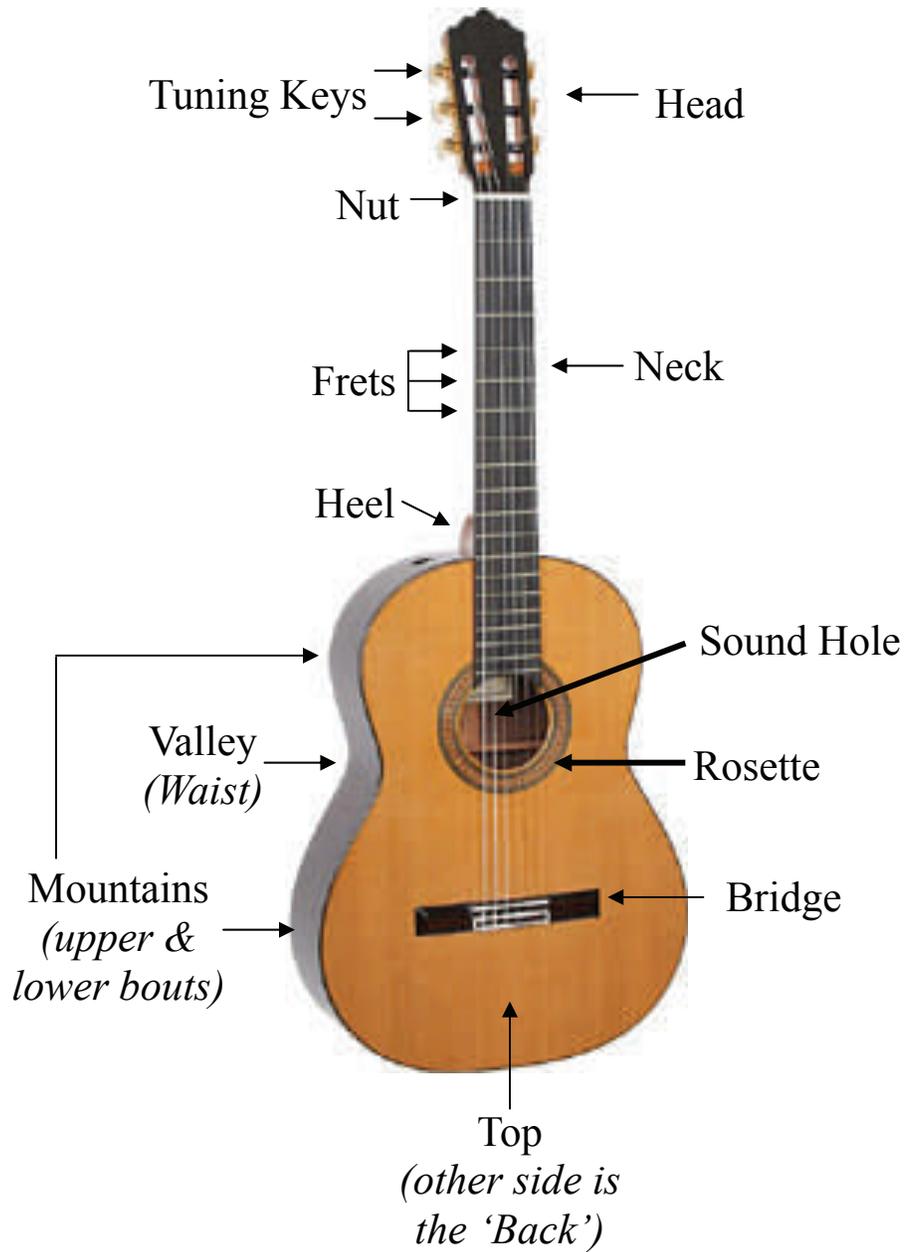


Home-Teacher Class Outline

Week 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Every Child Can -Listen, Listen, Listen (Distribute Recordings) -Imposing Negative Concerns -Practice ritual for home-teacher -Ability Development from Age Zero 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Sizing and materials -Terminology -Seating and positioning -Following the Score I-high/low
Week 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Preparing the environment -Practice ritual for child -Parameters of home practice -Begin daily sessions -Ability Development from Age Zero 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Right hand positioning & use -Playing with P -Tuning with tuner -<i>Billy Goat</i>
Week 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The Private Lesson -Roles of teacher, parent, child -Developing the Whole Child -Recommended Reading 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Left hand -Hot Cross Buns -Going Home -Mary Had a Little Lamb -Following the Score II-rhythm
Week 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Beautiful Tone -Home Lesson Structure -Developing Concentration -Pacing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -More Left Hand -Feathers in the Breeze -Lightly Row -Rest Strokes-Walking Walking, Hop, Hop -Following the Score III-fingerings
Week 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Importance of Review -Learning in small steps -Language for success -Communication with the teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -More Left Hand -Twinkle Theme -Aunt Rhody -Twinkle var. A -Following the Score IV-pitches
Week 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Group Classes -Performance Opportunities -Maintaining Motivation-Parent and Child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -More Left Hand -High Going Home -Songs with Rest Strokes -Following the Score V-expressive marks

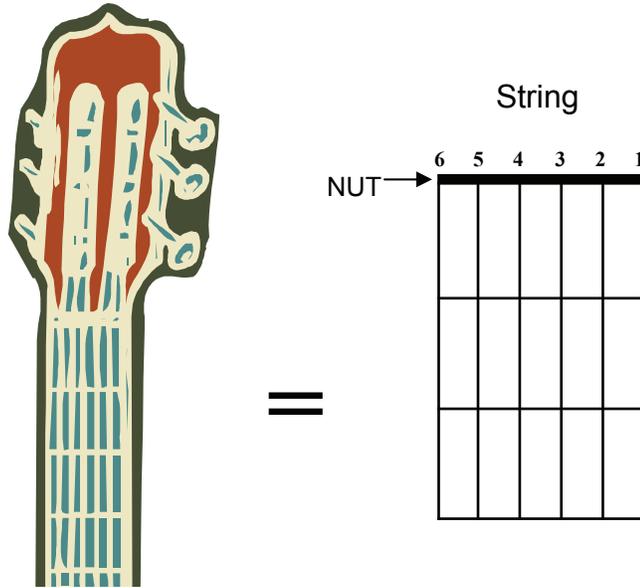
Parts of the Guitar



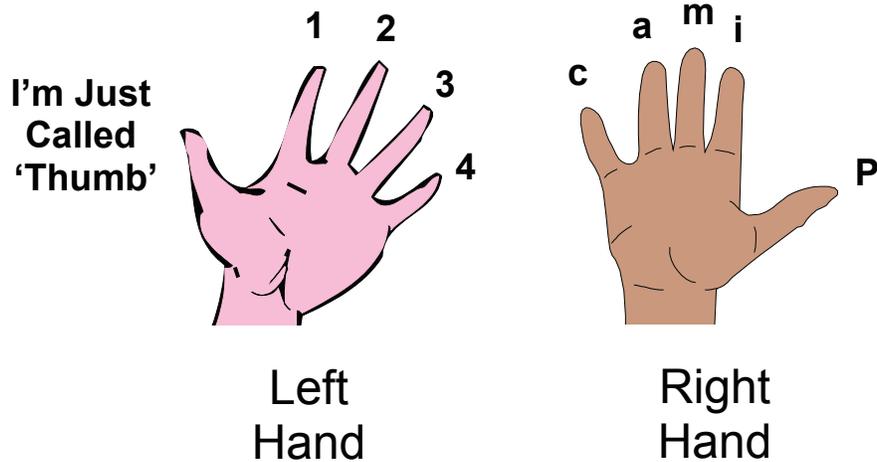
The strings are numbered 1-6.

1 is the thinnest (called highest)

6 is the thickest (called lowest)



Fingers Names:



Seating and Positioning

Proper positioning of the guitar and body are essential to developing beautiful tone, comfort, and ease in playing. Paying careful attention to these small details in the beginning will allow for much quicker development later on.

Chair

Good positioning cannot be accomplished with an incorrectly sized chair or stool. The height of the stool should be such that, when seated, the child's knees are at roughly the same height as the hips (top segment of leg parallel to the floor). Some adjustment may be suggested by the teacher based on the relative size of the guitar. A stool may be preferable as it is easier to transport and does not offer the temptation of leaning back against the rest.

Footstool

The footstool is placed directly in front of the left leg of the stool (or in line with where the left leg naturally falls with legs forward & loose) and far enough from the chair to position the ankle directly below the knee. . The proper height can be determined by the teacher.

Handling the Guitar

Consistently handling (holding & carrying) the guitar in the same manner will result in fewer accidents and a more secure feeling when performing on stage. The guitar neck should be grasped by the right hand near the heel. When walking it is held vertically in front of the torso with the strings facing outward. When the student begins removing the guitar from the case herself she should make a habit of grasping it and walking in this manner as well.

Seating and Positioning

All of the future elements of good tone production and technique hinge upon proper seating and positioning. Mastering the steps to 'perfect position' is a major accomplishment! Once standing in front of the chair with the guitar they bar:

-Eyes,
-Feet,
-Eyes,
-Seat,
-Up!
-Over!
-Shut!

Assisted Positioning

Very young children benefit from having the parent assist in placing and supporting the guitar in playing position for them until they are consistently able to find and maintain a good position on their own. The steps to perfect position can be practiced and refined during this period.

Steps to Perfect Position!

Eyes,

Standing tall, eyes forward, the first 'Kodak moment'

Feet,

Relaxed, droopy bow. Hang and look at feet. Hippopotamus!

Eyes,

Standing tall, eyes forward, the second 'Kodak moment'

Seat,

Balanced seating on edge of chair, guitar resting on right knee in rest (rocket ship) position.

Up!

Left foot squarely on the footstool (gas).

Over!

Right foot out (on the dot or other real or imagined object).

Shut!

Right hand lowers guitar into playing position (close the door).

Position Check!

Heart to Heart

What more can we say?!

Head Out

Imagine a plane running parallel to the child's shoulders and positioned at the front of their chest. The head of the guitar should not cross behind this plane.

Soggy Shoulder

Shrug and release shoulders until completely relaxed. Get to know the look of relaxed vs. engaged shoulders.

Preparing to Pluck!

Steady Fingers

Rest i and m on string (1) just above the rosette. Fingers are round and steady.

Drop and Flop

If the guitar is positioned correctly the right forearm will rest atop the lower bout (on the mountain). All of the weight of the shoulder and right are dropped onto the guitar. The wrist, hand and fingers should feel loose and floppy.

Arched and Aligned

The right wrist is aligned (you can make a straight line from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger) and slightly arched (wrist slightly higher than parallel to the guitar top).

A few words about Floppiness!

Probably the highest (and most challenging) goal in regards to guitar technique is cultivating the quality of release (floppiness). This means that muscles are not engaged when they are not doing something (moving) and are not simultaneously working against opposing muscles (tension). In almost every activity involving the body, the ability to fully release muscles has an enormous impact on our capabilities. This applies well beyond the obvious tasks of athletics or playing an instrument. Developing an awareness and control of tension in our bodies enhances myriad daily activities such as eating, sleeping, driving, studying, even speaking. Working on this now with your child is giving them something very powerful!

They are not naturally inclined to be interested in or cognizant of tension. They do, however, possess an extraordinary capacity for release!

There are many visual cues which can help you monitor the level of excess tension in an activity (Observing engaged shoulders, clenched mouth, extended inactive fingers). Some of the most powerful clues though come from touch. Get used to placing your hands on your child's hands, wrists, arms, shoulder, etc. Soon you will become an expert in noticing the amount of energy going into a given task. Touch often has the amazing quality of inspiring release on its own!

The ability of the brain to engage one set of muscles, at just the right time, without also engaging other unnecessary ones, is what we call coordination (sometimes independence). Your child has a certain degree of this already from her other non-guitar related activities and will develop more as we progress. When striving for release as a goal, it is important for us to remember that the child can only relax as much as her current level of coordination will allow for that particular activity.

The Wonders of P!

You will notice from your Suzuki Guitar School Book 1 that the traditional Suzuki Guitar School begins by playing notes with the fingers i and m, alternating the two. While this is certainly a meat-and-potatoes technique on guitar, especially for playing melodies, it is not the easiest and simplest manner of sounding the strings. Developing this technique with good relaxation and beautiful tone can take quite a while. While there is nothing wrong with holding out to learn a complex skill in the beginning, most children would prefer to play some songs sooner. So in the mean time we have P!

The P finger is the most sophisticated and developed finger on the hand!

It is the longest (stretching all the way to the wrist joint)

It is the strongest (when was the last time you saw two people pinky wrestling?)

It is the most agile (It does a complete 360 in both directions without effort)

It is the sneakiest (Independent control of P's tip joint trumps all the others)

So we will begin with some of what many call 'pre-twinkle' pieces.

By the time the child is ready to play with i and m the issues of seating, positioning, left hand use, learning by ear, and many others will already be old news.

Playing with P!

Touch and Play

With i and m resting on (1) place P on string (3), the note So.

Pause to feel the string-this step is called preparing, or just 'touch'.

P plays by dropping toward the floor-all the way until it hits the side of the i finger.

Try to swing P from the wrist joint, moving the others very little.

Repeat the 'touch' part before every 'play'; this can be done in rhythm:

Touch/ play/ touch/ play

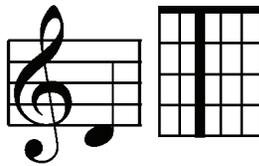
Billie Goat

A note which is not fretted with the left hand is called 'open'.

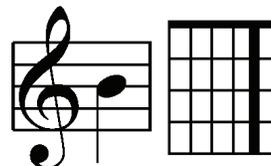
Billie Goat uses 3 open string notes:



G (sol)

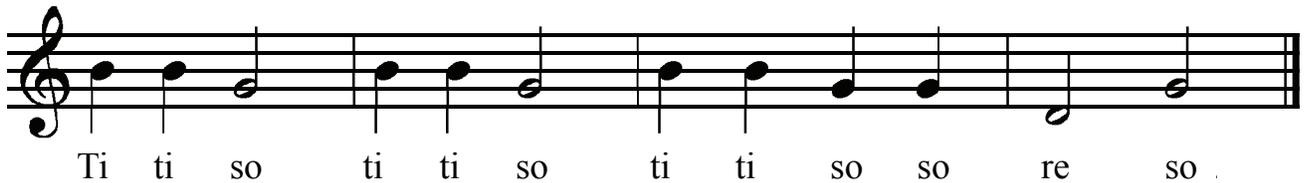
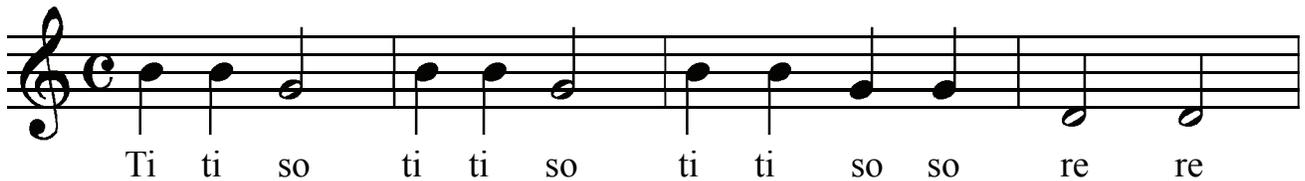


D (re)



B (ti)

Billy Goat



Tuning the Guitar

From the very start it is important for the child to become accustomed to the sound of an in-tune guitar. In time they will become able to hear immediately when one or more of the strings is not correct. The guitar should be tuned carefully by the parent before every home session.

Eventually the student and parent can learn to tune the guitar by ear. This, however, is a complex practice which requires that many other skill already be firmly in place. In the mean time, we are blessed with our friend-the electronic tuner.

While you only absolutely have to tune the string on which the child is currently playing, it is a good practice to tune all of the strings of the guitar from the start. The guitar performs best when each string is at the proper tension and the other strings will ring along with the ones being played.

There are two types of tuners available– open air and contact tuners. Open air tuners need to be used in a quiet environment. Contact tuners are not effected by ambient noise.

Different models have different preferences as to how they respond best. You will practice tuning often in the private lesson to learn to use your tuner most easily.

Occasionally one or more strings may become so out of tune that the tuner does not respond to the correct note name for that string. In that event you will need to lower or raise (usually raise) the string slowly and carefully, following the order of the pitches on the tuner, until it reaches the correct pitch.

Order of the pitches:

E F F# G G# A A# B C C# D D# E F F# G G# A A# B C C# D D# E

The open string of the guitar are tuned (lowest to highest):

E A D G B E
mi la re so ti mi



The Left Hand

The fingers of the left hand shorten or 'stop' the strings, thus changing the pitch. The pitches are fixed in place by the frets, which are what actually stop the string. This is different than what is done in other non-fretted string instruments where the finger itself is what stops the string.

The main goals for using the left hand are:

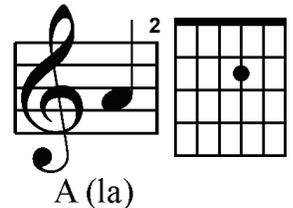
- To stop the string(s) with the least effort possible.
- To position the fingers for best access to the notes in a passage.

Beginning to Fret

At first the child will only need to stop one note at a time. This can be best accomplished in the 'neutral' left hand position. The first fingered note is 'la':

To find neutral in playing position:

- Drop the left arm completely at the side; soggy shoulder.
- Bend straight up at the elbow.
- Raise the arm (not the shoulder) a bit more until 2 is level with la.
- Rotate the forearm until the plane of the knuckles is parallel to the neck.



Now:

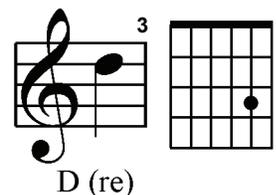
- Touch finger 2 lightly to the string.
- Place on its tip close enough to the fret to feel the metal.
- Release the thumb and touch lightly to the neck where it naturally falls.

The helicopter exercise alternates the fingered note (la) with the open string (so).
When the helicopter goes up, it releases gently to hover just above the string.

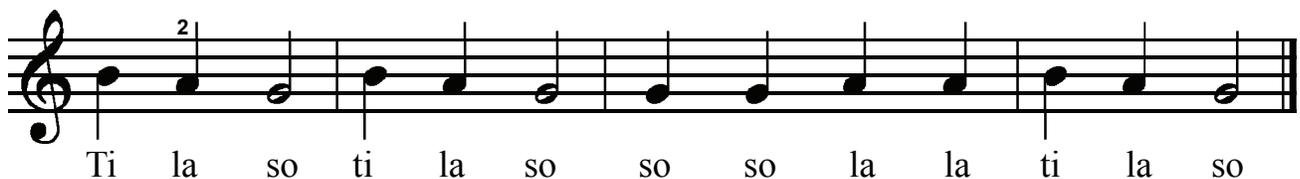
-hand in **Neutral**- -touch the **Fret**- -place on the **Tip**- -soggy **Shoulders**-

Then:

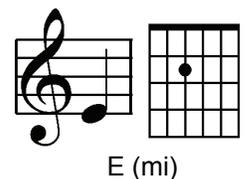
Do the same procedure and exercise for the next note, High Re:



Hot Cross Buns



Learn 'Going Home' by ear-the first note is high re!
Then try 'Mary Had a Little Lamb' and 'Feathers in the Breeze'!



Playing with the Fingers

After learning several songs plucked with the P finger the next manner of sounding the strings will begin to be introduced. By this time the student will have a secure sense of seating and positioning the guitar, have begun to use the left hand, and acquired a reasonable sense of floppiness! The new technique is called 'finger rest-strokes'. The term rest-stroke refers to the fact that the finger will briefly rest on the adjacent string after sounding its note.

First Rest Strokes

The first rest strokes are executed one finger at a time with the parents assistance.

This may be done using 'table-top' position or using the 'moonwalker':

(Guitar flat across legs)

(Home-made device with 2 strings)

- Set P** on the 6th string (or set spot on moonwalker).
- Flop** the right hand and wrist.
- Touch** 3rd string with i near its tip (or against the nail).
- Play** by pulling i through the third string to rest on the 4th string.
- Release** the finger back to the 'neutral' or floppy place (trampoline).
- Repeat with i, then with m, (and later a). -take your time.

Now try 'guitar bells' using one of the 3 fingers for each of the 3 strings.

Walking Fingers

After single finger rest strokes are comfortable 'walking fingers' are introduced.

'Walking Fingers' refers to alternating i and m in succession.

Practice walking fingers using the walk-ing-walk-ing-hop-hop rhythm:

- Start with the i finger.
- Help the child to remain floppy by touching/supporting the wrist.
- See if each finger can release after its note.



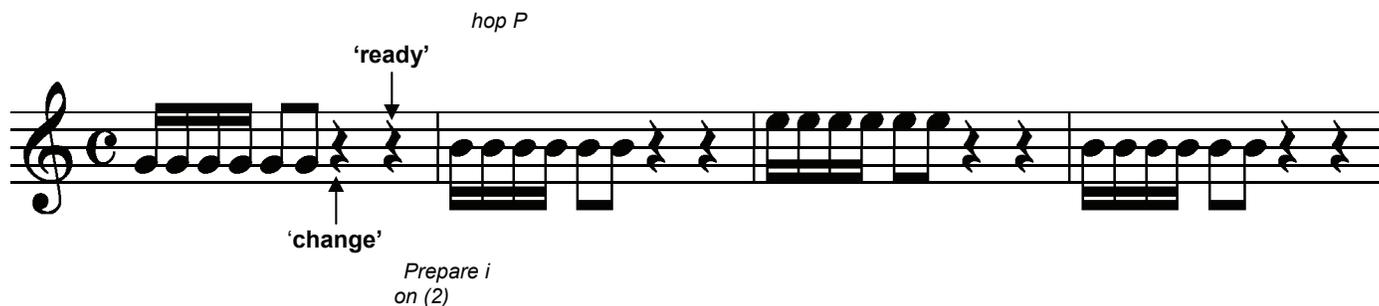
Changing Strings

When changing strings (called 'crossing') while using rest strokes the goal is to maintain the same hand and wrist position regardless of the string. To accomplish this the entire hand and forearm move as a single unit. To help students get the feel of this large movement, the P finger may 'hop along' from string to string as the hand moves, maintaining the same distance from the i finger at all times.

- i plays (3) / P rests on (6)
- i plays (2) / P rests on (5)
- i plays (1) / P rests on (4)

Playing with the Fingers

Now try the following exercise,
saying 'change'/'ready' aloud:



The image shows a musical staff in treble clef with a common time signature (C). The exercise consists of four measures. The first measure contains a sequence of eighth notes: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5. An arrow labeled "'change'" points to the G4 note. The second measure contains a sequence of eighth notes: C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. An arrow labeled "'ready'" points to the C5 note. The third measure contains a sequence of eighth notes: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5. The fourth measure contains a sequence of eighth notes: C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. Above the staff, the text "hop P" is written. Below the staff, the text "Prepare i on (2)" is written.

Using the hop-hop rhythm alone allows
more time to fully relax each finger:



The image shows a musical staff in treble clef with a common time signature (C). The exercise consists of four measures. The first measure contains a sequence of quarter notes: C4, D4, E4, F4. The second measure contains a sequence of quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. The third measure contains a sequence of quarter notes: C5, B4, A4, G4. The fourth measure contains a sequence of quarter notes: F4, E4, D4, C4.

Holding down finger 3 on Re this exercise
becomes the "Twinkle Change" section:



The image shows a musical staff in treble clef with a common time signature (C). The exercise consists of four measures. The first measure contains a sequence of quarter notes: C4, D4, E4, F4. The second measure contains a sequence of quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. The third measure contains a sequence of quarter notes: C5, B4, A4, G4. The fourth measure contains a sequence of quarter notes: F4, E4, D4, C4. A number "4" is written above the second measure, indicating that the third finger should be held down on the G4 note.

Now try 'Guitar Bells' at a slow tempo.
Remember to relax each finger after it plays::



The image shows a musical staff in treble clef with a common time signature (C). The exercise consists of four measures. The first measure contains a sequence of quarter notes: C4, D4, E4, F4. The second measure contains a sequence of quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5. The third measure contains a sequence of quarter notes: C5, B4, A4, G4. The fourth measure contains a sequence of quarter notes: F4, E4, D4, C4.

Every Child Can!

All Japanese children speak Japanese! This simple observation by Dr. Shinichi Suzuki led him to his strong conviction in the almost limitless ability of every child. The fact that every child in a culture is able to develop this high-level skill to a superior degree by the age of 5 or 6 demonstrated to him the universal potential of the human life force. If language acquisition is not limited to the gifted few, why should music be? Certainly we must acknowledge the varied temperaments with which different children are born, as well as the effect that their environment has already had by the ages of 3, 4, or 5. Even with these variances, all healthy children have the potential to achieve remarkable levels of ability if given the proper environment in which to thrive. We must accept this point or we will forever be limited by our perception of the child's inborn talent.

Mother Tongue is Best!

Suzuki understood that potential alone did not develop the profound ability for speech; the environment needed to be correct as well. He observed the aspects of a young child's environment which appeared to foster the growth of their language skill. He then applied to the study of music. These include:

Immersion-Children are continually bathed in the sounds of their mother tongue from birth

Imitation-Early on they begin to try to imitate the sounds of their parents, even down to the actual voice quality itself.

Repetition-Children do not speak a new word once and then leave it behind to go on to the next. They repeat their newly acquired vocabulary over and over (and over, and over....)

Constant encouragement-Nothing delights a parent more than the early utterances of their child. Children are given tremendous positive support for their attempts at speech, regardless of the quality.

Complete Confidence-Nobody has the slightest doubt that the child will learn to speak well.

Direct Correlation (Symbol Free)-In learning speech, the spoken word relates directly to the object, action, etc. The symbolic representation of written language is not a part of the early development.

Learning in Small Steps-One syllable nouns slowly become complex sentences

Ability Development-The first words come few and far between and require hundreds or thousands of repetitions. Once these early seeds of ability take root, the subsequent words and skills come at increasingly faster rates.

Gradual Approximation-Rather than waiting to speak a well-formed sentences with clear articulation, the first utterances are often crude, error-filled, incomprehensible (other than to the parent!) attempts. These are gradually refined to reach the level of that of the parent.

Nurtured By Love

Developing the whole child

Suzuki's believed that the pursuit of high standards of excellence, culminating in the experience of truly artistic performance, can change the child's character and elevate her spirit. He writes, "Art is not in some far-off place. A work of art is the expressions of a person's whole personality, sensibility, and ability."

Character first, then ability

Certainly, we will be very concerned with the details of playing a piece well on the guitar. However, in the Suzuki method, the skill and practices used to create this beautiful work of art are more important than the work itself! Patience, kindness, determination, awareness, appreciation of beauty— these qualities are the ultimate goals for our children that the Suzuki education provides. He says, "Teaching music is not my main purpose. I want to make good citizens, noble human beings. If a child hears fine music from the day of his birth, and learns to play it himself, he develops sensitivity, discipline and endurance. He gets beautiful heart."

Beautiful Tone, Beautiful Heart

Developing a beautiful tone on the instrument represents the highest level of sensitivity, refinement, and appreciation of beauty for its own sake. "Our purpose does not lie in a movement to create professional musicians, but to create persons of a beautiful mind and fine ability".

Excellence from the start

Holding the highest standards of excellence leads to a mastery which ultimately is sufficient to free the mind and body of the demands of playing the work, allowing the deep artistic and spiritual experience of effortless and truly expressive performance to emerge. Suzuki describes such an experience upon listening to a performance, "I had been able to feel the highest pulsating beauty of the human spirit, and my blood burned within me. It was a moment of sublime eternity when I, a human being, had gone beyond the limits of this physical body".

"The main concern for parents should be to bring up their children as noble human beings. That is sufficient. If this is not their greatest hope, in the end the child may take a road contrary to their expectations. Children can play very well. We must try to make them splendid in mind and heart also."

—Shinichi Suzuki

Roots of Motivation

“I want to play!”

For whatever reason, some children are attracted to the sound & spectacle of a specific instrument—they find the image of playing utterly compelling. For many families these initial requests from the child are what prompt them to seek out and enter the fold of the Suzuki method. They are rarely, however, what keep them there.

The picture in the child’s mind is of standing up, perhaps in front of a crowd, and playing the beautiful music they have heard. It rarely also includes the image of daily practice, careful attention to detail, and the gradual development of skills and the ability to concentrate. This kind of long-term thinking and investment is not part of the child’s mindset.

But it is for the Suzuki parent.

Before we ask the child, “Do you want to play?” we ask the parent, “Do you want this experience for yourself, your child, and your family? Are you ready to give them this amazing gift? To teach them to learn, to feel, to share in this way? Are you willing to commit to this process, teaching your child over time the nature of commitment, dedication, and love”

The young child’s interests come and go. Suzuki tells us that desire, and even genius, are nurtured by one’s environment. Children are not born either ‘natural musicians’ or not. Skill, and desire, are nurtured over time. And when desire runs low it is the mature experience and commitment of the home-teacher that carries the child through. Suzuki says, “Where love is deep, much can be accomplished.”

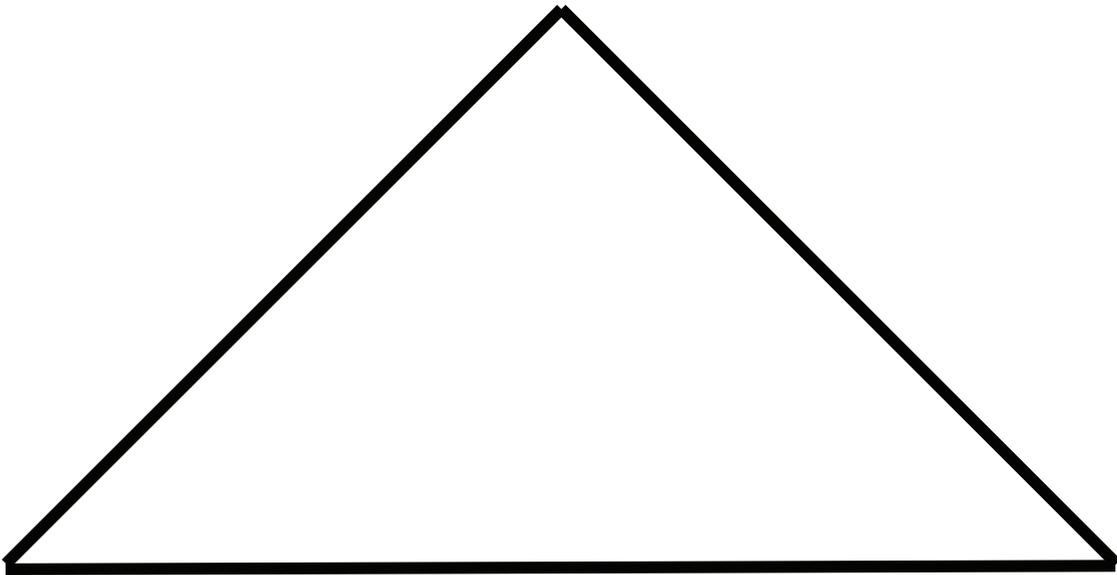
Eventually the time will come when, after the child has been helped along on this journey, she herself will take ownership of her instrument, her playing, and her development. This may be in early adolescence, when the flowers of consistent commitment and effort have long since blossomed and shown their color.

The mustard seed of great ability is small but lives within every human child. The power to release its potential begins in the hands that till the soil and dispense the water.

The Suzuki Triangle

Needs of the Child

- Needs a motivating and positive learning environment
 - Needs to enjoy the learning process
- Needs directed, organized home sessions and lessons
 - Needs to be given clear, attainable goals
 - Needs support and encouragement
- Needs to be accepted as the child they are today



Role of the Parent

- Play the Suzuki recordings daily
- Attend all lessons and groups with child
- Take notes and follow instruction points
 - Lead home lessons with child daily
- Provide a positive home learning environment
- Communicate directly with the teacher about issues effecting the learning process
- Honor the child's immense potential to learn

Role of the Teacher

- Support parent in home-teacher role
- Design appropriate pace for learning
- Organize and communicate learning points
 - Model beautiful tone and playing
 - Communicate directly about issues effecting the learning process
- Commit to continued education and maintaining well-rounded musicianship
- Seek to help develop the whole child

Listen, Listen, Listen!

Listening to the Suzuki recordings (as well as other fine classical recordings) is at the core of the Mother Tongue method. To neglect this aspect is to deprive the child of the very materials with which they are building their language. No child would learn to speak in a world of silence.

The child needs to be exposed to the recorded repertoire on a daily basis. This does not need to be active listening; children have the remarkable ability to absorb everything in their environment, whether they are trying to or not.

Make numerous copies of the CD and place them in various parts of the house, as well as in the car. Play them whenever the child is present. The child will truly not tire of hearing the same pieces. It is important not to transmit this adult concern about repetition to them.

By the time a child is ready to begin learning a particular piece on the instrument, she should be able to effortlessly reproduce the entire work in her mind (which is gauged by the teacher through singing). It is a good idea to play the track of a forthcoming piece repeatedly during listening. It is unfair to ask a child to learn by ear a piece which they have not had the opportunity to fully internalize through listening.

Listening only to the Suzuki recording is like hearing only one person speak and only discussing a few subjects. Children can internalize a sense of style for the entire history of classical music if they are exposed to fine recordings often. Some recommended guitar recordings are included in the appendix-be adventurous and play music in the home often!

Remember:

- Play the current book recording in the child's presence daily.**
- Play the recordings of the book beyond your child's level as well.**
- Continue to periodically play the recordings of previous books.**
- Play fine classical guitar as well as other recordings in the home often.**
- Take every opportunity to hear live performances.**

Recordings for Suzuki Guitar School Volumes 1-7 are published by Alfred Publications and are available through all major music retailers.

Creating the Home Lesson Environment!

Before beginning study, think carefully about the environment you are creating in which to work with your child. Once precedents are established, they can be hard to change. Ideally, the Suzuki study experience should be a positive and enjoyable one for the parent and child. There is much we can do to contribute to this success.

Attitudes: It is often said that young children are like sponges, soaking up every detail of their environment and modeling their parents in countless ways. This is particularly true of parental attitudes toward the world. Barring some previous instrumental experience for themselves or a sibling, young children enter this process as a blank slate-no particular expectations or assumptions. The parent, however, usually has many. Try not to impose your negative expectations or concerns upon your children; choose your language very carefully. They have no need to think that:

- Practice is unpleasant or a chore (many people do not use the word 'practice' at all!).
- Their goals are autonomy and independence.
- They need to progress quickly or do everything 'right'.
- Their progress or skill reflects their innate ability.
- Performance is something to fear.
- The product is the most important aspect of their study.

Physical Space: Choose a regular location for your home lessons (occasionally you can vary it for a spontaneous 'adventure' session). Try to pick a quiet place, free from distractions (phone, televisions, siblings, window to active area, etc). It can be hard to recover the flow of the session after an interruption- this is your time to be just with this child. Have all of the necessary materials close at hand.

Home-Lesson Time: Many families do best with a regular, predictable home lesson time. If this is not possible, try to plan the time for each day in advance to avoid discord about initiating practice. It is best to have the space prepared and all of the materials ready before starting. The parent will initiate the session. Create a ritual that signifies the official beginning and end of the session and use it religiously.

Home-Lesson Rapport: The relationships within the family are complex and are subject to numerous ups, downs, interruptions, aggravations, emotions, etc. Try to leave all of these elements behind as much as possible for the duration of the session. The time between the opening and closing rituals is a sort of 'sacred space'. Do everything possible to act your highest parenting aspirations in this space. The benefits will come back to you tenfold.

Suggestions for Implementing the Home Lesson

Plan: Spontaneity is great when it is well-planned! Have a regular home-lesson time or plan the time for each day in advance. This reduces fussing and negotiations considerably. Avoid tired, hungry, or over stimulated times.

Alert: Give notice in advance of the impending lesson time; allow the child to complete whatever he was doing.

Prepare: Home lessons go smoothest (and quickest) when all the materials are prepared and in place in advance. Set out stool, footstool, practice log, props; tune guitar, etc. before inviting child into room.

Frame: Start and end the home session with the chosen ritual.

Organize: Have a plan in mind for the order of activities.

Observe: Monitor your child's state of mind. How is their concentration/interest holding out?

Adjust: Be available to adjust your plan based on the child's response. Remember that maintaining a positive session comes before achieving specific goals with the material.

Focus: Distractions like phone calls, doorbells, other family members, household tasks, etc. can easily diminish a young child's ability to stay engaged.

Celebrate: Try to always end on an up! If things are going downhill quickly, find a quick way to wrap up the session and finish with success.

Enjoy: Your motivation is as important as the child's; keep the goals in regard to the material in mind but also remember to have fun and not take things too seriously.

The Home Lesson

An ideal way to organize the home lesson is to follow the format:

- Review**
- Tonalization/Technique**
- New Piece**
- Reading/Ensemble-(when applicable)**

Review: Starting with familiar material is the best way to ease into practice and establish concentration. Review should almost always have a goal-some teaching point to observe or refine while playing the song. Remember that repetition for its own sake has little value. Early in study the goal might often be just to concentrate all of the way through the song. Later the review portion is the chief vehicle for refining technique and musicianship. If no specific goal has been assigned during the lesson the home-teacher can choose what seems to be a good area to improve for that piece or day. The review pieces should sound better and better as the child gets further ahead in the repertoire.

Tonalization/Technique: Normally the teacher will have assigned an exercise or passage from the repertoire to repeat daily with a specific goal or goals. These short snippets serve to refine the production of a beautiful tone (tonalization) or to introduce a challenging technique which is forthcoming in the repertoire.

New Piece: Since the assignment for the new piece is often less specific in terms of number of repetitions, etc., saving it for the end of the home lesson allows for the greatest flexibility. On a good day, the amount of time spent on the new piece can be considerable. On a more difficult day, the previous days' learning can be reviewed and the lesson can be a success for having already completed the review and tonalization.

'Home-Teachers'

Remember that the parent is called the 'home-teacher', not the 'home-clerk'. A big part of the joy of the Suzuki experience is learning to effectively 'teach' our children. Successful teachers take responsibility for the results of their teaching by mastering their material, monitoring the students understanding and reactions, and finding creative ways to engage the imagination.

- | | |
|---|---|
| -Create games around child's interests | -Maintain enthusiasm and eye-contact |
| -Observe successes and difficulties | -Ask questions |
| -Break down problem tasks | -Imagine child's point of view/perception |
| -Try alternative language/ descriptions | -Experiment |
| -Model activities often | -Acknowledge accomplishments |

"An unlimited amount of ability can develop when parent and child are having fun together."

-S. Suzuki

More on The Home Lesson

Lesson Rapport:

The home teacher should maintain control of the lesson. Having a plan of games and moving directly between activities can keep the lesson fun and engaging without the child taking over.

One-Point Lesson:

Playing any passage well on the guitar involves many (eventually thousands) of individual habit all coming together at once. Each of these habits had to be formed at one time or another. To try to be aware of and control all of these aspects of playing at once would be overwhelming and frustrating. Suzuki realized that the chance for success was much improved by focusing the child's attention on only one point at a time.

In any home activity try to focus on only one point or goal at a time. Pick your goal (or follow the teacher's direction) and stick with it, even if 100 other issues appear in the process! Every child can do one thing well when it is chosen appropriately.

Remember that all children have the desire to play beautifully and perform every activity perfectly. Their challenge is not related to desire, rather to perception and concentration. Focusing on one point at a time builds their ability to be aware of what they are doing, sustain concentration, and ultimately form the habits that will allow them to progress.

Clear, Attainable Goals:

Defining success while practicing an instrument is notoriously subjective. We rarely walk away from a session with a concrete display of our accomplishment for the day. This is particularly difficult for young children who do not have a strong appreciation for skill-building activities and delayed gratification. Choosing a very specific goal and a specific number of repetitions can make accomplishments in practicing much more tangible. "We will do X and observe X, X times now" instead of "Let's do this some more and see if we can get better at it".

Language for Success:

The language we use can have a big effect on the response we get from the child. Some suggestions include:

- Minimize talking and explaining-short clear directions are best.
- Frame goals in the positive (what to try to do rather than to avoid)
- First note success without qualification, then set goals
- Observe = correct (just observing the teaching point usually leads to accomplishing it)
- De-personalize tasks (treat fingers and brains as separate entities we are trying to teach)
- 'Refining' not 'fixing' ("can we make this even better!")
- Let child be the judge ("what did you see/hear?). Ultimately they must learn to learn.

Power of Repetition

Variety, imagination, and action all engage the child's attention and draw her into the playing tasks. Young children benefit from having the tasks packaged with activities or 'games'. The need for this varies and is always more important the younger the child. Every home-teacher wants to have an arsenal of activities at their disposal.

Repetition Activities:

Games related to the material itself. (Ideas for these often come from the teacher in the private and group lessons and are specific to a particular goal.)

Examples:

'Freeze' games 'Police' games Props on guitar & child Varied rhythm Play on cue

Games purely to count/increase repetitions. (Parents can invent an endless number of ideas. These are not specific to a particular goal so can be used for anything. Use props from household items to simple manufactured games. Vary the games regularly and look for things that capture the child's imagination)

Examples:

Timer count	Fishing Review	Tower of pennies	Monkey chain	Domino row
Card house	Dice toss	Spinner	Jacks scoop	Bowling pins
Tic-Tac-Toe	Picture draw	Hangman	Connect Four	Abacus games
Puzzle pieces	Potato head	Popcorn chain	Marbles	etc. etc. etc....

Rest Breaks. Younger children whose concentration is developing may benefit from activities which are there purely to break up the time between bouts of concentration. Fun fillers to recharge the brain during hard work.

Examples:

Balloon volley Ball roll Hopscotch Follow the leader Bean bag toss

Other practice-time activities that parents have found helpful include:

- Storytelling, integrating review songs into story
- Role playing
- Fantasy scenarios
- Establishing and breaking personal records
- Practice marathons and challenges

The Private Lesson

The private lesson has a number of functions:

Inform: The private lesson is the main source of new information or 'teaching points'. The teacher will introduce new material at a pace that balances motivation to move forward with the establishment of good habits.

Review and Refine: Review will always be a part of the lesson as it is the main venue for refining skills and elevating ability.

Model: The private lesson is a model home lesson. The activities in the lesson are done as much to give the home-teacher ideas for home activities as they are to transmit teaching points. Observe carefully which activities engage the child most and produce the best results-then borrow and modify them at home.

Inspire: The desire to show a new piece, skill, or level of artistry to the teacher is a great motivator for the child during the week. Sometimes an activity will just be to let the child show off what they have done!

Perform: Playing through a piece uninterrupted for the teacher is a type of performance which offers additional performance experience and builds confidence in their ability.

Troubleshoot: This is the forum for discussing any issues related to the material, home environment, home lessons, or other relevant aspect of the child's life. Sensitive issues that should not be discussed in front of the child can be aired outside of the lesson.

Role of the Teacher and Home-Teacher:

The teacher directs the private lesson, just as the home-teacher directs the home lesson. Please allow the teacher to direct all aspects of the lesson, including handling challenging behavior. It is best if the child not receive critiques, reminders, or reprimands from the parent during the lesson.

If the young child is uncooperative or unable to participate at the time, the teacher may choose to direct the remainder of the time to the parent or do activities which allow for passive learning by the student. Even when apparently unengaged, young children are absorbing everything in their environment- even very small details.

The home-teacher actively observes the activities between the teacher and child, follows the score when appropriate, and takes notes on teaching points and assignments. The home-teacher is encouraged to ask for clarification whenever any point is unclear, including assignment for the week.

The Group Class

The group lesson adds to the environment:

Community: People working on common goals have a sense of belonging, and bonds are strengthened between them. Regularly seeing and playing with peers can motivate your child in a way that parents and teachers cannot.

Review: One of the great benefits of our common repertoire is the ability to engage in playing activities as a group. These sessions encourage students to continually refine their old pieces and have them ready on a moment's notice.

Ensemble: The language of music is meant to be shared. Developing the skills needed to play well together—listening, teamwork, following a leader—are cultivated in this comfortable setting.

Musicianship: Group lessons are an ideal way to introduce and develop musicianship skills to all students at once. Attentive listening, rhythmic awareness, improvisation, visualization, note reading, and other valuable topics will make their appearance.

Performance: Whenever two or more people are gathered together, music is being performed. The group class offers opportunities for both formal and very informal performances— not to mention growing the important skills of a good audience member .

Reinforcement: The group session is one more instructional opportunity to solidify all of the detailed skills that are the focus of the private lesson. Excellent posture, tone, rhythm and expression continue in the group environment.

Fun: You didn't think this was all so serious did you?

Additional Performance Opportunities

Recitals: Young Guitarists will hold periodic recitals and extended group events. These are an important part of creating the environment and are very motivating—even if you are just listening. Attendance and preparation are very important.

Into the World: There are numerous additional outside opportunities for your child to perform. Suzuki students always have repertoire on hand, ready to play, so take advantage of any situations in which people are gathered together. School, church, and social events are a few of the many places in which your child can share the fruits of their labor. Your effort in arranging these performances will be returned tenfold in their motivation and dedication.

Motivation

The motivation of the child (& home-teacher) are the foundation upon which all other goals are built. Key elements in maintaining motivation are:

- Enjoyable daily time with parent
- Fun and stimulating interaction with peers
- Frequent performances, both formal and informal
- Listening to classical guitar and other music
- Observing consistent progress on the instrument
- Attending live performances

On Games: Games and imaginary play can often capture the attention and commitment of a young child in a way that pure desire to accomplish a task cannot. They can also provide a concrete way for them to observe the successful completion of repetitions. As children get older and their instrumental skill and ability for sustained concentration grow they are able to do more and more work without any other activity attached. Some games are a part of the task, others are purely to inspire repetitions and provide relief between.

On Bribes, Rewards & Punishment: One of our ultimate goals is to cultivate an intrinsic motivation in the child to do her best work in pursuit of the beauty of art. Extrinsic motivators such as rewards, excessive and unfounded praise, and avoiding penalties may get results in the short-term but can have pitfalls down the road. This is a very complex area but is worthy of our attention. For an interesting perspective see Alfie Kohn's book 'Punished by Rewards'.

On Competition: Whenever people engage in a common activity within a peer group there is the temptation to compare one's level and progress to that of the others. While the Suzuki method urges the development of ability for the sake of nurturing a noble individual with a fine heart and sense of beauty, many children inevitably find additional motivation in trying to excel in relation to their peers. Danger arises when parents and teachers become involved in this practice as well and place importance on the progress of the child as compared to others. We need to make an effort to recognize and avoid these self-indulgent motivations, especially when they are communicated to or interfere with the best interests of the child.

On Consistent Progress: As teachers and home teachers we always want to focus on process as well as product. This is especially true at the beginning of study and with very young children. As children continue with study, however, they will inevitably become aware of their lack of preparedness and progress if their home study is neglected. We want to avoid putting them in the unpleasant situation of coming to lessons without preparation and observing their stagnant place in the repertoire.

Long-Term Success

-Developing Concentration: Children (as well as adults) are not always able to just concentrate on demand and for as long as needed. The capacity for maintaining their attention is one, and perhaps the most important, of the skills we are working with them to develop. We need to always be aware of their current limits in this regard. Our goal is to build their ability over time by directing their attention to ever greater details and for longer stretches.

-Small Steps for Success: A great source of motivation for the child is the confidence that comes from mastering a new skill, piece or topic. The better we are at breaking down tasks into smaller skills which can be mastered easily, the more rewarding the learning process will be.

-Pacing: The teacher's job is to set the pace for progress through the repertoire. This always involves a fine balance between capitalizing on the excitement of moving forward and taking the time to adequately refine and master the current material. Maintaining a free dialogue between teacher and parent about the pacing will help make goals clearer and minimize frustration.

-Importance of Review: In this method, working on the review pieces is not just a supplement to the main instruction, it is the meat and potatoes of the students development. This is where true artistic refinement takes place for the young student, to neglect it is to deprive them of the very experience we want them to have. When the review material becomes extensive, the teacher can help design a strategy for managing the load.

-On Consistent Progress: As teachers and home teachers we always want to focus on process as well as product. This is especially true at the beginning of study and with very young children. As children continue with study, however, they will inevitably become aware of their lack of preparedness and progress if their home study is neglected. We want to avoid putting them in the unpleasant situation of coming to lessons without preparation and observing their stagnant place in the repertoire.

-Creating a Culture: The value of appreciating fine art is not always present in mainstream activities. Playing fine music at home, going to concerts, attending workshops and summer institutes, and spending time with friends who share common artistic pursuits all contribute to the feeling of living in an environment which embraces art and beauty as a core value.

Communication and Troubleshooting: Our commitment to success:

We believe that every child has enormous potential to develop ability, that the roots of her motivation are found in the environment, and that our educational method is sound. Thus we are empowered to solve any problem which arises! The fault does not lie with the young child and his ability. While difficulties often arise from a combination of circumstances, the following list may help identify critical missing pieces in the Ability Development puzzle:

Is the child engaging in daily practice?

Remember-ability is only formed through understanding *plus repetition*.

Is the child hearing the recorded repertoire often-enough so that it is deeply internalized?

Listening is the primary means of communicating how to play the pieces.

Is the home practice environment positive and free from distractions?

A pleasant experience where one feels honored and encouraged is much more appealing.

Are home lessons well-planned and placed?

Practicing when rushed, hungry, tired, or pulled away from another activity will diminish motivation.

Are repetition tasks packaged with activities which engage the child's attention and imagination?

A child's work ethic is based upon play.

Are the specific goals and activities clear?

Nothing is more discouraging and stressful, for parent or child, than trying to do something which you do not understand.

Are the goals too ambitious?

Any goal which cannot be accomplished in lesson needs to be broken down into smaller steps. Success in every activity is critical.

Is review the primary portion of home-practice?

In the Suzuki approach refining the review pieces is the main tool for developing ability. The current piece is just a new tool to add to the review list!

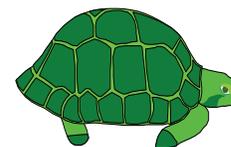
Does the child anxious about success?

It is easy to apply subtle pressure/expectations which makes the child believe that only perfection is acceptable.

Please communicate all concerns with your teacher as they arise!



The Rabbit and The Turtle



You know the story of the Hare and the Tortoise, the one where the hare races the tortoise but knows she's much faster so she takes a nap. Well this is the story of the rabbit and the turtle. It's pretty much the same but they want to race, not with their feet, but with their guitars....

Once upon a time Rabbit and Turtle were unpacking their guitars at group class and while Rabbit was opening his footstool, Turtle said, "I sure love the song 'Allegro'. Did you hear mouse play it at the recital?" Rabbit replied, "oh yes, it sure was beautiful, I can't wait until I get to play that piece."

"Me too" said Turtle.

After they got their guitars tuned, Rabbit said to Turtle, "Do you want to race to see who gets to Allegro first?" Turtle naturally wasn't too interested in races. "I don't know I have a lot of things I have to practice, like Review, Scales, and Note Reading." Rabbit, who loved races, pleaded with Turtle. "Please, please, it would be so much fun to race." Finally Turtle said Okay.

Well for the next year Rabbit and Turtle practiced a lot. They both spent about a half an hour a day practicing. As you might suppose, Rabbit got a fast start. The first week alone Rabbit got through four songs. All of the fingerings weren't exactly correct, and the tone could have been better, and sometime Rabbit missed a note or two, but Rabbit felt the songs were okay.

Turtle was known for being picky. Turtle worked carefully on one song that

first week. Turtle did feel a little jealous of Rabbit for learning so many songs so quickly, but Turtle knew that it was better to work slowly.

After a few months, Rabbit's teacher said, "Rabbit, we have to go back and work on your review songs, because they could be so much better." Rabbit wasn't so happy about this, because he really wanted to win the race. But the songs near the end of book 1 were really hard and Rabbit had to get through them all before Allegro. Rabbit didn't like it but agreed to work on the other songs with the teacher.

Meanwhile, Turtle kept working. Turtle was learning every song carefully and making sure that everything was learned right the first time. Then a year later at group class Rabbit said "Turtle, I'm doing pretty good on our race. I've been on Perpetual Motion for a few months and I should be learning another one soon. How are you doing?" Turtle replied, "well I'm polishing the Meadow Minuet and my teacher said next week we're going to start Allegro." "Oh no, how could this have happened?" Rabbit raved. "I was so far ahead of you at first." Turtle just said, "I don't know, all I did was practice how my teacher asked me to practice."

Rabbit wasn't very happy. Turtle wanted Rabbit to cheer up and said, "Well, if you keep practicing slowly and carefully I'm sure you'll get to Allegro soon and we can have a sleep-over and and play the whole Book 1 together." Rabbit cheered up at that thought and raced off to practice just like Turtle.

THE END

Reprinted from 1997 Suzuki Minijournal

Some Pre-Twinkle Activities

- ▽ **Children on the Bus**
- ▽ **Parts**
- ▽ **Follow the Leader**
- ▽ **Finger Finder**
- ▽ **Soggy Shoulders/Floppy Fingers (vs. prickly)**
- ▽ **Position Holder**
- ▽ **Sunflower**
- ▽ **Sitting Steps (Reverse)**
- ▽ **Fix Me**
- ▽ **Ready-Set-Pluck**
- ▽ **Rhythm Echoes**
- ▽ **Bell Tone- ? Tone**
- ▽ **Pluck on Cue**
- ▽ **Pop Goes the Weasil**
- ▽ **Jingle Bells**
- ▽ **Name that Tone**
- ▽ **Snuggle-Fret/ Magic Spot (Target Practice)**
- ▽ **Spaghetti Eaters (Draw Mouth!)**
- ▽ **Trampoline Fingers (Rest Strokes)**
- ▽ **Walking Fingers-Walking, Walking, Hop, Hop**
- ▽ **Change**
- ▽ **Monkey Song**

Young Guitarists

Recommended Recording List:

Any Recordings By:

Manuel Barrueco (EMI, Vox Box)

**300 Years of Guitar Masterpieces*

John Williams- the Guitarist (Sony Classical, Columbia)

**The Baroque Album*

**Columbia Records Presents John Williams*

**Music of the Americas*

Julian Bream (RCA Victor)

**The Art of Julian Bream*

**Celebration of Segovia*

Andres Segovia (Decca, MCA Classics)

**The Segovia Collection*

**Ponce Sonatas*

Joseph Pecoraro (Orchard)

**Sonatas Romanticas*

**Reflections*

**Perennials*

Pepe Romero (Philips)

**Noches de Espana*

Christopher Parkening (Angel, EMI)

**Concierto de Aranjuez*

Sharon Isbin (Virgin Classics)

-Any

Los Angeles Guitar Quartet (Sony Classical)

-Any

Naxos Records currently has an extensive guitar recording line, all of which are priced at their normal bargain rate.

Mary Had a Little Lamb



Ma - ry had a lit - tle lamb, lit - tle lamb, lit - tle lamb;

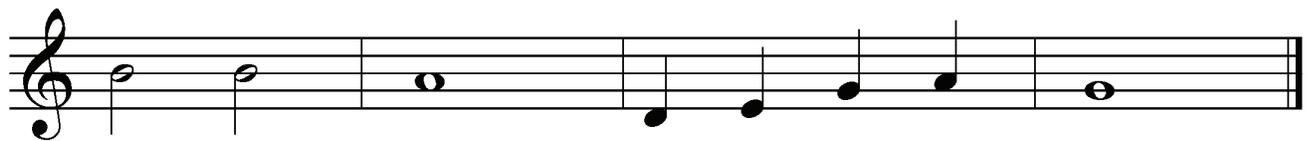


Ma - ry had a lit - tle lamb its fleece was white as snow.

Feathers in the Breeze

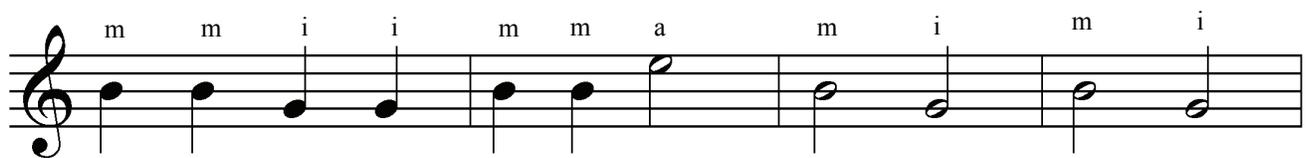


Fea - thers in the breeze, fea - thers in the breeze,



make me sneeze! fea - thers in the breeze.

Guitar Bells



Can you hear my gui - tar ring? Ding dong ding dong;



Can you hear my gui - tar ring? Ding dong ding.

High Going Home

Two staves of musical notation for the piece 'High Going Home'. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a 3/4 time signature, and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody consists of a sequence of notes: a half note G4, a quarter note A4, a half note B4, a quarter note C5, a half note B4, a quarter note A4, a half note G4, and a quarter note F4. The second staff repeats this exact melody.

Pop Goes the Weasel Melody

Four staves of musical notation for the piece 'Pop Goes the Weasel Melody'. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and a common time signature. The melody consists of a sequence of notes: a half note G3, a quarter note A3, a half note B3, a quarter note C4, a half note D4, a quarter note E4, a half note F4, a quarter note G4, a half note A4, a quarter note B4, a half note C5, a quarter note B4, a half note A4, a quarter note G4, a half note F4, a quarter note E4, a half note D4, a quarter note C4, a half note B3, a quarter note A3, a half note G3, and a quarter note F3. The second staff repeats this melody with an accent (>) over the eighth note G4. The third staff repeats the melody with an accent (>) over the eighth note G4. The fourth staff repeats the melody with an accent (>) over the eighth note G4 and a repeat sign at the beginning and end.