



Music Makers: at the Keyboard, Year 1, Book 2 (Green Book) – Weeks 19 through 21

Dear Teachers,

Week 19

Singing Circle –I no longer use the cards in a basket for the children to choose from. Instead, I pick three pieces I feel are related to the class.

I include:

- New pieces I want the children to become familiar with
- Pieces they have recently learned at the piano and I want to review or give them a chance to share at the piano
- Older pieces that relate to a concept in the lesson

(You can also refer to the choices of pieces in the Piano Partners curriculum)

In this lesson, I will include *Drum Song*, *Willum*, and *All the Little Ducklings*

You are welcome to continue to use the cards in a basket game, but don't be afraid to mix it up and start with something else first. You are also welcome to intermix depending on where the children are at. For example, I will sing and dance with John Kanaka and then ask for volunteers to play the piece with other children accompanying with chords or with singing.

Vocal/ Keyboard Improvisation Step 2 - Tonal improvisation - I like to start the activity by echoing tonal patterns based on the tonic chord. Possible examples would be:

Do – Mi- Sol

Sol – Mi- Sol

Sol – Sol – Mi

Mi – Sol – Do.

I think out loud. I ask myself, "What pattern would I like to create?" I stop, think, and then I say, "Let's try this one." then I ask them to be my echo. Then I say, "Let's play a game. I will make up a three-note pattern, and you will answer me with a different pattern." I take a moment to think and then I select a student I think will have the most success to start. I sing a pattern I created (the question) and they respond with a different pattern (the answer). I want to keep this first step fun and light and when I have a student that seems reluctant to answer I gently give them a default pattern (Do-Do-Do) as an answer they can always use. Once they get the game I again ask the children to create a three-tone pattern using the three elements: D, Mi and/or Sol; no ti, re, fa or la allowed. When they have a pattern, they just need to show me with a thumbs up. After they answer, I respond with one of the following:

- When the pattern is in tune and labeled correctly, I echo the pattern and then encourage the class to repeat my echo
- When the pattern is sung with incorrect pitch, I ask, "Did you mean...." And I sing the contributed pattern with the corrected pitch. Most children say, "Yes, that is what I meant." I then ask the children to echo the corrected pattern.



- If they choose to make up a pattern using re or fa or ti or la, I acknowledge them and then remind them of the rules. **My game, my rules.**

All the Little Ducklings – After singing the song and echoing the patterns in the piece, I play a quick aural recognition game. I ask where the pattern, “Do re mi fa sol” is in the piece. Then I wait while they go through the piece and usually a student will answer and then I have them replace the words with the pattern. After we play with the piece like this I will quickly do the song/play process away from the piano. I let them know I am going to start with a brand new warm-up special for this piece and it will be done by the left hand. I introduce a new fingering that involves the second finger crossing over the thumb of the left hand. After we practice the movement on the floor, we do the song/play process again at the piano and I do step 5, linking the patterns after each pattern. I will need to go around and check that they are trying the new fingering and actually playing with their left hand. I make a point of asking the children to play the melody only with the left hand and teach this piece as a left-hand melody piece only. Although I keep the melody in the left hand, my more stubborn students will insist on playing the melody in the right hand and using quite unusual fingering. I let them do this and then gently remind them that the melody is played by the left hand only for now. Save chords for next week.

Minor Purple Pattern Cards Game 2 - to save time I have them pull these cards out before the beginning of class and I collect them. Then I can set them up quickly as they move to the floor. First, we quickly review 1 – 4 and we play the game of playing the game where the student identifies 1 in 4 cards and then add a second card. I have my students play the cards at the piano. Observe their ability to keep up and it will tell you if they did the home listening or not. Do the same with 5 – 8. Keep it simple and not too long. Collect the cards and remember to bring them out again to distribute at parent time.

Dictation: Hot Cross Buns in G Major on page 12 – I take out a board and some manuscript paper. Then I write the do – do –do pattern in D do ask them to identify. This will include telling me the note is found “below the staff”. I do the same for “Mi – re-do”. Then I ask how these patterns would look in G Do. I hand out the paper and a pencil and we practice writing the patterns in G do. Then we start the dictation.

Parent time: Hand out the purple cards you collected and go to pp. 13, 14 to review the homework. I let them know they should try their compositions out on the piano at home because I will be asking them to play the pieces in class next week. Review *All the Little Ducklings*, and remind the children to play the warm-up and the melody with the left hand. Go quickly through the Dictation, reading from their books. Check last week’s homework, assign this week’s piano assignment and you are all set.



Week 20

Singing Circle – As before I choose three pieces that I feel will aid today's lesson.

All the Little Duckling, Willum and Who's That.

All the Little Ducklings week 2 - Because I only teach the melody of *All the Little Ducklings* in the left hand in lesson 19, I will review the song again in the left hand and introduce the chords in the right hand. I review the new fingering (finger 2 over the thumb) and ask for shares of the piece in the left hand. I then spend the time working on chords in the right hand. We practice a simple warm-up focused on moving from a I chord to a IV chord. For many of the children, this will mean working with two note rather than three note chords however my warm-up is this.

Do Mi So, I chord (when they sing "I chord" they sing on the pitch "Do" as they play either a three or two note I chord)

Do Fa La IV chord (when they sing IV chord they sing on the pitch "Fa" as they play either a three or two note IV chord. I explain the thumb as an anchor – it is found in both chords, so it stays on the Do. The fifth finger moves gracefully from Sol to La and back again. If I hear success I will then have them play the open fifth and then add the Mi with their third finger. They then move to the open sixth and add the Fa with their third finger. I know I am establishing good fingering so I work on this motion if it is appropriate at this time. However, I will leave it with open intervals if this all they can muster.

We continue with:

Ti Fa Sol, V7 chord (when they sing "V7 chord" they sing on the pitch "Sol" as they play either a three or two note V7 chord.)

Then I have them practice altogether moving from chord to chord. I direct by pointing when to change chords by signing with one finger for I chord, four fingers for a IV chord and five fingers for a V7 chord. When this seems manageable, I will have them sing "All the Little Ducklings" as they accompany the melody with these chords in the Right Hand, me directing. Perhaps one child may play the melody with their left hand as well.

Duple Cards II, Game 3 – Again, choose to collect these cards before you begin class so that you can easily move to this activity without losing the flow while children go looking. Children forget their cards at home so be ready with your set and choose who is going to share their cards. In future years you can always ask for donations of cards and then have extra on hand.

Mystery Song – Keep the ritual of reading the same each week.

- Review any patterns from the piece with cards or on a board
- Find the key of the piece,
- Identify the starting note
- Look for and mark repeating patterns



- Identify chords
- Chant the rhythm together
- Sing the melody together
- Identify the piece
- Have one or two volunteers try the melody and one or two follow chords.

Minor Compositions – I have them play their compositions on the piano, which I said at parent time last week.

Parent time – At the pianos have the children sing All the Little Ducklings while playing the chords with their Right hand. You are the conductor. Talk about the IV chord. Review the two tonic question/answer game you did earlier in class. Hand out those pink cards and assign this week's homework.

Week 21

This week I am definitely going to choose *Willum*, *Oranges and Lemons* and *Drum Song*. Follow with patterns.

Tonal improvisations with Two Tonal patterns are a bit more intricate because the student needs to think a larger answer and end on Do. Make sure your question pattern does NOT end on Do. Someone will ask why you don't get to end on Do. I just respond that it sounds better if they end on the resting tone rather than me ending on a resting tone. Use the same process as in week 19, first echoing Two Tonic patterns ending on Do and having them create their own Two tonic patterns. Then expand to the question/ answer game.

Willum - works on crossing over the thumb in the left hand, which they have learned to do with "All the Little Duckling" so again I teach the melody for left hand only. After the reviewing the warmup, now in minor, we go through the song/play process. I then warm up the chords for the right hand. Again I have them accompany the melody by singing the melody and playing the chords with the right hand. I repeat this accompanying for the parents and then encourage a few of the children to try to play the melody and the chords at the same time.

Seven Jumps – Keep it light and fun. Here is a chance to move and experience 16th notes.

Duple Cards III, Game 1 – use the same ritual you have used before to introduce the cards

Hoop Dance – use patterns from the orange cards as an ostinato as you drum along. If the children have been with you since Music Makers Around the World you may be tempted to pull out the hoops. Go for it!



Dictation – You may want to repeat the process I described earlier for Hot Cross Buns. Practice drawing the patterns in the dictation key is a nice way to start the dictation.

Until next month,

Ellen Johansen