

Selected Piano Music for Children by Nineteenth-Century Female Composers:

Cécile Chaminade and Amy Beach

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Abstract

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Cécile Chaminade (1857-1944) and Amy Beach (1867-1944) were two significant pianists and composers in the nineteenth century. They both wrote elementary and intermediate-level pieces suitable for young students. Among these educational pieces are works with titles specific to “children.” These pieces are: Chaminade’s *Children’s Album I*, op. 123; *Children’s Album II*, op. 126 and Beach’s *Children’s Carnival*, op. 25; *Children’s Album*, op. 36. In this paper, eighteen pieces selected from their works are analyzed and categorized into three levels. Preparatory exercises are provided for each piece.

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1. Introduction

When asked to identify typical piano repertoire pieces for young pianists, most titles that initially come to mind are written by male composers. Men have dominated the music field for centuries because of the different expectations of gender in society. In the nineteenth century, women were not expected to work outside their home. It was a time in which men worked, while women stayed at home taking care of family. Women in the middle- and upper-class received an education, usually from a tutor at home, but not at a school. They learned artistic subjects, but these skills were not considered to be professionally useful. In other words, a woman studied the arts only in preparation to be a housewife. Singing and playing the piano were all intensively encouraged for wives and dutiful daughters.¹ The purpose of education for women at the time was to become an elegant woman who would ultimately be married to an ideal man. Alfred Lord Tennyson, a Poet Laureate of Great Britain and Ireland in the nineteenth century, indicated that the wife's duty was to keep the family functioning smoothly: "Man for the field and woman for the hearth: man for the sword and for the needle she: man with the head and woman with the heart: man to command and woman to obey; all else confusion."²

Women composers are rare throughout music history, from the Medieval period to the nineteenth century. There are more female pianists and singers than there are composers. Besides the social factors mentioned in the previous paragraph, composing is considered a form of expressing personal thoughts to the audience. Women were expected to obey their husbands and not encouraged to be creative. That could be one of the reasons there are so few women

¹ Linda L. Clark, *Women and Achievement in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (New York: Cambridge, 2008), 82.

² Alfred Tennyson, *The Princess and Maud* (Boston: Cassino, 1901), 109.

composers in the past. Men, on the other hand, were prominent in the music composition field while women stayed in the background and were not expected to be professionals.

Clara Schumann (1819-1896) and Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel (1805-1847) were the most admired women composers of the nineteenth century. Clara Schumann was recognized as a gifted pianist when she was young. At the age of eleven, she performed her work, *Variationen über ein Originalthema* at her first solo recital.³ Her compositions include vocal works, character pieces for piano, and chamber music. At the age of twenty, she wrote, “I once believed that I possessed creative talent, but I have given up this idea; a woman must not desire to compose – there has never yet been one able to do it.”⁴ Her words reveal a general perspective on women composers at the time. Fanny Hensel published her first work, a collection of *Lieder*, in 1846. Her brother Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847) encouraged her composition activities and also admired her musical abilities. However, he discouraged her from publishing her works. It could have been a fear of competition and comparison between brother and sister. Mendelssohn described a meeting with Queen Victoria and Prince Albert in a letter:

The Duchess of Kent joined the party and while they all talked I browsed among the music papers and found my first “Song Collection.” Of course I asked that she choose one of these songs rather than the Gluck. She agreed willingly, and what did she choose? *Italien*.....It was really enchanting, and the last long G I have never heard better, cleaner, and more naturally sung by an amateur. Now I had to confess that Fanny was the composer of the song. (This was hard, but pride goeth before a fall.) I asked her to sing one of the songs that were really mine.⁵

This quote confirms that Mendelssohn was willing to give the credit that Fanny deserved.

Mendelssohn kept a good relationship with Fanny, most of the time.

³ Nancy B. Reich, "Schumann [née Wieck], Clara," *Grove Music Online*, accessed 3 February 2019, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

⁴ Reich, “Clara Schumann,” in *Women Making Music: The Western Art Tradition, 1150-1950*, eds. Jane M. Bowers and Judith Tick (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), 267.

⁵ Mozelle Moshansky, *Mendelssohn: His life and Times* (New York: Hippocrene, 1982), 123.

Hensel composed over 450 pieces, including songs, chamber pieces, and piano works. Most of her works are unpublished and unknown to the public until recently.⁶ Her piano cycle, *Das Jahr*, consists of twelve characteristic pieces representing each month, with a postlude at the end. The musical connections between each month in *Das Jahr* indicate that Hensel had a clear and deliberate idea of how to compile these thirteen pieces into a single organic work.

Cécile Chaminade (1857-1944) and Amy Beach (1867-1944) were two significant pianists and composers of the nineteenth century. While Chaminade is from France, and Beach is from the United States, they both established a reputation in Europe and in North America. In the United States, the Chaminade clubs flourished in the late nineteenth century, and even before Chaminade visited the United States. Her works were popular at that time. One of her piano pieces, *Scarf Dance*, op. 37 no. 3, was performed by many young pianists in the United States. Correspondingly, Beach's music had been admired by musicians in Europe before she traveled there in 1911.

Chaminade and Beach both wrote elementary and intermediate-level pieces suitable for young students. Among these educational pieces are four works with titles specific to "children." These pieces are: Chaminade's *Children's Album I*, op. 123; *Children's Album II*, op. 126 and Beach's *Children's Carnival*, op. 25; *Children's Album*, op. 36. These pieces are well-written and most of them are in binary or ternary forms. In addition, the pieces are written in order of increasing difficulty, which makes them ideal teaching material. Many well-known composers also wrote pedagogical pieces for young pianists. Robert Schumann (1810-1856) composed *Clavierstücke für die Jugend*, op. 68 in 1848 for his children. The collection includes 43 pieces written in progressive difficulty. The music was written in relatively simple keys with different

⁶ Marcia J. Citron, "Mendelssohn, Fanny," *Grove Music Online*. Oxford Music Online. Oxford University Press, accessed 12 November 2018, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

characteristics and techniques. *Mikrokosmos*, written by Béla Bartók (1881-1945), contains six volumes of 153 piano pieces in ascending technical and musical difficulty.⁷ The lack of comprehensive piano pieces for beginners motivated Bartók to complete this collection. The first two volumes were dedicated to his son Péter.

Chaminade and Beach's works are not often used as assigned teaching pieces. However, their works for children are a useful pedagogical resource for piano. In this paper, I selected eighteen pieces from their compositional output for further analysis. These works are divided into three levels and each piece contains preparatory exercises to help students' piano technique.

⁷ Benjamin Suchoff, *Guide to Bartók's Mikrokosmos*, rev. ed. (London: Boosey and Hawkes, 1971), 6.

2.1 Cécile Chaminade

Cécile Louise Stéphanie Chaminade, born on August 8, 1857 in Paris, was the third of four children in the family. Her parents were music enthusiasts and created a musical environment for their children. Chaminade had her first piano lesson with her mother, a singer and pianist. Her father recognized his daughter's talent in music but denied Chaminade permission to study in the Conservatoire, despite the recommendation from Félix Le Couppey, one of the faculty in the Conservatoire.⁸ Instead of attending the institution, Chaminade had piano and theory lessons privately with Couppey, A.-F. Marmontel, M.-G.-A. Savard, and Benjamin Godard. Her composition activity started at an early age and she once stated that "... the art of composition came to me as naturally as walking or talking comes to other children."⁹ It seemed that her natural destiny was to become a composer.

Chaminade's early works were praised by renowned composer George Bizet (1838-1875). Bizet was impressed by Chaminade's musical talent and encouraged her to pursue composition. Before 1890, she had composed most of her large-scale works, including the Piano Trio op. 11, the *Suite d'orchestre* op. 20, and *Concertstück* op. 40 for piano and orchestra. Financial difficulties impacted the family after her father's death in 1887. Except for the Piano Sonata op. 21 and *Concertino* op. 107 for flute and orchestra, Chaminade focused more on character pieces and *mélodies*. To alleviate the financial burden, she regularly performed her works in order to promote sales. Her trip to England in 1892 was a success, and she was invited to Windsor Castle by Queen Victoria, who adored her music.¹⁰ At that time her pieces were favored by the public, particularly in England and the United States.

⁸ Marcia J. Citron, *Cécile Chaminade: A Bio-bibliography* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988), 4.

⁹ F. A. Jones, "Cécile Chaminade," *The Magazine of Music*, 11(10), 223.

¹⁰ Citron, *Cécile Chaminade: A Bio-bibliography*, 11.

In 1901, Chaminade married Louis-Mathieu Carbonel, a music publisher. Meanwhile, the Chaminade clubs flourished throughout the United States around the 1900s. Music performed in these clubs was not only written by Chaminade but also by other composers. After the clubs became popular, Chaminade traveled to the United States and visited twelve cities from Boston to St. Louis. The tour was a tremendous success and she even met President and Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt in the White House. She had made a great impact in the music field. In 1913, she was the first female composer to be awarded Chevalier of the Legion of Honor by the French Government. She passed away in 1944.

2.2 Amy Beach

Amy Marcy Beach was born on September 5, 1867 and was an only child. Her father Charles Abbott Cheney was a paper manufacturer and importer. Her mother Clara Imogene (Marcy) Cheney was an amateur singer and pianist. Her grandmother Marcy and her aunt Franc were both fine musicians who influenced young Beach to be an outstanding pianist and composer. The house was always filled with music. Before Beach was two, she improvised “a perfectly correct alto to any soprano” that her mother might sing while rocking her to sleep.¹¹ Her excellent memory was evident from an early age. She once played a Strauss waltz which she learned by hearing her mother play it.¹² Despite Beach’s talent in music and desire to play the piano, her mother did not allow her to touch the piano until she was six, when she was given her first piano lesson. She could have been treated as a prodigy, but Clara Cheney raised her to be a humble and thoughtful child, and taught her to be grateful for her musical talent.

¹¹ Adrienne Fried Block, *Amy Beach, Passionate Victorian: The Life and Work of an American Composer, 1867-1944* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1998), 5.

¹² Block, *Amy Beach*, 7.

Beach's musical journey began when her family moved to Boston. At the age of eight, she began studying piano with Ernst Perabo of the New England Conservatory. She began studies with Carl Baermann when she was fifteen years old. In addition to piano, she studied harmony and counterpoint with Junius Welch Hill from 1881 to 1882. The first published composition by Beach was *The Rainy Day* in 1883, a song attributed to her aunt Franc with whom she maintained a close relationship for many years. It was not until 1885 that she played an entire recital by herself, a program that included works by Chopin, Rheinberger, Liszt, Rubinstein, Bach, Schumann, and some études by Baermann.¹³ Speaking about the compositional skills Beach had learned, Wilhelm Gericke, the conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, recognized her musical ability and offered her the opportunity to attend the rehearsals of the orchestra. She studied scores, listened to the rehearsals, and learned the compositional skills she later used in her music. This experience clearly benefitted her when she composed one of her most successful large works, the *Gaelic Symphony*, in the late nineteenth century.

At age eighteen Beach married Henry Beach (1843-1910), a surgeon at Massachusetts General Hospital. Beach soon adapted to her new role as a housewife and restricted herself to a more conservative life. She promised her husband that she would never teach, and only performed recitals for charity.¹⁴ On the other hand, Henry himself was enthusiastic for music and encouraged Beach to continue composing pieces and provided comments. When the World's Columbian Exposition took place in Chicago in 1893, her commissioned work *Festival Jubilate* op. 17, written for chorus and orchestra, was performed in the opening of the Woman's Building.

¹³ Walter S. Jenkins, and John H. Baron, *The Remarkable Mrs. Beach: A Biographical Account Based on Her Diaries, Letters, Newspaper Clippings, and Personal Reminiscences* (Michigan: Harmonie Park Press, 1994), 12.

¹⁴ Block, *Amy Beach*, 47.

Her music was recognized and admired extensively in the United States and other countries after the event.¹⁵

Beach toured Europe for the first time in 1911 and received enthusiastic responses throughout the trip. In 1921, Beach was invited to the MacDowell colony where she wrote most of her later works. Although she never had private students, she dedicated herself to music education and the Beach Club for children in Hillsborough was established by Beach and two other teachers in 1922. At the meeting, Beach performed pieces and talked about her activities as a musician.¹⁶ She was also a leader of the Music Teachers National Association and the Music Educators National Conference. She suffered from heart disease in later years and passed away in 1944, the same year as Chaminade.

Both Beach and Chaminade grew up in a well-educated family. They both demonstrated musical talent at an early age. Without the support of their families, their compositional accomplishments would have been highly unlikely. While Chaminade learned composition from teachers, Beach learned mostly by listening to concerts and studying scores. Women composers were expected to write only small-scale works such as piano and vocal pieces in the nineteenth century. From *the Woman Composer: Creativity and the Gendered Politics of Musical*

Composition, the author states:

“The areas of art inhabited by female composer, artist and writer have many common characteristics, most noticeably their lack of artistic ‘value.’ They are stereotypically small scale, simple, modest, undemanding, amusing, charming, less serious and ‘pretty.’ Such genres usually require less formal training and can often be cultivated with little financial expenditure or contact with public institutions.”¹⁷

¹⁵ Jenkins, and Baron, *The Remarkable Mrs. Beach: A Biographical Account Based on Her Diaries, Letters, Newspaper Clippings, and Personal Reminiscences*, 30.

¹⁶ Block, *Amy Beach*, 244.

¹⁷ Jill Halstead, *The Woman Composer: Creativity and the Gendered Politics of Musical Composition* (Brookfield USA: Ashgate, 1997), 174.

However, Beach and Chaminade both created outstanding pieces in large-scale categories. For example, Beach's *Mass in E-flat major* op. 5, *Gaelic* symphony, op. 32, and Chaminade's *Concertstück*, op. 40, made a great impact. The premiere of Beach's *Mass* in 1892 successfully brought the public's attention to this American female composer. The *Gaelic* symphony, premiered in 1896 by the Boston Symphony Orchestra and it is the first time the Boston Symphony performed a work by a female composer from the United States. They strove to prove that there was no difference between men and women as composers.

Even though they did not have private students, these women dedicated themselves to music education in different ways. Chaminade often wrote articles about the interpretation of her own pieces, and these articles became important resources for approaching her music. Beach established a music club where she gave piano master classes for young musicians. She also regularly provided her opinions on music education in journal articles. While both composers experienced a music career that was limited in some ways because of gender, they were never defeated by these impediment and kept pursuing their musical goals.

3. Level 1 Piano Pieces

3.1 Cécile Chaminade: Children's Album, op. 123 no. 3 "Canzonetta"

The *Canzonetta* refers to any short, simple song. From the late sixteenth century to the late eighteenth century, the title was given to a light secular vocal piece, particularly in the Italian style.¹⁸ This piece includes a simple melody with eighth notes as the accompaniment in the left hand. The time signature is 4/4, a duple meter, which makes an appropriate beginning piece for students to practice.

Preparatory Exercise 1: Double-notes

It is not an easy task for beginners to play double-notes. In the *Art of Piano Playing*, the author states that, "the main thing in double note is precision of sound, the proven simultaneous sounding of both notes."¹⁹ In some passages, it is necessary to emphasize the upper or lower notes according to the context of the music. There are several spots that contain double notes in this piece. These include transitions between thirds, fourths, and from the fifth to the third illustrated by the brackets notes in Example 1:

¹⁸ Ruth I DeFord, "Canzonetta," *Grove Music Online*, accessed 14 January 2018, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

¹⁹ Genrikh Gustavovich Neïgauz, *The Art of Piano Playing* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1973), 127.

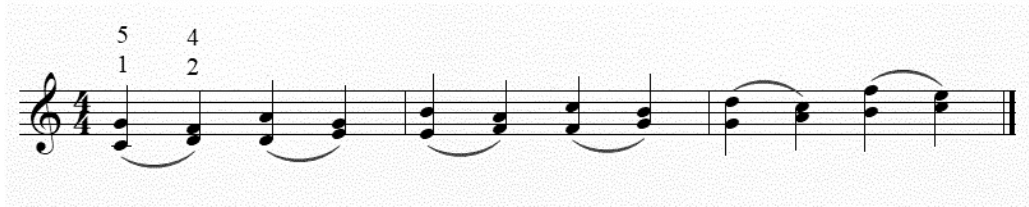
Ex. 1: *Canzonetta* measures 3-8

The independence of fingers is important for the playing of double notes, especially when involving the weaker fingers. Practicing thirds could be the first step towards mastering double notes. The fourth finger and fifth finger are weaker compared to the other fingers. It is important to make sure that the thirds played with fingers 2 and 4 are stable and firm. If it is difficult for the student to manage the previous fingering, an alternative fingering could be from fingers 2 and 5 to fingers 1 and 3. (Prep. Ex. 1-1)

Prep. Ex. 1-1: The thirds

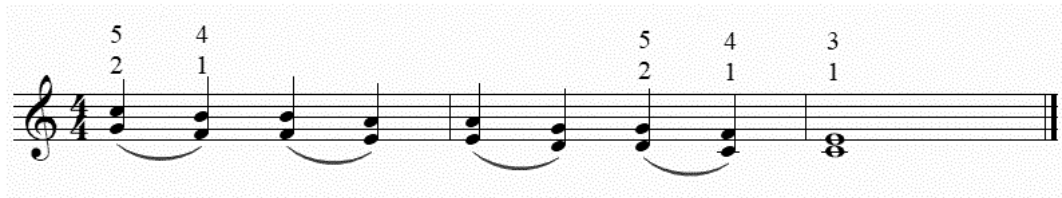
After mastering the thirds, the student could practice transitioning from the fifth to the third finger. The movement of the hands should follow the slur and all the gestures should be done with a loose and flexible wrist. (Prep. Ex. 1-2)

Prep. Ex. 1-2: The fifth to the third



The last set of double-notes is the fourth and it could be the most challenging exercise for younger students among these double-note passages. In Preparatory Exercise 1-3, the note played by the fifth finger is on the down beat while the thumb plays a note on the weaker beat. It is hard to play connected from the fifth finger to the fourth finger with double-notes because the fourth and fifth fingers are weaker. The transition from the first double-note to the second can be nicely done by slightly dropping the hand on the first double-note. (Prep. Ex. 1-3)

Prep. Ex. 1-3



3.2 Cécile Chaminade: Children’s Album, op. 123 no. 7 “Romance”

The term *Romance* indicates an extravagant, sentimental or ‘romantic’ tale in either prose or strophic verse. The simplicity, lyricism and form of the vocal *romance* were easily adapted to instrumental compositions.²⁰ Chaminade uses dotted rhythms as a motive to begin the piece. The dotted rhythm should be played gently, in order to express the lyric expressivity in this piece. It becomes a good resource for practicing dotted rhythms and shaping shorter notes so that they are lighter and integrated into the melodic line. (Ex. 3)

Ex. 3: *Romance* measures 1-4

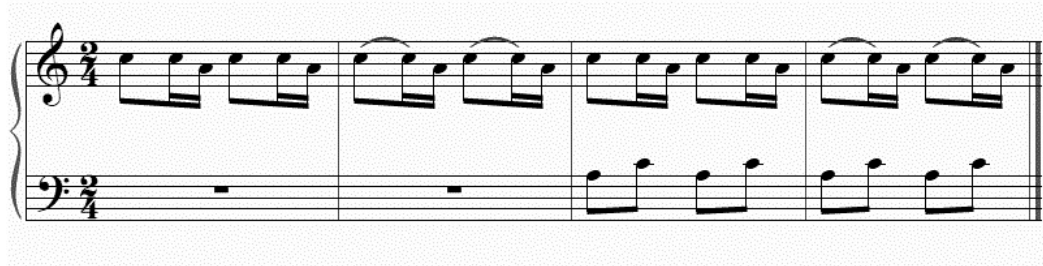


Preparatory Exercise 3: Dotted-rhythm

When students are first introduced to dotted rhythms, the timing on the shorter-notes presents challenges. When the rhythm is written out with an eighth and two sixteenth notes, it looks much clearer and it is thus easier to understand. Visualizing the pattern of an eighth and two sixteenth notes helps students comprehend the structure of dotted rhythms. Students should initially play the rhythm without the tie, as shown in measure one. (Prep. Ex. 3-1)

²⁰ Jack Sage, Susana Friedmann, and Roger Hickman, "Romance," *Grove Music Online*, accessed 15 January 2018, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

Prep. Ex. 3-1



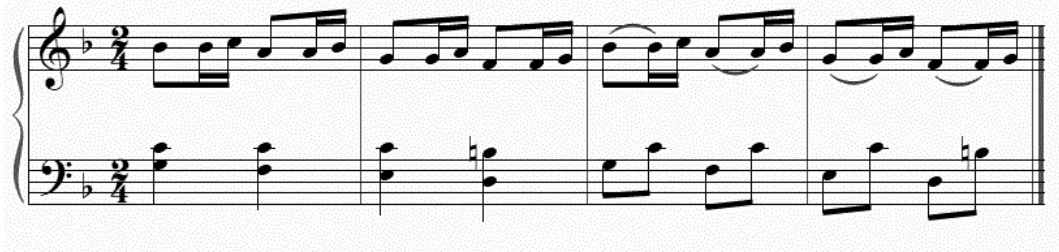
After students are acquainted with the first rhythmic pattern, they can observe and hold the tied note. Furthermore, the left hand can play the eighth-note rhythm together with the right hand. The left hand with the eighth-note rhythm establishes a steady beat for the right hand to follow. In measure 19-20, there are repetitions in the dotted rhythm, with eighth notes in the left hand. (Ex. 4)

Ex. 4: *Romance* measures 19-20



The same idea applies to the following passage. While the right hand divides the dotted rhythm into an eighth note and two sixteenth notes, the left hand plays block chords. This exercise focuses on the dotted rhythm at first with the left-hand chords coming back again once the right hand can execute the melody correctly. (Prep. Ex. 3-2)

Prep. Ex. 3-2



3.3 Amy Beach: Children’s Album, op. 36 no. 2 “Gavotte”

The Gavotte is a popular French court dance and instrumental form from the late sixteenth century to the late eighteenth century.²¹ It is in duple meter and performed at a moderate tempo. The piece consists of four-bar phrases in binary form and begins with the articulation of *staccato*, depicting a joyful and pleasant mood. The articulation then changes to a *legato* and elegant style in the B section. Students need to observe the different articulations and characteristics. This ability is crucial in music interpretation and should be the first thing in music learning. The importance of this ability in music learning is the same as the importance of development in extensive vocabularies and sentence structures in speaking and writing. (Ex. 5a, 5b)

Ex. 5a: *Gavotte* measures 1-4, A section



²¹ Meredith Ellis Little and Matthew Werley, "Gavotte," *Grove Music Online*, accessed 11 September 2018, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

Ex. 5b: *Gavotte* measures 17-20, B section

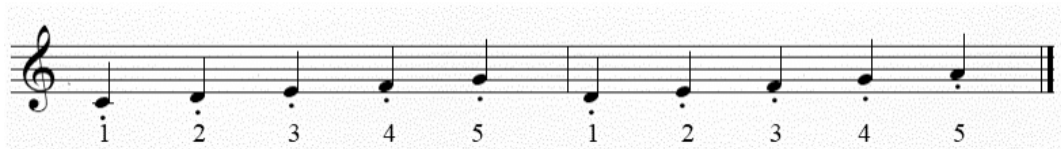
In the B section, the key signature changes from D minor to D major. Key changes are significant events, and students must learn to express how these changes can alter the character, mood, and articulation of the piece.

Preparatory Exercise 4: *Staccato*

It is easier for beginners to address the issue of *staccato* articulation, compared to that of *legato*. The technique of *legato* requires stable control of the fingers and flexible gesture of the wrists. The ear is engaged to judge the fading sound. On the other hand, *staccato* is easier for students to manage because of its simplicity in using the hands. The *staccato* articulation involves a relaxed throwing and reflex motion to release the key without a lift away from the key. Imagine a piano key as a spring, deformed after it is pressed. When releasing the key, it will bounce back to its original position, and there is no need to apply extra force to lift the key. It could be challenging for students when there are continuous *staccatoes* in a piece. (Ex.5a) The use of the hands and wrists becomes more important in this case.

As shown in Preparatory Exercise 4-1, students play a 5-note pattern in *staccato* while paying attention to their hand position. The hands should always be flexible while the fingers should be fairly firm. (Prep. Ex.4-1)

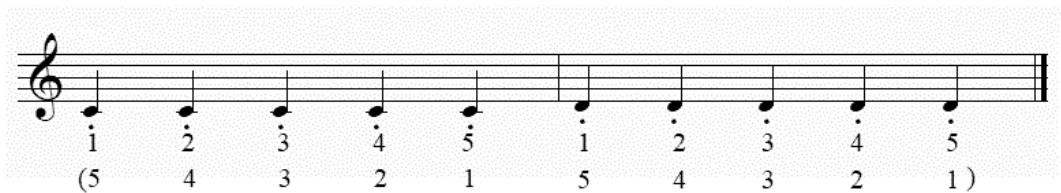
Prep. Ex. 4-1



Students continue to practice playing on the same note with different finger patterns. When playing on the same note, fingers actively release the key as they switch to the next finger.

(Prep. Ex. 4-2)

Prep. Ex. 4-2



Preparatory Exercise 5: Coordination between the hands

In the beginning of the piece, both hands comprise the melody. The left hand always plays on the stronger beats, which are the first and third beats. If students play the right hand too heavily, the music will sound unbalanced. (Ex. 6a, 6b)

Ex. 6a *Gavotte* measures 1-4: correct rhythmic emphasis

Ex. 6b *Gavotte* measures 1-4: wrong rhythmic emphasis

Students start by tapping on their laps, alternating between two hands. The left hand should tap louder than the right hand. (Prep. Ex.5-1)

Prep. Ex. 5-1

After several practices of tapping, the rhythmic patterns in the piece are applied to this practice. The tapping helps students get used to the sequence of the rhythmic patterns. Once students are confident with tapping, they can then sing the melody while tapping the rhythm.

(Prep. Ex.5-2)

It is not until the middle section of the piece that the right hand takes over the melody. (Ex. 8) Students can gain more confidence and control in their left hand through studying this piece.

Ex. 8: *Aubade* measures 17-20

17 *pp*
Dolce
2 Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

Preparatory Exercise 6

Balance between the hands plays a crucial role in the piece. Young pianists often do not listen keenly to their left hand. Many students are told by their teachers to play their left hand softly when beginning piano studies. Students must learn that it is the balance between two hands and the context of music that determine the relationship between the left and right hand. It is essential to introduce pieces where the left hand plays an important part in the music. The left hand will not always be merely the accompaniment to the right hand! Students can play the melody first followed by both hands playing the melody together, while keeping the left hand louder than the right. (Prep. Ex. 6-1)

Prep. Ex. 6-1

Musical score for Preparatory Exercise 6-1, featuring a treble and bass clef. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 4/4. The score consists of four measures. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5 above or below notes. The first measure has a whole note in the treble (F#4) and a whole note in the bass (F#2). The second measure has a half note in the treble (A4) and a half note in the bass (A2). The third measure has a half note in the treble (B4) and a half note in the bass (B2). The fourth measure has a half note in the treble (C#5) and a half note in the bass (C#2).

Preparatory Exercise 7

In the middle section, melodic lines shift to the right hand while playing the chords in the inner voice. (Ex. 8) Students should play the block-chord progression first, listening to the chord changes in the left hand. (Prep. Ex. 7-1)

Prep. Ex. 7-1

Musical score for Preparatory Exercise 7-1, featuring a treble and bass clef. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 4/4. The score consists of four measures. The first two measures show block chords in both hands. The last two measures show a cadence in the bass clef, with the right hand playing a whole note in the treble. A box highlights the last two measures of the bass clef.

In daily practice, students can play the cadence and listen to the balance between all four voices. It is a useful skill to play different voices louder each time, which strengthens the independence of fingers. Teachers can ask students to voice the soprano and then voice the bass for example. Students will become more adept at voicing after several attempts.

3.5 Cécile Chaminade: Children’s Album, op. 123 no. 9 “Orientale”

The title of this song, “Orientale” means eastern or Asian in French. This piece is not in a traditional major or minor key. The step-wise melody provides simplicity to the music and allows students to focus more on the mixed mode and Asian flavor in the piece. The atmosphere evoked by the modality is exotic and slightly mysterious to young students. After students begin to learn the piece, they will be more confident in “different” styles. When students play other pieces in similar styles, they will be more confident in dealing with this type of music.

Preparatory Exercise 8: Scales

It is important for students to learn all major and minor scales, especially the key of the music they are practicing at the moment. Joseph Lhevinne mentioned the importance of learning scales in *Basic Principles in Pianoforte Playing*:

Most pupils look upon scales as a kind of musical gymnasium for developing the muscles. They do that, of course, and there are few technical exercises that are as good; but their great practical value is for training the hand in fingering so that the best fingering in any key becomes automatic. In this way, they save an enormous amount of time in later years. They also greatly facilitate sight reading, because the hand seems to lean instinctively to the most logical fingering, to elect it without thinking.²³

Knowing these patterns and natural facilities will help students learn the configuration of black and white keys. Students can play without looking at notes by fully understanding the patterns. This piece begins with a suggestive sense of E minor in the left hand. Then the right hand plays a scale starting from E with F-sharp and C-sharp. (Ex. 9)

²³ Josef Lhevinne, *Basic Principles in Pianoforte Playing*, (New York: Dover Publications, 1972), 11.

Ex. 9: *Orientale* measures 1-4

It will be somewhat exotic for students to play this type of scale because they are more familiar with traditional harmonic or melodic minor scales. The fingerings should remain the same when playing the scales. Whenever students encounter patterns of scales, they will then pre-sense the fingerings, enabling them to play the passage smoothly and confidently.

Furthermore, it is useful to begin with different notes of the scale in practicing.²⁴ (Prep. Ex. 8-1)

Prep. Ex. 8-1a: E minor harmonic scale

Prep. Ex. 8-1b: E minor melodic scale

²⁴ Lhevinne, *Basic Principles in Pianoforte Playing*, 10-11.

The composer used an E scale with F-sharp and C-sharp in the theme to give some *spice* and exotic flavor to the music. In practicing this scale several times before playing the actual piece, students will gain an enhanced idea of image and sound. (Prep. Ex. 8-2)

Prep. Ex. 8-2: E scale with F-sharp and C-sharp



Preparatory Exercise 9

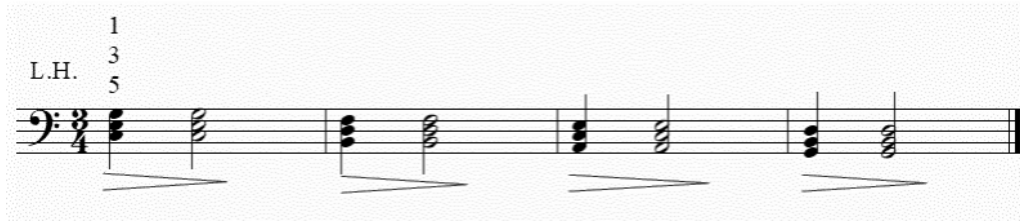
There are repeated block chords throughout the piece. (Ex. 10)

Ex. 10: *Oriente* measures 9-12



There is a tendency for students to play with the same volume, or to play increasingly louder when repeating chords. Students often ignore the sound of the left hand because it is the accompaniment most of the time, and students therefore dismiss it. By practicing only the left hand with block chords, students will focus on the left hand and listen to the sound more carefully. It will help students pay more attention to the sound by adding a *diminuendo* on the repeated chords. The goal is the fading sound, and it is difficult to achieve in repetition. The triads in root position are the most common chords, allowing the hands to keep a relaxed rounded shape. (Prep. Ex 9-1)

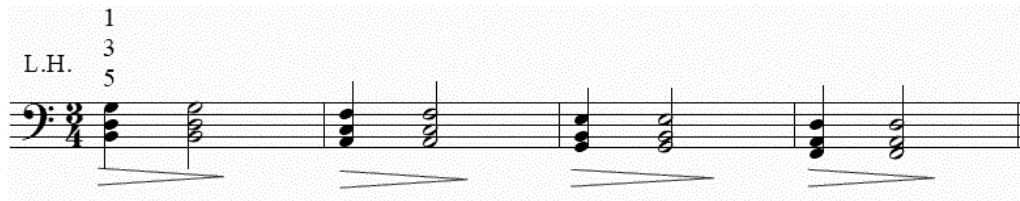
Prep. Ex. 9-1



Musical notation for Prep. Ex. 9-1, showing a bass clef staff with a 3/4 time signature. The exercise consists of four measures, each containing two chords. The first measure shows a triad (C3, E3, G3) and its first inversion (E3, G3, C4). The second measure shows a triad (F3, A3, C4) and its first inversion (A3, C4, F4). The third measure shows a triad (B2, D3, F3) and its first inversion (D3, F3, B3). The fourth measure shows a triad (E3, G3, B2) and its first inversion (G3, B2, E4). Fingerings are indicated above the notes: 1, 3, 5 for the first measure, and 1, 3, 5 for the second measure. The third and fourth measures do not have explicit fingerings shown.

Triads and first inversion chords are not too difficult for students because the thumb and the third finger stretch more to play the fourths. Also, the fingerings stay the same as the triads in root position. (Prep. Ex. 9-2)

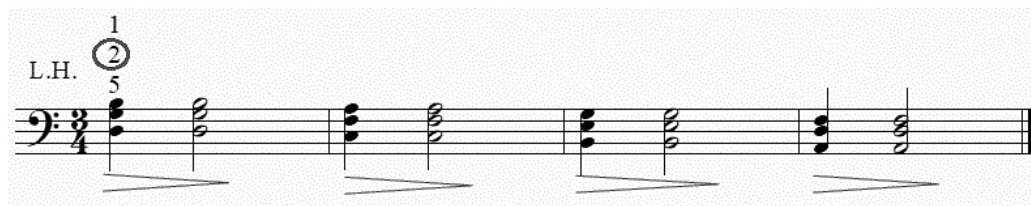
Prep. Ex. 9-2



Musical notation for Prep. Ex. 9-2, showing a bass clef staff with a 3/4 time signature. The exercise consists of four measures, each containing two chords. The first measure shows a triad (C3, E3, G3) and its first inversion (E3, G3, C4). The second measure shows a triad (F3, A3, C4) and its first inversion (A3, C4, F4). The third measure shows a triad (B2, D3, F3) and its first inversion (D3, F3, B3). The fourth measure shows a triad (E3, G3, B2) and its first inversion (G3, B2, E4). Fingerings are indicated above the notes: 1, 3, 5 for the first measure, and 1, 3, 5 for the second measure. The third and fourth measures do not have explicit fingerings shown.

It is not until the triads move to second inversion that the fingerings are different. (Prep. Ex. 9-3)

Prep. Ex. 9-3



Musical notation for Prep. Ex. 9-3, showing a bass clef staff with a 3/4 time signature. The exercise consists of four measures, each containing two chords. The first measure shows a triad (C3, E3, G3) and its second inversion (G3, C4, E4). The second measure shows a triad (F3, A3, C4) and its second inversion (C4, F4, A4). The third measure shows a triad (B2, D3, F3) and its second inversion (F3, B3, D4). The fourth measure shows a triad (E3, G3, B2) and its second inversion (B2, E4, G4). Fingerings are indicated above the notes: 1, 5 for the first measure, and 1, 2 for the second measure. The third and fourth measures do not have explicit fingerings shown.

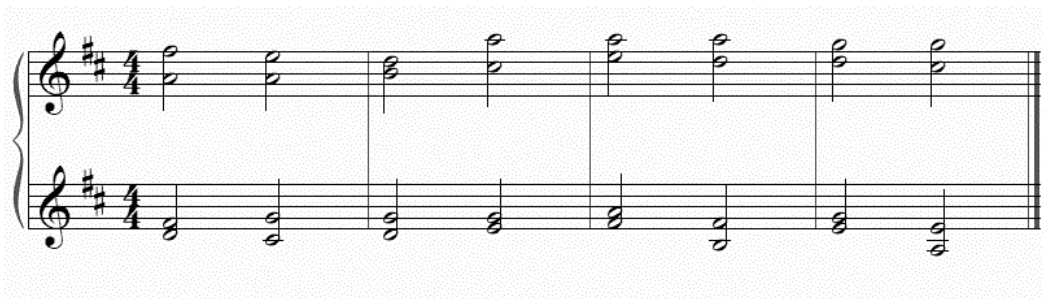
On the other hand, there are exercises with the triads played by the right hand. Students should pay attention to the difference between the fingerings in the right hand and in the left hand. (Prep. Ex. 9-4)

It is a challenge for students to play the entire piece smoothly and quietly while bringing out the melody. The main theme is in the left hand while a sub-theme is present in the right hand.

Preparatory Exercise 10


Even though the melody seems primary in the music, the harmony is also necessary to support and *flavor* the melody. The music cannot be complete without the harmony as a foundation. It would be analogous to a house that cannot be built without a foundation. These chords should be played at first before learning the music as written. (Prep. Ex. 10-1)

Prep. Ex. 10-1



After becoming familiar with the sound of the harmony, students can practice the melody alone. The left hand keeps a lighter touch than the right hand even though it is still the main theme. It is helpful to play the left hand in half-notes and the right hand in quarter-notes. In this way, the left hand will be heard more while the right hand remains lighter. (Prep. Ex. 10-2)

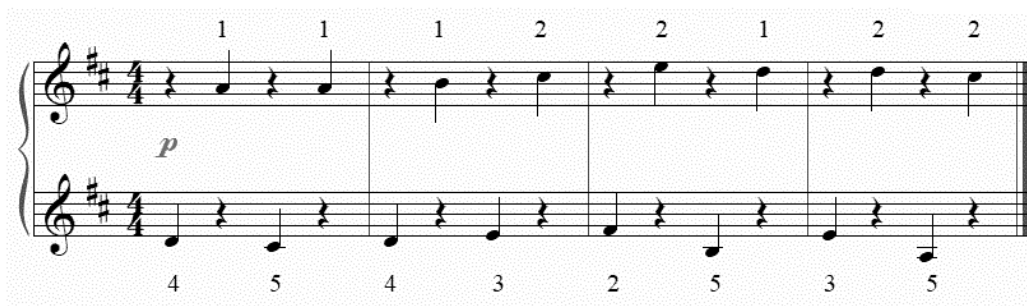
Prep. Ex. 10-2



Musical score for Prep. Ex. 10-2, featuring a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand, both in 4/4 time and G major. The melody consists of quarter notes with rests, and the bass line consists of quarter notes.

Then, the student should play the melody with the correct dynamic. Students should always observe the written fingerings and make sure that every note is connected smoothly, without bumps or accents. (Prep. Ex. 10-3)

Prep. Ex. 10-3



Musical score for Prep. Ex. 10-3, featuring a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand, both in 4/4 time and G major. The melody includes fingerings (1, 2) and a dynamic marking *p*. The bass line includes fingerings (4, 5).

4. Level 2 Piano Pieces

4.1 Amy Beach: Children's Album, op. 36 no. 3 "Waltz"

The waltz is a dance form often seen in piano music. This musical form attracted the attention of major composers in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.²⁶ Frédéric Chopin (1810-1849) composed almost twenty waltzes which are known as concert pieces. The Mephisto Waltz no. 1, S. 514, written by Franz Liszt (1811-1886), is one of the most advanced and virtuosic pieces in this form. A waltz is in triple meter, which is not natural for students to play. We are familiar with duple meter, because we walk in two. Two is symmetrical, and people are used to symmetric structures. Duple meters are a form of symmetry that is easier to understand and learn. The waltz is a perfect musical form for students to learn triple meter. This piece is in C major, and the melody is simple, with few leaps. The left hand plays basic broken chords as an accompaniment.

Preparatory Exercise 11

The main difficulty is the 8-bar phrase in the right hand at the beginning. *Legato* is the most challenging articulation for pianists. Longer note values challenge the student to gauge the fading sounds. The duration of the sound is the main issue in playing *legato* passages. Students should pay attention to *the remainder* of the sound when playing *legato*. In measure 5, there is a finger crossover from the thumb to the index finger. (Ex. 12)

²⁶ Andrew Lamb, 2001 "Waltz (i)," *Grove Music Online*, accessed 12 September 2018, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

Ex. 12: Waltz measures 1-8

Students should be aware of the cross and control the change between fingers smoothly. They should also listen carefully and make sure that each note is played smoothly and integrated into the longer line.

Furthermore, there should be a *decrescendo* added to the phrase, to encourage students to play softer at the end of the phrase and avoid any *accent* on the thumb. (Prep. Ex. 11-1)

Prep. Ex. 11-1

Preparatory Exercise 12

Portamento is indicated by dots and connecting legato lines together over notes. In most cases, it should be played three quarters length of the original note value. *Staccato* will be played by detaching one-half value of the written note value. However, this rule is not applied rigidly in all instances, as the context of the music is paramount. Students will become more accustomed and confident in making the appropriate musical decisions by performing and studying more

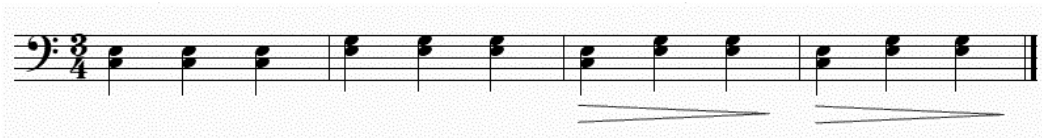
piano repertoire. In measure 95 in the left hand, there is a *portamento* at the very end of the piece. As the *ritenuto* slows the tempo, the *portamento* would be played slightly longer. (Ex. 13)

Ex. 13: *Waltz* measures 93-96



In the beginning, students should play the thirds longer than the original value and release the keys without a lift from the key's surface. During this exercise, it is important for students to feel the movement of the keys. After this exercise, students can play the notes for exactly one beat, the full value of the note. (Prep. Ex. 12) Students should apply *decrescendo* as a goal while playing this passage.

Preparatory Exercise 12



In measure 62, *portamento* occurs in the end of the B section before coming back to the A section. A *diminuendo*, emphasizing the fading sound, should occur in this passage. Students should not slow down in this measure. A *ritardando* appears in measure 64, one bar before the repetition of the A section. It is a common problem, that students tend to slow down while playing a *decrescendo/diminuendo* passage. A *diminuendo* only mandates a decrease in sound gradually. The tempo should be kept the same. (Ex. 14)

Ex. 14: *Waltz*, measures 61-66

4.2 Cécile Chaminade: Children's Album, op. 123 no. 5 "Gavotte"

The *Gavotte* is a popular dance form from the late eighteenth to the early nineteenth century and this particular piece, in duple meter, is in the key of A minor. Minor keys are sometimes less familiar to young pianists because they usually learn the major keys first and play most pieces in these keys. It is important for teachers to introduce minor keys to students at an early time, so that they have confidence in their various structures.

Preparatory Exercise 13

From measures 12 to 15, there are four-notes patterns in the right hand, each requiring the same fingerings. This pattern comprises four step-wise ascending patterns. (Ex. 15)

Ex. 15: *Gavotte* measures 12-15

The thumb should always be supple and not “fixed” for the subsequent note. If the thumb prepares and curls to reach the next note immediately after playing the first note, the wrist will tighten and become stiff. The same method applies to the left hand, which has the same pattern at the end of the piece. (Ex. 16)

Ex. 16: *Gavotte* measures 42-46

In the following exercise, both hands play the pattern together at the same time. The mirror fingering encourages coordination between the two hands. (Prep. Ex. 13)

Prep. Ex. 13

Preparatory Exercise 14: Chromatic scales

Chromatic scales are as important as major and minor scales. In the late nineteenth century, chromatic modulations were often used by composers, adding more musical *color* and creating a style in contrast to music of the Classical period. There is a chromatic scale in the left hand from measures 12 to 15. (Ex. 17)

Ex. 17: *Gavotte* measures 12-15

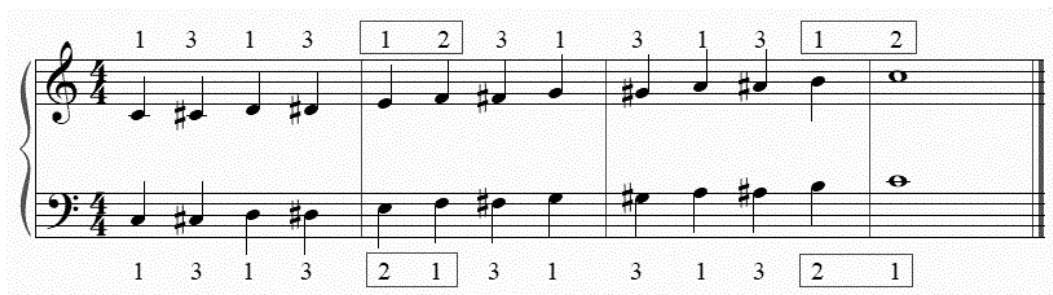


The image shows a musical score for measures 12-15 of a Gavotte. The score is in 4/4 time and features a chromatic scale in the left hand from measures 12 to 15. The right hand has a melodic line with slurs and ties.

Thoughtful and strategic fingerings are necessary in playing chromatic scales. It is important to memorize the fingerings when playing the chromatic patterns in the music. The most common way to play is to use the thumb on the white keys and the third finger on the black keys. When there are two white keys in a row, the second finger plays the second white key.

(Prep. Ex. 14)

Prep. Ex. 14



The image shows a musical score for Preparatory Exercise 14, a chromatic scale exercise. The score is in 4/4 time and features a chromatic scale in the left hand from measures 1 to 4. The right hand has a melodic line with slurs and ties. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1, 2, 3 above and below the notes.

4.3 Amy Beach: Children's Album, op. 36 no. 1 "Minuet"

In addition to the Gavotte mentioned previously in this chapter, the Minuet is another popular dance form from the late eighteenth and nineteenth century. It frequently appears in multi-movement forms such as the sonata, the string quartet, and the symphony, where it was usually paired with a Trio.²⁷

Preparatory Exercise 15

There are three pillars in music: melody, harmony, and rhythm. Although these elements form the core and shape of music, a piece may still sound meaningless with incorrect *phrasing*. Phrasing is the core of a meaningful and musical performance. Proper timing and dynamics are the two elements in making an effective phrasing.²⁸ Music is similar to language. In other words, phrases in music are analogous to clauses in sentences. Using accurate words and correct grammar can facilitate effective communication. Correct punctuation and proper diction are also important in speaking or writing. For example, teachers can ask students to read a poem or rhyme. When a student reads "row, row, row your BOAT," the word "boat" is emphasized naturally when saying this sentence. This sentence sounds wrong and strange when someone reads "row, row, row YOUR boat," with an emphasis on the word "your." It is an essential task for students to learn correct phrasing in every piece. The following example consists of an 8-bar phrase. (Ex.18)

²⁷ Meredith Ellis Little, 2001 "Minuet," *Grove Music Online*, accessed 5 October 2018, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

²⁸ Boris Berman, *Notes from the Pianist's Bench*, second ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017), 66.

Ex.18: *Minuet* measures 1-8

To play the phrase smoothly, students should try to sing the four-bar phrase in one breath, or sing two two-bar phrases with a brief break in between. Students can better comprehend the continuity of music by singing the entire phrase without a pause. In the *Interpretation in Piano Study*, the author states that, “We can discover a great deal about the shape of a phrase if we sing it.”²⁹ Students should avoid pausing after each slur. It is important to choose where to “breathe” in a phrase, especially in a *long* phrase. The harmonic alternations also play an important role in phrasing. The second bar ends on the supertonic chord, and it is not until the fourth bar that the harmony comes back to the tonic. Furthermore, the melody is ending on C, rather than the tonic, F. This indicates that the phrase is not complete. The melody repeats in measure 5 with slight

²⁹ Joan Last, *Interpretation in Piano Study* (London; New York: Oxford University Press, 1960), 3.

alternations. Since this is a sequence with harmonic changes, the second part should be more emphasized than the first part to shape the total eight-bar phrase. Students can better interpret the piece after analyzing the structure, strengthening the phrase execution. (Ex. 18-1)

Ex. 18-1: *Minuet*, measures 1-8

The musical score for measures 1-8 of a Minuet is presented in two systems. The first system (measures 1-4) is marked *p* and features a sequence of chords: I, ii7, V, and I. The second system (measures 5-8) is marked *(mf)* and includes fingering numbers and a dynamic hairpin.

Measure 1: Treble clef, 3/4 time, B-flat major. Notes: G4, A4, Bb4. Bass clef: G2, Bb2, D3. Chord: I.

Measure 2: Treble clef: Bb4, A4, G4. Bass clef: G2, Bb2, D3. Chord: ii7.

Measure 3: Treble clef: F4, G4, A4. Bass clef: G2, Bb2, D3. Chord: V.

Measure 4: Treble clef: G4, A4, Bb4. Bass clef: G2, Bb2, D3. Chord: I.

Measure 5: Treble clef: G4, A4, Bb4. Bass clef: G2, Bb2, D3. Chord: I.

Measure 6: Treble clef: A4, Bb4, C5. Bass clef: G2, Bb2, D3. Chord: ii7.

Measure 7: Treble clef: Bb4, A4, G4. Bass clef: G2, Bb2, D3. Chord: V.

Measure 8: Treble clef: F4, G4, A4. Bass clef: G2, Bb2, D3. Chord: I.

4.4 Cécile Chaminade: Children's Album, op. 126 no. 6 "Scherzo-Valse"

The term Scherzo depicts a comic or ironically comic composition.³⁰ The character of the piece is humorous and delightful in the style of *Valse*. The piece is in ternary form, A-B-A, starting with an elegant melody in the left hand. (Ex. 19)

Ex. 19: *Scherzo-Valse* measures 1-4



The right hand then takes over the melody with a *forte* and builds more energy into the next section. (Ex. 20)

Ex. 20: *Scherzo-Valse* measures 8-11



The A section shows a classic waltz with three beats per bar and a charming melody with basic harmonic progressions. In the B section, it dramatically changes to *staccato* with accents, becoming more lively and bouncy. (Ex. 21)

³⁰ Tilden A. Russell and Hugh Macdonald, "Scherzo," *Grove Music Online*, accessed 15 February 2018, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

Ex. 21: *Scherzo-Valse* measures 17-20

Musical score for measures 17-20 of *Scherzo-Valse*. The score is in 3/4 time and G major. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. Measure 17 starts with a treble staff containing a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, followed by a quarter rest. The bass staff contains a quarter note G2, a quarter note A2, and a quarter note B2, followed by a quarter rest. Measure 18 has a treble staff with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, followed by a quarter rest. The bass staff has a quarter note G2, a quarter note A2, and a quarter note B2, followed by a quarter rest. Measure 19 has a treble staff with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, followed by a quarter rest. The bass staff has a quarter note G2, a quarter note A2, and a quarter note B2, followed by a quarter rest. Measure 20 has a treble staff with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, followed by a quarter rest. The bass staff has a quarter note G2, a quarter note A2, and a quarter note B2, followed by a quarter rest. Pedal markings are present below the bass staff: 'Ped. ___ *' under measures 17, 18, and 19.

Preparatory Exercise 16

In this piece, there are several different *staccato* and *accent* markings: a dot, a wedge, and an *accent* symbol. The best way to play these notes is to interpret them within the context of the music. A wedge first appears in measure 8, when the melody is changing from the left hand to the right hand. The notes with wedges should be emphasized and should not be rushed in order to emphasize the melodic line. (Prep. Ex. 16-1)

Prep. Ex. 16-1

Musical score for Preparatory Exercise 16-1, measures 8-11. The score is in 3/4 time and G major. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. Measure 8 has a treble staff with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, followed by a quarter rest. The bass staff has a quarter note G2, a quarter note A2, and a quarter note B2, followed by a quarter rest. Measure 9 has a treble staff with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, followed by a quarter rest. The bass staff has a quarter note G2, a quarter note A2, and a quarter note B2, followed by a quarter rest. Measure 10 has a treble staff with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, followed by a quarter rest. The bass staff has a quarter note G2, a quarter note A2, and a quarter note B2, followed by a quarter rest. Measure 11 has a treble staff with a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, followed by a quarter rest. The bass staff has a quarter note G2, a quarter note A2, and a quarter note B2, followed by a quarter rest. Pedal markings are present below the bass staff: 'Ped. ___ *' under measures 8, 9, 10, and 11. Accents (A) and wedges (V) are placed above notes in the treble staff in measures 8, 9, and 10.

Students should play the theme from measure 1 to 4 with the left hand once, and then play the melody from measure 8 to 11. The first three notes, with wedges in measure 8 and 9, should be played separated and emphasized in order to highlight the presence of the melody.

(Prep. Ex. 16)

Prep. Ex. 16

The image displays two systems of musical notation for a piano exercise. The first system is labeled 'L.H.' and shows a bass line in G major (one sharp) and 3/8 time. The notes are G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The second system shows a melody in the right hand with the same notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/8.

4.5 Cécile Chaminade: Children's Album, op. 126 no. 8 "Novelette"

Novelette is a term first used by Schumann as the title of his op. 21, a set of pieces for piano. There is no title for each of the pieces, but the composer mentioned that the piece has its own character.³¹ Chaminade's *Novelette* has a simple melody and the key center is ambiguous at the beginning because of the G-sharp in measure 1. The music has a swaying movement because of the syncopated rhythm in the left hand, allowing the music to flow expressively. (Ex. 22)

³¹ Jane Bellingham, "novelette," *The Oxford Companion to Music*, Oxford University Press, accessed 15 February 2018, <http://www.oxfordreference.com>.

Ex. 22: *Novelette* measures 1-4

The image shows a musical score for the first four measures of a piece titled "Novelette". The tempo is marked "Allegretto" and the dynamics are "mf". The music is written for piano in 2/4 time. The right hand plays a melody with eighth and sixteenth notes, while the left hand provides a bass line with chords and single notes. Below the bass staff, there are four pedal markings, each consisting of the word "Ped." followed by a horizontal line and an asterisk, indicating where to use the sustain pedal.

Preparatory Exercise 17: Syncopations

Syncopation is one of the main difficulties among rhythmic patterns for most beginners. Syncopation is widely used in music, for rhythmic interest and variety. When students first encounter syncopation, they tend to play heavily or not play it with the full value for each note. It is recommended that students play the syncopation without the tie first, and then they can be more aware of the duration of the syncopation. (Prep. Ex. 17-1)

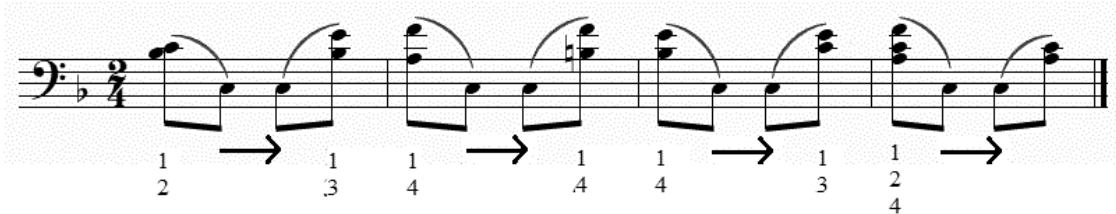
Prep. Ex. 17-1

The image shows a preparatory exercise for syncopation in 2/4 time. It consists of three lines of music on a single staff. The first line shows four measures of quarter notes with ties between them. The second line shows four measures of quarter notes with ties, with slurs over the first two and last two notes of each measure. The third line shows four measures of quarter notes with ties, with a double bar line at the end.

Students should be aware of their wrists at all times during practice, keeping flexibility and relaxed positions. There should be no hesitation when playing the repeated note, C. (Prep.

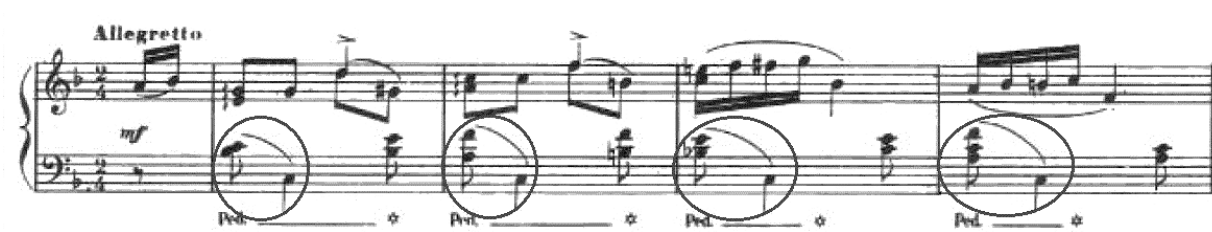
Ex. 17-2)

Prep. Ex. 17-2



There is a slur on the first two notes of the syncopation in the left hand at the beginning. (Ex. 23) It reminds the performer to play the quarter notes lightly. The slur can be played convincingly by using a subtle “drop and lift” hand gesture.

Ex. 23: *Novelette* measures 1-4



4.6 Amy Beach: Children’s Carnival, op. 25 no. 6 “Harlequin”

The Harlequin is a character in the Commedia dell’Arte. He is lighthearted and nimble, often depicted wearing a costume with diamond figures. Harlequin often comically prevents his master from achieving his goals. The music shows characteristics of his mischievous nature with the grace note and *staccato*. (Ex. 24) Not only does the right hand take part in the main theme, but also the left hand plays the melody in the B section. (Ex. 25) The rhythm is simple and consistent with eighth notes throughout the piece.

Ex. 24: *Harlequin* measures 1-4

Vivace

p

sempre staccato

Ex. 25: *Harlequin* mm 48-52

la seconda volta *pp*

Preparatory Exercise 18

The grace note is a common element in piano music. It is a basic expressive and vocal device that students will encounter in their study. The grace note is often written as a smaller note compared to the main note. The student sometimes ignores the role and importance of the grace note and other ornaments because of their appearance on the score. The grace notes and other ornaments add appealing sound to the melody. The grace notes or other ornaments are like jewels attached to a necklace enhance its beauty. The student should keep in mind that the grace note would never predominant over the main note. In this piece, the grace note helps depict a clever and witty character.

An ornament played one step above or below the main note is called an *appoggiatura*. The *appoggiatura*, usually a dissonance that resolves to the main note, makes the music different and unique.

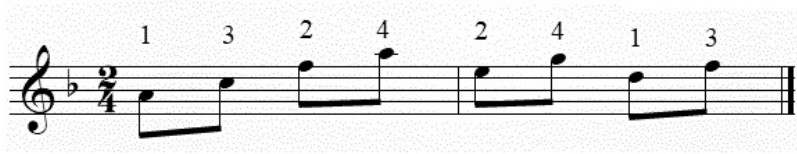
(Ex. 26)

Ex. 26 Chaminade: *Canzonetta* measures 1-2

The image shows a musical score for two measures of a piece. The top staff is in treble clef and the bottom staff is in bass clef. The time signature is 2/4. The tempo is marked 'Allegretto. (♩=120)' and the dynamics are 'Dolce'. In the second measure of the right hand, a small eighth note (the grace note) is written above the main note and is circled in red. The left hand plays a continuous eighth-note accompaniment.

The exercise begins by playing melodic thirds with fingers 1, 3 and 2, 4. (Prep. Ex. 18-1)

Prep. Ex. 18-1



The melodic thirds are played evenly at the beginning. They then switch to the strong beat, from the first note to the second note. (Prep. Ex. 18-2)

Prep. Ex. 18-2



The first note should be played shorter. (Prep. Ex. 18-3)

Prep. Ex. 18-3



5. Level 3 piano pieces

5.1 Amy Beach: Children's Album, op. 36 no. 5 "Polka"

The polka is originally a term related to a couple's dance in central Europe in 1830s.³² It is in 2/4 time and the music is joyful and cheerful. The *staccato* used in the music is a key feature that represents an important characteristic of the piece.

Preparatory Exercise 19

It can be a challenge for young students to play the sixteenth notes evenly. The notes should not be played with the same dynamic or it will sound like mechanical exercise for the fingers rather than shaped music. (Ex. 27)

Ex. 27: *Polka* measures 16-18



This passage can help students to prepare to learn how to play trills. There are different fingerings used in the trill according to the needs of the music. The most common and easy way is by using the index and middle finger. The fingers should be well-balanced while playing the trill. The tempo should not be too fast, and the fingers should be able to control the trill well without disruption. Besides fingers 2 and 3, fingers 3, 4 and 4, 5 can also be used in this exercise. (Prep. Ex. 19)

³² Richard March, 2012 "Polka." *Grove Music Online*, accessed 23 September 2018, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

Ex. 29 *Mikrokosmos* III no. 73 “Sixths and Triads”

Comodo ♩ = 98

p

f (*subito*)

4. Бартók 10956 [37 сек.]

In Bartók’s exercise, both hands play the interval of sixths for eight bars and then proceed with triads until the end. The left hand imitates the right hand’s motive from measure one to measure four. From measure five to measure eight, both hands play continuous sixths in contrary motion. The exercise of sixths builds up the tactile sense of distance between fingers and helps students develop the spatial awareness.

5.2 Cécile Chaminade: Children’s Album, op. 126 no. 4 “Eglogue”

The title, “Eglogue”, means a pastoral poem, thus the music presents imagery about natural and pastoral scenery. The tempo marking is *Andantino* which outlines the atmosphere and overall pace of the music. At the beginning of the piece, Chaminade wrote, *Très soutenu*, which means “very steady”, reminding pianists to play with a calm and steady tempo.

Preparatory Exercise 21

The piece begins with block chords and the basic long-short rhythmic pattern. This long-short rhythmic pattern represents the natural pulse in triple meter and is the main rhythmic pattern used in this piece. (Ex. 30)

Ex. 30: *Eglogue* measures 1-4



The image shows a musical score for the first four measures of 'Eglogue' by Cécile Chaminade. The score is in 6/8 time and features a long-short rhythmic pattern. The tempo is marked 'Andantino' and the mood is 'Dolce'. The piece begins with block chords in the right hand and a steady bass line in the left hand. Pedal markings are present at the bottom of the score.

The rhythmic pattern resembles the “Siciliana”, a dance form usually in 6/8 or 12/8 containing dotted rhythmic patterns.³³ The chords should not be played at the same volume and the notes within the chords should be played in contrast, with good balance. There might not be precise markings in dynamics on the score. There should be one or more notes which need to be voice out while playing multiple notes at the same time.³⁴ The note indicated with a number 1

³³ Meredith Ellis Little, 2001 "Siciliana," *Grove Music Online*, accessed 13 February 2019, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>.

³⁴ Berman, *Notes from the Pianist's Bench*, 18.

beside it should predominate while the note labeled with number 4 should sound the least. While focusing on the balance between the notes, the repeated chord should be played lighter than the initial chord. A *decrescendo* marking below the repeated chords helps students to execute the fading sound while playing this motive. (Prep. Ex. 21-1)

Prep. Ex. 21-1

The image shows a piano accompaniment score for a piece titled 'Andantino' with the instruction 'Dolce'. The music is in 6/8 time and consists of two staves. The right hand plays a melodic line with a slanted line above it indicating a decrescendo. The left hand plays a bass line with a slanted line below it indicating a decrescendo. The tempo is marked 'Andantino' and the dynamics are 'Dolce' and 'Très soutenu'. There are several 'Ped.' markings below the left hand staff, indicating pedaling.

The top voice of the chords should be heard, and it would be a helpful exercise to only play the top line several times. Students should play this part with the fingerings they will use when playing as written. It enhances the ability to play stronger with weaker fingers, such as the fourth finger and fifth finger. Young students often neglect dynamics and tone quality when practicing single melodic line. The added *decrescendo* marking on the score reminds the students to play musically with the shaped line. (Prep. Ex. 21-2)

Prep. Ex. 21-2

The image shows a single melodic line in 6/8 time. The notes are: G4, A4, B4, A4, G4, F4, G4, F4, G4, A4, B4, A4, G4, F4, G4, A4, B4, A4, G4. The fingerings are: 5, 5, 4, 4, 5, 4, 5, 4, 5, 5, 3, 3, 4, 5, 4, 1. The dynamics are marked as 'mf' and 'mp' with slanted lines indicating decrescendo.

Before playing the entire piece as written, students should practice the chord progressions in block chords to gain a sense of the harmony. (Prep. Ex 21-3)

Prep. Ex. 21-3



5.3 Amy Beach: Children’s Carnival, op. 25 no. 2 “Columbine”

“Columbine” is a female stock character in the Commedia dell’Arte. She is the sweetheart of Harlequin. The music is light and simple, with a single-voice melody. The time signature is 6/8 and is a good example for students to experience the pattern of triple meter. Even though the notes and rhythms are not difficult, it is a challenge for students to keep the music flowing and to make beautiful, long phrases.

Preparatory Exercise 22

After a two-bar introduction in the right hand, the melody appears in the left hand and the right hand continues the accompaniment with rests on the strong beats. The performance goal of the work is to maintain a steady beat in both hands. However, the rests should not interfere with the legato of the left hand. (Ex. 31)

Ex. 31: *Columbine* measures 1-8

Initially, the student needs to get used to the rhythmic patterns in the right hand. This can be done by playing the outline notes in the strong beats with the right hand. The rests in the right hand will later be filled in and played by the left hand. (Prep. Ex. 22-1)

Prep. Ex. 22-1

Besides practicing with both hands together, students can practice using the right hand only, filling in the rests by adding the notes illustrated below. This practice strengthens a student's sensation of the correct duration of the dotted note.

(Prep. Ex. 22-2)

Prep. Ex. 22-2



Preparatory Exercise 23

The left hand plays most of the main melody in this piece. It is an ideal example for developing the left hand. The tempo marking is *Andante*, a walking tempo, which should allow the student to feel more comfortable and relaxed while practicing this piece. The melody in the left hand should be projected as “singing,” to match the indication of *cantabile* at the beginning of the piece. (Ex. 31)

From measure 35 to measure 41 the right hand begins the melody for two measures, and then the left hand takes over the melody and continues until the end of the phrase. The right hand plays the accompaniment immediately after finishing the first phrase. It is important to establish different articulation between the melody and the accompaniment. (Ex. 32)

Ex. 32: *Columbine* measures 35-41



The melody should have a deep, *legato* touch and stand out from the other parts. Even though the melody line is completed by two hands, the melody should sound as though it was played by one hand. Thus, it is helpful to play the melody all by right hand (or left hand) several times before playing with both hands as written. (Prep. Ex. 23)

Prep. Ex. 23

R.H.



L.H.



In measure 37, the right hand completes the melodic line on the down beat. A short break, marked “v” on the score, indicates the difference between the melody and the accompaniment. The break provides enough time for the right hand to play the following section calmly and smoothly. (Ex. 33)

Ex. 33: *Columbine* measures 35-38

35



dolce

5.4 Amy Beach: Children’s Carnival, op. 25 no. 1 “Promenade”

This is the first piece in *Children’s Carnival*, op. 25 by Amy Beach. The tempo marking *Alla Marcia* specifically describes the march-like character of this music, which is in 4/4 with dotted-rhythms in the right hand. (Ex. 34) The music is confident and energetic and is in C major with a simple duple time signature. In section B, the melody in the right hand becomes more linear without the dotted rhythm. (Ex. 35) Overall, it is an excellent opportunity for students to learn and explore different characteristics within one piece.

Ex. 34: *Promenade* measures 4-8

4 *a tempo*
p

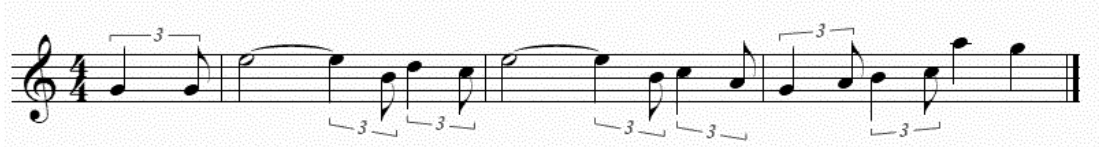
Ex. 35: *Promenade* measures 24-27

24
mf

Preparatory Exercise 24: dotted rhythm

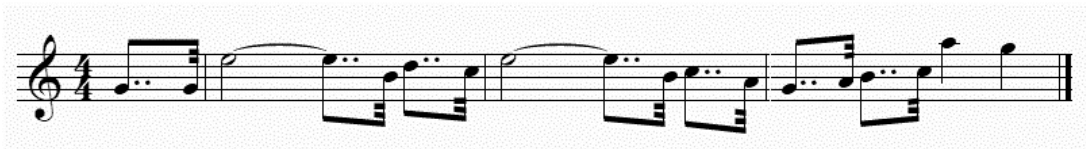
Dotted-rhythms are some of the most difficult rhythmic patterns for young students. Students are likely to play the sixteenth note too long or the dotted-eighth note too short. If students play the sixteenth note too long, the rhythm will sound like triplets. (Ex. 36)

Ex. 36



On the other hand, the rhythm will sound too snappy if students play the sixteenth note too short. (Ex. 37)

Ex. 37



In addition to the difficulties in playing dotted-rhythms correctly, another challenge is the transition from the passage with the dotted-rhythm to the eight-notes. There is a tendency for students to slow down or speed up in the eight-note passage after playing the whole dotted-rhythm section. (Ex. 38)

Ex. 38: *Promenade* measures 21-27

The image shows a musical score for measures 21-27 of 'Promenade'. It is written for piano in a key signature of one sharp (F#). The score is divided into two systems. The first system contains measures 21, 22, and 23. Measure 21 starts with a second ending bracket over the first two measures. The dynamics are marked 'cresc.' for measures 21-23 and 'mf' for measure 24. The second system contains measures 24, 25, 26, and 27. The music features a melodic line in the right hand and a supporting bass line in the left hand, with various fingering numbers and articulation marks.

In order to keep a steady beat, students may think about two “big” beats (one beat equals a half-note long) rather than four beats per bar. The music feels rushed and robotic with the dotted-rhythm pattern, if counting four beats per measure. Once the student has learned the piece, it will be much easier for the student to play the piece in two large beats. Larger, longer connections and musical ideas are always stronger than smaller ideas. It also helps the music to flow and the phrasing to be clear and natural.

Preparatory Exercise 25

The opening passage reappears with block chords at the ending, followed by the repeated A section. The texture, from single melodic line to block chords with accents and *crescendo*, represents the mood of triumph and victory in the conclusion of the piece. (Ex. 39)

de pèlerinage, supplément aux Années de pèlerinage 2de Volume: Venezia e Napoli are two other major works in this style. These pieces are in 6/8 and a rather fast tempo. The characteristics of tarantella that are used in those pieces include the rhythmic patterns, melodic line with upper and lower notes, and the scalic passages. (Ex. 40-1, 40-2, 40-3)

Ex. 40-1: Rhythmic patterns

Chaminade: *Tarentelle*, op. 123 no. 10 measures 1-4

Musical score for Chaminade's *Tarentelle*, measures 1-4. The tempo is marked **Vivo.** with a metronome marking of $\text{♩} = 112$. The score is in 6/8 time and features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in the right hand and a bass line with eighth notes and rests in the left hand. The dynamics are marked *mf*.

Chaminade: *Tarentelle* measures 14-15

Musical score for Chaminade's *Tarentelle*, measures 14-15. The score is in 6/8 time and features a melodic line with eighth notes in the right hand and a bass line with eighth notes and rests in the left hand.

Beethoven: Piano Sonata, op. 31 no. 3 measures 1-4

Musical score for Beethoven's Piano Sonata, op. 31 no. 3, measures 1-4. The tempo is marked **Presto con fuoco.** The score is in 6/8 time and features a melodic line with eighth notes and a dynamic marking of *p* in the right hand, and a bass line with eighth notes in the left hand.

Beethoven: Piano Sonata, op. 31 no. 3 measures 12-15

Musical score for measures 12-15 of Beethoven's Piano Sonata, op. 31 no. 3. The score is in G major, 3/4 time, and consists of two staves. Measure 12 starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The melody in the right hand features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and quarter notes, while the left hand provides a steady accompaniment of quarter notes.

Chopin: *Tarentelle*, op. 43 measures 1-6

Musical score for measures 1-6 of Chopin's *Tarentelle*, op. 43. The score is in G major, 6/8 time, and consists of two staves. It begins with the tempo marking **Presto.** and a forte (*f*) dynamic. The right hand has a melodic line with eighth notes, while the left hand plays a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The dynamics change to *diminu.* (diminuendo) and then *p* (piano) by measure 4.

Liszt: *Tarantella*, measures 70-76

Musical score for measures 70-76 of Liszt's *Tarantella*. The score is in G major, 3/4 time, and consists of two staves. It begins with the tempo marking *un poco meno Presto ma sempre con molto brio.* and a forte (*ff*) dynamic. The right hand features a melodic line with eighth notes, while the left hand plays a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. The dynamics change to *p* (piano) by measure 74.

Ex. 40-2: Melodic line

Chaminade: *Tarentelle* measures 11-13

Musical score for measures 11-13 of Chaminade's *Tarentelle*. The score is in G major, 3/4 time, and consists of two staves. The right hand has a melodic line with eighth notes, while the left hand plays a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes.

Chopin: *Tarantelle* measures 24-27

Musical score for Chopin's *Tarantelle*, measures 24-27. The score is in 3/4 time and features a complex, rhythmic melody in the right hand with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes, and a more active bass line in the left hand. The key signature has two flats.

Liszt: *Tarantella* measures 118-124

Musical score for Liszt's *Tarantella*, measures 118-124. The score is in 3/4 time and features a complex, rhythmic melody in the right hand with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes, and a more active bass line in the left hand. The key signature has two flats. Performance markings include *un poco rit. e scherz.*, *stringendo*, and *rinforz.* with accents.

Ex. 40-3: Scalic passages

Chaminade: *Tarentelle* measures 19-21

Musical score for Chaminade's *Tarentelle*, measures 19-21. The score is in 3/4 time and features a simple, rhythmic melody in the right hand with eighth and sixteenth notes, and a bass line in the left hand. The key signature has two flats.

Beethoven: Piano Sonata, op. 31 no.3 measures 35-38

Musical score for Beethoven's Piano Sonata, op. 31 no.3, measures 35-38. The score is in 3/4 time and features a simple, rhythmic melody in the right hand with eighth and sixteenth notes, and a bass line in the left hand. The key signature has two flats. A trill (*tr*) is marked in the right hand at the end of measure 38.

Chopin: *Tarantelle* measures 68-72



Chaminade's *Tarentelle* is decidedly more modest and much easier to play than the previous cited examples. But even so, she captured the fiery spirit of the dance and the spider-bite, making the theme accessible for the young student at the early intermediate stage of his/her study.

Preparatory Exercise 26

In measures 19 and 20, the right hand includes two voices. (Ex. 41) The top voice is the main melody, but the dotted-quarter note in the inner voice still needs to be heard.

Ex. 41: *Tarentelle* measures 19-20

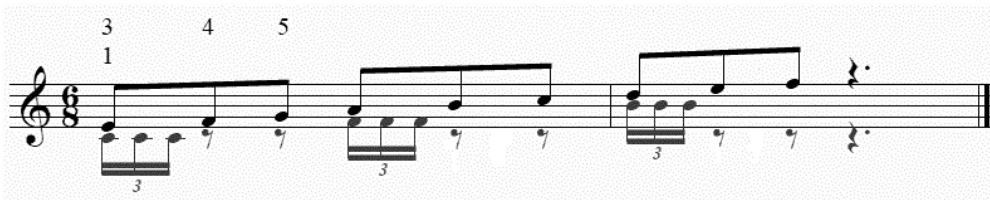


The thumb can become tight and stiff while trying to hold the note for the length of a dotted-quarter. Before playing as written, the thumb plays only the length of an eighth-note. The thumb should release from the key rather than lift from the key surface. (Prep. Ex. 26-1)

Prep. Ex. 26-1



Moreover, the thumb plays repeated notes in order to strengthen both independence and relaxation while playing this passage. (Prep. Ex. 26-2)



5.6 Cécile Chaminade: Children’s Album, op. 126 no. 7 “Élégie”

An elegy refers to a mournful tribute to someone, or a lament for the deceased. It is used in literature in poetry, and often the words are set to music as vocal works. The *Élégie* is in 6/8, a compound-duple meter. The pulse in the music becomes crucial in playing the piece because the way students count the beat influences the music that is performed. The title, *Élégie*, presents the whole image and mood of the music and the key of D minor enhances the sadness and melancholy of the music. At the beginning of the piece, the term *cantando* is written in the right hand. The right hand must play a *cantabile* line that prevail the left-hand accompaniment.

Preparatory Exercise 27

The pattern of the accompaniment in the left hand should be played in a calm and even manner. (Ex. 42) It is difficult for young students to keep the sound balanced, especially the thumb. When playing this section, the left hand can sound unbalanced between the thumb and fifth finger. (The left hand should play evenly and lightly in the background to support the singing right-hand.)

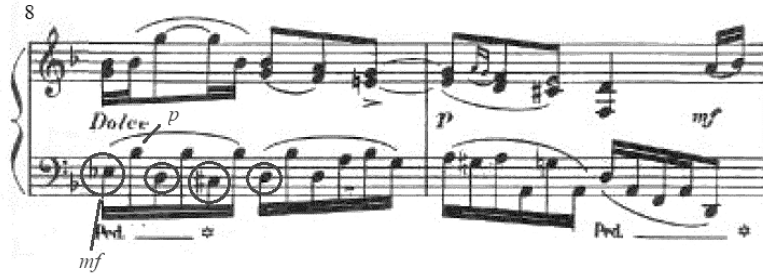
Ex. 42: *Élégie* measures 1-4

Students can practice playing the patterns with thumbs and fifth fingers in fifths or sixths, whichever are the most comfortable intervals for them. (Prep. Ex. 27) The hands should remain loose and be in a slight rotation while playing these patterns.

Prep. Ex. 27

In measures 8 and 12, there are some alternating notes in the left hand that should be brought out. (Ex. 43)

Ex. 43: *Élégie* measures 8-9



In order to bring out the changing notes, the fingers should slightly “throw” weight to these notes with the hands rotating while playing. The bass line should be played *mf* while the B-flat on the thumb should be played *p*. By exaggerating the dynamics, the layers of the sound become much more clear and delicate.

6. Conclusion

In the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, movements for women's rights sprang up around the world. Women fought for equal rights between genders, for issues such as school education and voting rights. It was not until 1920 that women in the United States had the right to vote. In France, women had to wait for the right to vote until 1944! Based on the ratio of men and women in the music world today, it is still a field dominated by men. There is no difference in the ability of composing and performing between men and women. Even though it is true that women did not receive the same education and opportunities as men in history, this did not stop them! It is a stereotype that women are to be seen but not heard. We look back at the time in the nineteenth century when Alfred Lord Tennyson, a Poet Laureate of Great Britain and Ireland, said in his poem that "Man for the field and woman for the hearth: man for the sword and for the needle she: man with the head and woman with the heart: man to command and woman to obey; all else confusion."³⁶ Thankfully, we are now in a society of equal opportunities.

In the twentieth century, women composers have emerged in the music field. Ruth Crawford Seeger (1901-1953) was the first woman to receive a Guggenheim Fellowship in composition in 1930. The Pulitzer Prize in music was first awarded in 1943, and Ellen Taaffe Zwilich (b. 1939) was the first woman to be awarded the prize in 1983 for her work Symphony no.1, commissioned by the American Composers Orchestra. Zwilich recalled that a behind-the-screen auditions were held in her high school. It is all about the music talent regardless of gender or age.³⁷ She said, "This, I think, is a wonderful model for everyone, particularly girls."³⁸ In some cases, it is well-known that female candidates will walk barefoot for the auditions so the

³⁶ Tennyson, *The Princess and Maud*, 109

³⁷ Lisa C. Delorenzo, "An Interview with Ellen Taaffe Zwilich," *Music Educators Journal* 78, no. 7, (1992), 46.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

jury will not know about their gender. Equal opportunities in all aspects have improved through these years. As more women flourish in the field of music, engineering, business, science, and more, the boundaries and gap between genders will hopefully become more blurred in the future.

Chaminade and Beach were distinguished pianists and composers in the nineteenth century. Their names have recently become better known by musicians after their works have been rediscovered and published. Their piano works written for children and young musicians show their passion for music education, and are excellent resources for piano pedagogy. Chaminade's *Children's Album I & II*, op. 123, 126, consists of twelve short pieces in each set. Each piece has a title that helps students to better understand the *meaning* behind the music. The *Tarentelle* from *Children's Album I*, op. 123, contains fast and continuous characteristics that imitate movements one might do after being bitten by a spider. It helps students to better understand the context of the music when there is a story behind the music. The "Élégie" from *Children's Album II*, op. 126, conveys a sorrowful emotion to help students interpret the piece properly. *Children's Album I* includes two common Baroque dance forms, Gavotte and Gigue, with simple motives and thin layers of music for young students. The difficulty increases gradually from *Children's Album I* to *Children's Album II* in musical texture, rhythmic patterns, and combinations of different piano techniques.

The music is written in treble clefs for both hands in Beach's *Children's Album*, op. 36. In the *Practical Method for Beginners on the Pianoforte*, op. 599 by Carl Czerny (1791-1857), the exercises also begin with treble clefs for both hands. While *Children's Album* is written in treble clefs for ease of reading, the music contains complete musical structure and mature artistry. Beach's *Children's Album* contains several dance forms: Minuet, Gavotte and Waltz. These are basic and important musical forms that young pianists should learn. Ternary forms are

one of the musical forms that students learn in the beginning because of clarity and simplicity. These forms are used in most of the pieces that students could easily learn and memorize. In Beach's *Children's Carnival*, op. 25, the different characteristics in each piece are a great example for students to learn contrasting expressions in music. The "Columbine" contains a light and simple singing-melody. These two women Cécile Chaminade and Amy Beach worked in the shadows, but left original, valuable and charming pieces for people to enjoy. These pieces of Chaminade and Beach could be a useful supplement for teaching piano students in addition to repertoire from other major composers.

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