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EXPLANATION

F O R W A R D

Throughout my years as a teacher I have become increasingly aware of the need to bring forth a concept in teaching that would assist pupils of all levels to help themselves when there was no recourse of study available to them.

As I worked within the smaller communities of Alberta, I could not help but notice the plight of pupils who wanted to take music lessons. The scenario was always the same.

Someone new comes to the community who is blessed with a few years of musical training and is quickly descended upon by youngsters who want to play the piano.

The person becomes "The Teacher" and after a time, leaves the community, for whatever reason. The children are left without any further instruction.

After an interval, someone else with a similar background comes into the community and the whole process is repeated.

The children can and do go through as many as two and three teachers in the space of a year, each with individual ideas of teaching.

Because the method differs between teachers, the pupils are often required to "start all over".

This tends to leave the children feeling frustrated, no sense of anything having been accomplished and the community itself, wary of strangers who profess to teach music.

When I put the question to the communities "Where are all the qualified teachers", I received the same answers.

"They don't want to come" and "they came for a short time and then they left."

Distance too far, didn't want to drive out so far.

When I took up permanent residence in my small community, I determined that even though I knew that one day down the road, it would be necessary for my own growth to leave, I would not leave my beloved pupils without something. And so the idea of a Musical Legacy was born.

With this in mind, I have written my little book in the hopes that all who follow "The Barbara Solis Method of Teaching" will be filled with a kind of learning so that for a time at least, they would not need a teacher.

completely guided by Divine Higher Creative Intelligence was written

to continue building when they could once again have musical instruction. During those times when there was a teacher & see them thru' a period when a teacher was not available.

pupils

that would

OVER

Eventually the concept was translated to those who wanted to teach & educate in the musical arena. Faced with this enormous responsibility it is not difficult to lead people astray & I'm the first to admit that I have erred many many times

During the writing of the book, the following words were given to me. If I may I should like to read them to you before we begin.
my workshop READ What is a Teacher (2)

4

original
don't make

WHAT IS A TEACHER

A good teacher clarifies his own ideas and strengthens them by teaching them.

Teacher and pupil are alike in the learning process. They are in the same order of learning and unless they share their lessons, conviction will be lacking.

A good teacher must believe in the ideas he teaches and he must believe in the pupils to whom he offers the ideas.

Teaching helps to change the mind - yours and others.

Every good teacher hopes to give his pupils so much of his own learning so that one day they will no longer need him.

This is the true goal of the teacher.

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1

I N T R O D U C T I O N

to the Workshop
Method

~~Presentation to~~

My method of teaching is based very simply on experience. During my many years as a professional teacher, certain problems would arise in connection with the discipline I was teaching for which there was no immediate answer. While I was most appreciative of the vast sources of material on the market for teaching purposes, presentation, etc., and while I attended the various workshops which were and are still being offered in an effort to assist the teacher, these did not always solve the basic problems either.

And so I began to look at the world of music and its problems through myself and through the eyes of the children whom I taught.

Although I was considered to be a very gifted child, it was not always easy for me as that gifted child to work with specific problems at the piano such as a new piece which contained a complex rhythm, or how to best remember a passage from Bach or Schumann.

Since it was taken for granted that I "knew" how to handle the basic elements in music, who was I to speak up and tell my teacher that I really did not know how to work through such and such a problem.

Such assumptions in place of proper preparatory work eventually became a larger problem and over a long range period of time showed up particularly in my own personal approach to the element of Rhythm.

Memory is another example. As a gifted child, I had an excellent memory. Most of the time I did not even know how I "remembered". But the time came and again over a long period of time, when my style of memorization just would not hold up and it became very necessary to seek a much more secure approach to remembering one's work.

As the years progressed, it became apparent that I was not a perfect pianist. Alas, how often and how painful it was to be reminded of my inadequacies in areas which were considered to be quite basic.

In coming to terms with this reality, I started analyzing every area of my playing to see how I could improve it.

My attention then focussed upon my pupils. Was it possible that they were encountering the same difficulties I had and that my assumptions would create similar problems for them in future years?

I began to wonder if it were possible to develop some kind of method of teaching whereby all pupils of all ages who came to study with me would not only be provided with a firm foundation but could be left with something that

would help them to open the musical doors for themselves as well as be of lasting value to them.

"The Barbara Solis Method of Teaching" is intended as an aid only to musical studies as I am totally aware that every teacher has his or her own way of doing things.

It is intended to present a way of teaching which may help to stimulate the pupils' interest and give them opportunity to progress at a much more rapid rate without the boredom that certain types of repetitious study tends to produce.

In spite of rigorous training ~~in the arena~~ of Lines and Spaces, the truth of the matter is that there are very few pupils who can read their bass clef as fluently as their treble clef.

I wrestled with this problem for several months until an idea of how to combine the learning of notes, and lines and spaces with what was on the agenda for the lesson, came to me.

What I was looking for was a way to put fluency, accuracy, and understanding into what was being learned. And I wanted something that would give the students the ability to put what was being learned towards new work so that they would not feel held back when they did want to progress on their own, *nor would they be afraid.*

OMIT
My method of presenting Note Reading is covered in the next chapter.

The following is a presentation of how note reading might be approached.

THE BARBARA SOLIS METHOD OF TEACHING

CHAPTER I - READING THE NOTES

During my years as a teacher, it has been my experience that most pupils at some point have difficulty with the reading of the notes.

The material they have absorbed has either been learned through constant repetition which tends to lead to a laid back approach to this important factor and often to boredom, or the material has been marvellously memorized by the more ^{who} astute pupils which can and does hoodwink the unsuspecting teacher into assuming that the pupil knows far more than what he or she actually does.

I myself personally depend ^{on} upon the tried and true way of teaching note reading through the method of Lines and Spaces and the pupils have delighted in making up sentences to help them remember their notes of the staff in a fun way. It is important to include them but to include them in such a way so as to inter-relate them with the actual teaching of note reading.

However, Lines and Spaces can also become repetitive and oftentimes they are overlooked simply because there is so much one wishes to cover in a lesson and there is never enough time to do it.

A have assigned 3 levels to Note Reading - the first is

CHAPTER TWO - NOTE READING WITH THE PENCIL

NUMBERING THE BARS

Step One Have the pupil no matter what the age, number the bars of the piece to be learned. (This gives the little ones an opportunity to practice their numbers and teaches the older pupils to know where they are at any given point of a lesson and also assists them to learn to play from any area of the composition under study rather than continually going back to the beginning.)

The numbering of the bars makes it much easier for the teacher to assess exactly and quickly where the difficulties lie and is helpful in setting out the lesson.

thus utilizing lesson time wisely efficiently

Step Two

Using a keyboard guide, either cardboard or one that appears at the top of the piece for little ones and/or a Staff for older pupils, have the pupil take a pencil (their own is good incentive) and point carefully to the note, calling out its letter names. See example. Do 3 times.

1. START WITH the keyboard guide at the top of the page as this

(3) This helps them to later match the notes up to those on the piece. JOHN THOMPSON

Step Three 3. For the Little People, when the keyboard guide is familiar at the top of the page or wherever it appears, have the child or pupil take the pencil and call out

STEP 3

the letters for the notes in each bar.

LESSON (c)
SET-UP

I recommend this procedure be done firstly bar by bar, followed by two bars at a time, followed by four bars at a time and finally the entire selection.

~~For older pupils - lines & spaces of staff should be taught & referred to~~

From the example, one might wish to set out the lesson as follows:

(d) PUT ON BOARD

- Bar 1 3 times
- Bar 2 3 times
- Bars 1 and 2 3 times
- Bar 3 3 times
- Bar 4 3 times
- Bars 3 and 4 3 times
- Bars 1 to 4 1 time
- etc.

Example to be done by "pupils"

STEP 6

SETTING OUT THE LESSON

(e)

I would encourage the pupil to go through this exercise 3 to 6 times, following the bar numbered outline. The number of times will depend upon the age and ability of the pupil.

ACTUAL PRACTICE FOR HOMEWORK

Step 4

CORRECT

TIME VALUES

In the matter of time values, I suggest to my pupils at the very outset of the exercise, to say the letter name followed by a number.

To demonstrate, one could say for example, C-2, the 2 representative of the half note value, or E-2,3, the

(b) get them REFER to the guide if they get stuck & teach them to observe the notes where it sits

for eg. on who below and on staff below < does it have a stick thru it etc.

Not hard & fast you will probably have your own way but repetition is important without boredom

If you turn to the 1st page in John Thompson's Book whole note G 232

The number is representative of a time value which would be greater than 1.

Another example - $\frac{3}{4}$ time piece

For example, one would say for the half note value

C-2

or whatever you choose

or for the dotted half note value when the pupil comes to it, one could say

E 2 DOT

or

E-2,3

and for the whole note value which is generally included in beginning studies, one could say

G-2,3,4

~~*or great big whole note*~~

Please refer to the examples for clarification of this point.

* Whatever the time value of the note, the pupil keeps the pencil pointed at the note or under it until the appropriate numbers have been said to give the note its proper duration.

This sets up correct rhythm right from the beginning.

It is very important that the pupil point the pencil at the note or under it, and not have the instrument of writing wandering all over the page.

To ensure that the exercise has been well absorbed and not merely memorized, the teacher could challenge the pupil in a little game of note reading. Pointing at random notes throughout the song, for each correct

*See
Toy
Soldiers*

note, the pupil is awarded the score, ^{POINT} for each incorrect ^{POINT} note, the teacher is awarded the score. This little challenge can be given unexpectedly and I find it does help keep the children on their toes for they do so want to excel.

A chocolate bar contest is a great incentive too - have them have a week to prepare their note reading for a piece.

Another method I use to double check that note reading has not just been committed to memory, is to have the pupil read their exercise from back to front. This also provides a bit of a challenge and some fun throughout the lesson. *It can be presented unexpectedly.*

If the child is very gifted, I employ these challenges in the first class, otherwise they are best left until the pupil has had a little time to work with the notes.

FOR OLDER PUPILS - still good to work from ^{that they make!} STEP 5 - to work with a piece of music. REMEMBER we are looking at this exercise from the eyes of a little child who is eager to learn to play this great big instrument. After your own personal introductions ^{about} the instrument the music is placed in front of the child & after a few more explanations as to clefs ^{OVER} time signature, etc you are ready to actually begin the study of the music to a child exciting & scary stuff.

So let's all take our periods & ^{OPEN UP} read the Birthdays to
notes on the little guides [HAVE pupils do Party
this ~~one~~ ^{3T} - then CALL for each teacher to
DO THIS or ASK THEM TO DESCRIBE
where the note is.]

PEDAGOGIC POINT - if they wish to make suggestion

Level 2 - At this next lesson level 1 should be heard on its entirety & listen carefully for errors or stumbling etc. Uncertain

up with a RED PENCIL or errors are circled & sent home for REPEAT of LOT +

CHAPTER THREE- NOTE READING WITH THE RHYTHM AND THE BEAT

1. Intro

Pupils need a break from sitting no matter how short or how long the lesson may be. A break gives the little ones a chance to stand up and stretch their muscles and it keeps the older ones from falling asleep at the keyboard as they are wont to do after a long day at school or a late night before their class.

For this section of Note Reading, you may wish to provide your pupils with a music stand.

2. Explanation

Step One

Involves use of the HANDS &

Feet, as well as saying the letter NAMES. Hands clap what's written - feet keep the beat - time signatures. Can be done separately to begin with as some pupils find it hard to co-ordinate both R & B at same time.

3. METHOD

Have the pupil stand up either behind the piano bench (this is dependent upon their eyesight) or in front of the bench or in front of a music stand quite apart from the piano. Older pupils prefer to sit.

As the pupil will now call out the letter names, have he or she clap their hands as the notes are called out. *How hands to the rhythm as they do so.*

At the time values, those that are longer than the quarter note or representative of the 1 value, the pupil holds the hands together and says the letter name, once again followed by 2; 2,3; or 2,3,4 as these numbers pertain to the value of the note being held.

Review whole exercise pair (1-2) FLUENCY important + POSITIVE aspects good work done.

we did with the PENCIL.

The main thing to remember is that whatever format you followed by using the pencil, you are now having the pupil substitute the hands for the pencil so do keep ^{continuity} continuity in mind.

Step Two

Now explain the time signature in your own way, emphasizing to the pupil that according to the top figure of the two numbers that appear at the beginning of the piece, the corresponding number of beats shall be needed for each bar.

Having the pupil use their foot, ask he or she to stamp out the beats for each bar as the letters are now called out. *Hands can remain quiet.*

This should be done two or three times or until the pupil feels comfortable stamping out the beats and calling out the letter names.

Step Three

Finally, have the pupil combine the rhythmic element (notes written on the page) by clapping the hands, and the beat element by stamping out the foot while simultaneously calling out the letter names.

I have found it a good idea to start with the longer notes of duration and have the pupil practice these several times with me and then to incorporate them with the surrounding bars.

LESSON SET - UP

An exercise set out in a two bar or four bar format is helpful, but always be sure to include the entire number of measures at the conclusion.

I would like to recommend that as part of the fun, the teachers also stand and participate in this exercise with the pupils. It is infinitely more fun for the pupil when there is participation from the teacher.

Teachers, please note that there will be times when this exercise is not as easy as it might appear and I would advise a short run through ahead of the lesson so as to be sure that what you are attempting to teach can be demonstrated without fault.

When the pupils are thoroughly adept at this exercise, a game can be played whereby the teacher is at once the rhythm and the pupil the beat and then the roles are reversed. The letter names can be called out by one or the other as well.

As aforementioned, this segment of note reading provides a necessary physical break and a little mental stimulation

which is of utmost importance if one wishes to keep the full attention of the pupil for the span of the required lesson.

Enthusiastically presented this book
NOTE READING - there was DONE

It further reinforces what has been done with the pencil.

OMIT

However you may wish to present this part of the note reading, be sure there is continence, between the exercises.

TURN TO SAME PIECES
USED FOR NOTE READING
with Pencil - 3 examples
HAVE "STUDENTS" stand
& demonstrate.

1. Start with Rhythm & letters
2. Beat & letters
3. Combine
4. Have teachers choose a partner
& play the "GAME". both Rhythm
to say letters
5. Reverse. Rhythm only says letters.

✓
CHAPTER IV - RHYTHM AND BEAT - STANDING

Perhaps one of the most difficult areas for the majority of pupils in the study of music, is that of truly understanding the rhythmic content of a piece.

While the simpler rhythms can be comprehended through the method of counting sooner or later, with the addition of dots, rests, ^{and} sixteenth notes the student actually sets up a mental block and is totally incapable of unravelling the rhythmic challenge that has been set before he or she.

And even though their comprehension of rhythm is excellent, I have yet to find a pupil (apart from the genius level) who can read every jot and tittle as it were on the musical page with accuracy and fluency and with understanding.

In order to tackle this problem, I utilize a Rhythm Language. Each note is given a rhythm name, dots are referred to as "dots" and rests are also called by their proper appellation.

OMIT
= [For those teachers who would like some form of guidance with respect to a Rhythm Language, I have appended one to the end of this particular chapter.

Whatever form of rhythm you will be employing, it is important to remember that it should carry on where the assignments for note reading left off. It should interrelate with what has gone before and whatever will follow, to give continuity to the lesson.

OMIT { It is therefore of utmost importance that the assignment from the previous lesson be reviewed, following each segment to its completion.

OMIT If the lesson has been written up carefully and has been adhered to closely in practice, the pupil should have very little hesitancy with the Note Reading assignments and should be able to read at least 4 bars without interruption. This of course will depend upon the ability and the age of the pupil. Ultimately of course, the goal is to have the pupil able to read fluently and at sight a given passage of music firstly saying the letter names and then with correct rhythm and beat.

OMIT { If inconsistencies, incorrect notes or hesitation occurs, these should be noted (I usually circle these in red) and they should be reviewed for an additional week. (I suggest that the particular circled error be reviewed at a minimum of 10 times). If there are more than two errors I usually call for a review of the whole passage at least 3 times as well as the specific errors.

Put
under
Pedagogic
Points
omit
for now

Having to review circled errors 10 times acts as an excellent deterrent to future note reading mistakes and I have found this to be especially effective with my seniors. Therefore taking the time to hear the correction of the error should not be overlooked. The pupil tends to realize the teacher is serious about this particular error being corrected.

~~The main point then is to be sure that~~ before the rhythm and beat exercises are assigned, the note reading assignments ^{should} be understood and not merely glossed over by the teacher or guessed at by the pupil.

Step One Set up a rhythm language suitable for the piece of music under study and note the chart in the lesson book or at the top of the page. Be sure that the pupil can readily see this chart so that it can be intelligently utilized.

Step Two Have the pupil stand either behind the piano bench or in front of a music stand and review the chart several times, having the pupil clap the hands for the rhythm.

Step Three

If the rhythm presents no problem discuss the beat and have the pupil go through the entire piece of music stamping out the beat with the feet.

Step Four

Now look at the rhythm for the treble clef and have the pupil using the chart when necessary, clap out the rhythm for the entire Treble clef. This may be done in small sections or larger ones, again dependent upon where the pupil is with ability.

Follow the same format for the Bass clef and in the case of more senior work, have the pupil go through each voice where double voicing appears.

Step Five

Have the pupil now add the beat. Be certain that as the teacher, you are totally capable of doing what you are requesting from your pupils before the lesson.

Each clef and each voice should be practiced until fluent. A little theory can be added at this time in demonstrating to the pupil how the rhythm of each bar and each clef

adds up to the Times signature =

At this juncture, rhythmic patterns can be pointed out and small challenges within the lesson offered to see if the pupil can distinguish one pattern from another, *from memory,*

clapped by the teacher.

I generally do this two ways.

- (a) Review the rhythms and then clap one and ask pupil to identify it as (a), (b) or (c).
- OK* (b) Clap one of the rhythms and have pupil clap it back,

The children love these games and some form of reward should be given for perfect scores.

If this is begun at an early level, the pupils will have less problem with ear training as they approach more advanced levels and it does make the job of ear training and sight reading infinitely easier for the senior teacher when the pupil is ready for this stage of study.

And we are not neglecting an area that is all too often put on the back burner due to lack of time.

As with the Note Reading Assignments, observe very carefully all weaknesses or hesitations in fluency of reading the rhythm and keeping the beat.

It is suggested that these *problem* areas be reviewed with the pupil in the class and assigned for home study until they do not exist.

CHAPTER FIVE THE RHYTHM LANGUAGE CHART

Chart for 4 Time

| <u>Kind of Note</u> | <u>Rhythm Name</u> | <u>Value</u> |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| Quarter | dum | one |
| Half | dum dee | two |
| Dotted Half | dum dee dot | three |
| Whole | dum dee dah day | four |
| Eighth (single) | did | half of one |
| Double Eighth | did dle | equal to one |
| Sixteenth | da | 1/4 of one |
| Dotted Quarter followed by Eighth | Dum dot a | one and one half |

How to Use

For the Quarter note the pupil claps the hands together one time and beats with the foot one stamp.

For the Half note, the pupil claps and holds the hands together while saying Dum Dee and stamps the foot two times to indicate that there are two quarter notes or dum notes for every half or dum dee note.

For the Dotted Half note, the pupil claps the hands and holds them together while saying dum dee dot. The foot is stamped 3 times.

For the Whole note, the pupil claps and holds the hands together while saying dum dee dah day.

The foot is stamped 4 times to indicate 4 dum

notes to each whole note.

The eighth notes are best taught in pairs until the pupil understands the function of the single eighth note. This would apply to younger pupils only.

Have the pupil clap the pairs of eighth notes and stamp but one time. For some pupils this takes sometime to master and should be approached with a lot of fun.

For the sixteenth notes, this is again best approached in groups of 4, with pupil clapping quickly 4 times while stamping foot one time.

With the dotted quarter followed by an eighth, have pupil clap the dum, hold hands together for the dot and clap again on the eighth.

The foot will be stamped on the dum and the dot. Teachers who approach this with a tremendous sense of rhythm will find that their pupils will enjoy the bounce and the feel of it and once learned, they will not have any fear of such passages.

In more advanced work where there is an eighth note followed by a dot and a sixteenth, I recommend saying did dot a, having pupil stamp foot on the did if the above chart would be applicable.

Chart for $\frac{6}{8}$ Time

| <u>Kind of Note</u> | <u>Rhythm Name</u> | <u>Value</u> |
|------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Eighth | dum | one |
| Quarter | dum dee | two |
| Dotted Quarter | dum dee dot | three |
| Half | dum dee dah day | four |
| Half with a dot | dum dee dot, 4, 5, 6 | six |
| Two sixteenths | did dle | equal to one |
| Single sixteenth | did | half of one |
| thirty second (single) | da | $\frac{1}{4}$ of one |
| Dotted Eighth | dum dot | one and one half |

How To Use

Use this chart exactly as you would for $\frac{4}{4}$ time except be sure to point out that as it is for compound time, the bars will only require two beats of the foot, to each.

N.B.

Where there are groups of three eighth notes, I like to say Butterfly with the stamp of the foot coming on the syllable "But". This seems to give more of a swing to the piece and lends definite rhythmic interest for the pupil.

OTHER COMPOUND TIMES

In $3/8$, $9/8$, or $12/8$ the same chart is used as for $6/8$ time. However, it will be explained to the pupil that the beat is derived at by dividing the top number by 3 and this number of beats will then be stamped out by the foot.

This chart is also useful for compound times such as $3/16$, $6/16$ and $9/16$ and $12/16$.

In compound times such as $9/4$ and $12/4$, the quarter note chart would be best followed.

It is important to remember that when the pupil is trying to determine a rhythm for a given exercise whether it is for the piano or for a theoretical exercise, when it is of extreme difficulty, they should look for the smallest duration and base which chart they will use on this note.

If a piece is difficult to work out for the $4/4$ chart even though it is in a simple time, I very often ask the pupil to think of the exercise in terms of the $6/8$ chart, that is making the eighth note the dum. The proper place for the beat must be determined and the student taught to stamp the foot at that point and not as where we would expect it to come in the normal $6/8$ time chart.

CHAPTER SEVEN - CHART FOR RESTS $\frac{4}{4}$ Time

| <u>Kind of Rest</u> | <u>Rhythm. Name</u> | <u>Value</u> |
|--|---------------------|--------------|
| Quarter Rest | Rest | one |
| Half Rest | Rest, 2 | two |
| Dotted Half Rest | Rest, 2,3 | three |
| Whole Rest | Rest, 2,3,4 | four |
| Eighth rest fol- lowed by eighth note | Rest, dle | equal to one |
| Sixteenth rest fol- lowed by note | Rest, da | 1/4 each |

Whenever a rest appears in a piece of music, I encourage my pupils to call it by its proper name that of rest and to open their hands and put their palms upward. This little added exercise helps their flexibility with wrists and arms and I have seen some pupils become quite artistic in their movements.

Even though there are rests throughout the composition the beat with the feet continues just as it would if the notes were in place of the rests.

CHART FOR RESTS - COMPOUND TIMES

| <u>Kind of Rest</u> | <u>Rhythm Name</u> | <u>Value</u> |
|---|--------------------|----------------------------|
| Eighth rest | Rest | one |
| Quarter rest | Rest, 2 | two |
| Dotted quarter rest | Rest, 2,3 | three |
| Dotted Half rest | Rest, 2,3,4,5,6 | six |
| Sixteenth rest fol- lowed by sixteenth note | Rest, da etc. | 1/4 each 4 equal to one |

MUSICAL SIGNS in Rhythm & Beat

Two - hands best held together as for Note Reading - Rhythm chart symbols in place of numbers to denote value.

Pause - Rhythm language plus Pause - hands remain together - no beat.

Rests - hands come apart while Beat is stamped.

Accidentals - not referred to in Rhythm & Beat exercises.

EXAMPLES

1. See examples with Note Reading
2. Set up charts & practice with "students"

OMT

CHAPTER EIGHT- MUSICAL SIGNS

As the pupil becomes more familiar with the notes and the rhythm and the beat, we must be certain that they are able to understand the other musical signs which will invariably be found throughout the piece of music they are studying.

Once again most of you will have some way of having the student indicate that particular sign but if you do not, then here are a few suggestions.

THE TIE - When the piece calls for a tie it should be called exactly that. If the pupil is at the note reading stage, he/she might say C2 tie 2 or whatever.

If the pupils are into the Rhythm and Beat exercises, the hands are best held together when the tie comes up. If the tie falls where a beat would come, again be certain that the pupil stamps the foot in the appropriate place.

THE PAUSE - The Pause also cannot be overlooked and should be called by its proper name but be sure to remind the pupil that there is no further beat required on the pause. The note name should be followed by the word Pause as should the rhythm name with the beat fal-

ling on the appropriate place.

OMIT
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THE SHARPS AND FLATS - In note reading exercises, it is best to have the pupil remember to call out the note which appears in the key signature as a sharp or a flat by that name.

Too often what happens when a pupil encounters another key other than C Major, the altered note is quite forgotten and once learned that way, it is difficult to unlearn.

So for example in the Key of G Major, wherever an F note makes its appearance, it should be called F Sharp not merely F.

In co-ordinating the beat with this note name, I have the pupil set the foot down simultaneously with the letter. The word sharp or flat is then said at a rate which will fit before the next beat falls.

The rhythm and the beat tend to become confused in the pupil's mind if the beat goes down with the accidental rather than the letter. But once again, you may have your own way of presenting this and as long as it works, then use it.

JMT

ACCIDENTALS - Once again all accidentals should be read as they appear by their correct names and if the accidental affects the same note more than once in the bar, be consistent and have the pupil read it out again.

In more advanced work, be sure that the pupil studies every voice for the details as discussed and is able to follow each line of music through just as if it were the melody.

Sharps and Flats, naturals and accidentals are read as part of the note reading exercises and are not referred to in the Rhythm and Beat exercises. However, the Pause and the Tie are referred to as suggested in the foregoing notes.

CHAPTER NINE - RHYTHM AND BEAT AT THE PIANO

Once the Rhythm and Beat have been understood the exercises are transferred to the piano.

I recommend that the pupil learn to keep the beat with the feet while playing and saying the Rhythm Language. This assists greatly in working towards a more perfect sense of timing especially for those pupils who find time a challenge.

For the younger pupils, I try to keep the exercises for the Rhythm and Beat assignments similar to what was set down for the Note Reading Assignments, that is with reference to the number of bars and which bars etc., you would wish them to study.

For the more senior work, again have the different lines of voicing studied, such as soprano and alto tenor and bass and then put together, firstly in the treble clef and then in the bass.

I prefer the pupils to study their exercises hands separately and then hands together as this gives them a more thorough knowledge of what is on the page of music.

~~OMIT~~ If the younger pupils are ready for simple duet playing,

Having pupils play together

having them say their rhythm and keeping the beat is a fun way of hearing two rhythms at the same time.

Where it is technically possible, the parts are exchanged so that the pupil has a total knowledge of what is being played rather than just the one part.

[DEMONSTRATE with EXAMPLES in USE]

With the more senior work, the pupils play the treble and then the bass while calling out the Rhythm Language and keeping the beat with the teacher who does one or the other without calling out the Rhythm Language, but does keep the beat.

OMIT

This is so helpful in preparing pupils who may be interested in ensemble work as it is very necessary for them to be able to listen to the other participants.

OMIT

When the pupils are preparing for a formal recital, the beat is discouraged and I try to get them to feel the beat with their body. Generally if they have understood the foundation, this is not a problem and most pupils have kept almost perfect time during a performance. By this I mean they may be off just a fraction but I no longer have the situation where the time is a disaster, as I did so many years ago.

OMIT =

The main thing is to be very exact and let nothing go. It is easier to spend a few moments making sure the difficulty is thoroughly mastered in the class and there will be infinitely less frustration on the part of the pupil when that particular Rhythm and Beat is

OMIT

met with again along the Path of Instruction.

Once again, when the musical signs of Pause and Tie and Rest are encountered, it is important to include them as the Rhythm Language is being called out and the Beat kept accordingly.

Obviously, accidentals or key signature signs do not work in this category.

CHAPTER TEN - THE SOL FAH METHOD OF MEMORIZATION

The Sol Fah approach to memorization and sight singing is the outcome of my personal studies in Spain.

This is the method by which pupils over there are encouraged to sight sing and memorize. Since it was a brand new concept (I had never really been taught in a specific way to memorize for I seemed to have an infallible memory) it was a tremendous struggle for me to try and switch my mind over to the idea and it was only at the insistence of my professor that I persevered.

It was some years before I saw the benefits of using the sol fah as being an important tool in aiding memory work, sight singing, harmony (written) and transposition to name but a few areas.

I also realized that if the Sol Fah could be introduced as a part of the early learning process, it possibly could help those students whose strong point is not memory as well as benefit the pupils who memorize easily.

I have been delighted with the results thus far.

Before attempting the sol fah, I usually start the pupils with the simple scale of C Major and have them sing this in sol fah language as follows:

| | |
|---|------------|
| C | Doh |
| D | Re |
| E | Mi |
| F | Fah |
| G | Soh |
| A | Lah |
| B | Si or (ti) |
| C | Doh |

I have the pupils accompany themselves with the proper fingering for the C Major scale or if they are able to reach the pedals, I ask them to combine the sol fah scale with a pedal exercise using one finger only.

The pupils learn to sing the scale with the piano and without the piano. Later triads are introduced and intervals as these points come up in their theoretical training.

I found that it was best to keep C no matter what key, sharpened or flatted as the "Doh". ^{Systems} It called ~~is~~ the Immovable Doh and have concluded that it avoids a lot of confusion in the mind of the child, if they can refer to C as doh no matter what key they are playing in.

For those of you who use the Movable Doh, and who may be having problems, you might wish to try the Immovable Idea as it really is much simpler

CHAPTER ELEVEN - SOL FAH WITH THE PENCIL

Sol fah with the pencil is approached in the same way that pencil work is introduced in the beginning for note reading.

This overlapping tends to inter-relate the subject matter and further cement itself into the child's mind.

As with note reading, I am inclined to use a bar by bar method, increasing this to two bars and then to four and so on. Finally the pupil is asked to read with the pencil the entire selection.

In checking the assignment the following week, be sure to look for any inconsistencies or weaknesses. These should be singled out and reviewed at the class and re-assigned as "review" or "repeat", depending how many faults have occurred. If a firm foundation is established at the outset there will be far fewer problems once the pupil has grasped the sol fah idea.

In order to detect memorization by rote, a random sol fah check can be made by selecting various notes out of their order and asking the pupil to identify them by their sol fah names.

CHAPTER TWELVE - SOL FAH STANDING AT THE PIANO

Before sol fah standing at the piano can be full mastered, it is important for the pupil to have a thorough grasp of the Rhythm and Beat aspects of the assigned work.

When this is secure, the pupil is asked to stand (once again the break from sitting increases attention span) and while clapping the rhythm (that which is written on the page) with the hands and keeping the beat (refer to the time signature) with the feet, said pupil calls out the sol fah names.

In the case of extended note values such as half notes, whole notes, or dotted notes, follow up with whatever you used in the initial note reading assignments.

For example the half note can be read as doh 2, the dotted half note can be read as doh 2, 3 or doh, 2, dot etc. Rests are read as rest 2, rest 2,3 or whatever.

Be consistent. By consistent inter-relating, the material is impressed upon the pupil's mind firmly.

When the pupil is standing, for sol fah, it is a good idea to encourage he or she to sing as the sol fah is called out. I find that this develops the ability to follow the musical line as well as sets the melody in the mind. It is a great aid to ear training particularly where melody playbacks are concerned.

Once again be on the lookout for any weak areas and encourage the pupil to review or repeat if these are in evidence.

Where there are two or more notes in double note or chord form, as with the pencil, it is a good idea to decide how you want these to be read, from top to bottom or bottom to top. I favour the latter.

In this challenge, the sol fah names are to be properly fitted to the beat which means the names will either be speeded up slightly or slowed.

IN SENIOR WORK it may be necessary to denote sharps or flats to sol

This policy applies to the use of sharps or flats as well.

JM IT

Very often the speed with which double notes, chords, or accidentals or the accidentals which are part of the key signature are said determines the simplicity and accuracy the pupil will attain from within the exercise.

page syllable.
Approach as we did for Note Reading.

KEEP

The proper application of this point will lend a certain rhythm or flow to the spoken part and pupils quite often find this helpful in getting the swing of the melody. And since most youngsters like an upbeat it appeals to them and they are more likely to remember the passage as opposed to just standing and reciting the sol fah names.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN - SOL FAH AT THE PIANO

When the assignments of sol fah with the pencil and sol fah standing have been completed, the pupil is then ready to transfer this preparatory work to the keyboard or other instrument as may be the case.

This part of the assignment is carried out hands separately and in parts where two or three voiced fugues are being taught.

I encourage the pupils to keep the beat with their feet and to sing along with the sol fah as much as they can (this depends upon the voice range and development of voice placement).

Any expression which may have been discussed or other detailed work is now also included with the sol fah at the piano. In other words expressive crescendos and diminuendos are combined with the actual sol fah and other details such as staccato marks, accents, etc. are also not overlooked.

When each hand can be expressed faultlessly, the pupil is then asked to do the assignment hands together (where applicable) and the pupil has the choice of either singing the sol fah to the treble clef if this is where the majority of the melody line lies or using the rhythm and the beat.

There are few pupils who can actually play an assignment hands together while singing the sol fah to one clef or the other but I personally have a few pupils who can do this and enjoy it

To be able to sing the sol fah to either clef while both hands are playing is a feat within itself and develops the memory to such a refined level that it is without doubt one of the most beneficial aids to memorization that I know of.

I personally utilize this format for memorizing particularly difficult passages for I somehow feel that if I can retain the concentration that is so necessary to do this, I really know that passage.

Senior pupils who eventually reach this level find it most stimulating and rewarding inasmuch as it assists them with other areas of study for which a great deal of memory may be required.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN - MEMORY WORK

Unless there is a very specific reason given me as to why a pupil cannot or does not need to learn to memorize an assignment, this is a requirement of the studies within those classes as offered by myself.

I recall only too vividly the many times I was called upon as a young student to play something while in the company of visitors or friends and just as vividly and with painful embarrassment having to say that I was sorry I could not because I did not have anything ready.

As a young matron, I had the very good fortune to study with Mr. Lloyd Powell and one of the most important things he taught me was to always have a composition or two at the ready. Not only was it good practice to play by memory but it gave an opportunity to play a piece and to test it for the sensitive areas which still needed to be strengthened before actual concert performance.

Playing a new piece by memory is a little like wearing a new pair of shoes or a new garment, we don't quite know what to expect from it. And often as not there are certain adjustments which have to be made so that the shoes or garments or selections to be performed are comfortable. As with shoes and garments, pieces become comfortable with time. They become as it were "old friends."

Performing for one's friends also gives a measure of confidence that may be difficult to determine if one does not allow them

this opportunity.

While performing from memory can be very difficult for some pupils and easy for others there is still always a measure of excitement that goes along with this aspect of musical study.

I have found that if the basics have been closely studied and thoroughly understood, the sol fah mastered to the best of the pupil's ability, there are far fewer errors and breakdowns in memory.

For while the pupil through nervousness or excitement may execute a wrong note or momentarily forget something within a passage either in one hand or the other, there is not a total breakdown and the pupil is generally able to carry on until the balance is restored.

In a personal study which I carried out within my classes, I found that those pupils who worked with the note reading, rhythm and beat and sol fah assignments, had more confidence when something did not go quite as planned as compared to the pupils who rather just did their own thing.

Usually when this latter occurs, the pupil then sees the validity of what I have been trying to teach and will resort to a more secure method of memorization as opposed to their own ideas.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN - MEMORY WORK WITH THE SOL FAH

Once the sol fah has been read, and the standing exercises and keyboard exercises mastered, the pupils then proceeds with the memory assignment using the sol fah.

I usually find for pupils who are totally unfamiliar with the memorization concepts of the sol fah, that small assignments in the beginning are better than large ones.

I suggest that the assignment be from one to four bars and that the number of times each clef with the bars from one to four be studied not less than 10 times for the first week.

The music is to be set up in front of the pupil but should be referred to as little as possible as the week progresses. As soon as possible the pupil should attempt to do the sol fah exercises without the benefit of the written music and become familiar with where the music is on the keyboard or other instrument.

As with the previous exercises rhythm and beat are employed and the pupil is encouraged to sing the sol fah to the most prominent melodic line and should attempt to do this for the secondary line which is usually the bass clef or inner voices in fugal work, or other two or three voiced works.

When each hand has been practiced separately, the hands are played together and the pupil has the choice of either sol fah to the melodic line or rhythm language.

As pupils progress, it is a good idea to get them to sing the sol fah to one hand or another as the hands are played together. This is not only challenging but develops their memory to a high degree in music and other educational subjects.

The benefits from sol fah are far reaching, as the aural senses begin to develop.

Pupils seem to be able to work with ear training concepts much easier such as intervals and the play back melodies required in examination work.

The sol fah seems to assist the development of voice placement amongst the younger pupils and very often I am able to determine whether a pupil would be more interested in the area of voice than say studying an instrument.

Most children like to sing and when they know their voices are going where they should they have a measure of confidence that would not otherwise be there.

For those pupils who are required to play choruses at the weekly Sunday School meetings or "Happy Birthday" to those celebrating their special days in school, I have encouraged them to write out the particular song using the sol fah and then I have taught them to put a rudimentary keyboard harmony to the piece. The rhythm language is also utilized and they are able to produce a satisfactory work that they can call their own. Pupils tend to remember something they have had to work out much better than if it were set down for them by the teacher. The sol fah is therefore useful for teaching pupils to play by ear but employing correct concepts in the areas of rhythm and beat and harmony.

I have also found the sol fah a tremendous aid in the teaching of Transposition and Keyboard Harmony. My pupils begin transposition at an early grade at the keyboard through the Sol Fah. For those who wish to pursue it on a more senior level, it has proven invaluable especially when they are asked to sight sing

in the original key and then in the transposed key.

In the study of harmony the sol fah has again proven itself as has the rhythm and beat part of the course. Few pupils can readily hum out loud or to themselves, a given written exercise but through the discipline of the sol fah, this chore is considerably lessened in their study of harmony.

While the sol fah is not always received graciously by my pupils in the beginning, once its validity has been perceived (generally the pupil's method of memorization breaks down) they become staunch users of it. It is to be hoped that your pupils will come to realize the value of sol fah in the same way that mine have.

This concludes "The Barbara Solis Method of Teaching." I have set up several examples along with each chapter or area of the course with as clear and detailed an explanation as possible.

Please remember that the method has been designed to apply to any particular course of study or music your pupils may wish to undertake and will also work with pupils studying various instruments including the voice.

If you would have any questions or comments please do not hesitate to get in touch with me.

Very musically yours,