

RMTA BREAKFAST MEET DISCUSSIONS– AUGUST 16, 2024

Highlands of Wyomissing

1. Transfer kids
 - a. Student with no knowledge of LH/bass clef; also has learning issues. Does know treble clef.
 - i. Try some finger number drills; rote LH patterns; LH blues line
 - ii. Try Music Tree method (Frances Clark); begins with two lines forcing the child to continue with directional reading; gradually adds lines until there is a complete staff.
 - b. Older transfer kids – main issue is usually technical.
 - i. Use technique books: Hanon, Czerny, Pischna, Phillippe for older kids. One-a-Day for younger kids.
 - ii. Scales!!
2. Kids who can't/don't count
 - a. Determine their counting 'vocabulary' and use that consistently-- 1&2& / ta-ti-ti / du-de-du-de (what do they do in school)
 - b. Use physical motions while verbalizing (i.e. Kodaly)
 - c. Sit on exercise ball while playing. Bounce to the beat.
3. The child who won't stop talking even while playing.
 - a. Make them sing while playing; helps keep them focused
 - b. Close the piano lid: that means quiet fingers and quiet tongue
4. Remember LH and RH
 - a. Color coding – lavender/left, red/right – in music
 - b. Place a picture of each colored hand on the piano rack
 - c. Also a problem with kids who can't verbalize LH/RH
 - d. Physical activities – i.e. pass ball to the right, then to the left.
5. Remembering lines and spaces
 - a. Each student make up a verse that is personal to them
 - b. Sidenote....this generation of kids have problems with memory skills in general (no help button)
6. Teaching legato to beginners
 - a. Sing while you play! Singing is legato.
 - b. Some beginning kids lack the motor skills necessary to play legato. Must wait until that develops.
 - c. Start with two notes – 'see-saw' back and forth on two notes, then three, etc.
 - d. Listen to make the sound 'run together'
 - e. Some kids can't hear what they are playing and can't hear the different between legato and non-legato.
 - i. Record them and play it back.
7. Teaching rubato
 - a. Develop an overall map of the piece and decide where you want to use legato.
 - b. Too much can make the music become predictable and will make your audience seasick.
 - c. Begins with understanding ritardando and how to play it.
 - d. Must consider the harmonic structure, phrasing, tempos, character, etc.
8. Fingering
 - a. What's in the score is a suggestion. There will be many possibilities based on student's hand size, shape.
 - b. Rarely is there one solution.
9. Parents in lessons.
 - a. Some like it, some don't. Absolutely for beginning students so the parents are engaged in their child's learning.
 - b. Must keep control of the talkative parent. Know when it's time to kick them out.

10. Vision issues

- a. Dyslexia, focus, 'floating notes'
- b. It was suggested we book an eye therapist for one of our gatherings.

11. Teaching polyrhythms

- a. Physical activity – clapping or tapping
- b. Verbalizing rhythms
- c. Exercise ball to sit on while playing, bouncing to the beat

12. Beginner student transition from directional off-staff note-reading to directional off-staff note reading WITH letter names in the notehead. Student totally perplexed.

- a. Create songs with only starting letter name so the student is still reading direction.