

Benefits of the Keyboard Gymnastics™ Program

One of the benefits of the Keyboard Gymnastics program is that students are exposed to every aspect of study involved in becoming a truly well rounded musician. It is comprehensive as well as flexible, enabling each student to excel at their own pace as well as allowing them to shine in their personal areas of expertise.

Seven Areas of Focus:

THEORY

Music Theory teaches students the fundamental building blocks that are used to create music. Students learn how these elements are used together in an artful way. Music Theory not only helps us understand how a piece of music is put together, it helps us communicate better in our performance. An understanding of Theory is the basis of Sight Reading and composition.

EAR TRAINING

Because music is such an aural experience, students should be trained to actively listen to the sounds they are creating. Being able to recognize and analyze pitch, interval, rhythm and tonality is the sign of an educated musician. Being able to sense and appraise the various colors and moods embodied in that sound is the sign of a true artist.

TECHNIC

The Technic test in Keyboard Gymnastics is essentially theory at the piano. Students who take the technic test pass off scales, arpeggios, chords and inversions, cadences, and transposition. All of these basic building blocks are found in the piano repertoire. If a student is proficient at recognizing and executing these building blocks, learning new pieces is easier, sight-reading is enjoyable, and memorization is a snap!

SIGHT READING

In the sight reading event, students are asked to play a piece of music they have never seen or heard before, perfectly on the first try. Sight Reading is the one skill that will keep your student playing the piano. It is an essential survival skill for the pianist who is asked to accompany other musicians. How many times have we heard the phrase, "I have had six years of piano lessons but I still can't read a note!" You will never hear that phrase uttered by the student who participates in the Sight Reading Event. These students are prepared to pick up a sheet of music and learn it on their own, without the help of a teacher.

MULTIPLE EVENT PARTICIPATION

Most piano teachers want to pass off pieces and train good performers. Teachers using the Keyboard Gymnastics program go the extra mile by providing students with all the tools needed to be well-rounded musicians with a life skill. Whatever these students decide to do with their music as adults, whether it be to learn a different instrument, accompany the church choir, or simply be a music lover who is a season ticket holder, the Keyboard Gymnastics program gives them the tools to both use and love music throughout their life.

ENSEMBLE

There are many advantages to ensemble playing. When playing with someone else, the discipline of practice becomes a team activity with musical objectives. Students with low self-confidence or limited performance background often feel less intimidated and more secure in an ensemble. They may even practice more for the team than for themselves. Keyboard Gymnastics teachers use ensemble music as a tool to improve the students' rhythmic and harmonic awareness. Players must study the harmonic structure of the music with careful attention to balance of melody and accompaniment. This requires analyzing how all parts work together to create a finished piece. Ensemble playing, particularly piano concertos, can be a catalyst to studying and appreciating other symphonic literature.

CREATIVE PROJECT

Students doing the Creative Project are invited to choose one area of music that fascinates them and create a project around it. Topics can include: composers, compositions, skits, art work, theory games, ballet music, building your own instruments, to name but a few. When students choose subjects that personally interest them, completing their project is often more play than work. Sometimes it is the student who may not excel in other focus areas (like Performance or Ear Training) that absolutely shines in Creative Project.

PERFORMANCE

The application of all of these skills comes together in the Solo Performance Event. The benefits are obvious: confidence, poise in front of an audience, the ability to memorize, the opportunity to express oneself, and the acquisition of a skill that brings joy to oneself and others. Playing comfortably in public is a skill that is acquired through repetition. Play at every opportunity and it will get a little easier each time.

For more details about the Keyboard Gymnastics™ program, please view our website at:
www.kgofphoenix.com