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# Introduction

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This book outlines an interactive, collaborative and imaginative way to teach pieces that have been set for an exam syllabus. The whole philosophy of teaching the Simultaneous Learning way is that we are pro-active rather than reactive. We take the ingredients of a piece and explore them in imaginative ways, making connections between them, being creative and enabling pupils to learn in a really engaging way. Students should be encouraged to continue with these activities in their practice. Not only do they learn to play the piece, but they can then apply their understanding to learn further pieces more quickly. It is a positive and exciting process that supports thorough learning and the potential for greater progress and continuing achievement.

## How to use this book

The work on each piece is divided into three periods:

- 1 Preliminary work before you introduce the notation;
- 2 Work when you are learning the piece from the notation and
- 3 Refining the piece ready for performance.

The amount of time spent on each period will depend on how students respond to the activities and how quickly they absorb the ingredients and concepts. Many instructions (describe, discuss, identify, explore, etc.) are intended to be carried out collaboratively with the student.

One of the important reasons for adopting Simultaneous Learning is to get away from the 'beginning at bar one and correcting mistakes as they are inevitably made' approach. Instead, we identify the ingredients of each piece, discuss and explore them through imaginative and appropriate activities and by making up (improvising) very simple musical ideas. Through experimentation and mixing and matching the ingredients, pupils will ultimately learn the pieces in a much more secure and musical way, at the same time deepening their general musical understanding.

## Getting started

Play the piece yourself and note the ingredients (they are also listed on each worksheet). Think about the music in terms of each individual student's particular needs and abilities. Look at the suggested activities and decide which ones are most appropriate for the student in that particular lesson, and which order you might like to introduce them. There is no set way to do this – you can begin with whichever you think is best. In the Simultaneous Learning way, if each activity is carefully chosen and each subsequent activity is carefully related and/or sequential, then your student should always achieve. Progress will be natural and ongoing. Do remember that in the first lesson on any new piece (and perhaps for several more lessons, too) the book is better closed and out of sight; try to rely more on your ear, memory and imagination.

Once you start these activities many more will become apparent – simply go with what works and your intuition. Begin anywhere appropriate in each piece – only occasionally at bar 1! Don't always

## Playing and refining the piece

### Rhythm and pulse

- Make up a new right-hand tune to fit over the left-hand chords in bars 1–8.
- Sing or listen to the melody, rocking backwards and forwards in time with it.
- Explore playing the piece at different speeds, including a one-in-a-bar feel.

### Key and scale patterns

- Play the scales and broken chords of C major and A minor in a rocking-horse style.
- Discuss the connection between these keys.
- Sight-read a piece in C major.\*

### Aural

- Regularly try to hear the piece internally – just the rhythm at first, then the melody too.
- Visualise your hands at the keyboard playing the piece at the same time as hearing it internally.
- Listen to, then discuss the articulation and changes of tempo in *Das Schaukelpferd*.

### Articulation and dynamics

- Play sections concentrating on the articulation and the dynamics to give the piece its phrasing, shape and character.
- Play the piece with completely different dynamics or articulation, then play it again as written. How different does it sound?
- Make up an exercise to practise the broken-chord patterns (bars 1, 3, 5, etc).

### Title, character and context

- Think about the character – does the piece suggest a picture or story or mood?
- What do you think is happening in the *poco rit* bars in the middle of the piece?
- The key feature of this piece is the portrayal of repeated movement. Make sure this is brought to life vividly when performed.

### Performing

- Start performing the piece all the way through, hands separately as well as together.
- Focus on a joyful, lively character.
- Discuss and experiment with how much the *poco rit* bars should slow down.
- Perform the whole piece to relatives and friends and/or make a recording.

\* For suitable sight-reading pieces try *Improve Your Sight-reading!* Grade 1.

# Student's worksheet

## Na krmítku ingredients

**Key signature** C major  
(with notes from C minor)

**Other scale patterns**  
G minor

**Time signature**  $\frac{4}{4}$

**Dynamics** *pp p mp mf*  
 $\leftarrow \rightarrow$  *cresc.*

**Rhythms** 





and rests

**Character** Mysterious,  
pecking, agitated

**Special ingredients**

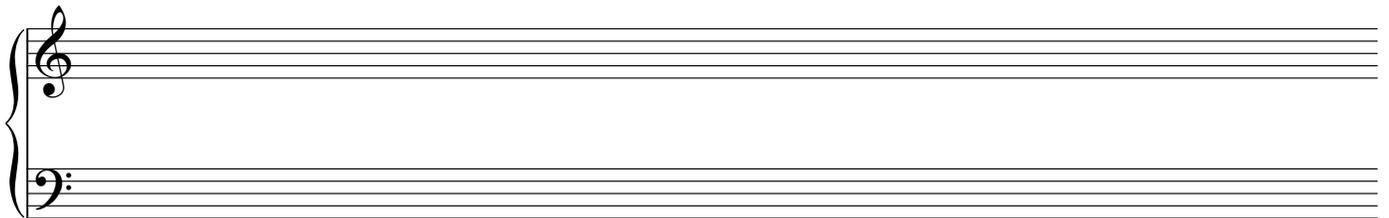
Accidentals, *staccato*, accented  
*staccato*, *tenuto*, part playing  
(bars 15–16)

**Form** Ternary-like

**Terms and signs** *Poco agitato*,  
 $\text{♩} = \text{c.112}$

Explore these ingredients by making up little musical patterns, exercises or phrases. Mix and match them where you can. Tick each ingredient when you've used it.

Write out bars 6–7 of the piece, both hands, including all the markings:



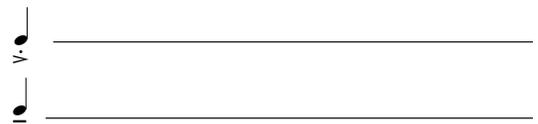
- Add a bracket over (or under) any semitones.
- Circle the fifth degree of the scale in the right hand.
- Play the music from your own notation.

Write down the meaning of these words and signs:

*Poco agitato* \_\_\_\_\_

*Cresc.* \_\_\_\_\_

*pp* \_\_\_\_\_



How many times does this rhythm  appear in the piece? \_\_\_\_\_

Sight-read this and list the ingredients here:

### Waddling like a duck

