

3. Guitar "Where Do I Go Now"?

By Rick Piché

Now that you have all these students who love the guitar, what can you do with them? Looking at years 2-4 of a guitar program. Developing strong musicians one note at a time through solos, ensemble work, theory, listening, improvising and hopefully having a whole lot of fun.

Book 2

Book 2 is a continuation of Book 1 and though there is a little “review” in the first few pages, it is assumed that students using this book have grasped the concepts presented in Book 1.

Book 2 includes:

- 25 theory lessons
- 3 composition exercises
- 7 ensemble pieces
- 27 songs, downloadable free
- 2 computer exercises
- a logical progression for learning the guitar

Students will learn to play two notes at the same time, read notes up to the tenth fret, play bar chords and develop solo and ensemble playing.

At the beginning of the second year, it is important to get the students “back in the swing” of things. Get them playing their guitars again as soon as possible. Play through all of Book 1, reviewing notes, chords, the pieces and proper positioning. Do a lot of rote playing to get their fingers working again. When their fingers feel comfortable, it is easier to play the notes.

This is why the moveable major scale and the pentatonic scale are in the beginning section. Get them playing these right away. (Depending on the class, the moveable pentatonic scale may have been taught in 1st year.)

I also like to make sure they can tune the guitar. I don't worry about them tuning in the first year, unless they are keen to learn. For most students, their ears must develop before they can hear to tune. Trying to teach them to tune the guitar “too early” is frustrating and a waste of time.

Also, as strings break, I start letting them put new ones on using the diagrams on page 6.

Page 14 - This is a very important page, as it reviews all the notes learned last year as well as it will become the reference page for learning new notes all the way up to the 12th fret.

Fill it in carefully with the students, making sure they have it right.

Page 17 - This is the first “new” technique, and the focus of much of Book 2. Playing with two fingers of the right hand, at the same time. As any new concept, it is introduced by rote. They must play a rest stroke for all treble notes while playing a free stroke bass with the thumb.

Page 18 introduces playing at the “2nd position.”

Page 19 is the first song in 2nd position, as well as playing two notes at once. It also introduces different tonal qualities. (*normal, tasto and ponti*)

Page 20 introduces tab (even though it is used earlier on page 18). I try not to “diss” tab, since many of the students use it. But, I do try to point out some of its shortcomings.

Note: the tab found on most internet sites is very different than the tab made with a music notation program, i.e. Page 22. This tab has note values.

Page 28/29 introduces bar chords. Try playing this with bar chords:

(0 = E chord, open, 3 = E chord barred at the 3rd fret)

0 3 5/ 0 3 6 5/ 0 3 5/ 3 0 0

(Smoke on the Water)

Pages 32 and 33 introduce very contemporary (in a classical sense) pieces. *Students usually love these pieces.*

I would always use the last three pieces as the final playing exams:

Packington's Pound p 40,

Valse p 43 and

Waltz p 45.

Theory - The theory lessons start with a little review of 1st year material and continue on through major and minor keys, to intervals.

Book 3

Book 3 is a continuation of Book 2 and though there is a little “review” in the first few pages, it is assumed that students using this book have grasped the concepts presented in the previous books in this series. Book 3 includes:

- 27 theory lessons
- 3 composition exercises
- 5 ensemble pieces
- 20 songs, down loadable free
- a logical progression for learning the guitar

Students will develop their ability to play rest strokes and free strokes, read notes up to the twelfth fret, play various bar chords and develop solo and ensemble playing.

At the beginning of the third year, as in second and fourth year, it is important to get the students “back in the swing” of things. Get them playing their guitars again as soon as possible. Play through all of Book 2, reviewing notes, chords, the pieces and proper positioning. Depending on who is in the class, it may be helpful to review Book 1 as well. Do a lot of rote playing to get their fingers working again. When their fingers feel comfortable, it is easier to get the notes.

The moveable major scale, the pentatonic scale, Left Hand Stretch and Strength and Chromatic scales

should get a good working over. Get them playing these right away.

Page 11 is the first solo piece in Book 3. It is the same piece the students used for their second Finale assignment in year 2 as well as being a duet in Book 1. It is the beautiful Irish Air, “Believe Me”. The melody is in the top part and should be played rest stroke, while the bass notes are free stroke.

Studies 1 and 2 are opportunities to work on the free stroke, including the use of the “a” finger of the right hand. Work with a drum beat or metronome if possible. The students will appreciate knowing what speed they started at and later knowing how much faster they can play.

I have included chord diagrams for 2 reasons: 1. to make reading a little easier 2. so students will start recognizing chords.

Teach in small bites. Work on the RH by itself with the LH muting the six strings.

P 14 Study 3 is also an arpeggio piece, but only uses *pmi*. Again, the chords are included.

P 15 The Shepherd's Wife, uses the 4 finger right hand arpeggio (*pima*), but this time with bar chords.

P 16 Kiss The Bride is another Celtic flavoured piece. It is usually a favourite with students.

P 17 Blue 4 U is a straight ahead 12 bar blues piece. Again, the students tend to love this one.

By book 3, many of the pieces have to be introduced, weeks before they are due. You must start the students with one or two bars at a time.

These are the pieces I use for the **final playing exam**.

P 30, 31 Allegretto,

P 32 Lessons in A Minor and A Major and

P 33 Salterello

Theory lessons start by reviewing sharps and flats and then covers intervals and chords. The chord material is geared directly at the guitar and is very “hands on”.

Year 4

The Final Frontier

By the end of this book, students will be playing pieces at RCM levels 6 and 7.

Book 4 is a continuation of Book 3 and though there is a little “review” in the first few pages, it is assumed that students using this book have grasped the concepts presented in the previous books in this series.

Book 4 includes:

- 10 theory lessons
- 3 composition exercises
- 6 ensemble pieces, including O Canada
- 20 songs, downloadable free
- a logical progression for learning the guitar

Students will continue to develop their ability to play and read notes. Pieces are progressively more difficult and most pieces in Books 3 and 4 are ones that they will want to learn and play forever.

At the beginning of any semester, it is important to get the students playing their guitars again, as soon, and as much, as possible. Evaluate how much review needs to be done and make sure they are comfortable before introducing new material.

Spend quality time on scales and exercises. Don't forget to use a drum beat. The only new exercise at the beginning of Book 4 is the Chromatic Octaves on page 10. This is a great workout for the left hand.

Fourth year guitar classes were always my favourite. The students are a bit more mature, and they are there because they want to be. As the students progress from first year, I tend to give them more and more time to work individually.

After the first week or so, a typical class might look like this. (70 minute period)

- 1. Warm ups:** 5-15 minutes -Scales and exercises -always with a drum beat -keep track of tempos
- 2. Review of learned pieces:** 5-15 minutes As the year goes on, you will have a lot of material to choose from. Vary what you are doing so they keep all former pieces at their finger tips.
- 3. Theory:** 5-10 minutes maximum -keep it short and keep reviewing
- 4. New solo bits:** 10-30 minutes I like to do a few bars at a time, and then give them a few minutes to work on it. When they get a bit restless, it is time to move on. I might have 4-6 pieces on the go in this section.
- 5. Individual practise time:** 10-30 minutes The time spent here, as in all sections, will depend on how you are feeling and how they are working.
- 6. New ensemble bits:** 5-15 minutes (like the solo bits section)
- 7. Wrap up:** 3-5 minutes Play something they really know well.

You also might want to add listening and history into that mix.

Book 4 repertoire and Carpenter Ants.

Questions or comments?

Contact rick@classroomguitar.org

www.classroomguitar.org

Year 2 Guitar

AMG 201 - AMG 30P

Name: _____

Home Phone: _____

- Feb. 4 Welcome back
 8 C and G Major scales p 8, 9
 12 Minuet in G, p 13, Theory 1-4
 14 D major scale p 15
 21 Moveable Major scales p 10, 11, Theory 5-11
 28 Air and Barcarolle (teachers choice) p 16
 29 Theory test #1
- March 4 Joelle, p 19, Finale Assignment 1 p. 72
 6 Reading at the 5th Position, p 21, Theory 12-14
 8-15 **March Break – Yahoo!**
 19 Progress Reports
 20 Canon p 23, Theory 15-18
 25 A Toye, p 25
 27 A Major Scale, p 27, Finale Assignment 2, p. 74
 28 Theory test #2
- April 3 Prelude in C, p 30 or Minuet by Weiss, p 31 (teachers choice)
 4 Fiddle Concert (optional)
 10 Sornod II, p 32, Theory 19
 15 Composition 1, Theory 20
 17 Stasis, p 33,
 24 Country Dance, p 35, Theory 21
 28 Mid-term Reports, Theory 22
- May 1 Andantino, p 36, Theory 23
 8 Allegretto, p 37, Composition 2
 15 Greensleeves (page one only), p 38, Theory 24
 20 Spanish Ballad part 2, p 94, Theory 25
 22 Article One Concert (ticket sales in April for Cancer)
 23 Spanish Ballad as a Trio
 29 Star of the County Down
 30 Theory test #3
- June 3 Lamb, Composition 3
 10 Final Theory Exam
Final Playing Exams in Class
 12 1. Packington's Pound
 16 2. Valse
 18 **Final Exam Period – You must play 3. Waltz**

Name: _____

Phone #: _____

Guitar Year 3

Tests And Assignments

February 2009

- Feb. 2 Welcome back
 5 Theory 1-4
 10 Chromatic Scale p10
 12 Believe Me If All ...p 11
 16 **Family Day, Hug your Dad**
 19 Study 1 or 2 (pp 12 & 13), teacher's choice
 24 Theory 5-8
 26 Study 3, p14 or Shepherd's Wife p 15, teacher's choice
- .March 3 Theory 9-12
 5 Composition #1, p 65
 12 Kiss the Bride, **Theory Test 1**
14-22 March Break
 26 Blue 4 U, p17, Theory 13
- April 2 Rondo pp 18, 19, Theory 14, 15
 7 Composition #2, p 65
 9 Fur Elise, p 20, Theory 16, 17
 10-13 **Easter**
 16 Bluegrass Medley, p 71
 22 Amour or I C U, p 21, Theory 18
 24 PA Day
 29 Andantino, p 22, Theory 19
- May 7 Siciliana by Carcassi, p 23, Theory 20
 14 #5 Waltz by Paganini, Theory 21
 18 Holiday
 21 Composition #3
 28 Study in C, p 26, 27, Theory 22
- June 4 Etude, p 28, Theory 23, 24
 9 Theory 25 - 27
 10 Lesson for Two Lutes as a duet or
 Ensemble Presentation (McAra's Jig, Bring a Torch or MacPherson's Lament)
- 11 **Final Theory Exam**
- Final Playing Exams in class
 15 1. Allegretto, pp 30, 31
 16 2. Lessons in A minor and Major, p 32
- 18 **Salterello, p 33 (exam period, sign up for a time)**

Year 4 Guitar

AMG 4M1

Name: _____

Home Phone: _____

- Sept. 8 Welcome back
 15 Left Hand Stretch and Strength p. 7, Chromatic scale p. 9
 21 Concert with Antoin Dufour \$5
 22 Chromatic Octaves
 24 Kemp's Jig, Theory 1
 30 Don't Polka Your Eyes Out, Theory 2
- Oct. 4 Composition, Theory 3-4
 5 Spanish Dreams
 8 Study #1, p17, Theory 5
 22 Minuet in G p. 18, Theory 6
 29 Adelita p. 19, Theory 7
 30 Theory test #2
- Nov. 3 Composition 2
 5 Study #2 p. 20, Theory 8
 18 Toy for Two Lutes as a Duet, p.21
 19 Guitar Day at Saunders
 20 Study #3, Theory 9
 26 O Canada, Theory 10
- Dec. 3 Bourree p. 24
 8 Composition 3
 9 Theory Test
 11 Toon in Sixths,
 15 Theory 25
 17 Angels We Have Heard on High
- Jan. 7 Study #4
 12 Final Theory Exam
 14 Flight
- 20 **Final Playing Exams in Class**
 1. Spanish Ballad
- 25 **Final Exam Period – You must play Prelude by Bach, p.30, 31**