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TEACHING CLASS PIANO IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
WITH
REFERENCE TO APPLICATION
IN THE WESTFIELD, ILLINOIS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

A Paper
Presented to
the Faculty of the Department of Music
Eastern Illinois State College

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science in Education

by
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August 1954

Approved by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION	1
The Growth of Music in the Elementary School	2
Changing Concepts in the Teaching of School Music	3
Changing Concepts in the Teaching of Piano	7
II. CONCERNING CLASS PIANO	11
A Short History of Class Piano	11
The Importance of Class Piano	11
Values Inherent in Class Piano	
Teaching	13
Musical Aspects	14
Educational Principles	14
Social Rewards	15
Problems in Establishing the Piano Class	17
Opposition from Private Teachers	17
Scheduling and Financing	18
Lack of Qualified Teachers	18
Qualifications of the Class Piano Teacher	20
Criteria for Class Piano Materials	21

Class Activities	22
Out-of-Class Activities . .	23
Outcomes of the Piano Class	23
CHAPTER	PAGE
III. ENRICHING WESTFIELD'S ELEMENTARY MUSIC PROGRAM . .	24
The Present Program . .	24
How Class Piano May Fit	
The Present Program . .	24
IV. ESTABLISHING CLASS PIANO AS A PART OF WESTFIELD'S ELEMENTARY MUSIC PROGRAM . .	26
Materials and Equipment Needed	26
Text Materials . .	27
General Teaching Approach and	
Basic Principles of Instrumental	
Class Instruction . .	27
V. SAMPLE LESSON PLANS AND OUTLINE FOR PIANO CLASS LESSONS. .	35
VI. CONCLUSION	53
BIBLIOGRAPHY	55

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Three general principles are offered in this introduction. These are basic to any approach in the study of class piano in the elementary school. These include music's important place in the curriculum of the elementary school; changed concepts for teaching music in the elementary school; and changed concepts for teaching piano.

The main body of this paper is composed of five areas of thought: first, class piano as a means of realizing some of the elementary school music objectives; second, the values of class piano, desirable outcomes or goals of the program as well as in-class and out-of-class activities; third, ways in which the piano class may enrich the Westfield, Illinois elementary music program; fourth, plans for establishing class piano in the Westfield elementary school, including equipment needed, choice of texts, general aims of the program in this school, the basic approach and basic principles of this approach; and fifth, lesson outlines for teaching the piano class along with some sample lesson plans to be used in teaching the piano class.

It is a clear and generally accepted principle of

American education that the school curriculum should change as the needs of society change. The curriculum should not be regarded as a finished product, nor should it be static, but it should be a developing part of the educational process reflecting the growth of the school, community, and society.

During recent years music has had a phenomenal growth in the elementary school. It has become an important part of the curriculum because of the contributions it makes to the curriculum.

Music is now considered a fundamental subject; a fourth 'R', as necessary to the education of the 'complete man' as any other branch of his school work. It is now a language which everyone hears, many use, and all may understand. By making music, and teaching others to do so, one can make life more joyful for every child under his supervision.... 1

Let us look at music concepts of the past.

Brooks and Brown in their book, Music Education in the Elementary School state:

In retrospect ... music passed through three phases up to the end of the nineteenth century. First, the idea was to teach children to sing as a formal exercise in connection with stereotyped material. Second, it was believed that all children must early gain the power to read music in order to make available to them the treasures of music literature. Third, the

1

Hazel Gertrude Kinscella and Elizabeth M. Tierney, Music In The Small School (Lincoln, Nebraska: The University of Nebraska Teachers College Division, 1939), p. 1.

child-study movement placed emphasis upon ability to appreciate and enjoy music as the great aim of music education. 2

The first of the new concepts of music education is that today's music curriculum is child-centered.

The second of the new concepts is that music education today is for many children, not for just the talented few. It is much broader in viewpoint than it was in the past.

...One of the most important things we have learned in music education in the public schools is that there are many students who do not have the innate ability to become superior performers but who, nevertheless, derive an immense personal satisfaction from their efforts, the value of which is of the greatest educational significance when measured in terms of human development. A restricted policy which disregards this important fact is difficult to justify. 3

Elementary school music should be for all the children of all the people. Each child should have experiences to enable him to emerge as a good and satisfactory citizen. 4

2

B. Marian Brooks and Harry A. Brown, Music Education in the Elementary School (New York: American Book Company, 1946), p. 17.

3

Paul Van Bodegraven, "Equality of Opportunity in Music Education," Music Educators Journal, 39:21, Sept.-Oct., 1952.

4

Hazel Nohavec Morgan, editor, Music Education Source Book I (Chicago: Music Educators National Conference, 1946), p.4.

The third concept in education is that today's music is an integrated part of the school's broad educational program. Subjects do not stand alone but are correlated and integrated into a meaningful whole.

Teachers today are earnestly seeking guidance in thinking out ways of making music an integral part of the whole process of pupil-education rather than an isolated subject taught without relationship to the rest of the curriculum. That is undoubtedly a predominant trend of the present time in music education. It will be even more strongly emphasized in the future. 5

The fourth concept in music education is that no longer are techniques and learning approached through drill. Instead techniques are taught through usage in enjoyable musical experiences. Mursell states:

Up to a certain point, which is undefined, the child should have plenty of 'rote' singing, plenty of listening, plenty of free rhythmic activity, some experience with toy instruments, and some 'creative work'. When this has gone on for a certain length of time, the symbols of the notation should be introduced in a planned sequence of lessons, the theory being that the child is now ready to stand the shock. What ought to happen is that, even in connection with the child's earliest experiences and activities in school, the visualization of music should play a part. The picture of how the music sounds certainly need not be in the conventional notation, for this is quite intricate. The purpose should be to help him grasp and enjoy better and better the music that he hears, the music that he sings and plays, and the music that he creates. Out of this, little by little, can evolve all the complexities of notation as they become relevant to his musical

experiences and activities. There need be no shock, no radical turning point, no sudden introduction of formal instruction, and yet all the aims of formal instruction can be accomplished in a far better manner. 6

...The greatest stumbling block to progress and effective results here is without a doubt the premature isolation of technique, and its mechanical treatment.... 7

It is altogether too common to put children up against nothing but the most difficult and exacting challenges. The central emphasis, for instance, is often on learning to play the violin or to read the musical score. To use such media and such instrumentalities for expressive purposes is indeed possible, and really expert teaching can make this a good deal easier than it usually is. But by and large they demand far more power and maturity than most children can muster. They become barriers to authentic musical experience, not avenues into it. What such experiences actually teach a great many children is a sense of failure and incompetence, whereas they should and could be getting a sense of success. What they learn is that music is very difficult -- perhaps too difficult for them. What they should learn is that music is within their capacity to understand, respond to, and enjoy." 8

The fifth concept in music education is that a wide variety of music activities compose the curriculum. Beatrice Perham says:

6

James L. Mursell, Developmental Teaching (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1949), p. 109.

7

Ibid., p. 296.

8

Ibid., p. 297

The music program must be concerned with the development of favorable attitudes and growing interests. These come about when children have an opportunity to participate in all kinds of pleasurable musical experiences. 9

The program in music which concerns itself with the development of favorable attitudes in music cannot afford to overlook the values of a wide range of activities. Many schools, in their anxiety to stress beautiful singing of fine songs have unwittingly fostered negative attitudes in children who have difficulty in singing. Unpleasant experiences in singing make deep and often detrimental impressions on child minds. It is no wonder we have negative attitudes, especially if the music program offers very little of any type of activity except singing. 10

A sixth concept in music education stresses growth through actual participation. Beatrice Perham says:

Our philosophy led us to believe that enjoyment and understanding of music came about naturally and forcefully through actual participation rather than through listening to and being told about music. This does not mean that the children did not have plenty of opportunity to sit quietly and listen to good music. But we believe that every child would enjoy and pursue some kind of musical activity other than singing and listening if given a chance to do so at his own level. Therefore, our plan was to provide as many opportunities for and as much variety in actual participation as possible. 11

9

Beatrice Perham, Music In The New School (Chicago: Neil A. Kjos Music Company, 1937), p. 44.

10

Ibid., p. 44.

11

Ibid., pp.116-117.

It was our firm belief that these first-hand and vital experiences of children working on music at their own level of accomplishment, should and would become the firm basis for further growth and development in music....12

The seventh concept in music education deals with the basic philosophy back of that education. Today the developmental approach is stressed as stated by Mursell:

...All musical activities, experiences, endeavors, and learnings should be thought of and planned as episodes in a process of musical growth....All special achievements and learnings should be treated as means for fostering it. The emphasis should always be on musical growth. It is the very heart of a well-organized scheme of music education. 13

Concepts have also been changing in the teaching of piano. First, specialized piano techniques are not the primary aim of early piano lessons. Hyman I. Krongard discusses this in an article, "Piano Lessons for John Smith." He states that John is not interested in the piano, but he is interested in making music. The piano is only the medium by which he expects to do this. He says:

As with all learning, technic should be for use, not for storage....14

12

Perham, op. cit., p. 118.

13

James L. Mursell, Education for Musical Growth (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1948), p. 3.

14

Hyman I. Krongard, "Piano Lessons for John Smith," Music Educators Journal, 34:29, Feb.-March, 1948.

...technic must be considered a generalization, a stockpile from which the player draws the skill he needs for expression. Technic means piano -- what John needs and wants is music. Only when he can clearly see, the place of drill in the scheme of his musical growth will he give it more than a grudging attention. When insistence on drill begins to drive away interest we must make a decision. Regardless of how successful the operation is, we want the patient to live! 15

...The only standard I can maintain for John Smith is to ever widen his musical horizon. If I can do this and make him a fine pianist at the same time, very well. If not, at least he must go on growing in musical understanding; his love for music must ever increase. 16

Second, the transference of musical symbols to the keyboard is not the primary aim in piano teaching.

For many years, the chief concern of most piano teachers was developing the pupil's ability to transfer musical symbols to the keyboard. Today our first interest is, or should be, in child growth and development. Our second interest should be in music as a contributing medium to this growth and development, -- and our third interest in the 'musical' growth of the child through the study of the piano. When emphasis changes, methods, procedures and desirable achievements change.... 17

Third, good piano teaching strongly emphasizes the molding of the pupil's attitude toward music.

Let us list, then, as the most important

15

Ibid., p. 29.

16

Ibid., p. 52.

17

Charlotte DuBois, "Piano Classes in the Schools," Music Educators Journal, 34:26, January, 1948.

outcome of good piano teaching, a favorable attitude toward music. It provides an atmosphere conducive to growth in the ability to perform with and for others. It promotes a corresponding growth in the discriminating interest in the playing of others. Unfortunate is the student who is led to believe that all the joy from music study comes late, a result of many weeks of laborious and uninteresting drill. Happy and usually successful, is the student whose teacher is expert in finding opportunities for the pupil to use his music in such a way that he reaches each goal with a sense of satisfaction and with a resultant ambition to go on to higher accomplishments. 18

Fourth, good piano teaching encourages student growth through musical discovery and exploration.

A second outcome of good music teaching

...is an attitude of musical discovery and exploration on the part of the student.... The young child explores music when he plays his little pieces in many different keys and when he experiments with chords to find a suitable accompaniment for a familiar song. 19

Fifth, good piano teaching stresses the social development and growth of the child.

Modern living conditions ... require a still fuller understanding of the individual, his behavior, and his relations to others. There is a great deal of evidence that our schools and colleges are increasingly aware of their responsibilities in general education for social objectives as well as for specialized training. It is important for musicians, as

18

Polly Gibbs, "Some Characteristics of Good Piano Teaching," Etude, 71:16,56, November, 1953.

19

Ibid., p. 16.

well as doctors, politicians, and industrial and labor leaders to have a social conscience; and all piano teachers have a responsibility in the social development of the child, as well as for technical training. 20

Social characteristics for the individual which may be influenced and developed through piano study are leadership, cooperation, and competitive attitude, self-expression, and personality development. 21

The piano teacher needs to observe the individual, to know education psychology and public school philosophy....Piano study should be correlated with the music education and general education of the child.... 22

20

John Crowder, "Social Implications of Piano Study," MTNA Bulletin, (Chicago: Music Educators National Conference), November, 1949.

21

Ibid.

22

Ibid.

CHAPTER II

CONCERNING CLASS PIANO

A short history of class piano is summarized briefly by Raymond Burrows in his article, "Piano Study -- a Fundamental."

In the brief thirty years of its history in this country, the school piano class has survived an early period of indifference on the part of those who knew nothing 'and cared less' of its existence. Still more significant, the movement has survived a second stage of sudden artificial prosperity caused by a rush to get on the piano-wagon with the attendant evils of improperly prepared teachers and get-rich-quick methods and devices. Having shown its strength through these two difficult stages, the piano class is now in a third and very healthy period of experiment and development. There are still areas of ignorance and indifference; there are still some examples of poor teaching and false promotion, but there are enough good examples of tested and demonstrated procedure to show the alert music educator and administrator what a powerful force the right kind of piano class can be in reaching the aims of all music education.

Tradition indicated for many years that piano instruction should be individual, and not by the group method. Educators were not particularly opposed to class piano save that they did not know what it would contribute to the school curriculum, and therefore as a new and untried method it was frowned upon.

1

Raymond Burrows, "Piano Study -- a Fundamental," Music Educators Journal, 34:54, Sept.-Oct., 1947.

Someone has asked, "Why all this emphasis on piano?" Piano serves as a foundational instrument for the development of ability to perform on other instruments or to sing. It is easy to secure intonation because it is a tuned instrument. The person playing piano learns to listen for both melodic and harmonic lines. Piano is often taught to quite young students. 2

The Music Education Source Book says:

Since the piano is an instrument which combines the three elements of music -- melody, harmony, and rhythm, it becomes a basic instrument on which to present the fundamentals of music, thus building a solid foundation for music in any line. Class Piano Instruction offers opportunity to many; fosters the group spirit, arouses and holds interest of the child in piano study; cultivates musical understanding and develops the aesthetic sense, in a word, a training for life. 3

Class piano instruction in which children learn to play simple songs (even if only with one finger technique!) should be correlated with the singing program. The educative value of such space-frame instruments in which eye and hand -- ear and voice -- are collaborators in the process of developing the rhythmic and melodic sense is generally accepted by music educators. 4

These preliminary experiences, particularly a familiarity with the piano keyboard, should be considered as fundamental prerequisites to beginning work in band and orchestra instruments

2
DuBois, op. cit., p. 27.

3
Morgan, op. cit., p. 85.

4
Ibid., p. 7.

in the fourth and fifth grades where a discriminating ear and subtle differentiations in motor or manual responses are so vital to satisfactory progress and to further pleasure in musical activities. 5

What are some of the values of class piano study?

Earl W. Gehrkens lists some in the following discussion:

...Many teachers continue to prefer to give private lessons, but I personally favor class piano for at least a year or two. It is true, of course, that many piano classes are badly taught, but I have also seen a great deal of very poor private teaching. So it seems to depend on one's opinion -- and the situation.

My reason for favoring class instruction in the early stages is that in the first place, children like to do things together so they look forward to meeting other children whether it is at a piano class, a party, or even washing dishes in the kitchen! Second, the class lesson is usually an hour in length, and this gives the teacher a chance to work at musicianship rather than devoting the entire lesson to the mechanics of playing an instrument. Third, children often learn from each other more quickly than they learn from a grown person, so it frequently happens that a quicker child will say to a slower one, "Let me show you how to do that," and often the slower child catches on at once. There is also an element of competition in the class lesson, and sometimes children are spurred on to harder work so as to keep up with the others; just as some adults work a little harder in various ways so as to "keep up with the Jones's!"

Perhaps I ought to add that in my opinion the best piano classes are those in which the teacher tries to put together in one group the children who are able to go at approximately the same rate of speed. Thus the slower child is not frightened because he is with a group that doesn't go too fast for him, and the brighter child is not bored because he is working in a

group of children who are either quicker than average or else do mor practicing. So I conclude my answer by stating that if I had a child of my own I would rather have him or her in a good piano class than under private instruction under even an equally good teacher. 6

While the preceding article by Mr. Gehrkens undoubtedly refers to class piano under a private music teacher, there are implications which are applicable to class piano situations in the school.

Class piano should offer the student musical, educational, and social values. The references cited often refer to more than one value, so that a feeling of relationship among the several values results.

Musical and educational values are designated by Raymond Burrows, who says:

...the good piano class encourages an enriched activity program. It includes song singing, and extends the song approach through an application to the visual and tactile sense of the keyboard. The piano lesson increases rhythmic, dynamic, and musical mood perception through the use of physical response to music. The creative sense -- not only in creating new musical compositions, but also in the development of creative performance, and creative listening -- is an important part of the piano lesson. Through this broad activity program the piano lesson teaches the fundamental skills of reading and harmonic background which makes participation so much richer.

Secondly, the interrelationship of various parts of the music program and of other school experiences is encouraged in the piano lesson. Songs sung in the singing period are also used in the piano lesson, with children providing

piano accompaniment. Folk dances used in physical education are learned in the piano lesson. Violin and clarinet pupils find they have classmates who can play the same pieces at the piano. The social science teacher, the English teacher, the French teacher, and the Spanish teacher, all find that the piano lesson makes a direct contribution to their work. 7

Fay Templeton Frisch says:

The function, then, of the piano class is to present fundamentals with the piano as the medium. Piano classes are laboratories where aptitudes and special talents are discovered. Students who are found to have unusual possibilities need further development of skills and techniques which can be concentrated upon by the private teacher.

The class piano teacher is like the general practitioner while the private teacher is like the specialized physician. Both are definitely needed. Both are essential to the complete training of the individual. The specialized physician, if he is to be successful in his work, must know what the general practitioner has done. Discussion and observation of procedures will benefit both. 8

Some people feel that the study of piano should be provided by the parents. In a study made in the schools of Long Beach, California, one of the findings was:

...discovery of instrumental music capabilities cannot be left to parents alone. Lack of knowledge, indifference, and economic inability all act as powerful deterrents in such case as they would in relation to every subject in the school curriculum treated similarly. Most

7

Burrows, op. cit., p. 54.

8

Fay Templeton Frisch, "Calling All Piano Teachers," Music Educators Journal, 32:84, March, 1946.

children want to play some musical instrument, yet parents will not always provide private instruction, because the enterprise is speculative and costly. In the school instrumental class the cost is negligible, and if the child discloses interest and talent his parents are more likely to finance his further study under a private teacher. 9

The social values of piano study in classes are important. John Crowder, Dean of the School of Music, the University of Arizona says modern living conditions

...require a still fuller understanding of the individual, his behavior, and his relations to others. There is a great deal of evidence that our schools and colleges are increasingly aware of their responsibilities in general education for social objectives as well as of specialized training. It is important for musicians, as well as doctors, politicians and industrial and labor leaders to have a social conscience; and all piano teachers have a responsibility in the social development of the child as well as for technical training.

Social characteristics for the individual which may be influenced and developed through piano study are leadership, cooperation, the competitive-attitude, self-expression, and personality development. 10

Social values are listed in a report by Paul Boston, Superintendent of Schools, LaPorte, Indiana. He feels there is an opportunity for children with different social backgrounds to work together at

9

William R. Sur, editor, Piano Instruction In The Schools (Chicago: Music Educators National Conference, 1949), p.vi.

10

Crowder, op. cit., (n.p.)

the piano, and that ensemble playing is democratic. He believes the class piano music inspires a feeling of "togetherness", and stimulates mental alertness by ear-training and chord work. 11

There are some drawbacks to establishing piano classes in schools. There is too often a feeling of jealousy or enmity between the school piano teacher and the private piano teacher. However, the problem can be met without too much difficulty. The school teacher should encourage children who show ability in the school piano lessons to study in private lessons, increasing rather than decreasing the private teacher's number of pupils.

The class method of teaching piano differs sharply from the approach used by many private teachers. The private teacher may re-teach the student according to her own method. Musical symbols and notation should transfer. Most important, the child's attitude developed through the classroom approach to music can also be useful.

In Westfield, Illinois there is only one private

11

Paul Boston, "Class Piano As An Integral Part of The Elementary School Curriculum", Traveling The Circuit With Piano Classes (Chicago: Music Educators National Conference), 1951.

piano teacher. She follows a positive approach and encourages the children to use their music. Some of the children have acted as accompanists for singing in the music class. The teacher encourages them to play simple right hand melodies and to chord with the left hand, using the basic chords which are taught in piano class work. Therefore, I believe, enough similarity exists between the approach to piano work, as taught by the private teacher, and the class piano method, as I will teach it, that each method will augment and strengthen the other.

Many schools are unable to work out the scheduling of piano classes, to decide who shall be permitted to take the lessons, and how the financing of lessons shall be accomplished. A lengthy discussion could be carried on as to various methods now in use. The simplest and easiest solution occurs where the piano class is offered to all children at a definite grade-level, it is scheduled as a regular class in the elementary music program, and the elementary music teacher instructs the class.

There is a lack of qualified teachers. Many colleges with otherwise good music programs do not offer method courses in class piano to the students they train as future teachers. In speaking of this

problem, Guy Maier says:

You can count on less than the fingers of one hand the names of colleges and music schools giving practical, up-to-date courses in piano teaching. I am acquainted with only three that can be recommended to young people anxious to equip themselves for a teaching career. The few other schools which offer half-hearted piano pedagogy courses go either for the stuffy lecture kind or for teaching class piano in the dreary "Hot Cross Buns" manner. (I cannot conceive of anything more dismal than the usual exhibition of college class piano teaching methods demonstrated at conventions.) 12

The above indictment aroused a storm of protest from academic staffs of various schools who felt that it was much too severe. In view of the fact that many fine colleges and music schools in the country today do question this point, it seems that lack of training in class piano procedures may be an extremely important weakness in the preparation of piano teachers.

Fay Templeton Frisch says concerning the class piano teacher:

One reason for lack of understanding concerning the class piano instruction is that no one has clearly defined the essential qualifications and attitude of the class piano teacher, or the principles underlying the work.

The teacher of class piano must necessarily have broad musical background and experience. She must understand thoroughly the relationship of her work to the rest of the music education program and to the general curriculum of the elementary school. Too many directors have not understood how essential it is for the class piano teacher to be more than a skilled pianist. The

must be competent in the use of psychology techniques for the elementary school child and in classroom procedures. Most teacher-training institutions have failed to set up an adequate course of study in the field.

The teacher of class piano hopes that the experience will be a happy and successful one for the child. If it is, it will act as a springboard to other music activities. She wants each pupil to play successfully many pieces on his level of understanding, and to acquire broad musicianship. She can only hope that out of her classes there may emerge some superior talent. 13

The MENC Curriculum Committee in its report on class piano work under "Qualifications of the Class Piano Teacher" say:

In order to carry on class piano instruction successfully, the teacher must be equipped with many qualities. She should be physically fit; have an attractive personality, radiating cheerfulness, sincerity and assurance; have a broad musical knowledge, at least the equivalent of a Bachelor of Music degree, besides special training in modern normal methods of teaching class piano under supervision. The piano teacher should have a thoroughly organized plan of procedure and "follow it through". She must have specific knowledge in child training and development, as well as a love for children. She must be kind but firm and have the ability to adapt her program to the setup which is peculiar to the school in which she is teaching. She must have definite goals to be reached by the pupils at a certain time and must know the orderly steps to reach these goals. The class piano teacher must be a saleswoman, she must have enough business ability to keep her monetary accounts accurate, her reports clear, concise, and on time. Good discipline and fine cooperation are as necessary as an adequate education. The class piano teacher should make her department indispensable to the school and community. 14

13

Frisch, op. cit., p. 84.

14

Morgan, op. cit., pp. 85-86.

The teacher who expects to teach a piano class needs to choose good teaching material. Miss Leah Curnutt discusses criteria for evaluating teaching materials at length. The music book should be attractive in color and have good art work in it with pictures that appeal to the children. The page should be well-spaced and uncluttered in appearance and the printing clear and legible. The music should be printed so the phrase line or measure is not broken or so pages need not be turned while playing a short piece. The melodic line should be easily grasped by the eye. The shape and size of the book should make it possible to follow notes easily in the line of vision. The oblong shape seems to be best for the young beginner's book. 15

Miss Curnutt suggests that criteria for judging the musical content of beginning piano music includes the use of music of value, well-organized music so that modern reading methods may be employed, a variety of keys, the song approach with songs that are within the child's normal singing range, basic chords so the children develop basic keyboard harmony, music that transposes easily into many keys, music that covers the entire keyboard rather than being narrowly limited,

music that gradually develops from rote to note, reading through observation, drill and guided reading into the goal of independent music reading. 16

New problems are presented by imitation, the rote method, followed by the opportunity to see the problem on the printed page, the observation method. There is an easy and gradual approach to new problems with a certain overlapping of ideas from piece to piece as given in guided reading lessons. Problems are retaught so the pupil feels "at home" with them before additional new material is taught. This is reading drill. There is much easy material to read at sight for building independent music reading. There is continuity in the material so that the child progresses from that which he knows to that which he does not know. The theory presented always relates and applies to the music being studied and performed. There is supplementary material for use by students who progress rapidly or for additional work on a problem by the student who does not grasp ideas as easily. 17.

A variety of activities are used in classroom piano teaching. They include rhythmic response, singing,

16

Ibid., pp. 41-42.

17

Ibid., pp. 41-42.

playing, listening, reading, transposing, and creating. 18

Out-of-class room activities include playing or harmonizing simple tunes, playing simple accompaniments, performing for others, discriminating listening to music on radio, T-V concerts and other programs. 19

Outcomes of the class piano work for children from ages eight through eleven should include:

- (a) joy and satisfaction in performing for self and others,
- (b) attainment of poise and confidence,
- (c) permanent values of all musical experiences,
- (d) musical feeling and thinking,
- (e) discriminative listening in the fields of melody, harmony, rhythm, meter, form,
- (f) workable knowledge of the keyboard and the printed page,
- (g) interest in exploring new materials,
- (h) development of the desire to create,
- (i) intelligent practice habits. 20

18

Morgan, op. cit., p. 89.

19

Ibid., p. 89.

20

Ibid., p. 89.

CHAPTER III

ENRICHING WESTFIELD'S ELEMENTARY MUSIC PROGRAM

In introducing class piano into the Westfield elementary school music program, it is necessary to adapt the work to the particular needs of the school. Emphasis varies according to these needs.

The present music program includes vocal music in all eight grades. Special activities include rhythm band for Grades One and Two, tonettes for Grade Three, Beginning Band and Regular Band for Grades Five through Eight.

The daily music period is from twenty to twenty-five minutes in length in the first four grades. Special classes are used as a regular part of the program and are combined with the vocal work on two days each week.

In the upper four grades class periods are thirty to forty minutes in length and meet on a rotating schedule, so that both vocal and band groups meet five times in a two week period.

It is apparent that there is a gap in the program in the Fourth Grade, where I will use the class piano work. The class is scheduled to meet twice a week for thirty minute periods. Since the enrollment for the grade averages about thirty-five students, it is necessary to have two sections of piano class.

Dividing the piano class into sections is open to debate. I will use the method based on the child's reading ability as indicated in records kept by the classroom teacher for her reading classes. It is feasible to shift a child whenever he seems out of place in his particular group. Each piano section will meet two days a week and all children in the grade will have vocal work the remaining one day.

In the present program the tonette class in Third Grade covers, in one year's time, the treble clef with its letter names for lines and spaces; three key signatures - C,G,F; a study of three basic rhythms - 4/4, 3/4, 2/4; whole, half, quarter, eighth, sixteenth notes and rests; the dotted half note; and common terms used in the music played such as measure, bar, double bar, sharp, flat, and natural.

The above work is reviewed in the Fourth Grade vocal program. There is definite value in this plan as it carries over into the Beginning Band work. Children who play treble clef instruments have much less difficulty in reading than those who play instruments reading from the bass clef. The present program is weak because there is practically no bass clef work. The bass clef needs to be stressed in piano class work.

CHAPTER IV

ESTABLISHING CLASS PIANO IN WESTFIELD'S ELEMENTARY MUSIC PROGRAM

Materials and equipment needed for establishing class piano in the Westfield Elementary Music Program include:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 1 piano | -- This is available in the regular music room which will serve as the class piano room. |
| Blackboard, chalk, staff liner | -- These are in the music room. |
| Large cardboard keyboard | -- This must be purchased for use by the teacher in demonstrating work before the piano class. |
| Keyboards for children's use | -- The most satisfactory are the silent wooden keyboards with movable keys, costing about \$25 each. Because of the expense involved it would be necessary to have two children play at each keyboard. (Some schools use cardboard keyboards for students, or wooden keyboards with stationary keys.) |
| Desks or tables | -- These are needed to hold keyboards. Our music room is furnished with folding chairs, so we will need tables. |
| Music holders | -- If movable keyboard ^s are used, the lid of the case forms a music rack. |

Instruction books -- These will be furnished by the school. We will use two books interchangeably the first year. They are "The Young Explorer At The Piano" - Willis Music Company
 "Young America at the Piano", Book I - C.C. Birchard and Company.

The teacher of class piano might well keep in mind the basic principles in class instruction as presented by Theodore F. Normann.

- (1) Plan each lesson so that some definite accomplishment has been made. The consciousness of having made a step forward is the greatest incentive to real effort.
- (2) Present drills that may be applied to the music at hand. Provide frequent opportunities for individual recitations so that the student will learn to look upon performances as a matter of course.
- (3) Encourage thinking in terms of rhythmic and phrase units. Music must be more than individual notes.
- (4) Problems must be presented so as not to overtax the pupil's span of attention. Variety, games, novel approaches, and competition all help maintain his attention.
- (5) A generous amount of rote teaching and imitative drill, particularly in the beginning, encourages the pupil to listen.
- (6) Employ the "singing approach". It ties up with the pupil's previous musical experience and is a helpful guide to correct intonation.
- (7) Keep materials generally well within the student's ability. A great fault of much music teaching in America is the attempted performance of material beyond the student's technical and intellectual grasp.
- (8) The class must be kept busy to forestall problems of discipline. The nature of

the class requires instant reaction to a set of procedures to avoid needless explanations, waste of time, noise and confusion.

- (9) Generally, the effectiveness of the lesson is inversely proportional to the amount of explanation done by the teacher. ¹

The general aims to be accomplished by teaching class piano in the Westfield Elementary School are:

- (1) To expand and enrich the present elementary music program.
- (2) To stimulate new musical experiences for the students.
- (3) To provide an interesting way to gain keyboard knowledge.
- (4) To carry over the early rhythm work and sight reading into early band work.
- (5) To further the music reading program with special emphasis on the bass clef.
- (6) To present interesting work to children who have not been overly responsive to the vocal program.
- (7) To open a way for creative and exploratory work that will be meaningful to students.
- (8) To strengthen the ear training work.
- (9) To refer students showing ability to a private teacher.
- (10) To create interest in piano playing in the community.

1

Theodore F. Normann, Instrumental Music in the Public Schools (Philadelphia: Oliver Ditson Company, 1941), Chapter VI.

...Music reading is one skill which is fundamental to a rich music curriculum but which, some teachers have been tempted to abandon because of the difficulty of developing reading proficiency for children of varying talent and background without endangering the enjoyment of song singing itself.... Because it readily combines the three educational senses of hearing, seeing, and touching, the piano has been a means of developing reading skill in school classes.... 2

The principles of linguistic reading have produced thousands of literate American boys and girls. The same principles applied to music reading will develop music readers. Music reading should be approached intelligently. Isolated drill on a note-to-note method is not the answer. Every piano class should have as one of its goals the accomplishment of fluent music reading. The class which is taught by an intelligent, well-equipped capable teacher who follows a plan which is psychologically sound will find that this goal can be reached without forcing or undue emphasis on drill. 3

The musical experience of children entering a beginning piano class has been primarily vocal. Their natural response to music is to sing a melody. In other words, the pupil is ear-minded and voice-minded. The class piano teacher who appreciates this background of group vocal experience will continue the song approach as a natural road to piano playing.... 4

...If we may draw comparisons between reading verbal material and reading music, it at once appears obvious that a fluent note-reader must learn to read notes in groups instead of one-

2

Raymond Burrows, "Piano in School," (Chicago: Music Educators National Conference), 1949.

3

Curnutt, op. cit., p. 40.

4

Loc. cit.

note-at-a-time. Simple chords provide one type of note-pattern which even total beginners at the piano can quickly be taught to recognize. So, too, do broken chords, scale passages, and many other varieties of note-groups. For the pianist, however, this visual-recognition of such note-patterns is not enough; his fingers and hands must be trained to "think" the corresponding key-patterns for the notes in question. This muscular acquaintance with the keyboard is the point where most students fall down in their attempts at reading, for they find it constantly necessary to take their eyes from the music in order to see that they play the correct keys. And yet, with a surprisingly small amount of concentration on the muscular side of performance, the average student can train his fingers and hands to "recognize" and perform the greater part of any music he may be studying without any need for watching the keyboard. 5

Roberta Savler believes that the students should be taught to associate staff lines and spaces with specific keys of the piano for "he can locate a new note far more quickly than if he learns to give the letter name of the note and then to find the key of that name on the keyboard...." She believes that the slow way of teaching is the old plan of using letter word association such as "Every Good Boy Does Fine" in teaching the lines of the treble clef. To substantiate this she says, "...Campbell gives the information that, according to William James, it takes only one-tenth

5

Harvey Lyle Decker, "What Can The Piano Instructor Learn From The Scientist?", Music Educators National Conference 1939-40 Yearbook, 30:318.

of a second to see the note and find the key, but one and a half to two seconds to see the note, name it, and then find the key." Thus she favors a direct note-key relationship in the teaching of piano music. 6

The article stresses the teaching of note direction, ascending notes to be played to the right, descending notes to be played to the left; the learning of the relative value of notes in a rhythm pattern rather than the count of each note as a separate unit; and the tapping of rhythm, which is a motion similar to playing the keyboard, rather than clapping the rhythm. 7

There are several different approaches to class piano work. We will use the type known as "Keyboard Experience", because I believe it best fits the present elementary music program. The general approach is through song singing with which the children are familiar. 8

Lessons for the first six weeks are taught by the rote method. The children learn by ear and imitation. They play before they see the printed page or attempt to read notes. In this method the children learn to

6

Roberta Savler, "Teaching the Reading of Piano Music," Music Educators Journal, 32:22-75, Sept.-Oct. 1945.

7

Ibid., pp.22,23,72-75.

8

Raymond Burrows, "What Is Keyboard Experience?", The School Musician (Chicago: American Music Conference), (n.d.).

play short tunes from the very first lesson. 9

All keys are treated alike, the children learn to play on white keys and black keys. Emphasis is not placed on sharps, flats, or naturals as such. Early key changes are played by ear. Children play a melody in many keys, starting on either white or black keys. They do not realize that this is transposing since it is done through aural work. 10

Much stress is placed on finger patterns and the use of the five fingers on the keys. The thumb in either hand is number one, and the fingers are often identified by numbers one, two, three, four and five. 11

During the year, children will play many simple melodies, first, with the right hand, then with the left hand. Finally, both hands will be combined in the playing of melodies.

The student learns three basic chords for harmony work and to serve as satisfactory accompaniment to the melodies learned. They are the tonic, dominant seventh and subdominant chords. Work is offered with some increasing difficulty in rhythmic variations.

Bodily expression is important, and the teacher

9

George Marek, "New Ways To Teach Piano," Good Housekeeping, March, 1948, p. 4.

10

Ibid., pp.4, 246.

11

Loc. cit.

often has the class express themselves rhythmically by walking, skipping, and running. Clapping and tapping of rhythms on desks and finger play in the air are used to express rhythm and to gain some muscular control.

The very important role that a good sense of rhythm plays in production of excellent piano music was thoroughly stressed by Dr. Pace. "When you teach a swinging song, for example," he explained, "don't have your pupils just sing it; let them physically swing it. It's an excellent idea to have them swing it at the piano, too; thus they learn to feel the rhythm. One of the values of music is that it can remove a lot of inhibitions from children. Don't be afraid to let them have their bodies express the rhythm. 12

Each lesson moves rapidly in order to hold the interest of the class. Every lesson offers some new material, some review material and variety in approach to needed drill. Each child plays at the piano several times during the class period. To facilitate this, the teacher works out a rotation system so that a minimum of time is wasted in calling names or giving directions about taking places at the piano.

The teacher cannot concentrate attention on a single child for long. The class must not become a series of short individual lessons. The teacher moves

rapidly about the room observing the players at the silent keyboards and listening to the playing of the students at the piano. The use of group motions and rhythmic responses is important as a means of holding the student's attention. 13

13

Raymond Burrows, "The Progress of Establishing Piano Classes in the Public Schools," The Music Trade Review, 106:12, (Chicago: Music Educators National Conference), (n.d.).

CHAPTER V
LESSON PLANS FOR TEACHING CLASS PIANO
UNIT I*

Lesson I

"Today, boys and girls we will become acquainted with the piano keyboard."

"Look at the keys in front of you and see if they are alike or different."

"Who can tell me how many kinds of keys are there?"

Answer: Two kinds. Some children will probably mention that there are two colors in keys, the black keys and the white keys. If they do not, the teacher may ask, "What color keys do you see?"

"The piano keys are arranged in groups. Look at the keyboard and find the black keys. Are all the groups the same?"

Some children will discover that there are groups of two black keys, and others of three black keys on the keyboard.

"Find all the groups of two black keys and play them." The teacher may demonstrate by using the cardboard keyboard fastened up on the front wall of the room so all the children can easily see it.

In finding the groups of two black keys and

* Each unit is designed for approximately one month's work.

three black keys, the teacher will be able to show the children direction on the keyboard, indicating the groups beginning at the left hand side of the keyboard and playing to the right as going up the keyboard, and the opposite direction as going down the keyboard.

"Let us learn the names of some of the piano keys. Find the two black keys. The white note directly between the two black keys is D. Here is a little rhyme to help you remember this key, ' D dum diddle, D's in the middle.'"

"The white key to the right of D is E. The white key to the left of D is C. Now let us find these three white keys going up the keyboard, then coming down the keyboard." Children find keys on their keyboards.

"We can use numbers to help us know how to place our fingers on the keyboard. Let us start with the thumb on the right hand and call it number one. Then the second finger is two, the middle finger is three, the next finger is four and the little finger is five." Teacher may have finger drill in the air to help children learn the finger numbers. The teacher should explain that on a finger drill, the finger must bend and make a downward movement as though it is striking a piano key. The tapping of the fingers on the table or desk will give the children a more definite idea of

what to do with the finger as the finger drill is used.

"We are going to learn to play parts of a song today which we all know. Let's all sing 'Three Blind Mice'." Children sing song. Teacher says, "I will show you on my keyboard here in front of the room where the notes are that play for the words, 'Three Blind Mice'."

Teacher will play tune using the key of C and starting the song on the three notes learned - E,D,C. She may then ask, "Can anyone name the three notes I am playing?" Some children will be able to answer and give the letter names. The teacher suggests that the children find this group of three notes all up and down the keyboard.

The teacher needs to explain to the children that they will take turns going to the piano and playing the tunes learned at the real keyboard. The children will work in groups of two. There will be two children playing at the keyboard, two more children standing behind them waiting to take their places at the piano as soon as the first two have played, and a third twosome will be coming from their seats as the rotation takes place. Thus three couples will be involved in the rotation to and from the piano. The teacher may assign partners the first day, and considerable practise should be done in going from the seats to the piano and back

with a minimum of direction from the teacher. This is very important, for if not carefully worked out, a great deal of class time will be wasted in making this shift to and from the piano.

I will not want the children to keep the same partners for any length of time. I will assign seats to the children in two rows running lengthwise, so that the child will always know whom he is to follow. There will be name cards for the children. At the beginning of the period I will hang two name cards side by side on the bulletin board. These two people will be partners for the day, sitting in the first seat, and all other children will follow in their regular order.

The lesson will continue with children taking their places at the piano and playing the notes E,D,C as the words "Three Blind Mice" are sung.

The teacher will teach by rote the melody "Little River Flowing", p.2, of "The Young Explorer At The Piano." It will be used as a song only. If not taught today, start the next lesson by teaching it.

LESSON II

Review the material learned the first lesson. Sing "Three Blind Mice", playing the notes E,D,C in the correct places.

"Today we will learn the names of more keys on the piano. Find the groups of three black keys. The

white note to the left of the first black note in the group is F. To the right of F is G. To the left of F is E." The teacher locates the notes on her cardboard keyboard as she talks. This is followed by drill to find the notes G, F and E going up and down the children's keyboards.

"We will sing our song 'Three Blind Mice' again, and this time when we get to the words, 'See how they run, see how they run', you may play the tune with our new notes G, F, E." Teacher drills on this.

The song "Little River Flowing" is played on the white keys. Teacher will need to review notes for this song. Running notes are eighth notes, stepping notes are quarter notes, and slow note is the half note at the end of the piece. Children will tap the rhythm.

The teacher may place the numbers on the board to be used in finger drill for this song. The skip on the word "flowing" must be stressed. Curved lines drawn between the numbers 5 and 3 on the board may help show this. New notes learned are A, B, C above Middle C, and D. These are related by position to the black key group as before.

LESSON III

Review "Three Blind Mice." Do any necessary drill on the two groups of three notes the children are learning.

Teach "Hot Cross Buns" on the black keys in key of F# as given on page 2. of "The Young Explorer At The Piano". Try to play it with both the right hand and the left hand. Do not repeat the notes on the words "One a penny, two a penny" but hold the note through the measure. Repeated notes call for more muscular coordination than most beginning piano students have.

Sing and play "Little River Flowing".

LESSON IV

Review "Little River Flowing". Do any needed drill work. Review rhythm patterns for running notes, stepping notes, and slow note. These will be used again in the new rote song, "Autumn Leaves" on page 2 of "Young America at the Piano", Book I.

End lesson with review of "Hot Cross Buns".

LESSON V

Review the four songs learned. Children should be able to play them in either treble clef or bass clef, using the right hand or left hand, and playing the song in the key it was originally taught in.

Reteach any work that seems to need more emphasis.

Try "Autumn Leaves" in the key of D. Finish the period by going back to the key of F and singing song as the children play.

LESSON VI

Teach the "G Major Harp Song" by rote from page 3

of "The Young Explorer At The Piano".

Teach "Little River Flowing" in the key of C.

Review "Autumn Leaves" in key of D.

LESSON VII

Review the "G Major Harp Song".

Teach the "C Major Harp Song".

Combine the two songs as shown on page 4 of "The Young Explorer At The Piano". This is rote work.

Review "Autumn Leaves" in key of D.

Review "Three Blind Mice" and "Hot Cross Buns".

LESSON VIII

Teach new rote song "Rain and Sun" on page 2 of "Young America at the Piano".

Mention the dynamic markings p and f used in the song. The swell is used. Teach the dynamics by rote.

Review the "C G C Harp Song".

UNIT II

LESSON I

Review "Rain and Sun". Stress use of both right and left hands in playing a piece. Drill skips in song by using keyboard to show children what to play. Do not stress numbers but drill fingers 1-3-5 and 5-3-1.

Teach solid C major chord and G major chord, shown on page 4 of "The Young Explorer At The Piano".

Let children choose two review songs.

LESSON II

Teach "White, White, White", on page 3 of "Young America at the Piano". Teach as written in key of C.

If time permits try the same song in key of F.

Review "Little River Flowing".

LESSON III

The children know the words for "Lightly Row". There are no new note values in the song.

Two dynamic markings are added, mf and pp.

Children learn to play the song with both hands.

Review "Rain and Sun" and "White, White, White".

LESSON IV

Teach "To New York" by rote from page 6 of "The Young Explorer At The Piano". Play in both treble

and bass clefs.

Stress dynamics in this song.

Review "Autumn Leaves" and the "C G C Harp Song".

LESSON V

Teach new song "Hallowe'en" on page 6 of "The Young Explorer At The Piano" by rote.

This song uses the 1-3 skip and the 1-3-5 skip previously learned. They are combined with 5-4-3-2-1 fingering in the right hand. The same combination reversed is used in the left hand.

Finger drill is needed before presentation of the song.

Teach the dynamics in the song if they have not been previously taught, and review those they know.

Review the songs "Three Blind Mice" and "Autumn Leaves".

LESSON VI

Today the student uses his book for the first time. The song used is "Hallowe'en" on page 10 of "The Young Explorer At The Piano".

Review the "C G C Harp Song".

LESSON VII

Teach a new rote song on page 3 of "Young America at the Piano" called "The Nightingale".

Children learn to play this melody in both clefs

using the right-hand melody, then the left-hand melody.

Finger drill is necessary in the playing of F# with the third finger on a black key. Some students will experience difficulty with this.

Review songs are "Hot Cross Buns" and "Little River Flowing".

LESSON VIII

New material is to teach the "F Harp Song" by rote as presented on page 6 of "Young Explorer At The Piano".

Review songs are "Hallowe'en" and "To New York".

UNIT III

LESSON I

Teach new material "Black, Black, Black" on page 4 of "Young America at the Piano".

Review work today concentrates on black keys. Use "Hot Cross Buns". Using key of F# have children play "Three Blind Mice".

LESSON II

Review "Hallowe'en" using books.

Teach "Horses" on page 12 of "Young Explorer At The Piano". This observation song uses the right hand.

Teach by rote the song "White, Black, White" on page 4 of "Young America at the Piano". This is preparatory work for teaching the D major tonic chord.

LESSON III

Review last lesson of "Horses" played by right hand. Present page 14 which is the same tune "Horses" played in the bass clef by the left hand.

Teach D major tonic chord used as an accompaniment by rote.

Children know the song "Row, Row, Row".

Children play the accompaniment chord as they sing the melody of "Row, Row, Row". This material is presented on page 4 of "Young America at the Piano".

If time permits, do the accompaniment in both treble and bass clefs.

Review the song "The Nightingale".

LESSON IV

Teach the tune "Black, White, Black" on page 5 of "Young America at the Piano". This is preparatory work using the E flat major tonic chord.

Children sing "Row, Row, Row" in the key of E flat and play the tonic chord accompaniment. Play in both treble and bass clefs.

Review song is "Little River Flowing" used in the key of G major.

LESSON V

A new observation song on page 16 of "The Young Explorer At The Piano" is played today. This song was previously learned by rote. It is "Little River Flowing" presented in the key of G major. Last lesson it was reviewed by rote in this key.

Teach the G major tonic chord and let the children try to fill in one chord to a measure as an accompaniment to the melody.

Review using the books for page 10, "Hallowe'en" and page 14, "Horses".

LESSON VI

Review "Little River Flowing" as taught in last lesson.

Teach a new guided reading song from page 17 of "The Young Explorer At The Piano". The song is "Green Gravel".

Review "Row, Row, Row" in the key of F major using the tonic chord as accompaniment.

Review the songs "Autumn Leaves" and "C G C Harp Song".

LESSON VII

Review "Little River Flowing" on page 16 as it is presented for the right hand.

Today we learn "Little River Flowing" on page 18. It is played in the bass clef by the left hand.

Begin the use of the tonic accompaniment chord, alternating the left and right hands as shown on page 6 of "Young America at the Piano". Teach the chord in the key of B major as shown in the text. Teach this by rote.

Using the music book review "Hallowe'en" and "Green Gravel".

LESSON VIII

Review "Green Gravel" on page 17 and teach the D major tonic accompaniment chord. Try to combine with the song, "Row, Row, Row" using alternating hands for the accompaniment chord.

Review as many songs as time permits.

UNIT IV

LESSON I

Review the song "Little River Flowing". The children have learned to play this in the treble clef with the right hand, and in the bass clef with the left hand.

Today we will add the chord accompaniment. The children have learned the tonic chord in the key of G major. Review this chord.

Teach the dominant seventh chord for the first time. Show the children that the bottom note of the tonic chord moves to the next note lower, the middle note of the tonic chord moves up one note, and the top note of the tonic chord remains the same.

Practice shifting from the tonic chord to the dominant seventh chord and back to the tonic chord, since this occurs in the piece.

Teach page 20 of "Young Explorer At The Piano" by rote.

Review songs not reviewed in last lesson.

LESSON II

Review the song "To New York" which has been taught by rote earlier. Today we will use this song as presented on page 21 of "Young Explorers At The Piano" as a guided reading song.

Before teaching the song, review the tonic and dominant seventh chords in the key of G major. These

chords form the bass and treble accompaniment in this piece.

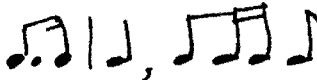
Children choose the day's review songs.

LESSON III

Review "Little River Flowing" and "To New York" using the books.

New song today is "Jingle Bells" on pages 24 and 25 of "The Young Explorer At The Piano". Review the accompaniment chords, tonic and dominant seventh for the key of D major.

Teach the accent mark. Review *f* and *p*, also swell.

Teach two new rhythmical figures. 

This is the first use of sixteenth notes in songs learned in piano class.

Use rhythm and finger drills before reading the song from the book.

LESSON IV

Today we begin the study of $3/4$ time using the waltz bass accompaniment as shown on page 7 of "Young America at the Piano".

In this waltz accompaniment the chord is played on each count in the measure. Review the tonic and dominant seventh chords in the key of F major which have been previously taught.

The children know the words for the song, "Did You Ever See a Laddie?". The children sing the melody as they play the chord accompaniment in the bass clef.

Teach the observation song on page 8, "Autumn Leaves", using the text. This song has been taught as a rote song.

Review "Jingle Bells" using the books.

LESSON V

Teach waltz accompaniment chords in the key of C major. Today the children sing the tune "Did You Ever See a Laddie?" in the key of G major and play in the treble clef the accompaniment chords as shown on page 7 of "Young America at the Piano".

Review "The Nightingale".

LESSON VI

We have studied $3/4$ time using the accompaniment chords. Today our new observation song, "Pets", on page 10 of "Young America at the Piano" is written in $3/4$ time.

The children will clap and tap the rhythm. If children can read the melody line easily, they may also try filling in the accompaniment using one chord to the measure.

Review the tonic and dominant seventh chords for the key of F major. Review "Row, Row, Row" in the key of F major using alternate-hand chord accompaniment.

LESSON VII

Review the song "Pets" taught last lesson.


The new observation song today is "Red Sky" on page 11 of "Young America at the Piano". This song continues the study of $3/4$ time.

Fill in the tonic and dominant seventh chord accompaniment using one chord to a measure. The music is in the key of F major so no new chords are involved.

Review "Autumn Leaves" and "Rain and Sun".

LESSON VIII

The new song is "An Odd Story" on page 16 of "Young America at the Piano". This is the first song learned in a minor key. This song is in D minor.

 is a new rhythmic figure. Drill on this rhythm.

End period with general review of songs and pieces learned.

The material listed in these lesson plans will cover approximately one semester's work. Planning lessons is work that should not be done too far in advance. The successful plan is one that is revised and rebuilt to serve the immediate needs of the piano class.

Enough material is present in the two texts used by the class to cover another semester's work.

Not only will these texts be used, but I hope to correlate the piano class work with the vocal class work as soon as possible. To this end, I have chosen a list of songs which are taught in Fourth Grade, using the vocal class text, "Singing Every Day", from "Our Singing World Series" published by Ginn and Company.

Many of these are folk songs and familiar tunes loved by the children. The simpler songs will be taught first, then progressing to the more difficult. The list includes:

Page 7	-- "Little Red Caboose".
Page 8	-- "Polly-Wolly-Doodle".
Page 14	-- "Old MacDonald Had a Farm".
Page 18	-- "Playtime".
Page 22	-- "Strawberry Jam, Cream of Tartum".
Page 23	-- "Whither, Little Path?".
Page 29	-- "The Sow With the Measles".
Page 31	-- "The Bee and the Pup".
Page 33	-- "Hot Dog".
Page 34	-- "Grumbling Joe".
Page 36	-- "Leave Her, Johnny".
Page 37	-- "Haul on the Bowlin'" and "Blow, Boys, Blow".
Page 51	-- "The Pawpaw Patch".
Page 52	-- "Miss Jenny-O-Jones".
Page 76	-- "Billy Boy".
Page 77	-- "Oh Susanna".
Page 79	-- "Liza Jane".
Page 81	-- "Dinah Won't You Blow".
Page 99	-- "We Wish You a Merry Christmas".
Page 108	-- "New Year Song".
Page 110	-- "America".
Page 112	-- "Battle Hymn of the Republic".

This list presents a wealth of interesting material, all of which will not be covered in one year's piano work.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Music holds an important place in the elementary school program. As in other fields, the approach to the teaching of music is not static but grows and changes as the needs of society change.

Among the newer phases of music education today is the teaching of class piano as a part of the elementary instrumental program. Piano study is recognized as a basic way of strengthening the child's early music education. It combines musical knowledge, educational principles, and social rewards.

Problems to be faced in establishing piano classes in the school include the opposition of the private piano teacher, the scheduling and financing of the class lessons, and the lack of teachers who are well-trained in teaching the class-piano method.

The class-piano method is a definite approach to teaching piano to a group, and is not to be confused with individual instruction in piano work. To help clarify this point the writer presents the qualifications necessary for a class-piano teacher, criteria for choosing class-piano materials, activities to be looked for and outcomes to be expected from the teaching of the piano class.

Because the writer believes as a teacher that class piano will fill a need in the Westfield, Illinois' elementary music program, definite plans are made for its inclusion in the program. This is done through the discussion of materials and equipment which will be needed, the choice of class-piano texts which will be used, the explanation of the "Keyboard Experience" approach that will be developed, the enumeration of basic objectives that will be accomplished, and the presentation of lesson plans that will be taught.

The writer believes that the class-piano method has definite values and presents the reasons for this belief to the reader, that he in turn may feel that class-piano is a worth-while means of enriching the elementary school music program.

Mursell states:

...You cannot teach anything well unless you feel in your heart that here is a message you long to deliver because you are convinced it is worth delivering. This applies to all teaching everywhere, and most emphatically it applies to the teaching of music. The worth-whileness of your work depends absolutely upon your own sincere, inner, personal conviction of its value.... 1

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James L. Mursell, Music and the Classroom Teacher (Chicago: Silver Burdett Company, 1951), p.3.

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