

# PIANO SAFARI® FOR THE OLDER STUDENT REPERTOIRE & TECHNIQUE BOOK 1

## TEACHER GUIDE

by Dr. Julie Knerr

### UNIT 2

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# UNIT 2

## Goals and Objectives

In Unit 2, our goals are:

- Learn the basics of reading on the staff, including line and space notes, Landmark Notes, and the intervals of Unisons and 2nds.
- Learn about time signatures while still counting syllabically
- Read Unisons and 2nds intervallically beginning on the Landmark Notes
- Refine the technique of playing *non legato*
- Play pieces in various styles, modes, and tempos
- Play hands separately and hands together in parallel motion

## OBJECTIVES

- Learn the basics of reading on the staff, including:
  - Line and space notes
  - Clef signs
  - Landmark Notes of Treble G, Bass C, and Middle C
  - Time Signatures
  - Intervals of Unisons and 2nds

## TEACHING TIPS

- The information on these pages is for use in presenting the concepts found in Unit 2. It is not necessary to complete every page in order before playing the pieces in Unit 2. Use the pages at your discretion to introduce the concepts.
- **Landmarks, p. 30.** All Reading Pieces and Sight Reading Exercises in Units 2 - 4 begin on the Landmark Notes of Treble G, Bass C, and Middle C. After identifying the starting Landmark Note, students then read intervallically from there (up, down, same). They do not read note by note using note names. Although internalizing the names of all the notes on the staff is very important, we emphasize intervallic reading first. This allows students to read by pattern, shape, and contour rather than note by note, which is how advanced pianists read. After learning to read Unisons, 2nds, and 3rds intervallically beginning on the Landmark Notes in Units 2 - 4, students learn Note Names on the Staff in Unit 5. Eventually they should become adept at instantly recognizing every note on the staff and combine this with their primarily mode of reading, which is by interval.
- **Rhythm, p. 31.** Although students will continue to count rhythms syllabically (Ta), we introduce the concept of the Time Signature here to prepare students for counting metrically (introduced in Unit 4 on p. 62).
- **Intervals, p. 32.** All the Reading Pieces and Sight Reading Exercises in Unit 2 feature only the intervals of Unisons and 2nds. We believe that concentrating on an interval for an extended period of time before introducing new intervals aids students greatly in becoming a fluent and confident readers.

# MEDIEVAL CORONATION p. 33

By Knerr

UNIT 2  
READING

## OBJECTIVES

- Read a RH piece that uses Unisons and 2nds on the staff by interval (up, down, same)
- Learn the 8va sign
- Play *non legato* with a forearm motion and good piano hand shape

## TEACHING TIPS

- Before playing the piece, have the student place RH Finger 2 on Treble G. Say, "Play G. Same. Same. Up a 2nd. Up a 2nd. Down a 2nd," etc. The student will play each note according to your verbal instructions. This allows the student to play up, down, and same before seeing the notation. You may give instructions according to the intervals in "Medieval Coronation" or randomly. Use only Unisons and 2nds.
- Help the student identify the Landmark Note (Treble G). Then have the student point to each note and say whether the note moves up a 2nd, down a 2nd, or stays the same (Unisons). Be sure the student is looking at the note head rather than the note stem. Also, be sure that the student understands that stem direction indicating the hand to play was only applicable in pre-staff notation. On the staff, the note stems go in either direction and do not generally indicate the hand to be played. Explanation about stem direction is found in the *Sight Reading & Theory Book 1* on p. 18.
- Play the piece while the student taps the rhythm and counts syllabically.
- Have the student play the piece while you help him track from left to right by pointing to the notes with a pencil from above. Or you may also count tap and count syllabically.
- Providing small steps that allows the student to have a good first experience reading on the staff is very important, as the student needs to develop the idea that reading music is well within his capabilities and is not at all intimidating.
- Although the primary way students will be reading will be intervallic, "G same same up, G same, same down," as a preparation for learning all the notes on the staff and making the connection between a key on the piano and its corresponding place on the staff, you may also have the student tell you the names of the some of the notes. For example, in this piece in m. 1, you could say, "We have three Gs, and then we go up a 2nd to what note?" The student can refer to the keyboard and then answer, "A." "Yes, this note on the 2nd space is A." For m. 2, "We have three Gs and then go down a 2nd to what note?" The student responds after consulting the keyboard, "F." Because automatically and instantly recognizing notes by letter name on the staff takes quite a bit of time, preview activities like this will gradually help the student make connections between the staff and the keyboard in preparation for formally being introduced to all notes on the staff in Unit 5.

# LAMENT p. 34

By Knerr & Fisher

UNIT 2  
READING

## OBJECTIVES

- Read a LH piece that uses Unisons and 2nds on the staff by interval (up, down, same)
- Learn the *8vb* sign
- Play *non legato* with a forearm motion and good piano hand shape

## TEACHING TIPS

- Repeat the Teaching Tips listed in “Medieval Coronation,” modifying them to begin with LH on Bass C.
- Students who are extremely coordinated or who have had previous piano training in the past may play the single line Reading Pieces hands together in parallel motion if desired. In this case, LH Finger 2 is on Bass C, and RH Finger 4 would be on Middle C.

# MIDSUMMER WALTZ p. 36

By Knerr

UNIT 2  
READING

## OBJECTIVES

- Read a RH piece that uses Unisons and 2nds on the staff
- Play a piece in 3/4 meter, feeling one large beat per measure
- Learn *D.C. al Fine*, and read a longer piece than the previous Reading Pieces

## TEACHING TIPS

- Tap and count with the student carefully before the student plays the piece, as 3/4 is sometimes a difficult meter to grasp.

# NON LEGATO ARTICULATION

p. 38

By Knerr & Fisher



UNIT 2  
TECHNIQUE

## OBJECTIVES

- Be formally introduced to *non legato*, and refine this articulation
- Practice a graceful wrist lift
- Shift from octave to octave

## TEACHING TIPS

- Students have to this point been playing all their pieces and Sight Reading Exercises using a *non legato* articulation. This Technique Exercise provides a focused time to refine this articulation and to work on a graceful wrist lift.
- The hand shape should by this point be solid, with a raised bridge, firm fingertips, relaxed non playing fingers, and a relaxed arm and wrist.
- Play the exercise for the student, and refine any problems in the technique.
- On the half notes, have the student lift the wrist by rolling slightly forward toward the fallboard.
- The LH is presented first because we wanted the LH exercise to appear on the left side of the book and the RH exercise to be on the right side of the book. You may introduce either hand first.
- As a Challenge, students may play this exercise hands together in parallel and/or contrary motion as noted on p. 39.
- A Reminder Video can be found for all Technique Exercises at [pianosafari.com](http://pianosafari.com) on the Videos page.

# DRAGON DANCE p. 40

By Knerr



UNIT 2  
TECHNIQUE ROTE

## OBJECTIVES

- Play a patterned Rote Piece that features the Non Legato Technique (RH)
- Refine the Arm Drop Technique (LH)

## TEACHING TIPS

- Be sure the student is playing all notes *non legato*.
- Have the student learn each hand separately before playing hands together.
- Draw the student's attention to the repeating patterns in the RH. For example, the 2nd line is the same as the first line, except it begins on E instead of D.
- Variations are provided to accommodate various student's abilities in a group class.



# NON LEGATO IMPROVISATION p. 42

By Joey Lieber

UNIT 2  
IMPROVISATION

## OBJECTIVES

- Experience call and response using Non Legato Technique
- Hear a twelve bar blues piece

## TEACHING TIPS

- The student should imitate your phrases with the correct fingering and *non legato* articulation.
- See the Variations for other teaching ideas.
- Students will enjoy creating short phrases for you to imitate. However, because not all notes will work well with the accompaniment in G, it is suggested that you transpose the accompaniment down a half step to G<sup>b</sup> before allowing the student to be the leader in creating phrases on the black keys. In G<sup>b</sup>, all black key phrases will sound good.

# CITY STROLL p. 44

By Fisher & Fisher

UNIT 2  
READING

## OBJECTIVES

- Read a piece that uses Unisons and 2nds in the treble clef
- Learn the repeat sign

## TEACHING TIPS

- As a challenge, have the student play this piece hands together in parallel motion. RH Finger 5 is on G, and LH Finger 1 is on G. Parallel motion playing is an important coordination for students to master in Level 1.
- You may have the student tell you the letter of the notes on the first line as a way of connecting the staff with the keyboard in preparation for learning all notes on the staff in Unit 5. This piece lends itself well to this activity, because it features the Music Alphabet descending and ascending in order.

# MIDNIGHT WALTZ p. 45

By Fisher & Knerr

UNIT 2  
READING

## OBJECTIVES

- Read a piece that uses Unisons and 2nds in the bass clef
- Play a piece in 3/4 meter
- Learn the quarter rest and whole rest

## TEACHING TIPS

- Have the student tap and count the rhythm of this piece as you play the melody, as the rhythm is a bit more complicated than in other pieces.
- As a challenge, the student may play this piece hands together in parallel motion if desired. LH Finger 2 is on C, and RH Finger 4 is on C.
- Another idea for helping the student make connections between notes on the staff and their correlating place on the keyboard is to ask these or similar questions:
  - "Point to all the Bass Cs."
  - "Say the letter names of the first two measures."
  - "Find all the As." (since they feature prominently in this piece).

# DANDELION FLUFF p. 46

By Knerr



UNIT 2  
ROTE

## OBJECTIVES

- Play a patterned piece on black keys that shifts by octave and features hand crossing
- Experience a complicated, arpeggiated accompaniment
- Improvise on black keys

## TEACHING TIPS

- Teach each pattern in two-bar phrases by rote. Stems up = RH. Stems down = LH. The student should play *non legato*, as the pedal will make it smooth while the *non legato* will preserve the student's hand shape.
- Note that each hand begins with Finger 2 for the first several phrases. The first phrase, m. 1 - 2, is the same as m. 3 - 4 except for the LH hand crossing.
- In m. 5 - 8, the phrase ascends and then descends on black keys with hand crossings.
- The first half of the piece is repeated in m. 9 - 16, except for the last measure.
- After playing the piece as written, repeat the accompaniment while the student improvises on black keys.

# CHICKEN CHATTER p. 48

By Fisher & Fisher

UNIT 2  
READING

## OBJECTIVES

- Read a piece on the grand staff that uses Unisons and 2nds.
- Read a piece in parallel motion.

## TEACHING TIPS

- Although students have played pieces in parallel motion as a challenge in their single line Reading Pieces, this is the first time they see the notation on the grand staff written out in parallel motion in a Reading Piece.
- Be sure the student notices that the hands play the same notes an octave apart and that the intervals are the same between hands.