



A workbook for examinations Including over 100 practice tests for ABRSM exams with supporting audio available online

Grade 3

Piano

Improve your sight-reading!

Paul Harris



FABER *ff* MUSIC



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Grade 3 Level 3 Late elementary Piano

Improve your sight-reading!

Paul Harris

- Stage 1 **Changing hand position**
- Stage 2 **Chords**
- Stage 3 **A minor** 
- Stage 4 **B minor and more D major**
- Stage 5 **B \flat major and G minor**
- Stage 6 **E \flat major and** 
- Stage 7 
- Stage 8 **More rhythms in** 
- Stage 9 **Revision of keys and rhythms**

FABER *ff* MUSIC

Practice chart

	<i>Comments (from you, your teacher or parent)</i>	<i>Done!</i>
Stage 1		
Stage 2		
Stage 3		
Stage 4		
Stage 5		
Stage 6		
Stage 7		
Stage 8		
Stage 9		

Teacher's name _____

Telephone _____

Many thanks to Jean Cockburn, Claire Dunham, Graeme Humphrey and Diana Jackson for their invaluable help, and particular thanks to Lesley Rutherford whose editorial skills and perpetual encouragement went far beyond the call of duty.

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This edition first published in 2008 by Faber Music Ltd.

Bloomsbury House, 74–77 Great Russell Street, London WC1B 3DA

Music setting by Graham Pike

Cover and page design by Susan Clarke

Cover illustration by Drew Hillier

Printed in England by Caligraving Ltd

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ISBN10: 0-571-53303-5 (US edition 0-571-53313-2)

EAN13: 978-0-571-53303-9 (US edition 978-0-571-53313-8)

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Introduction

Being a good sight-reader is so important and it needn't be difficult! If you work through this book carefully – always making sure that you really understand each exercise before you play it you'll never have problems learning new pieces or doing well at sight-reading in exams!

Using the workbook

1 Rhythmic exercises

Make sure you have grasped these fully before you go on to the melodic exercises: it is vital that you really know how the rhythms work. There are a number of ways to do the exercises – see *Improve your sight-reading Grade 1* for more details.

2 Melodic exercises

These exercises use just the notes and rhythms for the Stage, and also give some help with fingering. If you want to sight-read fluently and accurately, get into the habit of working through each exercise in the following ways before you begin to play it:

- Make sure you understand the rhythm and counting. Clap the exercise through.
- Look at the shape of the tune, particularly the highest and lowest notes. Which finger do you need to start on to be able to play it? The exercises have this fingering added to get you started.
- Try to hear the piece through in your head. Always play the first note to help.

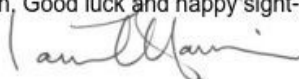
3 Prepared pieces

Work your way through the questions first, as these will help you to think about or 'prepare' the piece. Don't begin playing until you are pretty sure you know exactly how the piece goes.

4 Going solo!

It is now up to you to discover the clues in this series of practice pieces. Give yourself about a minute and do your best to understand the piece before you play. Check the rhythms and hand position, and try to hear the piece in your head.

Always remember to feel the pulse and to keep going steadily once you've begun. Good luck and happy sight-reading!



Terminology:
Bar = measur

Stage 1

Changing hand position

The examples in earlier books have all remained in a five-finger hand position. As you progress you will have to read music that changes hand position. Often the fingering is given, but you will need to develop a feeling for the best time to change position – otherwise you'll simply run out of fingers!

Often the changes are related to scale and arpeggio patterns – this is another reason why it's important to know your scales! You'll find lots of fun scale practice in this volume's sister book *Improve your scales! Grade 3*.

Look at the next phrase – it moves out of the C major five-finger position. Can you see the best place to move hand position? Think about the fingering you use in a C major scale.



Here's the solution – you probably worked it out! You will put a 1st finger on the F – just as in playing a C major scale.



Sometimes there may be more than one fingering to choose from, depending on the melodic pattern. Have a look at this tune and think about which finger is best to put on the F# at the start of the second phrase.



The best solution is to put a 3rd finger on the F# (though a 4th would also work).



Most of the examples in this book change hand position. Always be on the look-out for where your hand position will move and you'll never run out of fingers!

Melodic exercises

Though the fingering is marked to help you, think carefully about the hand position changes before you begin each exercise.

1 ☐



2 ☐



3 ☐



4 ☐



5 ☐



Prepared pieces

- 1 What is the key of this piece? Play the scale (or microscale*) and arpeggio.
- 2 What do you notice about the melodic pattern in bars 3 to 6?
- 3 What will you count? Tap the rhythm of each hand separately. Now tap the rhythms of both hands together.
- 4 Look through the piece for changes of hand position.
- 5 What is the musical significance of the *dim.*?
- 6 How will you put character into the music?

Maestoso

1 ☐

- 1 What is the key of this piece? Play the scale (or microscale*) and arpeggio.
- 2 Can you spot any repeated patterns – rhythmic or melodic?
- 3 What will you count? Tap the rhythm of each hand separately. Now tap the rhythms of both hands together.
- 4 Play the first note in each hand and try to hear the piece in your head.
- 5 Notice the one change of hand position.
- 6 How will you put character into the music?

Elegantly

2 ☐

* See page 40 for details

Going solo!

Don't forget to prepare each piece carefully before you play it.

1 ☐

Allegretto

mf f

2 ☐

Andante

mp mf

3 ☐

Con moto

f p f

4 ☐

Grazioso

mp

5 ☐

Con spirito

f p mf f

Stage 2

Chords

As well as single-note melodic lines you will also come across chords – two or more notes played together. Here are some examples:

Seconds:



Thirds:



Fourths:



Fifths:



Triads (made up of the first three notes of an arpeggio):



Practise these chord shapes in different keys.
Write down some of your own favourite chords:



Melodic exercises

1 ☐

2 ☐

3 ☐

4 ☐

5 ☐

Prepared pieces

- 1 What is the key of this piece? Play the scale. Which fingers will you use for the chord at the start of the right-hand part?
- 2 Which notes are affected by the key signature?
- 3 Can you spot any repeated patterns – melodic or rhythmic? Are there any scale patterns?
- 4 What will you count? Tap the rhythm of each hand separately. Now tap the rhythms of both hands together.
- 5 How will you finger the last four bars of the right hand? Why?
- 6 How will you give an expressive performance?

1 ☐

Calmly

- 1 What is the key of this piece? Play the scale. How will you finger the chord in the first bar of the left hand? Where does this chord appear again?
- 2 Which notes are affected by the key signature?
- 3 What will you count? Tap the rhythm of each hand separately. Now tap the rhythms of both hands together.
- 4 What is the connection between the right and left-hand notes in bar 1?
- 5 Play the first notes in each hand and try to hear the piece in your head.
- 6 What ingredients give you clues to the character of this music?

2 ☐

Andante

Going solo!

1 ☐

Moderato

mp espress.

2 ☐

Humorously!

mf

p

3 ☐

With energy

f

p

f

4 ☐

Alla Russe

f

p cresc.

f


5 ☐

Like a big movie theme

f

ff

Stage 3

A major


Rhythmic exercises

Remember to count two bars before you begin each exercise – one out loud and one silently.

1 

2 

3 

Melodic exercises

And don't forget to count two bars before you begin each melodic exercise as well!

1 

2 

3 

4 ☐

Exercise 4 consists of 8 measures in 3/4 time, key of D major. The right hand features eighth-note patterns with fingerings 2, 1, 3, 3. The left hand features a descending eighth-note scale with fingerings 5, 2, 1.

5 ☐

Exercise 5 consists of 8 measures in 4/4 time, key of D major. The right hand features eighth-note patterns with fingerings 1, 2, 3, 2. The left hand features a descending eighth-note scale with fingerings 2, 1, 2, 1, 2, 1, 2, 1.

6 ☐

Exercise 6 consists of 8 measures in 4/4 time, key of D major. The right hand features eighth-note patterns with fingerings 3, 1, 2, 2. The left hand features a descending eighth-note scale with fingerings 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, 2, 3, 4.

7 ☐

Exercise 7 consists of 8 measures in 3/4 time, key of D major. The right hand features eighth-note patterns with fingerings 3, 2, 2, 3, 1. The left hand features a descending eighth-note scale with fingerings 1, 3, 4, 3, 2, 1, 2, 3.

8 ☐

Exercise 8 consists of 8 measures in 4/4 time, key of D major. The right hand features eighth-note patterns with fingerings 3, 1, 2, 2. The left hand features a descending eighth-note scale with fingerings 1, 3, 2, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

Prepared pieces

- 1 What is the key of this piece? Play the scale.
- 2 Look through the piece for changes of hand position.
- 3 What will you count? Tap the rhythm of each hand separately. Now tap the rhythms of both hands together.
- 4 Which chord do the final two notes of the right-hand part belong to?
- 5 Can you spot any scale or arpeggio patterns?
- 6 How will you put character into this piece?

1

- 1 What is the key of this piece? Play the scale.
- 2 Is the melody always in the right hand?
- 3 What will you count? Tap the rhythm of each hand separately. Now tap the rhythms of both hands together.
- 4 Look through the piece for changes of hand position.
- 5 Can you spot any scale or arpeggio patterns?
- 6 How will you put character into this piece?

2

Going solo!

Don't forget to prepare each piece carefully before you play it.

1 ☐

Maestoso

f *mf* *f*

2 ☐

Allegretto

mf *f*

3 ☐

Elegantly

mp *f*

4 ☐

Alla marcia

f *f*

5 ☐

Dance Italiano

f *p* *mf*

Stage 4

B minor and
more D major

Rhythmic exercises

Remember to count two bars before you begin each exercise –
one out loud and one silently.

1

2

3

Melodic exercises

What is the connection between B minor and D major? What will help you
decide which of the exercises is in B minor and which is in D major?

1

2

3

4 ☐

5 2 1 3 2 1

1 2 3 2 4

5 ☐

3 2 1 2 1

1 2 3 2 1

6 ☐

3 4 1 2 1 2 1

5 2 3 2 1

7 ☐

3 1 2 1

3 1 2 1

8 ☐

2 1 2 1 3 1

1 2 3 2 1

Prepared pieces

- 1 What is the key of this piece? Play the scale and arpeggio.
- 2 Can you spot any repeated patterns – rhythmic or melodic? Can you spot any scale patterns?
- 3 To which chord do the three notes of the first beat of the piece belong?
- 4 What will you count? Tap the rhythm of each hand separately then both together.
- 5 Try to hear the piece in your head and include the dynamic markings.
- 6 What character will you try to convey?

1

Andante espressivo

p

mf

rit.

p

- 1 Play the scale and arpeggio of the key.
- 2 To which chord do all the notes in the first bar belong?
- 3 What will you count? Tap the rhythm of each hand separately. Now tap the rhythms of both hands together. Hear the rhythms of both hands in your head.
- 4 Does either hand change position in this piece?
- 5 What does *rit.* (bar 5) mean?
- 6 How will you give the piece character?

2

Moderato

f

mp

rit.

f

Going solo!

1 ☐

Indian dance

2 ☐

Molto humoroso

3 ☐

Slavonic dance

4 ☐

Allegretto

1

Stage 5

**B \flat major
and
G minor**

Rhythmic exercises

Remember to count two bars before you begin each exercise –
one out loud and one silently.

1

2

3

Melodic exercises

How are B \flat major and G minor connected?

1

2

3

4 ☐

Exercise 4 consists of four measures in 3/4 time, key of B-flat major. The right hand features a melody with slurs and fingerings 1, 4, and 1. The left hand provides a bass line with a fingering of 2.

5 ☐

Exercise 5 consists of four measures in 3/4 time, key of B-flat major. The right hand has a melody with slurs and fingerings 5 and 5. The left hand has a bass line with a fingering of 5.

6 ☐

Exercise 6 consists of four measures in 4/4 time, key of B-flat major. The right hand has a melody with slurs and fingerings 3 and 5. The left hand has a bass line with a fingering of 5.

7 ☐

Exercise 7 consists of four measures in 3/4 time, key of B-flat major. The right hand has a melody with slurs and fingerings 5 and 4. The left hand has a bass line with a fingering of 5.

8 ☐

Exercise 8 consists of four measures in 3/4 time, key of B-flat major. The right hand has a melody with slurs and fingerings 1, 3, and 4. The left hand has a bass line with a fingering of 5.

Prepared pieces

- 1 What is the key of this piece? Play the scale. Which fingers will you use for the chords at the end of the right-hand part?
- 2 Which notes are affected by the key signature?
- 3 Which bars have the same rhythm in both hands? Are there any scale patterns?
- 4 What will you count? Tap the rhythm of each hand separately. Now tap the rhythms of both hands together.
- 5 Play the first note of each hand and then hear the piece through in your head.
- 6 How will you give a graceful performance?

Grazioso

1

- 1 What is the key of this piece? Play the scale.
- 2 Can you see any scale patterns?
- 3 Are there any E♭s?
- 4 Does either hand move out of a five-finger position?
- 5 Now play the first notes in each hand and try to hear the piece in your head.
- 6 How will you bring this piece to life?

Hungarian dance

2

Going solo!

Don't forget to prepare each piece carefully before you play it.

Humorously!

1 ☐

f *p* *f*

Expressively

2 ☐

mp

Russian folk dance

3 ☐

f *mp* *f*

Boldly

4 ☐

f *p* *f* *p* *f*

Sinister...

5 ☐

p *f* *pp*

Always count two bars before you begin each exercise – one out loud and one silently.



And don't forget to count two bars before you begin each melodic exercise as well...



4 ☐

4/4

5 ☐

3/4

6 ☐

3/4

7 ☐

4/4

8 ☐

4/4

Prepared pieces

- 1 What is the key of this piece? Play the scale.
- 2 Which notes are affected by the key signature?
- 3 Which bars have the same rhythm in both hands? Are there any scale patterns?
- 4 What will you count? Tap the rhythm of each hand separately. Now tap the rhythms of both hands together.
- 5 Play the first note of each hand and then hear the piece through in your head.
- 6 How will you give a characterful performance?

1

Sunday jaunt tempo

- 1 Play the scale and arpeggio of the key.
- 2 Which notes are affected by the key signature?
- 3 Is the melody mainly in the right or left hand?
- 4 What will you count? Tap the rhythm of each hand separately. Now tap the rhythms of both hands together.
- 5 Play the first note of each hand and then hear the piece through in your head.
- 6 How will you give your performance character?

2

Andante

Going solo!

1 ☐

3/4 *mp* *f* *mp*

2 ☐

Moderato

4/4 *p cresc.* *f* *p cresc.* *f*

3 ☐

Con moto

3/4 *mf*

4 ☐

Late at night

4/4 *p* *mp* *pp*

5 ☐

Andantino

3/4 *mf* *f dim.* *p*

Stage 7

Rhythmic exercises

Always count two bars before you begin each exercise – one out loud and one silently – then continue to feel the pulse strongly.

1

2

3

Melodic exercises

Don't forget to count two bars before you begin each melodic exercise as well.

1

2

3

4 ☐

3/8

5 ☐

3/8

6 ☐

3/8

7 ☐

3/8

8 ☐

3/8

Prepared pieces

- 1 What is the key of this piece? Play the scale and arpeggio. How are the two pieces on this page related?
- 2 Can you describe the pattern formed by the right hand notes in bars 5, 6 and 7?
- 3 Study those three bars for a few moments, then play them from memory.
- 4 What will you count? Tap the rhythm of each hand separately. Now tap the rhythms of both hands together.
- 5 Can you spot any scale patterns?
- 6 What ingredients give you clues to the character of this piece?

1

- 1 What is the key of this piece? Play the scale and arpeggio. Which fingers will you use for the first note of each hand?
- 2 Where will you have to change hand position?
- 3 Which notes are affected by the key signature?
- 4 What will you count? Tap the rhythm of each hand separately. Now tap the rhythms of both hands together.
- 5 What pattern do the first two bars of the right-hand part form? Does this pattern occur again?
- 6 What ingredients give you clues to the character of this piece?

2

Going solo!

Don't forget to prepare each piece carefully before you play it.

1 ☐

Giocoso

Handwritten musical score for 'Giocoso' in 3/8 time. The piece is marked *f* (forte) and *mp* (mezzo-piano). It features a treble and bass staff. The treble staff has a 5-measure rest, followed by a 3-measure rest, and then a 5-measure rest. The bass staff has a 5-measure rest, followed by a 3-measure rest, and then a 5-measure rest. The piece ends with a double bar line.

2 ☐

Andantino

Handwritten musical score for 'Andantino' in 3/8 time. The piece is marked *p* (piano) and *mf* (mezzo-forte). It features a treble and bass staff. The treble staff has a 4-measure rest, followed by a 4-measure rest, and then a 4-measure rest. The bass staff has a 4-measure rest, followed by a 2-measure rest, and then a 1-measure rest. The piece ends with a double bar line.

3 ☐

Like a lullaby

Handwritten musical score for 'Like a lullaby' in 3/8 time. The piece is marked *mp* (mezzo-piano). It features a treble and bass staff. The treble staff has a 3-measure rest, followed by a 3-measure rest, and then a 3-measure rest. The bass staff has a 3-measure rest, followed by a 3-measure rest, and then a 3-measure rest. The piece ends with a double bar line.

4 ☐

Seriously

Handwritten musical score for 'Seriously' in 3/8 time. The piece is marked *p* (piano). It features a treble and bass staff. The treble staff has a 1-measure rest, followed by a 3-measure rest, and then a 3-measure rest. The bass staff has a 1-measure rest, followed by a 3-measure rest, and then a 3-measure rest. The piece ends with a double bar line.

5 ☐

Jack-in-the-box tempo

Handwritten musical score for 'Jack-in-the-box tempo' in 3/8 time. The piece is marked *f* (forte), *p* (piano), *f* (forte), and *ff* (fortissimo). It features a treble and bass staff. The treble staff has a 3-measure rest, followed by a 3-measure rest, and then a 3-measure rest. The bass staff has a 3-measure rest, followed by a 3-measure rest, and then a 3-measure rest. The piece ends with a double bar line.

Stage 8

More rhythms
in
3/8

Rhythmic exercises

Always count two bars before you begin each exercise – one out loud and one silently – then continue to feel the pulse strongly.

1

2

3

Melodic exercises

Don't forget to count two bars before you begin each melodic exercise as well.

1

☐

2

☐

3

☐

4 ☐

Exercise 4 consists of 8 measures. The treble clef staff begins with a first finger (1) trill on G4, followed by eighth-note pairs (A4-B4, B4-A4, G4-F#4, F#4-E4, E4-D4, D4-C#4, C#4-B3, B3-A3). The bass clef staff provides a steady eighth-note accompaniment: G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F#4, G4. A second finger (2) trill on G4 occurs in the final measure.

5 ☐

Exercise 5 consists of 8 measures. The treble clef staff features a fifth finger (5) trill on G4, followed by eighth-note pairs (A4-B4, B4-A4, G4-F#4, F#4-E4, E4-D4, D4-C#4, C#4-B3, B3-A3). The bass clef staff provides a steady eighth-note accompaniment: G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F#4, G4. A second finger (2) trill on G4 occurs in the final measure.

6 ☐

Exercise 6 consists of 8 measures. The treble clef staff begins with a fifth finger (5) trill on G4, followed by eighth-note pairs (A4-B4, B4-A4, G4-F#4, F#4-E4, E4-D4, D4-C#4, C#4-B3, B3-A3). The bass clef staff provides a steady eighth-note accompaniment: G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F#4, G4. A second finger (2) trill on G4 occurs in the final measure.

7 ☐

Exercise 7 consists of 8 measures. The treble clef staff begins with a first finger (1) trill on G4, followed by eighth-note pairs (A4-B4, B4-A4, G4-F#4, F#4-E4, E4-D4, D4-C#4, C#4-B3, B3-A3). The bass clef staff provides a steady eighth-note accompaniment: G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F#4, G4. A second finger (2) trill on G4 occurs in the final measure.

8 ☐

Exercise 8 consists of 8 measures. The treble clef staff begins with a third finger (3) trill on G4, followed by eighth-note pairs (A4-B4, B4-A4, G4-F#4, F#4-E4, E4-D4, D4-C#4, C#4-B3, B3-A3). The bass clef staff provides a steady eighth-note accompaniment: G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F#4, G4. A second finger (2) trill on G4 occurs in the final measure.

Prepared pieces

- 1 What is the key of this piece? Play the scale and arpeggio.
- 2 To which chord do the notes in left-hand bars 1 and 2 belong?
- 3 Does the left hand change position?
- 4 What will you count? Tap the rhythm of each hand separately. Now tap the rhythms of both hands together.
- 5 Can you spot any scale patterns?
- 6 Which ingredients give you clues to the character of this piece?

1

☐

Giocosu

- 1 What is the key of this piece? Play the scale and arpeggio.
- 2 Where will you have to change hand position?
- 3 Which notes are affected by the key signature?
- 4 What will you count? Tap the rhythm of each hand separately. Now tap the rhythms of both hands together.
- 5 Compare the first left-hand bar with the first right-hand bar.
- 6 Play the first note of each hand and try to hear the piece in your head.

2

☐

Andantino

Going solo!

1 ☐ **Espressivo**

2 ☐ **Allegretto**

3 ☐ **Stealthily**

4 ☐ **Lively**

5 ☐ **Triumphantly**

1

Stage 9

Revision of
keys and
rhythms

Rhythmic exercises

1 

2 

3 

Melodic exercises

1 

2 

3 

4 ☐ Ceremonial

f *mf* *f*

5 ☐ Sadly

p

mf *dim.* *p*

6 ☐ Grazioso

mf

7 ☐ Solemn and Russian-like

f

mf *cresc.* *f*

Prepared pieces

- 1 Are there any changes of position in the left-hand part?
- 2 Can you spot any repeated patterns – rhythmic or melodic?
- 3 What key is this piece in? Are there any scale patterns?
- 4 What do you notice about the rhythm in bar 4?
- 5 What will you count? Tap the rhythm of each hand separately. Now tap the rhythms of both hands together.
- 6 What ingredients give you clues to the character of this piece?

Cool bounce

1

The musical score for 'Cool bounce' is in 4/4 time. The right hand begins with a five-measure rest, then plays a melody starting on G4, moving up stepwise to D5, then down to C4, and finally up to G4. The left hand plays a bass line starting on G2, moving up stepwise to D3, then down to C2, and finally up to G2. The piece is marked with a forte (f) dynamic in the right hand and a piano (p) dynamic in the left hand. The key signature has one sharp (F#).

- 1 Look through the piece carefully and find your changes of hand position.
- 2 Can you spot any repeated patterns – rhythmic or melodic?
- 3 What key is the piece in? Can you spot any scale patterns?
- 4 Which interval is formed by the final two notes in the left hand?
- 5 What will you count? Tap the rhythm of each hand separately. Now tap the rhythms of both hands together.
- 6 What ingredients give you clues to the character of this piece?

Tempo di valse

2

The musical score for 'Tempo di valse' is in 3/4 time. The right hand plays a melody starting on G4, moving up stepwise to D5, then down to C4, and finally up to G4. The left hand plays a bass line starting on G2, moving up stepwise to D3, then down to C2, and finally up to G2. The piece is marked with a mezzo-forte (mf) dynamic in the right hand and a piano (p) dynamic in the left hand. The key signature has one sharp (F#).

Going solo!

Don't forget to prepare each piece carefully before you play it.

1 ☐

Jauntissimo

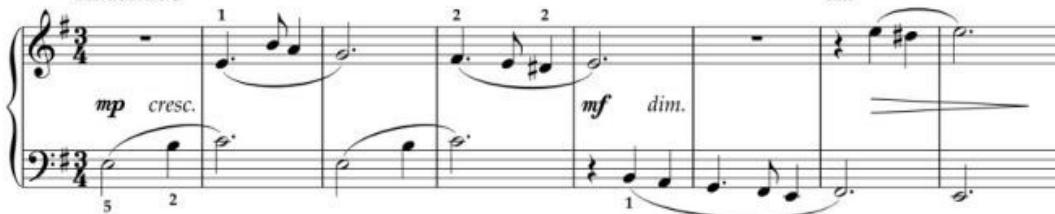
mf



2 ☐

Andantino

mp cresc. mf dim. rit.



3 ☐

Con brio

f mf f



4 ☐

Grazioso

mp f p



5 ☐

Maestoso

f



The golden rules

A sight-reading checklist

Before you begin to play a piece at sight, always consider the following:

- 1 Look at the time signature and decide how you will count the piece.
- 2 Look at the key signature and find the notes which need raising or lowering.
- 3 Notice patterns – especially those based on scales and arpeggios.
- 4 Check the fingering and hand position for the first notes of each hand.
- 5 Notice any markings that will help you convey the character.
- 6 Count at least one bar in.

When performing your sight-reading piece

- 1 Keep feeling the pulse.
- 2 Keep going at a steady tempo.
- 3 Ignore mistakes.
- 4 Look ahead – at least to the next note.
- 5 Keep your hands in position on the keyboard.
- 6 Play musically, always trying to convey the character of the music.

Look at each piece for about 30 seconds and try to feel that you are understanding what you see (just like reading these words).

Don't begin until you think you are able to play the piece accurately.

Microscales

If you don't know the whole scale, just the first five notes or even just the first three notes will do! Both patterns will give a good feel of the key.

