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Ten points for talent education and development

1. Suzuki triangle

Student – Parent – Teacher. Parent and teacher must be equally involved to reinforce the students' learning.

2. Listening to cd's / downloads / spotify / iTunes

To be played routinely and constantly in the background – passively and actively.

3. Importance of environment

Constant involvement interaction and exposure to music so it becomes ingrained and second nature.

4. Praise and encouragement

Nurtures strength, perseverance and self-belief.

5. Consistency

Crucial to create the habit of practising as a routine.

6. Repetition

Lays foundation for solid musicianship as a practising method. Should use all known pieces and if possible concurrently, especially with any new pieces.

7. Seating position

Start as you mean to continue. This helps to focus the mind for better playing. Ensure the seat and stool are the correct height for the student with a straight back.

8. Bite size portions

Take pieces and analyze / practise them in sections which is more manageable and helps to build on the piece.

9. Layering

Every piece has a journey and can always be improved on. Learn the pieces hands separately, learn the notes, learn hands together, focus on the technique. After this, the student can begin understand the piece.

10. Reflection

Always stop to look at how far you've come, then the goal will be achievable. Reflect on what was learned, the lessons and what the pieces are about.

ROLE OF THE PARENT IN THE SUZUKI METHOD

Parent attendance is required – this is at the core of the Suzuki philosophy, there are three corners to the learning process which we call the Suzuki triangle, the teacher, the parent and the child.

Note taking for teaching at home – there are many ways to observe the lessons which can be done both actively & passively. Notes can be taken in writing, but some may decide to use iPads or record the lesson by taking photos, recording on the phone or using a dictaphone. Each parent can choose the best way for them and sometimes there will be a need to just watch and soak it all in. If you have questions, we can cover all of this at the end of the class. The main aim is to try and achieve a comfortable flow to the lesson. It is also advised to buy your copy of Suzuki piano Book 1 as early as possible.

Listening – the most vital part of the development of the ear and of musicality. The CD/Download/Spotify playlist/iTunes playlist is the No. 1 teacher. The parent will have to help the child at home and set up a routine to put on the listening device/method for them, otherwise it might not end up happening if the responsibility is only on the child to do it.

Group Classes – group classes are an integral part of the Suzuki method of teaching. Students who regularly attend these progress much faster and their enjoyment of the process is massively increased. It also serves to inspire them to set more goals. Siblings and relations are more than welcome to all of these but there will be a structure designed for the students involved, but done through fun musical games. Musical development in the wider context is developed in these classes through group learning, concert preparation, theory basics, reading, social skills, respect for peers, but always reinforcing individual classes.

Concerts – performing at the formal concerts are also required within the course syllabus to boost the students' confidence. In Suzuki, all students become inspired to progress when they observe each other perform, regardless of their level. Concerts also train them how to perform in a more formal environment. It is also a source of great inspiration in developing really well-known pieces to a much higher standard. Only pieces that are very well-known can be played to ensure the experience is positive for the student. You can work out with your teacher which one to choose. Finally, it's an opportunity for the family & student to dress up and have an afternoon of lovely music.

Class environment – another important aim of the Suzuki method is to achieve a calm, pleasant & enjoyable environment that provides support for the student at all times. This will ensure successful development of the student's musical ability. In this regard, the bow at the beginning and end is an integral part of the lesson, this presents a gesture of respect from teacher and student to each other.

Suzuki philosophy – we strongly recommend that parents purchase a copy of either or both of the following books written by Suzuki 'Nurtured by love' and 'Ability development'. They can be ordered online or through the school. These books demonstrate the full story behind the development of the method and Suzuki's intention to educate children to become fine human beings through the process of learning music to an extremely high level and develop a beautiful tone.

Enjoy the classes – most importantly the Suzuki method is a chance for parents to enjoy music and the classes as much as the child and teacher. You have the opportunity to sit back and enjoy listening to them play while supporting them and learning yourself.

Websites & Forums

1. Irish Suzuki Association

<http://suzukiireland.net/>

2. British Suzuki Association

<http://www.britishsuzuki.org.uk/>

3. Suzuki Association of Americas

<http://suzukiassociation.org/>

4. Mary Lou Roberts (guitar teacher trainer website)

<http://www.marylouroberts.arborguitar.org/>

5. International Suzuki Association

<http://internationalsuzuki.org/method.htm>

6. The Suzuki method (Australia)

<http://www.suzukimusic.org.au/suzuki.htm>

7. The Suzuki Method (Japan)

https://suzukimethod.or.jp/english/E_mthd122.html

Recommended books for further reading

1. Nurtured by love – Shinichi Suzuki
2. Ability development – Shinichi Suzuki
3. Musicophilia – Oliver Sacks
4. The inner Game of Music – Barry Green
5. Effortless mastery – Kenny Werner
6. This is your brain on music – Daniel Levitin

Books to purchase for students (I use all of these in the class)

1. Book 1 – 7: Suzuki New International Edition Piano School (with CD's)
2. Read Rhythm Right – Claire Lester
3. It's time to read music, Volume 1 & 2 Piano – Daniel Fajardo
4. La Methode Rose – Ernest Van de Velde
5. Super sight reading secrets – Howard Richman
6. Suzuki Piano Ensemble Music Volume 1 & 2 (2 Pianos, 4 Hands)
7. The ABRSM Guide to Music Theory Part 1 & 2 – Eric Taylor (intermediate to advanced)

Suzuki Piano Book 1 – Words to pieces

Twinkle Twinkle Little Star

Twinkle twinkle little star, how I wonder what you are,
Up above the world so high, like a diamond in the sky,
Twinkle twinkle little star, how I wonder what you are.

Honeybee

Honeybee, don't you dare sting me!
Don't sting father, don't sting mother
Don't sting sister, don't sting brother
Honeybee, don't you dare sting me!

Cuckoo

Cuckoo, cuckoo where are you hiding?
Cuckoo, cuckoo, where is your tree?
I want to find you, I'm looking for you,
Cuckoo, cuckoo, come back to me.

Lightly Row

Lightly row, gently row in, our little boat we go,
Lightly paddle, gently paddle, in our little red canoe,
Listen to the seagulls call, listen to the seagulls call
Lightly paddle, gently paddle in our little red canoe.

French children's song

We are French children playing in the sunshine,

We are French children playing in the sun.

Running and laughing and climbing in treetops,

Running and laughing and climbing in trees.

We are French children playing in the sunshine,

We are French children playing in the sun.

London Bridge

London Bridge is falling down, falling down, falling down,

London Bridge is falling down, my fair lady.

Mary had a little lamb

Mary had a little lamb, little lamb, little lamb,

Mary had a little lamb, its fleece was white as snow.

Go tell Aunt Rhody

Go tell Aunt Rhody, who likes little dogs

Go tell Aunt Rhody, we got one in town

I got one today, in a little shop

I got one today, in a shop

Go tell Aunt Rhody, who likes little dogs

Go tell Aunt Rhody, we got one in town

Clair de Lune

Oh my good friend Pierrot, in the moonlight bright,
Please lend me your quill pen so that I might write.
Blown out is my candle, my fire will not light,
Turn the big door handle, let me in Pierrot.

Long Long Ago

Long, long ago on a bright summer day, I saw a frog sit on a log.
Long, long ago on a bright summer day, I saw a frog on a log.
He jumped so high that I thought he could fly,
He jumped so high that I thought he could fly.
Long, long ago on a bright summer day, I saw a frog on a log.

Little Playmates

Going to my playmate's, times with her are just great,
Every summer day we play together.
Riding on our big bikes, skating down the footpath,
I have fun with her throughout the day.
And when the winter comes and snow is falling,
Bundled in heavy clothes I'll still come calling.
You and I together, we'll be friends forever,
Through our memories of happy play. (repeat from line 5)

Chant Arabe

Caravans make their way through the heat of the day,

Lonely sands stretching far, now above shines a star.

But in the tents of nomads the dancing girls go twirling round and round,

Castanets clicking softly as bodies move in rhythm with the sound of music

Campfires flicker and die, wisps of smoke fill the sky,

Lonely hearts beating free, land of dark mystery.

Allegretto 1

Up and down and up and down, my friend and I together,

Back and forth and back and forth, we swing in sunny weather. (repeat)

Up and up as higher we go, try to touch the sky with our toes,

Evening's falling, mother's calling, dinner's ready, it's time to go home. (repeat)

Goodbye to Winter

Come out and play, snow's gone away,

Gone is the cold winter breeze,

Soon there'll be leaves on the trees,

Icicle days fading away,

Goodbye, goodbye winter day.

Allegretto 2

Baby kangaroo goes hop, hop, hopping,
He is playing hide and seek,
Hiding from his Mum at bedtime,
Shyly from behind the tree he peeks. (repeat)
Mother catches him in one big swoop,
Gathers him in her pouch so deep,
Mother kangaroo goes hop, hop, hopping
Joey's in her pouch so very deep. (repeat)

Christmas Day Secrets

Ssh, ssh, listen to my secret, listen to my secret, it's Christmas Day,
Ssh, ssh, listen to my secret, listen to my secret, it's Christmas Day.
Here's a present, here's a pretty present, I made it to give to Mummy,
Here's another, here's another present, I made it to give to Dad.
Ssh, ssh, listen to my secret, listen to my secret, it's Christmas Day,
Ssh, ssh listen to my secret, listen to my secret, it's Christmas Day.

Allegro

Heads heads, ears ears, shoulders shoulders, nose nose,
Waist waist, knees knees, ankles ankles, toes. (repeat)
Fingers, wrists and two elbows,
Two eyes, one mouth, hair that grows...
Heads heads, ears ears, shoulders shoulders, nose nose,
Waist waist, knees knees, ankles ankles, toes.

Musette

Hallowe'en night is drawing near,

My favourite time of year.

Witches on broomsticks fly about,

Goblins and ghosts appear.

There's a full moon shining brightly,

Making the shadows frightening,

But little children never fear,

Trick or treat time is near. (repeat from line 5)