

## **Kodaly Lesson Plan (part two)** by Rebecca Crosby

I covered the note groupings GAB, BD and BDE in the first of a series of incremental lesson plans inspired by the Kodaly method in the last EGTA(UK) Newsletter. The main aim of the lessons is to nurture a secure, accurate technique alongside a high level of musical knowledge and understanding. Developing technique and musicianship slowly enables pupils to gain excellent music reading and aural skills. All the material is meant to be played without looking at either hand, and I find that once pupils have learned to play in this way and can read a variety of tunes over an octave range they can sight read the Grade One Associated Board accompanied pieces, and thus avoid the rote learning of three solo pieces over a long period of time so common amongst guitarists.

The plans are aimed at young beginners from year three, 7 to 8. This approach takes time and I find that pupils need a lot of material all at the same level to develop fluent reading. I will be covering the note groupings GABD and building up to GABCD and E. Once pupils gain fluency with these two note groups it is relatively easy to move onto tunes of an octave.

Pupils will already be able to play open string pieces and exercises fluently without looking at either hand. Examples of accompanied pieces are John Compton's Scenes and Themes, the first eight pieces.

Although I have split the material into two lesson plans I would not expect the material to be covered in two lessons, I would cover the work in anything up to a whole term, depending on the pupil's coordination and sequencing skills, length of lesson and number of pupils sharing a lesson.

The material relies on using free stroke and resting P on string 4, as the next group of tunes uses string 4 D integrating the right hand thumb.

### **Lesson Plan One - note groups GABD, revising BDE and GABDE.**

Having already covered BD, BDE and GAB tunes the next step is to tackle linking together finding D and A with the left hand without looking.

Start the lesson by assessing the pupils note knowledge e.g. teacher says "let's start on string three, what's it called? What comes next?"

Ask pupils to find high D. It's helpful to differentiate D on string two from open string four. Then ask pupils to find A on string three without looking and still holding finger 4 on high D. This approach relies on using left hand finger 4 for fret three as this helps keep left hand fingers round the front of the finger board and helps legato playing. Next ask pupils to lift finger 4 then replace and lift finger 2 then replace. When this is secure ask pupils to play GABD repeating each note four times, and playing the sequence of notes several times without looking. How the pupils respond to this exercise then shapes the choices for the rest of the lesson.

If the pupil is insecure with this group of notes try the exercises again then move onto tunes with more familiar note groups. If pupils can securely play the exercise a few times then try the tune Hands Together. Revise BDE and play Here Sits a Mousie. Then try Bow wow wow.

Depending on the pupils fluency you can also play copy cats using ED and B, ensuring that pupils understand which note is highest. Any of these tunes can be learnt by singing first with words, then using the sol fa names.

Extension activities.

This is a good point for pupils to write their own pentatonic tune.

## Lesson Plan Two - Note group GABCD and E.

Go through known notes assessing pupil's knowledge, pupils should know GABD and E. Ask which letter name you've missed out. Show pupils where C is and play C-D-C leaving finger 1 on C while D is played with finger 4. Also play BCDCB repeating each note four times.

Again depending on the pupils security with the new note grouping either revise pieces using GABDE or introduce mini scales.

Play GABAG, ABCBA, BCDCB, and CEEDC. This is a really good way of assessing pupil's sequencing skills. Dependent on the pupil's level of understanding and fluency you can then either revise tunes or try playing the full scale of GABCDE. Play each note five times.

This is a good time to introduce "say/play". This is an excellent way to learn scales. While the pupil plays the first group of four G's ask them what note is coming next. This takes a while to embed but is a very useful tool for learning grade one scales. Pupils are learning that scales are a sequence of notes getting higher then lower by step rather than a left hand finger pattern.

Once these notes are secure try the tunes Mother's Washing and Once a Man Fell in a Well.

Tunes for lesson plan one.

Here Sits a Mousie  
Hands Together  
Bow Wow Wow  
Fire in the Mountains  
Hush little Minnie

Tunes for lesson plan two.

Mother's Washing  
Once a Man Fell in a Well

### Here sits a mousie

Musical notation for 'Here sits a mousie' in 2/4 time. The melody is written on a single staff with a treble clef. It begins with a mezzo-forte (*m*) dynamic. The notes are: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4-G4 (beamed eighth notes), F4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (quarter). The lyrics are: 'Here sits a mousie in her little housie No-one comes to see her except her grand-ma mousie'.

### Hands together

Musical notation for 'Hands together' in 2/4 time. The melody is written on a single staff with a treble clef. It begins with a mezzo-forte (*m*) dynamic. The notes are: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4-G4 (beamed eighth notes), F4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (quarter). The lyrics are: 'Clap your hands one two clap your hands one two keep the rhy - thm strong and the mu - sic is true.'

### Bow wow wow

Bow wow wow whose dog art thou? lit - tle Tom-my Tuck-ers dog bow wow wow.

The musical notation is in 2/4 time, starting with a treble clef. It features a melody with eighth and quarter notes. An accent mark 'i' is placed above the first note of the second line.

### Fire in the mountains

Fire in the moun-tains run boys run You with the red coat fol-low with your gun  
Drums shall beat and you shall run Fire in the moun-tains run boys run

The musical notation is in 4/4 time, starting with a treble clef. It features a melody with quarter and eighth notes. A mezzo-forte 'm' dynamic marking is placed above the first note of the first line.

### Hush little Minnie

Hush lit tle Min-nie and don't say a word Pa-pa's gon-na buy you a mock-ing bird  
It can whis-tle and it can sing It can do most an - y - thing.

The musical notation is in 4/4 time, starting with a treble clef. It features a melody with quarter and eighth notes. Dynamic markings 'm' and 'i' are placed above the first notes of the first and second lines respectively.

### Mother's washing

Moth - er's wash - ing moth - er's wash - ing rub rub rub  
picked up John - ny's lit - tle shirt and threw it in the tub

The musical notation is in 2/4 time, starting with a treble clef. It features a melody with quarter and eighth notes. Dynamic markings 'i' and 'm' are placed above the first notes of the first and second lines respectively.

### Once a man fell in a well

Once a man fell in a well splish splash splosh he sound - ed  
if he had not fal - len in he would not have drown - ed

The musical notation is in 2/4 time, starting with a treble clef. It features a melody with quarter and eighth notes. A mezzo-forte 'm' dynamic marking is placed above the first note of the first line.