

Dr. Margarita Denenburg
TMTA, 2022

Challenges and Solutions with Transfer Students

Frances Clark

“I feel that I can count on a fair degree of success with students. I start from their very first lesson, but I need help with students who transfer to me from other teachers. Many of them are poor readers, careless musicians, and have little or no technique; but most importantly they are playing music way over their heads, and don’t know it.” (Questions and answers by Frances Clark, p.201)

Ruth Slenczynka

“The habit of poor reading with too quick, faulty memorizing causes frustration that curtails musical exploration, growth, and enjoyable performance.” (Music at Your Fingertips by Ruth Slenczynska, p.14)

Marianne Uszler

“Solving specific problems or eliminating certain deficiencies may not present as much challenge as being able to teach the transfer student at a number of levels simultaneously.” (The Well-Tempered Keyboard Teacher, p.137)

Marianne Uszler

“The interview should include activities that enable you to assess the student’s reading and rhythmic ability, general knowledge about music, practice habits, ear, attitudes, learning propensities, and readiness to follow instruction.” (The Well Tempered Keyboard Teacher, Marianne Uszler, p.129)

Martha Baker-Jordan

“Special assessment procedures and perhaps different initial teaching techniques will be called for because this student usually comes with “excess baggage” that is often a challenge to even the best and most experienced teacher. (Practical Piano Pedagogy by Martha Baker-Jordan, p.125)

Square-One Assessment Form

Student Name: _____		Date of Birth: _____	
School Grade: _____		Years of Piano Lessons: _____	
Musical Literacy			
	3	Exceeds expectations	
	2	Proficient	
	1	Not Proficient	
Technique			
	4	Healthy technique in your style	
	3	Healthy technique not in your style	
	2	Unhealthy technique in your style	
	1	Unhealthy technique not in your style	
Musicianship			
	4	Above average musicianship	
	3	Basic musicianship	
	2	Underdeveloped musicianship	
	1	Developed musicianship not in your style	
Practice Habits			
	3	Align with your studio's policies (Student always completed their hw)	
	2	Exists but differs from your studio policies (Student partially completed their hw)	
	1	Practice routine is lacking (Student arrives consistently unprepared)	
Total:			

Points to Consider when Evaluating

Musical Literacy	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Notes ● Rhythm ● Fingering ● Articulation (non-legato, legato, staccato) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Terminology ● Theory/ Harmonization ● Aural Training ● Form ● Voicing
Technique	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sitting position ● Posture ● Hand Position ● Alignment ● Sound 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Articulation ● Velocity ● Scales ● Etudes
Musicianship	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Phrasing ● Attention to harmony ● Terminology ● Style and historical understanding ● Articulation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sound ● Attention to the score ● Timing ● Balance
Practice Habits	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How many times a week does the student practice? ● How long are the practice sessions? ● How does the student divide his practice sessions? ● What is the student's practice environment? ● How does the student approach a new piece? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How does the student practice a difficult spot or a passage? ● Does the student use the metronome? When and how? ● Does the student use a recording device for their practice sessions? ● How many extra curricular activities does the student involved in? ● How involved are the parents in the practice routine?

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Resources

Books:

- Playing Beyond the Notes: A Pianist's Guide to Musical Interpretation by Deborah Sinn
- Music At Your Fingertips by Ruth Slenczynska
- Questions and Answers by Frances Clark
- Practical Piano Pedagogy by Martha Baker-Jordan
- The Well-Tempered Keyboard Teacher by Marianne Uszler, Stewart Gordon and Scott McBride Smith

Articles:

A Fresh Look Into The Transfer Student Process by M. Denenburg:

https://www.denenburgmargarita.com/_files/ugd/aae41a_b0f67ccbea284536bb86a28b83cf409d.pdf

Using Social Media in Private Lessons by M. Denenburg:

https://www.denenburgmargarita.com/_files/ugd/aae41a_a0036b1fbcea45a2a18773e1aad869e3.pdf

Piano Magazines:

American Music Teacher Journal: www.mtna.org

The Piano Magazine: <https://pianoinspires.com/magazine/>

International Piano Magazine:

<https://www.rhinegold.co.uk/rhinegold-publishing/magazines/international-piano/>

Practicing Recording Programs:

<https://collabramusic.com/>

www.GoReact.com

<https://www.practicespaceapp.com/>

www.Tonara.com

Educational Website

<https://www.classicsforkids.com/>

www.Sproutbeat.com