



let's play music

THE PARAMOUNT PROGRAM FOR DEVELOPING THE COMPLETE MUSICIAN

Our Teaching Philosophies

The foundation of the Let's Play Music curriculum is based on proven philosophies and research about the way children learn. We are a comprehensive music course that develops the **complete musician**.

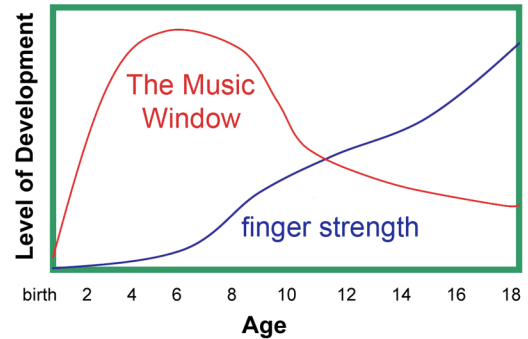
What is a "complete musician"?

In Let's Play Music not only do we teach piano, we develop sight reading, harmony, melody, and rhythm in such a way that children internalize these skills and become talented! Our students can read music and know what the music sounds like in their head, so sight singing, harmonizing, composing and improvising become second nature. Our graduates will continue to demonstrate high musical ability throughout their lives. People will say the child is "talented", and she is! But we know it was due to the right education and exposure at the right time.



The Piano Playing Dilemma

The child's brain is most receptive to learning music between ages 2 and 9; a period called 'The Music Window'. Piano playing requires letter reading and finger strength which are not ready until around age 8. We take advantage of the music window by providing music exposure at the right time, in the right way.



The Heart of our Curriculum



The Let's Play Music curriculum is centered in the teachings of the music masters Kodaly, Orff and Dalcroze. These men were revolutionists who changed the attitudes and tactics for teaching music to children. Their philosophies are at the very heart of our curriculum. You will see their methodologies in each purposeful activity and lesson.



Zoltan Kodaly: music education is a playful, natural experience.

- Emphasized the folk song as the "mother tongue" in teaching music
- Used Melodic Patterning (repeating several notes in a row) for ear training
- Developed Solfege to teach 'inner hearing' and sightsinging skills



Carl Orff: music education is experiential and physical

- Taught through improvisation and composition
- Stressed importance of percussion instruments for early learning
- Utilized body percussion, chanting, dance and drama



Emile Jacques-Dalcroze: music education is based on movement

- Developed "Eurhythmics", a method of teaching music through movement
- Listening enhances expressiveness, musicality, and understanding

Play to Learn

Children learn through play and repetition. Discovery, imagination, stories, games and laughter are all part of the Let's Play Music classroom. Children experience sheer enjoyment and creativity in every class.



Full Body Involvement



Children learn by involving their whole body. We use minimal talking and explaining. Research has shown that the more senses involved in the learning process, the more the concepts are internalized. We use the eyes, ears, hands, and full body movements to learn concepts usually taught on paper.

Experience Precedes Learning

Children learn through experience. Concepts and skills are introduced in games and songs without labeling or explaining. Once a concept is mastered, it can then be labeled and becomes a dramatic discovery moment. Repetition is key to reinforce the knowledge and skills, then when concepts are labeled, they stick!





first year: preparation for piano

Our Teaching Methods

Audiation (hearing music 'in our heads')

The ability to hear music accurately inside the ear is the foundation of all other music ability! We approach this great skill by teaching sub-skills:

- Solfege— Syllables and hand signs (DO, RE, MI) give physical meaning to the notes of the major scale, and help us to internalize the sound! Then we can sing on key!
- Patterning—We sing certain, fundamental melodic patterns (usually on solfege syllables!) over and over so we can aurally recall them without sounding them out loud.
- Pitch matching—Our songs constantly repeat the interval of a *minor 3rd*, (three 1/2 steps) proven to be the first interval children will hear and sing in tune.
- Perfect pitch— We intentionally sing middle C in each class and call it "home" to train the ear to hear this pitch without any external cues.



Solfege Activities: Patterning Activities:

Do, Re, Mi	Let's Play Music
Scotland's Burning	Frog in the Middle
Three Blind Mice	Rig-a-Jig-Jig
Are You Sleeping?	Hokey Pokey
The Ants Go Marching	Johnny's Haircut

Pitch Activities:

Hickety Pickety Bumblebee
Echo Ed
DO is Home

Staff Reading

Activities:

- Red Balloon
- Baby Step, Leap
- Taking Baby Steps
- How to Skip
- Dinosaur Song



We use our full body and a giant floor staff to learn how the notes go high or low and move in steps, skips or leaps! We count the lines and spaces and learn to read steps and skips from the staff so we can sing the notes and play them on our bells! **Yes!** We can sight read and sight sing before knowing the letter names on the staff!

Rhythm: these skills progress in order!

Steady Beat: Keeping a steady beat is the precursor to all accurate rhythm making. First we find our heartbeats to feel the steady beat of life. We clap, pat, stomp, jump, flap our arms, play simple instruments, etc. *always to the beat.*

Subdivision: Now we can work on dividing our steady beats into smaller parts. This develops 'spatial skills' which greatly enhances math understanding. The teacher claps a steady beat and students try to clap two times for each of her one claps!

Imitation: We imitate rhythmic patterns with our voices, on instruments and with our bodies!

Notation: Rhythm symbols tell us how our playing fits in time. Since language has a natural rhythm, and since bugs are so fun to talk about, we learn basic notation using a bug chant!



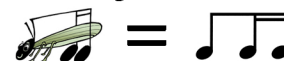
Rhythm Activities:

- May There Always Be Me
- Nearly every LPM activity!

- Tambourine Train
- Jungle Rhythm
- Can't Bug Me

- Echo Ed Rhythm
- Barnyard Boogie
- B-I-N-G-O

Can't Bug Me!



Chords & Harmony



Since the primary chords make up 90% of the music we listen to, we spend a lot of time singing about each chord and singing the chord notes individually! We also play chords on the autoharp! Since color is so familiar to children, they are the perfect label for our chords.

Chord Activities:

- Primary Chords Song
- Chords in Pieces
- All autoharp songs!

1st Year is Piano Prep.....and more!

In a sneaky way, we are teaching piano lessons to these children who are 'too young' to learn piano! Since our tone bells line up just like a piano, the children will easily transfer all note reading skills to playing piano in their 2nd Year of Let's Play Music. Throughout 1st Year, they are already reading rhythms, accompanying a group, playing in an ensemble and learning about chords and improvisation! The 1st Year is a solid piano prep course ... **and so much more!**

Classical Music



Classical music study can be playful if you use puppets to introduce instruments, repeating sections, themes, motives and variations! We use drama and imaginative play to give life to classical pieces!

Activities:

- Magical Lamp
- Waltz of the Flowers
- Triumphant March
- Fox Hunt

