

GPSA GRADUATION 2024-2025

Piano Preparatory Level – Twinkles and Allegro

The Piano Preparatory Level was instituted as part of the 2009-2010 GPSA Graduation program, so that Suzuki piano students would have the opportunity to participate in the program earlier in their study, just as string students do. The added benefit for teachers is that they would receive feedback about their students' skill development early in Book 2.

Students and their teachers are required to attend one of the Graduation recitals. Students will be presented with a trophy at the end of the recital, joining the performing students onstage for a final group Bow. We will keep a performance option under consideration for future Graduation recitals.

Piano students *begin the Graduation level sequence with the Preparatory level*. The only exception would be for transfer students who join the teacher's studio when they are at Level II and above. **Level I students are required to begin with the Preparatory Level**. However, at any level, the teacher can encourage transfer students to review Twinkles and Allegro and submit a video at the Preparatory level. The basic requirement is that students record Twinkles and Allegro - the most technically challenging pieces in Book 1.

Drs. Suzuki and Kataoka both taught us that the Twinkles are the foundation of natural technique. Therefore, if we teach them thoroughly and carefully throughout Book 1, and continue to use them as tools for good tone production, the more advanced repertoire will be easier for students to accomplish with greater naturalness and ease.

Allegro demands real hand independence, as students work on balancing the sound of the two parts, the right hand tone staccato and bright, and the left hand soft and gently detached. This hand independence is essential before a student's introduction to counterpoint with the Bach minuets.

Teachers who only have students in the Preparatory level will not be required to serve on a listening committee. However, we welcome attendance at a listening committee meeting.

Guidelines:

- 1) Students must be working at the *Short Story/Happy Farmer level* or beyond to participate.
- 2) Record all the **RH Twinkles**, playing through with **teacher accompaniment**, as performed on the CD by Dr. Kataoka. Recommended tempo: 69-72. Demonstrate good, clear tone on both staccato and legato sounds, using natural finger movement, with good balance above the keyboard.
- 3) Record **Allegro, Quarter Note = 116-132**. Demonstrate good "Down-Up" technique with ringing, staccato tone in the RH, and gently detached, rhythmic LH chords. Also, listen for shaping of phrases, particularly phrase 2.
- 4) **Rae Kate Shen is the hired evaluator**, to listen to and comment on students' performances. A written evaluation for each student will be emailed to teachers.
- 5) All recordings should be **submitted online**, by uploading both pieces to YouTube (**select "unlisted" not private setting**), or Vimeo, **using the password GPSA**. Label/identify with teacher and student's name. These links should be emailed to Janet Kaido at janetskeyboard@gmail.com, who will send everything to Rae Kate at one time. The deadline is January 7, 2025.