Keyboard Basics

Lesson Plan

**DAY 1**
1. Discuss course objectives and requirements.
2. Determine music and keyboard background of class members.
3. Discuss objectives for the week (p. 8).
4. Discuss *How to Sit at the Keyboard, Hand Position and Finger Numbers* (pp. 8–9).
5. Introduce *Basic Note and Rest Values and Rhythm Reading* (pp. 9–10).
6. Introduce *The Keyboard and Two-Black-Key Groups* (p. 11).
7. Introduce *Three-Black-Key Groups* (p. 12).
8. Introduce *Black-Key Improvisation #1* (p. 13).
12. Introduce *C-D-E Groups* (p. 16).

**Assignment**
1. Rhythm Reading (p. 10)
2. Two-Black-Key Groups (p. 11)
3. Three-Black-Key Groups (p. 12)
4. Naming White Keys (p. 14)
5. Finding White Keys (p. 15)
6. C-D-E Groups (p. 16)
7. F-G-A-B Groups (p. 17)
8. *Summer Night* (p. 18)

**DAY 2**
1. Review Rhythm Reading (p. 10).
2. Review Two-Black-Key Groups (p. 11).
3. Review Three-Black-Key Groups (p. 12).
4. Introduce Black-Key Improvisation #2 (p. 13).
7. Review C-D-E Groups (p. 16).
10. Introduce Sharp, Flat and Natural Signs; Half Steps; Whole Steps (p. 19).
11. Introduce Playing by Ear (p. 19). Each student should play one of the three melodies by ear.
12. Introduce Building Whole-Step Patterns (p. 20).
13. Introduce *The Chromatic Scale* and Playing the Chromatic Scale (p. 20).
15. Introduce The Grand Staff and Time Signatures (p. 22).
16. Introduce Naming Notes and Playing Melodic Patterns (p. 23).
17. Introduce Tempo Marks and Articulation (p. 24).
18. Introduce Reading Melodies (p. 25).

**Assignment**
1. *Summer Night* (p. 18)
2. Playing by Ear (p. 19)—Play one melody by ear.
3. Playing the Chromatic Scale (p. 20)
4. Naming Notes and Playing Melodic Patterns (p. 23)
5. Reading Melodies (p. 25)

**DAY 3**
1. Review *Summer Night* (p. 18).
2. Review Playing the Chromatic Scale (p. 20).
4. Review Reading Melodies (p. 25).
5. Introduce Reading on the Grand Staff (p. 26).
6. Begin Review Worksheet (pp. 27–28) and bring completed worksheet to next class.
7. Spend any additional class time helping students with specific problem areas.

**Assignment**
1. *Summer Night* (p. 18)
2. Playing the Chromatic Scale (p. 20)
3. Naming Notes and Playing Melodic Patterns (p. 23)
4. Reading Melodies (p. 25)
5. Reading on the Grand Staff (p. 26)
6. Review Worksheet (pp. 27–28)
Teaching Tips

1. Most music majors will know the basic theoretical information contained in this unit. Observe and be aware of what information they do know and spend only a minimum amount of time with this in class. It is best to go through such material quickly, rather than to skip it totally.

2. Finger numbers can be a source of confusion for some music students (especially string students, who number fingers differently). Be aware of students who may be having problems identifying finger numbers.

3. Students must be able to find keys on the keyboard very quickly. If necessary, spend extra time with this.

4. Most students will know one of the melodies for Playing by Ear (p. 19). If possible, students should play melodies that they already know. If all melodies are unfamiliar, learn one by listening to the CD or GM disk.

5. The first note in each example of Naming Notes and Playing Melodic Patterns (p. 23) can be used as a landmark note. Students should memorize these and be able to find them on the keyboard quickly. Reading can then move up or down by interval from each landmark.

6. There may not be time to cover all the Reading examples (pp. 25–26) in class. Remaining examples can be used for practice outside of class.

7. The Review Worksheet (pp. 27–28) can be collected as homework and graded to check the students’ understanding of theoretical information.

8. Use the CD or GM disk with all examples in this unit to promote steadiness of tempo and to add musical interest.

Reading Focus

Page 23—Steps and skips from landmark notes
Page 25—Melodies limited to five notes on a single staff using sharps, flats, staccato and legato
Page 26—Melodies limited to five notes on the Grand Staff using sharps, flats, staccato, legato and alternating hands