

DAILY LISTENING IS ESSENTIAL

Music is an aural art, an art for the ears. If we don't use our ears to learn the music, we are proceeding as if we are deaf and our ears don't work. Listening to an excellent example for as many hours every day as possible is essential to make the study of the piano fast, easy, and secure.

In the beginning the Suzuki student will not be reading music. By listening daily, the student learns the music. Listening is the key to and the basics of all of the work done at the instrument. If the foundation of listening is done continually and consistently, cooperation in practicing, easy coaching and beautiful playing is the natural result. The music goes in the ears and comes out the fingers!

It is the parent's job to turn on CD and provide the listening every day. Listening to beautiful music of all kinds is the most important thing that you do for your Suzuki student.

LISTEN TO THE WHOLE CD SEVERAL TIMES EACH DAY

Obtain a good programmable CD player and/or iPod or MP3 player for the student's room and other areas in the home and car. It is best to also have treble and bass controls and earphone jack.

- A. Program CD player to repeat the whole CD all night long, very softly during sleep.
 - 1. The student will wake up singing the songs.
 - 2. The listening gets done so easily in this manner.
- B. Play the CD and other good recordings during waking hours.
 - 1. Play the CD every night as you go to sleep.
 - 2. Play it again before and during waking up.
 - 3. Play it in morning and at night while washing face, brushing teeth, combing hair and dressing.
 - 4. Play it before beginning a practice session.
 - 5. Play it any time during the day or night while riding in the car.
 - 6. If you have earphones, use them for private listening. Be very careful that sound is not too loud. Loud earphones can and do damage ears and this damage is permanent.

Listening is vital for good progress in playing the piano. Listening teaches:

- 1. The melody and accompaniment. Both parts sound at the same time and you hear how each one fits with the other.
- 2. The dynamics - the louds and softs of each piece.
- 3. The tempo or the speed. Don't worry if the speed seems too fast at first. It will be just right later.
- 4. The phrasing and mood of piece as a whole.

Listening is even more important than practicing! If you haven't practiced as much as usual, listen even more that day.

- 1. If you are going to be gone on vacation, take CD with you. Even if you can't practice, you can listen.
- 2. When in a strange place, listening to CD will give the student the security and comfortable reminder of home.

One year I watched a six year old student take a lesson after a week on vacation in Hawaii where she did not practice. The smart mother's criterion in renting a car was that it had to have equipment to play the Book 1 music. After driving around Maui for a week listening to the music, this student still played very well because she had done so much listening!

Have fun in the listening. You will hear something new and different when you listen carefully each day, especially when you know the pieces very well!