

# PIANO SAFARI®

## REPERTOIRE BOOK 1

### TEACHER GUIDE

by Dr. Julie Knerr and Katherine Fisher

Note: To find a specific piece in the Teacher Guide, see the Alphabetical Index.

TEACHER GUIDE SECTION	TEACHER GUIDE PAGE NUMBERS
Teacher Information	1 - 11
Introductory Unit	12 - 36
Unit 1	37 - 56
Unit 2	57 - 75
Unit 3	76 - 105
Unit 4	106 - 125
Unit 5	126 - 147

Throughout this Teacher Guide, page numbers refer to *Repertoire Book 1* pages unless preceded by "TG."

For example:

- "p. 12" refers to p. 12 in *Repertoire Book 1*
- "TG p. 12" refers to p. 12 of the Teacher's Guide.

# PIANO SAFARI® LEVEL 1

## Repertoire Book 1 & Audio Tracks



- Reading Pieces
- Rote Pieces
- Folk Songs
- Animal Technique Exercises
- Improvisation Pieces
- Theory

## Sight Reading & Rhythm Cards for Book 1



- RH Reading Exercises
- LH Reading Exercises
- Rhythm Exercises

## Theory Book 1



- Provides additional practice for theory concepts presented in *Repertoire Book 1*

For additional teaching resources, including Videos and Essays, visit [pianosafari.com](http://pianosafari.com).

## TYPES OF PIECES AND EXERCISES IN LEVEL 1

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

# READING PIECES

## How Students Learn Reading Pieces

- Students learn the Reading Pieces by reading the music notation.
- Reading Pieces are not included on the Audio Tracks, 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	READING PIECES: MAIN CONCEPTS
Unit 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pre-staff notation on black keys with fingers numbers 2 3 4</li></ul>
Unit 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pre-staff notation on white keys with finger numbers 1 2 3 4 5</li><li>• Pieces begin on various keys with different fingers</li></ul>
Unit 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introduces the interval of a 2nd</li></ul>
Unit 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introduces the interval of a 3rd</li></ul>
Unit 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Combines 2nds and 3rds</li></ul>

Focusing on one interval for an entire unit gives students confidence in reading one interval before combining it with other intervals. 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 play hands together in the Rote Pieces and Folk Songs. 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 [pianosafari.com](http://pianosafari.com). These cards are an integral part of Level 1 of the Piano Safari® Method. Students are provided with additional practice in not only recognizing intervals, but in writing them in *Theory Book 1*.



## 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 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** on the Resources page at [pianosafari.com](http://pianosafari.com). Throughout this Teacher Guide, Teaching Strategies are listed in bold.

\* Students are referred to in the masculine for clarity of prose.

# SIGHT READING & RHYTHM CARDS

The *Sight Reading & Rhythm Cards* are an integral part of Level 1. Learning to read music notation takes much practice and reinforcement. Although many Reading Pieces are provided in Repertoire Book 1, we have found that most students need even more practice at reading, especially since their aural abilities develop so quickly through learning the Rote Pieces. We designed the *Sight Reading & Rhythm Cards* to provide this practice.

Cards can be worked on at the lesson or assigned for home practice as desired.

The cards are color coded and correlate by level with each unit of the *Repertoire Book*, as show in the following table.

More information for teaching the *Sight Reading & Rhythm Cards* can be found in the Teacher Guide for these cards at [pianosafari.com](http://pianosafari.com).

BOOK UNIT	SIGHT READING CARD LEVEL	READING CONCEPT
Unit 1	Level A	Pre-staff Black Keys
Unit 2	Level B	Pre-staff White Keys
Unit 3	Level C	Unisons and 2nds
Unit 4	Level D	Unisons and 3rds
Unit 5	Level E	Unisons, 2nds, and 3rds

## THEORY BOOK

*Theory Book 1* provides practice in writing music notation. Writing is an important aspect of the learning process and aids in solidifying knowledge of each concept. Each unit correlates with the units in *Repertoire Book 1*.

# ROTE PIECES

## How Students Learn Rote Pieces

- Listen to the Audio Tracks. (A code to download the tracks is provided on the title page of *Repertoire Book 1*.)
- Model the teacher phrase by phrase
- Reminder Videos for home practice, available on the Videos page at pianosafari.com
- Limited reference to the score to detect patterns. The notation is for teacher or parent reference only. Students should *not* learn a piece by rote and then try to read the notation. Instead, reading is taught through Reading Pieces and Sight Reading & Rhythm Cards. The type of piece is listed in the upper right hand corner of each page in *Repertoire Book 1*.

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, and 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 and become musically literate both visually and aurally.

The Rote Pieces in *Repertoire Book 1* may look difficult, but we have found that students who have played Rote Pieces from 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.

Not every piece makes a good rote piece! The Rote Pieces included in Piano Safari been specially composed based on keyboard patterns of black and white keys that children can understand easily. Patterns are essential to a successful Rote Piece.

For more information about the benefits of teaching by rote, see **Mini Essay 6: The Benefits of Rote Teaching** on the Resources page at pianosafari.com.

## Teaching Strategies for Rote Pieces

- Have the student prepare for learning the piece by listening to the Audio Track. 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**)

# TECHNICAL EXERCISES

## How Students Learn Technical Exercises

- Listen to the Audio Tracks. (A code to download the tracks is provided on the title page of *Repertoire Book 1*.)
- Imitate the technical motions demonstrated by the teacher.
- Reminder Videos for home practice, available on the Videos page at [pianosafari.com](http://pianosafari.com)

The **Technical Exercises** presented in this book are designed to help students master basic motions that provide a solid foundation for future piano study. The animal names make the exercises fun. The exercises were developed through Dr. Julie Knerr's dissertation research with respected teachers of pre-college students, in which she observed lessons and interviewed the teachers about how they teach technique. If you would like to read the dissertation, it is available on the Resources page at [pianosafari.com](http://pianosafari.com).

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

## Technical Exercises Presented in Repertoire Book 1

- 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)

An **Improvisation Piece** and a **Rote Piece** that uses the technical motion follows each of the seven **Animal Techniques** presented throughout the book.

**Important!** All pieces and Sight Reading & Rhythm Cards should be played *non legato* until the Tree Frog Exercise on p. 88. We have found that an extended period of playing *non legato* helps students develop their coordination between arm and fingers and form a good piano hand shape. Once the hand shape is secure and the coordination is in place, students can then begin to connect fingers in the *legato* Tree Frog exercise. This is our single most important piece of technical advice for teachers of beginning students.

# IMPROVISATION PIECES

## How Students Learn Improvisation Pieces

- Model the teacher
- Create their own sounds within a given framework

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.

In addition, an Improvisation Piece is included for each of the seven Animal Techniques to allow students to explore the technical motion in a creative way.

# FOLK SONGS

## How Students Learn Folk Songs

- Read finger numbers
- Read notation by interval

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.

# LESSON ORGANIZATION

What is included in a Piano Safari lesson?

We recommend 45- or 60- minute lessons for all students, because there is so much to do in a lesson. Even young children of 5 or 6 can benefit from a longer lesson than the typical 30-minutes, because they must be completely secure with their piece before going home to practice. The longer lesson also allows for more play related activities that are so important to learning.

The order of lesson and times can be adjusted as desired. Here is a sample breakdown of a 45-minute lesson.

ACTIVITY	NUMBER OF PIECES	TIME
Pieces a Student is Working On	2 - 4	13 minutes
New Pieces	1 - 2	10 minutes
Review Pieces	3 - 10	8 minutes
Improvisation		2 minutes
Sight Reading & Rhythm Cards	2 - 4	10 minutes
Assign Theory Pages	2 - 5 pages	2 minutes

## ASSIGNING PIECES

Students should work within a unit until all Repertoire Book pieces, Sight Reading & Rhythm Cards, and Theory pages are completed for that unit. The student then graduates to the next unit.

The order in which pieces are assigned within a unit is left to the discretion of the teacher. One week a student may need a new Reading Piece, while another week he may need a new Rote Piece.

In general, students will spend 1 - 2 months in each unit (except for the Introductory Unit, which can usually be completed in 3 or 4 weeks). Students usually take an average of one full year to complete Level 1. However, this varies depending on the student's age and practice habits. Young students may take two years to complete Level 1, while older or diligent students may complete Level 1 in 6 months.

**Piece Cards** are a motivational supplement available for purchase at [pianosafari.com](http://pianosafari.com). These include a card for each piece that the student can color. The Piece Cards can be given as each piece is assigned and affixed to **Unit Maps** (available for download on the Resources page). This is a fun way to assign pieces and allow students to track their progress through each unit.

# SAMPLE LESSON PLAN

Here is a sample lesson plan for a 30-minute interview or the first lesson. This is appropriate for a beginning student who is between the ages of 4 -10. This can also be expanded into a longer first lesson by adding other activities or pieces. See the page for each piece for specific teaching instructions.

For more teaching ideas, see **Mini Essay 3: What Should Be Included in a Beginning Level Piano Lesson?** on the Resources page at [pianosafari.com](http://pianosafari.com).

PIECE/ACTIVITY	PURPOSE	TYPE	TIME
Alphabet Boogie (TG p. 28)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn a Rote Piece</li> <li>• Introduce the music alphabet and apply it to the piano keyboard</li> <li>• Assess the student's ability to concentrate by having him play from the bottom to the top of the keyboard</li> </ul>	Rote Piece	4 min.
Charlie Chipmunk (TG p. 31)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn a Rote Piece</li> <li>• Assess the student's ability to copy patterns on the black keys</li> </ul>	Rote Piece	5 min.
Rhythm Playbacks on drum or clapping (TG p. 22)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess the child's ability to imitate Animal Rhythm Patterns</li> </ul>	Rhythm	1 min.
March Improvisation (TG p. 33)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play on the black keys freely</li> <li>• Assess the child's basic sense of pulse</li> </ul>	Improvisation	1 min.
Activity: Decorating the Piano (TG p. 29)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess the student's ability to recognize groups of two and three black keys</li> <li>• Begin the process of learning to name the white keys on the piano</li> <li>• Assess the student's attention span</li> </ul>	Theory	10 min.
Lion Paw (TG p. 44)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show the student how to have a loose arm</li> <li>• Assess the student's physical coordination</li> </ul>	Technique	7 min.
Review Charlie Chipmunk & Alphabet Boogie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess the student's retention</li> <li>• Allow the child to leave excited that he has already learned two pieces</li> </ul>	Rote Pieces	2 min.