

Integrating Dalcroze Education into Private Piano Lessons for Beginning Students

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The use of Dalcroze education in the private piano lesson is an effective way to combat the struggles teachers and students face. Through this training, students will enjoy physical and aural experiences while being encouraged to create and explore. As a result, they will be able to better feel, hear, and enjoy the music they are playing.

High v. Low

High and Low Glissandi

Teacher	Student
1. Play descending glissando. Ask student to pretend to sled down a hill when music begins.	Pretends to sled down hill when music begins.
2. Play slow ascending music (hand over hand broken triads). Ask student to pretend to pull the sled back up the hill.	Pretends to pull sled back up the hill.
3. Play descending or ascending music in random order or alternate order. Ask student to respond appropriately.	Responds with either sledding down or pulling sled up.

Snowmen

Teacher	Student
1. Play slow descending improvisation on piano. Ask student to pretend to be a snowman melting in the sun.	Pretends to be a snowman melting in the sun.
2. Play slow ascending improvisation. Ask student to rebuild the snowman by placing higher and higher balls of snow on top of each other.	Pretends to rebuild snowman.
3. Play descending or ascending music in random order or alternate order. Ask student to respond appropriately.	Responds by either melting or building.

Growing

Teacher	Student
1. Choose 1 black key and play that pitch beginning with the lowest to the highest in ascending order through several octaves. Ask student to pretend to be a seed in the ground by curling up as small as possible and then growing into a plant.	Curls up and then grows like a plant when music begins.

Steady Pulse

Student Establishes Pulse

Teacher	Student
1. Ask student to walk as if mother called him from playing outside. Match student's pulse on the drum.	Responds.
2. Ask student to walk as if they woke up on their birthday. Match student's pulse on the drum.	Responds.
3. Ask student to walk as if they had to sit in time out. Match student's pulse on the drum.	Responds.
5. Come up with own scenarios (Fly like a plane, crawl like a snail).	

Student Establishes Walking Pulse

Teacher	Student
1. Ask student to walk comfortably around the room.	Walks around the room.
2. Match student's pulse with a drumbeat.	Continues to walk.
3. Improvise on the piano still matching student's pulse.	Continues to walk.

Quick Reaction – Steady Pulse

Teacher	Student

1. Ask student to walk to the pulse. Improvise a melody with chordal accompaniment at a comfortable tempo.	Walks to the pulse.
2. Adjust tempo to match the step of the student.	Continues to step.
3. Tell student to stop walking when music stops and start walking when music starts again. Stop playing.	Stops stepping.
4. Resumes playing.	Resumes walking.
5. Continue stopping and resuming.	

Loud v. Soft

Tip Toes and Broad Steps

Teacher	Student
1. Play a soft improvisation. Ask student to tip-toe around the room.	Tip toes around the room.
2. Play loud chords. Ask student to walk loud, broad steps (don't stomp).	Walks loud, broad steps.

Questions and Answers

Teacher	Student
1. Ask student "How strong is a lion?"	Shows physical response for some time.
2. Imitate student's movements by improvising on the piano.	Continues same movements.
3. Repeat with other questions like "How big is an elephant?" "How hard is a rock?" "How strong is your father?" "How soft is a cushion?" "How tired can you be?" "How quietly is this doll lying?" "How droopy is a flower without any water?"	Responds accordingly.

Quick Reaction – Loud and Soft

Teacher	Student
1. Alternate improvising with loud and soft sounds. Ask student to punch fist when music is loud and poke with one finger with music is soft.	Punches or pokes with loud and soft sounds.
2. Repeat. Ask student to swing arms around the body, meeting hands in front and back - large swings for loud, small swings for soft.	Swings arms accordingly.
3. Repeat but ask student to hide away in cracks and corners for soft sounds and to come out and fill up the room for loud sounds.	Hides away for soft sounds. Comes out and fills the room for loud sounds.
4. Repeat. Ask student to be a tree blowing in the gentle wind for soft sounds or a tree in a violent storm for loud sounds.	

Helpful Sources

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