

1. Hand Shape and Arm Movement

- a. Begin with arms hanging from shoulders and fingers resting in a gentle, rounded way
- b. Play clusters using the gently folded fingers; think of a mitten or a paw
- c. Begin with using the middle fingers to feel arm balance and to keep a straight arm/hand
- d. Engage in large motor movement of the forearms
- e. Let the arm/hand take the fingers to a new place (throw)
- f. Think about seeing the backs of the fingers -- the finger nails
- g. Alternating hand movement encourages large motor movement and the equal use of two hands
- h. Use arm movement to take the hand/fingers to a new place, as in octave movement
- i. Remember to "let go" at the appropriate time to avoid tension
- j. Words for arm movement: over shape, in-out movement, throw the hand (the arm takes the fingers to a new place), rotation, separated touch to use the forearm (down movement), large motor movement

2. Avoid

- a. Stretching (the hand should keep fingers resting together as much as possible)
- b. Twisting (especially when moving from white to black keys or moving to another register)
- c. Reaching (either throw or let go)
- d. Gripping (holding onto the keys)
- e. Curling (keeping fingers rounded to an extreme)
- f. Isolating fingers (poking with one finger -- keep the fingers together in a natural shape)
- g. Keybedding (pressing on the key after it is depressed)
- h. Pushing (using too much effort to depress a key)
- i. Hitting (using too much force to depress a key)
- j. Holding the arm up; sticking out the elbow; raising the shoulders (keep all resting)
- k. Lifting fingers (use the hand to move the fingers or feel the key generate the movement)
- l. Hovering

3. Physical apparatus: body parts

- a. Avoid isolated finger movement - fingers move as a unit
- b. Feel gravity - play down and gently feel the bottom of the keybed and rest
- c. The thumb stays close to the index finger and the fingers remain close together
- d. Arm balance: The forearm is straight with the hand and moves behind every finger (walking arm)
- e. Feel the elbow to finger tip in one piece
- f. Know all body parts: torso, shoulders, feet, arms, wrists, hands, fingers, elbows (efficient, coordinated movement)
- g. Fingers/hands/arms/elbows/shoulders awareness - Keep loose - be aware of tension areas
- h. The arch of the hand is obvious when the "long" fingers are on the black keys

4. Weight of keys

- a. Learn how much effort it takes to depress a piano key - know that speed of key descent changes the sound
- b. Trampoline from one key to another: Let the key throw the hand to a new place
- c. Ride the key up (elevator)
- d. Use a separated touch while experimenting with where the sound stops

5. Sound production

- a. Speed affects both the quality of sound and the volume
- b. Breathing affects the beginning sound of a piece: audiate and breath, then play
- c. Breath to begin and end a phrase, listening to the relationship of the sounds between the tones
- d. Parachute (or float) into a key, then rest there gently
- e. Move on a key when playing repeated notes: Do not play in the same place

6. Eye movement

- a. Look at the key where the finger/hand will go, then let the arm take the hand there
- b. Decide which hand to look at when both hands are moving
- c. Audiate the sound of a melody or the accompaniment: use the eyes to organize the hand movement
- d. Play with closed eyes or eyes looking up

7. Develop the left hand

- a. Play folk song melodies with the left hand
- b. Play roots of harmonic chord progressions
- c. Play a variety of accompaniment patterns