas are not all mine, I've made them mine by finding original ways of integrating or using them.

How does this relate to making lesson plans? Getting new ideas or finding multiple ways to vary an explanation or demonstration is only part of the equation, of course. But it's a good way to start "packing your own bag." New ideas get you to think about things in another way. They might also pull you out of a teaching rut. You have a deeper and richer supply from which to choose teaching strategies and make plans.

You'll notice that in this issue one of the "How To" columns focuses on a more difficult piece. A number of teachers have asked for this. Although the *Piano Adventures®* levels are rising chronologically and will be succeeded by further developing Faber publications—thus the materials and music will naturally advance in difficulty in upcoming issues—we're happy to begin discussing some higher-level standard literature now. And we hope you'll find the teaching tips just as practical and on-target.

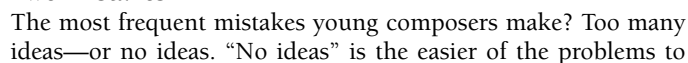
I'll close with a suggestion. Let's consider this newsletter our collective "bag." Take what you need to add to your own collection. But consider making a personal contribution, too. Tell all of us what you've discovered or what works for you. Some other reader might say, "Now, why didn't I think of that?"

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BY WYNN-ANNE ROSSI

Notation is done on basic lined paper, turned sideways. A line is drawn across the middle of the page which represents Middle C. Notes in higher octaves are written at the top of the paper, just as notes in lower octaves are written at the bottom. Reading is left to right, and notes that sound at the same time line up in the same column. If desired, faster notes can be linked together, similar to eighth notes. Longer notes can be indicated by a swoop line, similar to a tie. The advantage to this system is that it uses the entire piano and frees the student from a five-finger position.



solve. You need only one idea for a composition, and an idea can be as short as three notes. If necessary, the musical idea can be composed during the lesson. Then the student can experiment with different octaves, different positions, backwards, upside-down, alternating rhythms, and much more. In the beginning, my instruction sounds like a broken record, involving two words of advice—"repeats" and "patterns". These two gems provide the glue necessary for every original composition. Students love it when I point out that the audience is rather clueless. They need to hear something several times before they really get it.

Having too many ideas is far more complex. Students are afraid their compositions will appear too simple, and thus, sound boring. The result is disastrous. Narrowing 20 unrelated ideas down to two or three can be frustrating for both the teacher and the student. But it must be done. I use the example of an architect with too many types of building materials. Using tree limbs, bricks, hay bales, paint cans, milk cartons, and Plexiglas would be a challenge even for Frank Lloyd Wright. Choose one or two, and you have a nice start towards building a decent structure.

Theory as a Tool

Teaching composition involves providing students with the proper tools. Scales, chord progressions, and arpeggios are effective building blocks. I created the *Get Ready Duet* series (FJH Music) for the purpose of teaching and improvising with these tools. While the teacher plays the secondo part, the student can play the skill as written, then repeat it, improvising with the notes that are introduced.

In *Piano Adventures*®, the Creative questions found at the bottom of the page provide an excellent source of ideas that lead to composition. Each piece has a Discovery question that reviews or reinforces a theory concept. In each unit, a Creative question nudges the student toward application of the new concept in a personal, creative way. These tips and exercises introduce fundamental tools of composition, such as imitation. In *Accelerated Piano Adventures*® Lesson Book 1, for example, students are

encouraged to make up several one-measure left-hand melodies and imitate them an octave higher with the right hand.

Theme Recitals

Compositional themes are very popular with young composers. In my studio, every third recital is devoted to original material. Each has a theme to help direct the flow of inspiration. My most recent recital was broken into several themes by age group. The young girls chose "spirits of fantasy," the young boys "natural disasters." Teenagers decided to base their pieces on famous paintings.

I begin preparations for these recitals up to four months in advance. Students take two to three months to compose the pieces, then concentrate on recopying them and preparing to perform them. It's important to make a distinction between their role as composers and their role as performers. Both require equal attention.

The Musical "Me"

Original composition is a journey of self-discovery, well worth the effort for both teachers and students. And there is a new series of books to assist you in the process! *Music by Me* (FJH Music), a composition workbook created by Kevin Olson and myself, is designed to stimulate self-expression through original composition with practical tips and a progressive, fun approach.

18  using a musical form unit 5

Form is the way a musical piece is organized.

When you create music, you have three choices.

1. You can take a musical idea and repeat it.
This is called *repetition*. 
2. You can take a musical idea and vary it a little.
This is called *variation*. 
3. Or your musical idea can be followed by something totally different.
This is called *contrast*. 

As a composer, you'll have to make decisions about repeating, varying, or contrasting your ideas.



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Two-Hand Conversation

Moderately

1 on Name the position. _____



Make up a one-measure melody with your L.H. in C Position.
Imitate the melody with your R.H. one octave higher. Try several of these.

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Counter to the myths, original composition is not a journey limited to young Mozarts. All children are creative. They deserve the opportunity to finger-paint their way into their own priceless musical identities. |||

Wynn-Anne Rossi is a composer, author, performer, and educator with over 40 publications through the FJH Music and Boston Music companies. Commissions include works sponsored by Minnesota Public Radio, American Composers Forum, and the National Endowment for the Arts. She is creative consultant for the new St. Paul Chamber Orchestra CONNECT outreach curriculum. Wynn-Anne also performs her own music in the Minnesota public schools through the Bravo Music Program and as an active SPCO cultural partner. Her first CD, *Take Me North*, is now available (www.rossi-music.com).

The Pedagogy of Piano Adventures

Level 3A: The Role of Review

BY RANDALL FABER

You've likely heard a colleague say, "My goal is to get the student out of a method and into the literature as soon as possible." Have you wondered if you should agree? While I acknowledge that one must take into consideration the individuality of the student and the characteristics of the chosen method, I question the wisdom of leaving the structure and pacing of a good method too soon. More specifically, I would like to discuss the dangers in pushing a student ahead with haste.

We've all seen an occasional precocious student move up the levels with impressive speed. We observe this speedy progress through the method as a reliable predictor of future success. We are thus seduced. The high-numbered level makes the teacher look good and the parent beam with pride. So we tend to push students, hoping to see nine-year old Erin in Level 4, or ten-year-old Jason playing *Für Elise*.

But the actual variable that predicted success with a fast-moving student is the *ease* with which the student moved up the levels—an exceptional capacity in some students that makes it possible to progress quickly. A teacher's push to get there fast does not itself predict success. Indeed, it can backfire. The fast track can leave knowledge gaps, feelings of uncertainty, and may insidiously undermine technical and musical development even when the student is apparently keeping pace with the decoding of notation. It is important to understand that a student's level of advancement and speed of advancement are not the measures of good teaching. A better measure is how much the student knows and how much the student can do at his or her current level—regardless of what level that may be.

Review and Repeat

Consider this. The late-elementary student must absorb and apply knowledge of note reading, rhythmic notation, chord structures, and musical expression—all while grappling with the physical mechanics of hand shape, arm weight, finger coordination, and wrist relaxation. At the same time, the student is expected to be listening—indeed hearing—what he/she is playing, evaluating sounds as they pass in time, and adjusting to the idealized sound envisioned in the mind's ear.

Now, let's get real. This is not going to happen readily and does not happen fast! *Knowledge* needs *review* so that it will endure in long-term memory and be readily accessed. *Skills* need *practice* so that they become *automatized*—played without conscious attention.

Review and repetition, then, become operational basics for the piano teacher. We consolidate knowledge with fastidious review while we steadily move forward. We consolidate skills by practicing what the student can do well instead of practicing incorrect playing. We use repetition to make well-executed skills automatic, freeing attention for new challenges.

Moving Too Fast

What happens if we move the student into difficult repertoire too soon? We lose the opportunity for review and repetition. Familiar concepts are buried in a complex setting and thus overlooked, instead of reviewed. New concepts are encountered that the student does not and cannot yet understand. Old skills do not become automatic. Instead, they are skipped through before they are developed and eventually are buried under an accumulation of hidden physical tensions and habits.

Because this danger becomes acute at the intermediate level, the role of *Piano Adventures*® Level 3A becomes clear:

- to provide *review* that consolidates knowledge
- to provide *repetition* that automatizes skill
- to structure an appropriate pacing for advancement

We tend to think of a method as the means to introduce new material. In light of the above discussion, let's instead reframe the role of *Piano Adventures*®. The method provides a structure that both prevents premature advancement and promotes adequate review and practice. Indeed, this is the antithesis of the opening oft-argued proposition. The goal is not to get out of the method as soon as possible; the goal is to fully employ the method to yield sufficient review for retention and sufficient practice to develop deep-rooted skills. The method is more than a bridge to the literature; the method is an engine for deep learning along the way. At the point when the literature does become the main event, there is understanding because study of the literature can then build on a substantial framework of knowledge and skill.

Spiral Curriculum

In teaching a new concept, ideally one incorporates review. Open the teacher-student dialogue by bringing a relevant concept already learned into discussion. With this information now in "working memory," a new concept will more easily take hold. The I, IV, V7 chord review that opens Level 3A, for example, begins with blocked chords to cue recall. Then the primary chords are drilled with a waltz pattern and broken-chord pattern. At the end of the unit, the student learns the new Alberti Bass, yet applied in the familiar context of I, IV, and V7.

On a macro level, instructional pacing should routinely dip back to review concepts already learned, yet add new context or new depth. Thus we practice cueing the recall of concepts learned as well as adding new knowledge. Instead of an accumulation of poorly related facts, we achieve integration in the knowledge structure. Alberti Bass is not just a left-hand pattern, it is another accompaniment pattern for chords already learned. 6/8 time is the equivalent of two measures of 3/8. The "round-off" of Level 3A is not a new gesture, but the refined

application of the “wrist float off” with special focus on the soft phrase ending.

Jerome Bruner coined the term “spiral curriculum” to describe this instructional process of review. Each time a concept is revisited, it is clarified for more precise understanding or amplified for broader application. The key point here is the necessity for review—to keep coming back to principal concepts and enriching them with expanded knowledge and application. Let's look at how the idea of a spiral curriculum is designed into the theory, technique, and repertoire of Level 3A.

Theory at Level 3A

- ◆ The primary chords (I, IV, V7) that characterize Level 2B are reviewed in Unit 1, then explored in expanded contexts: with syncopation, with expressive articulations, and using Alberti Bass.
- ◆ The Level 2B Keys of C, G, and F are reviewed and the Key of D major is added, again with emphasis on the primary chords.
- ◆ The interval of a 7th is introduced by highlighting its notational similarity to 3rds and 5ths, all notated as line-to-line or space-to-space.
- ◆ The chromatic scale builds on the half-step presentation at Level 2A, expanding the chromatic fragments to the full octave.
- ◆ The cross-hand arpeggio of Level 2B is refined in the form of a one-octave arpeggio played within the hand, establishing the fingering and hand shape for multi-octave arpeggios at later levels.
- ◆ Simple binary form at the beginning of Level 3A expands to ABA; then, by the end of the level, to ABA with both Introduction and Coda.

Technique & Artistry at Level 3A

The carefully sequenced handling of the wrist in the Technique & Artistry Books reaches a culmination at Level 3A with the Round-Off. The Thumb Perch at the Primer Level established the wrist height. The Wrist Float-Off at Level 1 established the

1. The first secret is ROUND-OFF.

Sighing

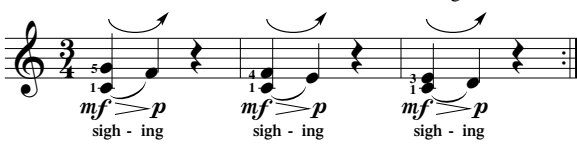
In music, the last note of a slur is usually played softly.

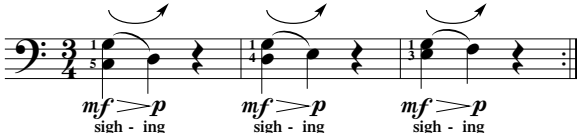
This can be called a *round-off*.

To softly “round-off” slurred notes, use an upward wrist motion.

Roll your hand forward (toward the piano) for the end of the slur.

- Practice round-offs for the slurs below. *Listen* for a “soft sigh.”

R.H. 

L.H. 

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range of wrist motion. Levels 2A and 2B established the slur gesture. The Round-Off at Level 3A refines the phrase ending, adding polish to both sound and gesture.

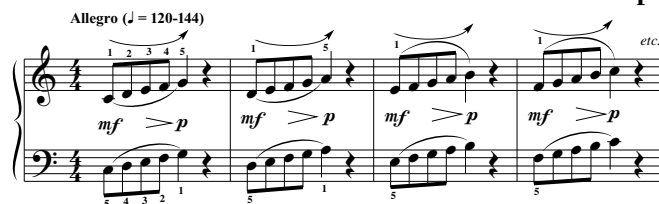
Rotation incorporates a throwing of arm weight with rebound, thus building on the technique secret Arm Weight taught at both the Primer and 2B Levels.

The “pedal by ear” secret, Pedal Rhythms, builds on the connected pedaling technique secret of Level 2B, now requiring the student to depress the damper pedal more quickly—on the “and” of the beat, and asking for more careful listening. Pedaling is approached in stages throughout *Piano Adventures*®: holding the pedal throughout a piece at the Primer and Level 1, up-down pedal notation at Level 2A, connected pedal at Level 2B, and more refined pedaling at Level 3A.

There is a continuing progression toward playing multiple notes in a single gesture. The three-note slur of Painter's Brush Stroke at Level 2B expands to 5-Note Scoops in Level 3A, and even to the playing of a full one-octave scale in a single gesture (8-Note Scoops). Notice how the expressive character is developed through gesture. Expressive scales are repeatedly encouraged in diverse settings such as Portrait of a Scale, Nine Lives of the Cat, Scale Monster, Scale Leader, and Olympic Torch.

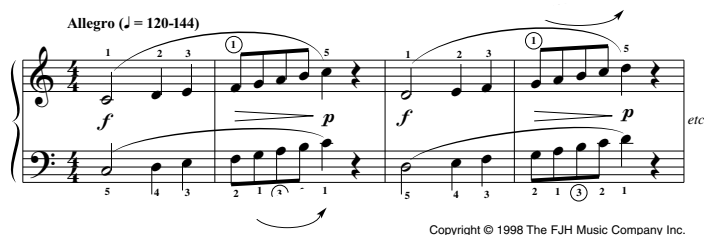
5-Note Scoops

Allegro ($\text{♩} = 120-144$)



8-Note Scoops

Allegro ($\text{♩} = 120-144$)



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In similar fashion, the accompanying left hand takes on increased expression with a down-up gesture that carries through the full measure. The accompaniment is also enhanced by the use of a light thumb, developed sequentially in Levels 2A and 2B (Light as a Feather and Weightless Thumb) and applicable here on the weak beats of the accompaniment pattern.

Repertoire at Level 3A

Do you see why we divided Levels 2 and 3 into A and B? We want our students to develop a depth of skill ... and this takes time. So, we've stretched these levels into two parts each. The student still feels a sense of achievement by graduating from one book to the next, but doesn't encounter too much difficulty too soon.

The Waltz Bass
(for L.H.)

Allegretto (♩ = 144)

MOTION: Down - up bounce, Down - up bounce,

L.H. *mf*

SOUND: STRONG gen - tle, STRONG gen - tle,

Canyon Echo
(for L.H. alone)

Andante

Count: 1 2 3 4 5 6

mf (echo) (echo) (echo) etc.

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Many are familiar with the *FunTime Piano* series, which designates Level 3 in the *PreTime to BigTime Supplementary Library*. As the name *FunTime* suggests, these books offer a diversion from the rigors of the method by exploring familiar tunes in a variety of musical styles. Though fun to play, the books are wonderfully effective for consolidating skill. A teacher should harness this series to adjust the method pacing. We frequently put a student through several *FunTime* books, one at a time, before moving up to Level 4 or *BigTime Piano*. In so doing, the student often discovers a favorite musical style while becoming increasingly comfortable with the process of reading music.

Deeper Understanding and Broader Application

I'm advocating here for deeper understanding and broader application at each level. This is significantly more valuable than a superficial flight up the levels. A premature leap in difficulty invites physical tension, reading frustration, incoherent musicality, and insufficient comprehension to find the simplicities that often permeate an apparently difficult score. Level-appropriate repertoire allows for expressive playing. It invites solid reading skills, strong pattern recognition in music theory, and a natural, coordinate technique. Analysis of theory concepts in the method repertoire and synthesis of theory concepts in composition and improvisation build a solid foundation of musicianship that can be applied to any genre or instrument.

Yes, we maintain high aspirations for our students. We expect diligent and significant practice. But instead of being concerned about speedy progress *up* the levels, we focus our teaching on developing depth and breadth at the student's current level.

The payoff is not just in the student's future success, with the ease in which repertoire will be mastered. There is payoff here and now. Theory comprehension isn't deferred until advanced study. Theory comprehension occurs with each piece in the current method repertoire. And significantly, artistry is not postponed for later piano literature. Artistic playing can be heard now—in the next piece your student plays. ■■■

PIANO

Adventures®

by Nancy and Randall Faber

Level 3A Piano Adventures®



Lesson Book FF1087

The Level 3A Lesson Book offers sufficient review to consolidate early-level skills while continuing to add new knowledge: 3/4 and 6/8 time, Key of D major, swing rhythm, and one-octave arpeggios.



Theory Book FF1088

Along with essential writing activities, the Theory Book presents sight-reading and ear-training instruction for each unit.



Performance Book FF1089

This engaging and expressive collection of pieces offers a varied repertoire while reinforcing the Lesson Book concepts.



Technique & Artistry FF1100

The "Technique Secrets" lay a foundation of physical gesture with an ear toward expressive playing. Each unit culminates in an "Artistry Magic" page with tips for artistic performance.



Christmas Book FF1141

"Sightreading Stocking Stuffers" follow each Christmas selection. These melodic variations build on the aural familiarity of the tune to promote recognition of musical patterns, and thus reading skill.



Popular Repertoire FF1260

Appealing popular standards are arranged to reinforce the concepts of the level. Each selection is paired with an Activity Page that addresses harmony, rhythm, ear-training, or other important musical skill.

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SETTING THE STANDARD FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

How To

Get Students “In the Groove”

BY MARIENNE USZLER

Prepare the Swing Rhythm

- ◆ Have the student tap or clap even eighth notes while chanting



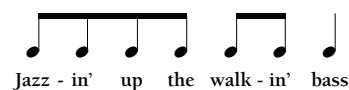
Try this with the left-hand notes in measure 1.

Repeat, as in a loop, with eyes closed.

- ◆ Have the student tap or clap swing eighth notes while chanting



or



Try this with the left-hand notes in measure 1.
Repeat, as in a loop, with eyes closed.

Prepare the Left-Hand Moves

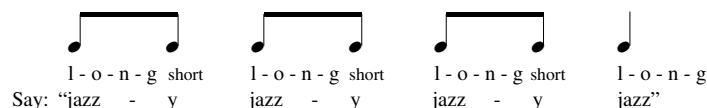
The idea here is to make sure the fingers cover all the notes in the pattern as a group. Then plan the moves based on where the thumb is: C, F, and G

- ◆ Block the patterns as they change in the piece. Make sure the student sees that the left-hand second finger covers a black key on the C and F patterns.
- ◆ Block the patterns in all the odd-numbered measures, followed by playing the quarter-note patterns (as they change) in all the even-numbered measures. Teacher plays the right-hand chords.

Swing Rhythm (common in jazz and blues)

In *swing rhythm*, 8th notes are played in a *long-short* pattern.

Tap or clap the 8th notes below in swing rhythm with your teacher.



If the **tempo mark** includes the word “swing,” play the 8th notes with a *long-short* swing rhythm.

Practice Suggestions:

1. First play *Cool Walkin' Bass* with even 8th notes at a slower tempo.
2. Then play with the 8th notes in a *long-short* pattern at a moderate **swing tempo**.



Cool Walkin' Bass

Moderate swing (♩ = 108-116)

Bud - dy plays a walk - in' bass, he can swing it.

Jazz - in' up the walk - in' bass

swing the eighths!

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Where are the blocked pattern and the quarter-note pattern the same?

(Measures 1-4)

Where are the blocked pattern and the quarter-note pattern different?

(Measures 5, 6)

Where does the quarter-note pattern change direction?

(Measures 7, 8)

Where do the patterns move quickly? (Measures 9-11)

There are two patterns on F. Check where the fourth finger is!

Where does the hand move in the last measure?

- ◆ Student plays the left hand (as is) with swing rhythm.
Sing the words in the piece. Teacher plays the chords.

5
3
1

Bud - dy's got a talk - in' bass, he can sing it.

7
2
3
4

Bud - dy's got a walk - in' bass, hear him swing it.

9
1
2
3
4

Pluck - in' those bass strings, do - in' his jazz thing.

11
1
2
3
4

Bud - dy's gon - na play it to - night!

8^{va} - - - 5 - - -

Remember, an *accidental* is a sharp, flat, or natural that is not in the key signature.
Point out 3 measures which have **no accidentals**.

Teacher Duet: (Student plays as written.)
8^{va} higher throughout

mp

mf

From *Piano Adventures Lesson Book*
Level 3A, pp. 34, 35

Prepare the Right-Hand Chords

- ◆ Show how the right hand barely moves. Notice the common tones.
(Measures 1-8: Thumb stays on C; fingers 3 and 5 slip up, then back)
(Measures 8, 9: Fifth finger stays on G; thumb slides down)
- ◆ Check out the right-hand moves in measures 9-11.
(Steps and skips)
- ◆ Practice all the right-hand chord moves with eyes closed!
- ◆ Have student play the right-hand chords as written.
Teacher plays the bass.

- ◆ Have student play the right-hand chords as written, but with eyes closed! Teacher plays the bass.

Play the Piece

When you play, the right hand should take care of itself. (That's why you practiced the chords with eyes closed.) Watch the left hand, and *think* in the left hand. That's where the action is.

Swing It!

Put on the CD or MIDI accompaniment and get in the groove! III

How To

“Fly” Through a Fugue

BY MARIENNE USZLER

The Flight of the Fugue

“Fugue” comes from the Latin “fuga” which means “flight.”

In a fugue, voices “flee” or “chase” one another by means of imitation.

This is a fun fugue.

- ◆ The subject is short
- ◆ Each announcement comes in right after the one before
- ◆ Each announcement enters just *after* the downbeat
- ◆ The counter subject is also short

It's nice to know that Pachelbel wrote something besides that “Canon!”

The Subject Is ...

The most important element in a fugue.

- ◆ It sets the mood of the fugue
- ◆ It must be heard clearly each time it enters
- ◆ It should be articulated the same way each time
- ◆ It gives the fugue its overall shape

Know the Subject

- ◆ Decide how to play (articulate) the subject. The words the editors suggest make it easy to capture its spirit: Knock, knock, knock, please let me in!

22

The rhythm and the melody have joined forces to create an immediately appealing motive. Think or sing this lyric during practice: “Knock, knock, knock, please let me in, let me in” at each entrance—soprano, alto, tenor, and bass. The fugue subject (the primary melody) occurs ten times in 15 measures, and it should always sing out above the other voices.

Little Fugue in C Major

JOHANN PACHELBEL
(1653–1706)

(Andante) (♩ = 76–84)

The musical score for 'Little Fugue in C Major' by Johann Pachelbel is presented in a single system. It is in 4/4 time and marked 'Andante' with a tempo of 76-84 beats per minute. The key signature is C major. The score consists of 15 measures. The right hand (R.H.) plays the main melody, which is a simple, catchy tune. The left hand (L.H.) provides a simple harmonic accompaniment. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and ornaments. Dynamics include *mf* (mezzo-forte), *p* (piano), and *f* (forte). The score is divided into four systems of four measures each, with the final measure of the fourth system being a double bar line.

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All the “knocks” are short.

Lean a little on “please.”

Slur “let me in.” Push off crisply on “in.”

- ◆ Play through the entire fugue with a steady tempo—subject only. Use the correct hand and fingering. (Don't miss the change to the right hand on the last note of the second entry!) Keep the tone solid—no dynamics yet. Make sure the articulation of each subject is exactly the same. Be careful not to slur the last “knock” to “please.”

Hear the Subject

- ◆ Play through the entire fugue, subject only, as before. This time *hear* how the subject gives the fugue harmonic shape—the tonality you hear on “please.”

Mm. 1-5: I-V-I-V-I

M. 6: Modulation to A Minor

Mm. 7, 8: (In A Minor) V-I




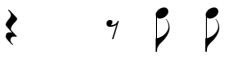
Mm. 9-11 (Back to C Major) V-I-I

- ◆ You can hear and see how the fugue has two parts.
Part I: Almost entirely in C Major, moving to its relative minor (A) at the end
Part II: Beginning in the relative minor (A), sliding quickly back “home” to C

Counter Attack

The **counter subject** is the material that appears with or “counter to” the subject. In most fugues the counter subject has the same, or similar, motives that reappear each time the subject is announced.

In this fugue, the counter subject uses one of two rhythmic figures as it joins the subject and pushes to beat 3 (“please”):

Subject			
Counter Subject		OR	

In just one place (M. 9) it comes in *on* the second beat. Be ready for it!

Subject	
Counter Subject	

- ◆ Play each entry of the subject together with its counter subject. Practice just “Knock, knock, knock, please.” Be sure to use correct fingering in each hand. If you are ready for each entrance with both the subject and counter subject, you’ll be prepared to play most of this fugue.
- ◆ The fugue gets “thicker” as it moves toward the end. In the beginning there are two voices, then three, then back to two (to modulate to A Minor). Watch how the lower voice climbs up the scale to A. The fugue then pushes on to a four-voice climax, after which it drops back to three, then two voices to close. ■■■

From *From Focus on Melody*,
Volume 1, page 22

Selected and Edited by Suzanne
Guy and Victoria McArthur

TEACHING PIANO PEDAGOGY

Learning to Teach Teaching to Learn

BY FRANCES LARIMER

Editor's Note: This column is directed to those readers who teach pedagogy. There are two ways to look at "pedagogy." Each time anyone teaches anything, "pedagogy" is involved. In that sense, we all are "pedagogy" teachers. In a more restricted sense, however, the word refers to the art of teaching others how to teach. Although articles on this page speak to those in the latter category, we hope that all readers will find them informative and thought-provoking.

There are two main components in organized pedagogy study:

Information: readings, discussions, lectures, research, and observation of master teachers

Practice: on-going supervised intern teaching

Supervised intern teaching is the most important, and it should run concurrently with the informational component.

Pianists should be aware that teaching is also a performance skill. It requires the same scrupulous study and evaluation as performance on an instrument.

To perform as a teacher, the pianist must consider

- ◆ overall musicianship
- ◆ communication skills with students of differing ages and levels
- ◆ body language/energy level
- ◆ sensitivity to student personality, behavior, and learning style
- ◆ organization and sequencing of learning steps (lesson planning and diagnostic skills)
- ◆ pacing (lesson variety and timing of activities)
- ◆ self-evaluation (what was successful; what needs improvement)

Novice teachers cannot deal with these aspects all at once any more than they can deal simultaneously with learning all aspects a piano work.

The intern teacher should consider a number of points. (These would apply to both individual and group lesson settings.)

The Organizational Aspects of the Lesson

What *new* material do you wish to cover?

How will you sequence a step-by-step process?

How will you set up a model for successful practice?

What material do you plan to *review*?

What are ways to vary the review?

What new practice steps will be added if continuation on the material is appropriate?

How can you *involve the student* in the learning process?

What *thought-provoking questions* will you ask?

In a group lesson, how might students *interact* with each other?

What main points will you *summarize* at the end?

What *practice steps* will be emphasized and demonstrated?

Evaluate your performance

Were directions clear?

Were students actively involved?

Did students experience each activity at the lesson?

PEDAGOGY TEACHERS!

Join us in an informal survey.

Do you require pedagogy students to perform intermediate literature in any of your courses?

Please share with us when and how you do this (or not).

Go to www.PianoTeaching.com

Click on "The Piano Club"

Click on "Teaching Piano Pedagogy"

The intern teacher's lesson plan would be outlined in order of the presentation, and each lesson activity should be timed to assist in keeping on schedule.

A Down-Side to This Procedure

Intern teachers can become so engrossed in the lesson plan and what comes next that they are unaware of student responses and behaviors. The student may bungle or misunderstand some activity, and, in an effort to get through the lesson plan, the intern teacher cheerfully announces "good" and plows on! The prepared lesson plan may also be unsuitable for the moment and may need to be modified on the spot. A quick switch in the order and length of time spent on an activity would be more appropriate. These are learning steps that beginning intern teachers will experience, and they cannot totally be avoided.

After learning how to plan and organize the lesson, however, the intern teacher must move on to focus attention on student responses and the student input in the learning process.

This leads to a more integrated process

- ◆ sensitivity to student musical and verbal responses
- ◆ learning to be flexible with the lesson plan—expanding or shortening it
- ◆ involving students more in the learning process—posing thought-provoking questions and generating discussion

Becoming a successful teacher then begins to meld together.

Self-Evaluation

The video camera is a great tool. The intern teacher should preview and evaluate the taped lesson in advance of a conference with the supervisor. There is a tendency for both supervisor and intern teacher to enumerate what was not so successful and to discuss ways to make repairs. It is equally important to note what was successful and why in order to repeat the success in other situations.

Before a More Student-Centered Approach

My own experience has shown that student-centered awareness comes more easily if some organizational expertise comes first. A comparison could be made with repertoire study.

Organizing and sequencing a lesson is comparable to the early stages of learning a new score. Awareness and sensitivity to student learning and performance is comparable to incorporating musicality and expressiveness within a piece.

As these processes are regularly experienced with constructive feedback from a supervisor, the intern teacher becomes more adept at blending organizational skills with student-centered learning into a seamless whole experience. Most intern teachers discover that the process of teaching improves their own practice and performance. They begin to apply to themselves what they teach to others.

Thus—Learning to Teach becomes Teaching to Learn! ■■■

TALKING TECH

Get More for Your Money!

BY MARIENNE USZLER

Using technology in your studio doesn't always mean fussing with cables or experimenting with new programs. It need not even mean buying equipment or software. You already have things on hand that you could use to better advantage. For instance ... the MIDI disks or CDs that you have purchased as part of your *Piano Adventures*® library.

Yes, they are designed as accompaniments to the pieces in all the Lesson, Performance, and Technique & Artistry books. You may be using them as the “dessert” after a piece or an exercise has been worked on, or to enhance recital performances. It's possible that you may also be using them to stimulate interest in a particular piece. But, wait—as the infomercials always claim—there's more!

These exciting accompaniments can be used for rhythm and listening experiences, too. Some of them may work better in a group setting, but all of them may be used with individual students. Several suggest ways to use rhythm instruments you might already possess, or perhaps these ideas may motivate you to add a few rhythm instruments to your studio.


Remember—these are done with the MIDI disk or the CD accompaniments!

LEVEL 1

Lesson Book: Forest Drums, page 26 (Mm. 1-8; Mm. 17-28)

Use a tambourine.

1) Student taps on beat 1 of each measure.

2) Then student taps using 

Performance Book: A Merry March, page 12

Have the student march energetically around the room.

(I know this sounds ordinary, but it promotes full-body movement, an experience too often lacking in a piano lesson.)

Performance Book: The Crazy Clown, page 16

How many of the sounds can the student identify?

(There are many different sounds, all of them quite short. This promotes careful listening. It's not important if you can't name them all. It's the listening and trying that are important.)

LEVEL 2

Lesson Book: I Am the King, page 18

Use (a) drum(s)

1) Student drums the rhythm “I Am the King” each time it occurs.

2) Student drums on beats 1 and 3 in measures with the left-hand melody, then drums the “I Am the King” rhythm in measures where it occurs.

3) Create the rhythm you want to drum for the last four measures.

Technique & Artistry Book: Hound Dog Boogie, page 26

Student does “Flying Fingers” on the fallboard.

Move left hand up or down as required in the piece.

Listen to audio files for these examples!

Get a free MIDI download!

Log on to www.pianoteaching.com/newsletter

LEVEL 3A

Lesson Book: 7th Street Blues, page 14

1) Student claps on beats 2 and 4 (like a jazzier would, with body “feel”)

2) Student then claps on beats 2 and 4 in most measures; in measures 3 and 7 student claps on beats 2, 3, 4

(This gets the student to differentiate between on-beat and off-beat pulses. Feeling strong off-beats is typical of jazz.)

Lesson Book: Land of the Silver Birch, page 15

1) Student taps/claps the rhythm heard in the accompaniment. (Have student discover that it's the right-hand rhythm in the last line.)

2) Student plays the right-hand rhythm and notes from M. 13, two octaves higher, throughout the piece

3) Student plays the right-hand rhythm from M. 13, two octaves higher, but creates an original motive using the notes of the D Minor chord.

(This is a listen-to-something-else-while-you-play experience, like being part of an ensemble.)

Lesson Book: Cool Walkin' Bass, page 34

Student steps/stamps and sways body on beats 1 and 3, and clicks fingers on beats 2 and 4

(Here's another chance to engage in full-body movements. Encourage strong, jazzy body language.)

Performance Book: Carnival of Venice, page 4

Student blocks the chords as they change, but with eyes closed!



(This teaches the student to anticipate the harmonic changes.)

Performance Book: The Great Wall of China, page 22

1) Student discovers the pentatonic scale used in the right-hand melody, probably in this position:



2) Using this scale an octave higher than the right hand, improvise a descant melody in Mm. 1-8, Mm. 17-23, and Mm. 28-31 using this rhythm



Do another improvisation in this way, but with eyes closed! (This is a more complex listen-while-you-play experience.)

All of these activities are ways to use the MIDI disks or CDs in addition to having the student play the piano with the accompaniment. When students have varied experiences with a piece—especially those that intensify the rhythmic feel—you can be sure that will translate into a more rhythmic piano-playing performance, too. As you noticed, the activities grew more complex and challenging as the level increased. You can create similar—or even more ingenious—activities as you work with your own students.

Remember—the accompaniments can have multiple uses. And it's a way for you to capitalize on your investment! ■■■

TAKIN' CARE OF BUSINESS

Careers for Pianists: Part Three

BY BETH GIGANTE KLINGENSTEIN

Editor's Note: This is the final list of careers in music for the pianist. The checklist below suggests academic routes to prepare for certain careers, but degrees may not be necessary in all cases.

BUSINESS AND SERVICE CAREERS

COMPOSER

Requires

- individuality and artistic vision
- composition study
- extensive study in music theory, counterpoint, form and analysis, music history
- understanding the fundamentals of all instruments
- highest possible level of musical skill on an instrument

For composer at a university

- ability to teach college level courses

For arranger or songwriter

- ability to supplement income
- understanding of copyright laws
- understanding of the music business

Degrees: BM, MM, DM in Composition, Music Theory, Performance

<http://music-usa.org/nacusa/index.html>

www.societyofcomposers.org

www.composerforum.org

www.under.org.cpsc

www.songwriters.org/nas2.htm

CONDUCTOR

Requires

- conducting courses
- broad knowledge of choral/instrumental repertoire and capabilities
- understanding of musical periods and styles of performance
- understanding of musical form and analysis
- usually needs supplemental income

Degrees: BM, MM, DMA in Choral or Instrumental Conducting

<http://acdaonline.org/>

<http://www.symphony.org/career/index.shtml>

ARTS ADMINISTRATOR

Arts administrators work for performing organizations, festivals, community and state arts agencies, and museums.

Requires

- experience in the arts
- organizational skills
- ability to multitask
- skill in public relations and promotion
- good speaking and writing skills
- knowledge of budgets and fund-raising
- grant-writing skills

- governance and board development skills
- program development skills
- faculty hiring and evaluating skills
- long-range planning skills
- strategic planning skills
- understanding of the arts and arts curriculum
- governance and board development skills

Degrees: BM, BA, MM in Music, Arts

Management

www.artsnet.org/aaac/

www.nationalguild.org—click on Programs, click on AMICI

MUSIC THERAPIST

Requires

- music courses (history, theory, performance, conducting, instrumental technique, ensembles)
- music therapy courses (principles, psychology of music, practica experience)
- biological and behavioral sciences (anatomy, abnormal psychology, sociology, exceptional children)
- completion of a six-month clinical internship under the direction of a registered music therapist in an AMTA approved music therapy program
- Certification after successful completion of the AMTA national certification exam

Degrees: BM; MMT in Music Therapy

www.musictherapy.org

<http://members.aol.com/kathysl>

MUSIC PUBLISHING

Requires

- strong background in music
- ability to network
- library and research skills
- prior experience in the music field
- experience with computers and technology

Degrees: BM, MM with a business emphasis; degree with a music/business minor

www.mpa.org/

www.ascap.com/index.html

www.nmpa.org/

MUSIC EDITOR

Requires

- strong background in music
- attention to detail and understanding of the material being edited
- excellent writing skills
- ability to network
- interpersonal skills

Degrees: BM, MM, DMA

MUSIC TECHNOLOGY

Music technology jobs include the teaching of notation, sequencing, and electronic composition; working in the recording industry; notating or engraving music; working as a sound technician; and working in music publishing.

Requires

- classes in music history, theory, performance
- knowledge of notation software, sequencing, MIDI
- classes in sound recording, multimedia authoring, sound synthesis, digital signal processing, and audio editing
- classes in music software applications

Degrees: BM, MM, DMA in Music Technology

www.music.org/atmi/

<http://php.auburn.edu/outreach/dl/ctmu/NSMIT/2003/>

<http://musictech.com>

www.ti-me.org

PIANO TECHNICIAN

Requires

- strong piano skills
- completion of a set of three examinations to qualify as a Registered Piano Technician (RPT): written, technical, and tuning

Degrees: BM in piano, Certification as a RPT

www.ptg.org/ptg.htm

INSTRUMENT MAKER

Requires

- study and graduation from a recognized instrument-making school
- apprentice with a master

Degrees: BM

http://musicmoz.org/Business/Instruments/Builders_and_Manufacturers/Keyboard/Harpsichord/

www.guitarplans.co.uk/ViolinMakingCourses.htm

http://dir.yahoo.com/Business_and_Economy/Shopping_and_Services/Music/Instruments_and_Equipment/Keyboard_Instruments/Piano/Makers/

SALES

Requires

- clear understanding of the music profession
- familiarity with all inventory (publications, music, instruments, accessories)
- strong business skills
- ability to play an instrument is an asset

Degrees: BA, BM, MM

BS, MS in Business

www.printmusic.org

FAMILY TREE

A Method Becomes “Popular”

BY MARIENNE USZLER

Piano methods were needed in the early years of the 20th century. Having a piano in the parlor was a mark of distinction. As Arthur Loesser recounts in *Men, Women, and Pianos*, there “was a prodigious rise in the density of piano distribution.” On every working day in 1910, for example, “1,200 persons bought a new piano.” That also increased the number of “piano dabblers.”

It is not surprising, then, that learning to play the piano became a domestic pastime, especially for girls and women. For them, learning to play did not mean aspiring to anything grandiose. They were content to perform popular songs and “salon” pieces. They had to learn to read music, but they weren’t very interested in technique or great piano literature. Being able to accompany the family sing-along or dash off a pretty tune would do nicely, thank you.

Methods to acquire these modest skills multiplied like rabbits, as did the army of (mostly incompetent) teachers who gave piano lessons for “pin money.” I’ve never been able to locate the exact source of that expression, but it may be more than a curious coincidence that in the last decades of the 19th century and the earliest decade of the 20th, small pianos and sewing machines were sold in the same stores, to the same customers. They were both household commodities.

One of the most successful of these methods (it eventually sold over 10 million copies) was written by John M. Williams, a pianist and teacher who lived a very long life, from 1884 to 1974. Williams had obviously found a winning formula that appealed to the students playing all those parlor pianos. It first appeared in 1925. Williams stressed that it was a preparatory, not a first-grade, book.

A look at the *Very First Piano Book* gives ample evidence that Williams knew something about good teaching, but was also able to present piano instruction in language that meshed with the interests of female players.

The opening posture-at-the-piano page is addressed “To Mothers” and includes photographs of a little girl with her Mary Jane-shod feet properly placed on a box rather than wound around the piano stool. All references are female: “her lesson,” “when she looks at the music,” “her expression.”

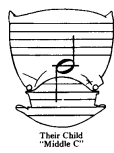
By current pedagogical practices, analogies used to teach the clefs and Middle C are embarrassing. “Mr. Bass Clef” and “Mrs. Treble Clef” each have extensive families, but they also have “their” child, Middle C (rocking in a cradle), who is the “great favorite.”

MRS. TREBLE CLEF AND HER “FAMILY,”
MR. BASS CLEF AND HIS “FAMILY,”
and THEIR “FAMILY”—MIDDLE C!

(The illustration at the bottom of the page shows MRS. TREBLE CLEF and MR. BASS CLEF looking at their child MIDDLE C, who rocks in his cradle—between the two staves!)
Of course: MRS. TREBLE CLEF will have to look out for HER children!—and MR. BASS CLEF will have to watch out for HIS children!—but THEIR CHILD—MIDDLE C—(who belongs to BOTH—MRS. TREBLE CLEF and MR. BASS CLEF)—will doubtless get to “play” all the time!
He’s a great favorite—is MIDDLE C!



Mr. Bass Clef

Their Child
“Middle C”

Mrs. Treble Clef

Williams makes some important points in the early pages, once again addressed “to teachers and mothers.”

- ◆ The aim of all educational training should be self-activity
- ◆ A child learns by doing, not by telling
- ◆ From the known to the unknown is a good maxim

That said, Williams then proceeds to do the opposite.

The entire grand staff is presented at the outset. A detachable staff notation chart is included in the book designed so that when placed against the fallboard, each key would correlate with its staff look and name. The student is to place this chart behind the black keys “daily as long as necessary.”

This is a straightforward Middle C reading and playing approach. Notes develop outward from Middle C, and the reading range in the entire book extends from F below Middle C (used once) to B above Middle C.

LEFT! RIGHT! ONWARD MARCH!

To be taught first by **ROTE**—not from the notes.
After it has been taught by **rote**—then play from the chart above—
then from the music below.

Played with the thumb first finger of each hand.

WHAT THE EAR HEARS IS ACCENTS (which cause pulsation).
WHAT THE EYE SEES IS MEASURES.
BARS ARE VERTICAL LINES DRAWN ACROSS THE STAFF.
BARS DIVIDE THE STAFF INTO MEASURES.
THE FIRST NOTE AFTER THE BAR-LINE IS GENERALLY ACCENTED.

THREE notes UP and three notes DOWN from MIDDLE C

BELL IN THE STEEPLE

ON PARADE

The reading range advances quickly. At the end, the location of the five Cs is diagrammed (Middle C, the Line Twins, the Space Twins), but there is no music to correlate with these notes.

Rhythmic note values or rests are never explained. Eighth notes are used on page 30 and several pieces thereafter. Since all the pieces have words and most are from nursery rhymes (like Polly Put the Kettle On, Diddle-Dee-Dee Dumpling, Lazy Mary), rhythms were presumably learned by singing the words.

In its fast pacing, minimal explanations, and lack of reinforcing material, it is like other methods of the time. What set this method apart—and must have accounted for its popularity (many books followed and were revised into the '60s)—was its mass-market appeal. Williams knew his audience ... and he certainly paved the way for John Thompson. ■

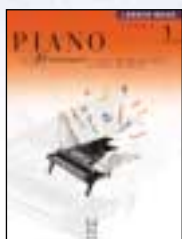
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