
LESSON 1: BASICS

Learning points:

1. Proper posture at the piano
2. Finger numbers
3. Letters on the keyboard (keyboard geography)

Piece of the week:

The Edge of Space

1. Work on this piece in 2-bar segments, not moving forward until you internalize the pattern of notes. You want to be able to “get” the pattern (perhaps without looking at the music) before moving on to the next pattern. Your priority is learning the letters on the keys.
2. Another priority is expression. We’ll talk about dynamics more later, but think about how you can create a beautiful sound with this one, right from your first practice session.
3. Follow the letters and finger numbers of this piece, but don’t worry about rhythm. We’ll get there soon!

Technique:

1. Spend about 3-5 minutes/day finding each of the letter names on the piano. Find all A’s, then B’s, then C’s, and so on.
2. Bonus points if you can get someone to give you a pop quiz: have them call out a random letter, and practice finding it immediately.
3. The goal is to have the note letters so engrained by the end of the week that you don’t have to think about them much – allowing you full focus on reading music.

Sight Reading:

1. Go through one sight reading exercise per day (5m). Try with each hand separately. Don’t worry about the notated rhythm; see if you’re able to “hear” what the tune is supposed to sound like.

Method book:

- If working through **Piano Adventures for Adults**, you can work through all of Unit 1.
- If working through **Alfred’s for Adults**, you can play up to “Aura Lee”, right before the introduction to the Grand Staff.

Practice tips:

- For this week, if you're not working with method books or other materials, you'll only need to commit about 20-30 minutes of practice per day. I'd much prefer you work in small amounts daily, and get to the piano daily, than bigger bursts but less frequently. Small bursts are best; the brain needs time to rest.
- Each practice session, expect to spend approximately 5 minutes on technique, 5 minutes on sight reading, and 10-20 minutes on the main piece for the week.
- If you're working with a method book, have a secondary 20-30 minute practice session where you work through this material. I highly recommend doing this – the more you're reading and moving your fingers, the better!