

PIANO SAFARI® REPERTOIRE BOOK 1
TEACHER GUIDE
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PIANO SAFARI® LEVEL 1

Piano Safari® Level 1 consists of:

For additional teaching resources, including Videos and Essays, visit www.pianosafari.com.

Repertoire Book 1



- Reading Pieces
- Rote Pieces
- Folk Songs
- Animal Technique Exercises
- Improvisation Pieces
- Musicianship (Theory)

Sight Reading & Rhythm Cards for Book 1



- RH Reading Exercises
- LH Reading Exercises
- Rhythm Exercises

Listening CD for Book 1



- Rote Pieces
- Folk Songs
- Technical Exercises

TYPES OF PIECES AND EXERCISES IN PIANO SAFARI® LEVEL 1

TYPE OF PIECE	PURPOSE	HOW STUDENTS LEARN THE PIECES
Repertoire Book 1: Reading Pieces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop the ability to read music notation • Provide a formal presentation of musical terms and symbols, which students will have already informally encountered in the Rote Pieces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finger numbers (Units 1-2) • Intervals on the staff (Units 3-5)
Repertoire Book 1: Rote Pieces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow students to play more complicated pieces than they can read • Develop aural, technical, musical, and memorization skills • Develop kinesthetic familiarity with patterns at the piano, which ultimately makes reading notation easier 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imitate the teacher • Some reference to the score to detect patterns • Reminder Videos for home practice • Listening CD for musical understanding
Repertoire Book 1: Animal Technical Exercises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop the basic gestures of an effective piano technique, based on animal names: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arm Weight: Lion Paw • Fast Repeated Notes: Zechariah Zebra and Kangaroo • <i>Non legato</i>: Tall Giraffe • <i>Legato</i>: Tree Frog • <i>Legato</i> Three-Note Slur: Soaring Bird • Rotation: Monkey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imitate the teacher • Some reference to the score to see patterns • Reminder Videos for home practice • Listening CD for musical understanding
Repertoire Book 1: Folk Songs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow students to play pieces they recognize • Provide additional practice for finger numbers and letter names beyond the pre-staff part of study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finger numbers or letter names • Listening CD for musical understanding
Repertoire Book 1: Improvisation Pieces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop creativity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various
Sight Reading & Rhythm Cards for Book 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforce reading and rhythm skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finger numbers (Levels A-B) • Intervals on the staff (Levels C-E)

OVERVIEW OF REPERTOIRE BOOK 1

LEVELS OF DIFFICULTY

You may notice that the pieces and exercises in Piano Safari® Level 1 are at varying levels of difficulty. This was planned for the following reasons:

- To provide appropriate levels of reinforcement
- To provide the both the challenge and motivation necessary for students to progress. Interspersing easier pieces with more difficult pieces builds confidence.
- To generate mental and physical connections between the ears, eyes, fingers, and imagination that comes from playing pieces in a variety of textures, types, and levels
- To provide variety in how students learn pieces in order to accommodate different learning modalities

READING PIECES

PURPOSE:

- READ NOTATION ON THE STAFF

HOW STUDENTS LEARN READING PIECES

Students learn the Reading Pieces by reading the music notation.

Reading Pieces are not included on the Listening CD, because we want to be sure students are learning to read notation rather than learning these pieces by ear.

The following table summarizes the introduction of new concepts and intervals in the Reading Pieces of *Repertoire Book 1*.

UNIT	MAIN CONCEPTS OF READING PIECES
Unit 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pre-staff notation on black keys with fingers numbers 2 3 4
Unit 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pre-staff notation on white keys with finger numbers 1 2 3 4 5• Pieces begin on various keys with different fingers
Unit 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduces the interval of a 2nd
Unit 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduces the interval of a 3rd
Unit 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Combines 2nds and 3rds

Focusing on one interval for an entire unit gives students confidence in reading that interval before adding others. All Reading Pieces in *Repertoire Book 1* are composed for one hand. This allows the student to focus on reading intervals without the complexities of reading the other hand.

Although the Reading Pieces are written on one staff, students do play hands together, pieces on the grand staff in their Folk Songs and Rote Pieces. Hands together Reading Pieces on the grand staff are introduced in *Repertoire Book 2*.

To add complexity to the single staff Reading Pieces and to build coordination, we recommend that students play selected Reading Pieces hands together in parallel motion.

In addition to the Reading Pieces provided in *Repertoire Book 1*, students gain extra practice in reading and rhythm skills in the *Sight Reading & Rhythm Cards for Book 1*. See the Teacher Guide for these cards at www.pianosafari.com. These cards are an integral part of Level 1 of the Piano Safari® Method .

TEACHING STRATEGIES FOR READING PIECES

- Play the piece for the student while he taps and counts the rhythm.
- Point to the notes on the page to help the student track with his eyes while reading.
- Have the student use the **Practice in Your Brain Strategy**. This means he previews each phrase silently on the surface of the keys and plays it when he is ready.
- Cover the student's hands with a book to remind him to look at the music rather than back and forth between his hands and the score.
- Count the long notes (half or whole notes) while the student plays to aid him in holding these notes for their proper value.

For more Teaching Strategies, see **Mini Essay 7: Teaching Strategies** under Pedagogical Resources as www.pianosafari.com. Throughout this Teacher Guide, Teaching Strategies are listed in bold.

ROTE PIECES

PURPOSES:

- **BUILD CONFIDENCE IN MEMORY, TECHNIQUE, FLUENCY, AND CONCENTRATION**
- **PLAY INTERESTING SOUNDING PIECES**

HOW STUDENTS LEARN ROTE PIECES

Students learn the Rote Pieces by:

- Listening to the CD
- Imitating the teacher, phrase by phrase
- Limited reference to the score to detect patterns

Teaching students by rote (by imitation with little or no reference to the score), allows students to develop the ear, memory, and technique without the added complication of reading notation. Music is an aural art, so students should learn music with their ears as well as with their eyes. A balance between pieces taught by notation (eye) and those taught by rote (ear) will help students understand and internalize music, thereby becoming musically literate.

The Rote Pieces in *Repertoire Book 1* may look difficult, but we have found that students who have played Rote Pieces since the beginning of study develop an astounding ability to internalize patterns and memorize them. Therefore, although the Rote Pieces increase in difficulty, we have found that the more Rote Pieces the student plays, the easier they become to learn.

TEACHING STRATEGIES FOR ROTE PIECES

- Be sure the student listens to the piece on his Listening CD before teaching it. This will allow him to internalize the rhythm, style, and sound of the piece before playing it.
- **Follow the Leader:** The teacher plays a short melody or phrase from the piece. The student imitates the notes, rhythm, sound, and technical gesture.
- **Hands Separately, then Together**
- Only assign as much of a piece as the student can handle (**Two for One**)
- The student can refer to the Reminder Video at www.pianosafari.com during home practice to refresh his memory.

For more Teaching Strategies, see **Mini Essay 7: Teaching Strategies** under Pedagogical Resources as www.pianosafari.com.

TECHNICAL EXERCISES

PURPOSE:

- **TO LEARN THE BASIC MOTIONS OF PIANO PLAYING**

HOW STUDENTS LEARN TECHNICAL EXERCISES

Students learn the Technical Exercises by:

- Listening to the CD
- Imitating technical motions demonstrated by the teacher

The **Technical Exercises** presented in this book are designed to help students master important motions that lay a solid foundation for all of the student's future piano study. The animal names make the exercises fun. The exercises were developed through my dissertation research with respected teachers of pre-college students, in which I observed lessons and interviewed the teachers about how they teach technique.

Mastering the following technical motions will aid the student greatly in playing his first year repertoire and will provide a framework of physical freedom and confidence on which to build all future piano technique.

The motions presented in *Repertoire Book 1* are:

- Arm Weight (**Lion Paw**)
- Fast Repeated notes with a loose arm and firm fingertips (**Zechariah Zebra, Kangaroo**)
- *Non legato* articulation with an arm bounce on each note (**Tall Giraffe**)
- *Legato* articulation with an arm bounce on each note (**Tree Frog**)
- *Legato* articulation with one arm motion for several notes (**Soaring Bird**)
- Rotation (**Monkey Swinging in a Tree**)

A **Rote Piece** that uses the technical motion follows each **Technical Exercise**.

IMPROVISATION PIECES

PURPOSE:

- **CREATE MUSIC**

Improvisation Pieces are “sound pieces” that allow students to create sounds at the piano that relate to moods or objects in nature. This links the world students live in with sounds they create in their music study. Also, these pieces provide students with an organized outlet for their musical creativity.

FOLK SONGS

PURPOSES:

- **PLAY FAMILIAR MELODIES**
- **REVIEW FINGER NUMBERS**

HOW STUDENTS LEARN TECHNICAL EXERCISES

Folk Songs provide students with familiar songs to play. Additionally, we believe it is part of our responsibility to introduce students to folk music, since they may not learn these songs elsewhere.

Students learn these pieces through a combination of reading finger numbers, reading notation, rote, and by ear. Continuing finger numbers past the initial pre-reading units allows students to continue to pay attention to finger numbers, which is an important part of studying piano music through the advanced levels.

SAMPLE LESSON PLAN

Here is a sample lesson plan for a 20-minute interview for a beginning student ages 4 to 10. This can also be expanded into a longer first lesson by adding other activities or pieces.

For more teaching ideas, see **Mini Essay 3: What Should Be Included in a Beginning Level Piano Lesson?** under Pedagogical Resources at www.pianosafari.com.

PIECE/ACTIVITY	PURPOSE	TYPE	TIME
Charlie Chipmunk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn a Rote Piece Assess the student's ability to copy patterns on the black keys 	Rote Piece	4 min.
Alphabet Boogie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn a Rote Piece Introduce the music alphabet and how it works on the keyboard Assess the student's ability to concentrate by having him play from the bottom to the top of the keyboard 	Rote Piece	3 min.
Hungry Herbie Hippo, m. 1-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learn a Rote Piece Assess the student's ability to copy patterns on the black keys 	Rote Piece	3 min.
Activity: Decorating the Piano (see below)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess the student's ability to recognize groups of two and three black keys Begin the process of learning to name the white keys on the piano Assess the student's attention span 	Musicianship	6 min.
Hungry Herbie Hippo, m. 1-8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> After a break for Decorating the Piano, return to Herbie Hippo to see how it has improved through the break. Teach the rest of the Gb version. 	Rote Piece	2 min.
Review Charlie Chipmunk, Alphabet Boogie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The student is excited about already being able to play three pieces after 20 minutes! 	Rote Pieces	2 min.

ACTIVITY: DECORATING THE PIANO

Step 1: Have the student place a bouncy ball on each group of two black keys.



Step 2: Have a student lay a plastic worm across each group of three black keys.



Step 3: Hand the student the foam D's. Tell the student that D is the white key between the two black keys under the ball. The student puts all the D's on the piano.



Step 4: Hand the student the foam C's. Count up from A to help the student find C's, noting that C is to the left of D.



Step 5: Repeat the process with E's, noting that E is to the right of D.



Step 6: Repeat with F, G, A, and B.



Step 7: Celebrate how great the piano looks now that it is decorated!

