

Daraja MUSIC INITIATIVE CURRICULUM

Teaching Violin to Beginners
Part I, Beginner Set up

Ching-Yi Lin, 2016

We are so excited that you will be joining the DMI team to teach violin in Moshi this summer! For first timers, you will find that the teaching experience is vastly different than what you might expect in America and I hope the following tips will help you adjust quickly! Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any additional questions.

— Ching-Yi Lin

Useful Words for Teaching the Violin in Moshi

Left – kushoto

Right – kulia

Up – juu

Down – chini*

Listen – sikiliza

Watch – angalia (pronounced “ahn-ga-lee-uh”)

Additional helpful teaching words are in the DMI handbook page 18.

*Up and Down bow is easier to teach visually than push and pull.

Basic Tools

For the violin:

- Sponge/foam
- Rubber band
- High dot at middle harmonic for reference point
- “Magic X” for hand shape

For the bow:

- Middle tape
- Pinky House

Detailed descriptions in DMI *Teaching Violin to Children* handbook pages 3 to 17.

Curriculum

We teach the Majengo Primary students to learn by rote. Since they do not play violin during the school year, we have to review pieces starting from *Ant Song* to refresh their memories the first few days. After that, we review previously learned Suzuki pieces and add new ones.

You should always go through the set-up routine on page 6 of the *Teaching Violin to Children* handbook: “make a V... Take a step...” It does not matter that they understand what it all means in English (you can explain it all as time goes on). This sequence helps

to coordinate students so you can manage a classroom of 20 more easily and efficiently and ensure good posture. You will also find that they are quick to pick up English words (much quicker than we learn Swahili! 😊)

Classroom

The teaching environment is much different in Moshi than in the America. There are no sound proof rooms and the windows are usually open for fresh air. You will find other students to be playing sports outside of the classroom, and it can get very noisy. Bring your best teaching voice and be ready to speak very loudly everyday.



Ear and Rhythmic Training

Because the kids don't have access to a piano in order to hear pitches, we do a lot of singing of open strings for them to recognize those pitches. We will add the A major scale notes as they learn pre-Twinkle and Suzuki Book One Pieces.

We use the *Sunflower Song* to introduce students to the solfège system. Students sing the scale in solfège while pointing to different body parts to develop coordination:

- Do—Students point to their toes
- Re—Students point to their calves
- Mi—Students point to their knees
- Fa—Students point to their thighs
- Sol—Students point to their waists
- La—Students point to their shoulders
- Ti—Students point to their heads
- Do—Students wave their hands in the air!

Go up and down the scale multiple times a day for ear training. Other DMI faculty will also come to your classroom to teach different songs and sing with the students. This is always a good bonding time for the violin and clarinet students. You can set that up with faculty on site to coordinate meeting times.

Rhythm training: A way to stimulate rhythmic pulse is for students to stomp constant quarter notes with their feet. We march from one classroom to another while doing *The Case Walk* to develop good rhythmic impulses.

Names

Because we are teaching in groups of 12 to 20, it is essential that we memorize the names of the students. I have found it helpful to give students coloring sheets on the first day of the class, and take a photo of it so I can memorize the names that same day and be prepared for the next day. This way you don't lose precious teaching time trying to figure out who is who. It's also much easier when you can call on the student individually, as they are more spread out around the room because of the set up of violin and bow.



Table of Contents

THE INSTRUMENT AND SET-UP	5
<i>Introduction to Parts of the Violin</i>	6
Setting-Up the Violin	6
<i>High Dot</i>	6
Setting-Up the Student	7
<i>The Rest Position</i>	7
<i>Magic X</i>	8
<i>Body Positioning and Sequence</i>	9
INTRODUCING THE PRE-TWINKLE PIECES;	11
<i>Ant Song</i>	12
<i>GDG</i>	12
<i>Jig</i>	13
Setting-Up the Bow	14
<i>Introduction to Parts of the Bow</i>	15
<i>Preliminary Bow Exercises</i>	16
PUTTING THE VIOLIN AND THE BOW TOGETHER	21
<i>A-E-A</i>	21
<i>Magic X Placement</i>	23
<i>Seesaw</i>	26
<i>See a Little Monkey</i>	27
<i>A-major scale</i>	30

THE INSTRUMENT AND SET-UP

Violin sizes begin at the 1/32 size, and continue in increments of 1/16, 1/10, 1/8, 1/4, 1/2, 3/4, 7/8, and 4/4 (a full-size violin). In determining the right size of violin, children should be able to comfortably curve their left hand around the scroll when placed in playing position. The left arm should not be completely stretched out, but rather slightly bent at the elbow. If the fingertips do not reach the end of the scroll, or if the arm is hyper-extended, a smaller size is recommended. Brenda Brenner stresses in her lectures: “It is always better to err on the side of too small rather than too large.”¹ It is

¹ Dr. Brenner discussed the importance of erring on the side of a smaller violin than larger during a lecture called “Setting-Up for Success” given at Western Kentucky University on April 10th, 2010.

easier to learn violin technique on a smaller violin, and this method of measuring will ensure the child will be able to maintain the proper playing position.²

Introduction to Parts of the Violin

The “Naming Parts of the Instrument” game is a fun way for children to learn the parts of the violin: back, front, ribs, neck, fingerboard, scroll, peg box, pegs, strings, bridge, fine tuners, tailpiece, chin rest, end button, f-holes, and sound post. Young “Pre-Twinklers” can count pegs, strings, and fine tuners.³ Teachers may use their own instrument as a reference to point and ask children to name the parts. Teachers should begin with four or five parts, and gradually add more parts of the violin as students become more familiar with the instrument.

Setting-Up the Violin

High Dot

A “high dot” (a little piece of colored plastic tape or a small sticker) should be placed on the fingerboard, under the A and D strings, dividing the string length into two. Students cover this dot with their left-hand fingers, and place the end of the thumb under the neck of the violin. This placement: 1) shapes the left hand; 2) serves as a reference point for children to develop good posture (holding the violin in the “Statue of Liberty stance” over the high dot); and 3) provides a place for students to tap over to develop rhythmic impulse, vibrato motion, and finger strength (see Fig. 2).

² Zweig, *String Pedagogy*.

³ McCall, *Group Lessons for Suzuki Violin and Viola*, 16.

Figure 2. “High Dot”



Setting-Up the Student

After the violin is introduced to students and parents, we are ready for the physical set-up of the student. For some children, it may take only a few lessons to accomplish these beginning tasks. For others, it may take longer. The key to success is to use Suzuki’s concept of repetition: always start from the beginning of the set-up routine, without skipping any steps along the way, until the child is ready to advance.

The Rest Position

When students are given the violin for the first time, they should be taught to hold the instrument at rest under their right arm, with the arm over the chin rest. This is called rest position. Students should avoid resting their right arm over the bridge of the violin. This could damage the bridge if too much pressure is applied. The left hand should gently hover over the high dot (see Fig. 3).

Figure 3. “Rest Position”



Magic X

A “Magic X” should be marked on the base joint of the student’s left index finger with a pen.⁴ This serves as a reference point for students to gently glide up and down the neck of the violin (the idea comes from Rolland’s “Shuttle Game”).⁵ Students can do this exercise in both rest and playing positions. The thumb should remain flexible while traveling with the hand. This exercise helps students relax their left hand, and develop their shifting and vibrato impulses. It also encourages fluid motions and a round hand position (see Fig. 4).

⁴ Zweig, *String Pedagogy*.

⁵ Rolland, *The Teaching of Action in String Playing*.

Figure 4. Placement of a “Magic X”



Body Positioning and Sequence

Zweig adopts Rolland’s “Shuttle Game” and “Statue of Liberty” in her teaching, using the “Magic X” as the contact point on the index finger when holding the violin. Students of the WKU Pre-College Strings students practice the following sequence to ensure good body positioning:

- 1) Violin in rest position.
- 2) Feet together.
- 3) Make a “V” with the feet.
- 4) Move the feet a step apart (shoulder width).
- 5) Rock back and forth like a “tree in the wind.”
- 6) Slide on the “Magic X.”
- 7) Left hand over high dot.
- 8) Tap over high dot (different rhythmic patterns).
- 9) “Statue of Liberty.”

- 10) Count to _____ (fill in a number and be creative).
- 11) Rest the violin on the collarbone.⁶

Steps 2–4 help students develop good playing posture. Furthermore, this creates a simple sequence that is fun and easy to follow. The “rocking” part of the sequence is to ensure that weight is evenly distributed and the body is balanced. The Suzuki method uses another system to teach children a proper stance. A piece of “foot paper” is placed on the floor. Each child’s name is written on the paper, and the feet are traced in the correct position.⁷ Two pieces of paper are made: one for parents to use at home and the other for lessons in the studio.

The next steps, 6–9, help students strengthen their muscles and develop their muscle memory. The left hand over the high dot helps students shape the hand into a round, relaxed position. As mentioned earlier, the tapping movement helps to generate rhythmic impulse, vibrato motion, and finger strength, and shape the left hand. Counting to particular numbers during the Statue of Liberty stance can develop left-arm strength. Depending on the age of the student, teachers can be creative in the counting games and ask them to count in even numbers, odd numbers, or even backwards. The placing of the violin (or the “airplane landing”) puts the instrument on the collarbone from above, which is a lot easier for children to do than starting from below. Make sure the student’s nose is pointing at the bridge and the scroll (see Fig. 5).

⁶ Zweig, *String Pedagogy*.

⁷ Starr, *Suzuki Violinist*, 53.

Figure 5. “Statue of Liberty”



INTRODUCING THE PRE-TWINKLE PIECES;

After children are familiar with the proper stance, they are ready to play pizzicato songs on the violin. Relaxation is the key to left-hand technique. Parents and teachers can help shape their children’s hands by showing them how to curve them around the upper bout of the violin and over the “high dot.” In the WKU Pre-College Strings Program, the “Ant Song” is the first song students sing and learn to play (see Ex. 1).⁸

⁸ Zweig, *String Pedagogy*.

Ant Song

Example 1. “The Ant Song” from Zweig, *String Pedagogy*

Each, Each, Each Each and ev-ery Ant, Ant, Ant, dig-ging in the

Dirt, Dirt, Dirt, all the way to Greece, Greece, Greece.

Beginning students play pizzicato with the left-hand pinky over the high dot on the words “each,” “ant,” and “dirt,” and “Greece.” The first letter of these words corresponds with the notes of the open strings E, A, D and G. Students should play pizzicato three times on the E string, then use beat four to prepare their fingers on the A string (the piano fills in the sixteenth notes on beat four). This process is repeated until students have played on all four strings. Students can count the number of times each string is plucked for the “Ant Song,” and write the letters (E, A, D, and G) on the board or on a piece of paper.

GDG

After the “Ant Song,” children learn the “G–D–G” or “Gee Dee Gee” Song, which is played over the high dot like the “Ant Song.” This song originated from Rolland, and is an accompaniment to “Hot Cross Buns.” This is how the song is played: “G–D–G–Rest, G–D–G–Rest, G–G–D–D, G–D–G–Rest!” This pattern is repeated on the D and A strings, on the A and E strings, and finally on the G and E strings. During the word “Rest,” students are to stomp their right foot on the ground. This is to avoid

playing during the rest (to stimulate a good sense of rhythm) and to check for body balance. Regardless if the student is right or left-handed, I strongly suggest that they stomp with their right foot. This is to avoid displacing the violin position while stomping.

Jig

“Jig” by Stanley Fletcher is another song that can be played with left-hand pizzicato to help strengthen the fingers and shape the left hand. The solo part can also be played with right-hand pizzicato or a combination of both (see Ex. 2).⁹

Example 2. “Jig” from *New Tunes For Strings*, Teacher’s book (one) by Stanley Fletcher, 6, mm. 1–7

Violin

(Viola 8va)
Cello

pizz. or arco

D. Bass

Part I

Piano

f

staccato sempre

⁹ Stanley Fletcher, *New Tunes for Strings, Book 1*, (New York: Bossey & Hawkes, 1972), 6.

Setting-Up the Bow

As previously discussed, it is important that students establish good standing and violin-holding positions before moving on to learning the proper bow hold. Zweig advocates making a “pinky house” for the bow when teaching beginning violin students (see Figs. 7 and 8). These are the steps for making a “pinky house”:

- 1) Cut a piece of electrical tape, the thicker the better, about two inches long (the length depends on the size of the student’s little finger, or pinky). This piece is used to make the structure of the pinky house.
- 2) Think of the tape horizontally in thirds and fold the tape towards the sticky side. Leave about a third of the sticky part of the tape exposed to place on the frog of the bow.
- 3) Form a circle with the sticky part on the outside of the circle. I find it helpful to wrap the tape around the student’s pinky to get the right size.
- 4) The exposed sticky part is to form the base of the “pinky house” and is placed on the top of the frog.
- 5) Cut another two inches of electrical tape down the middle to make two pieces of tape. Secure the pinky house by inserting the two pieces of tape on opposite sides of the house and wrapping them around the frog of the bow.¹⁰

¹⁰ Zweig, *String Pedagogy*.

Figure 7. Front View of “Pinky House”

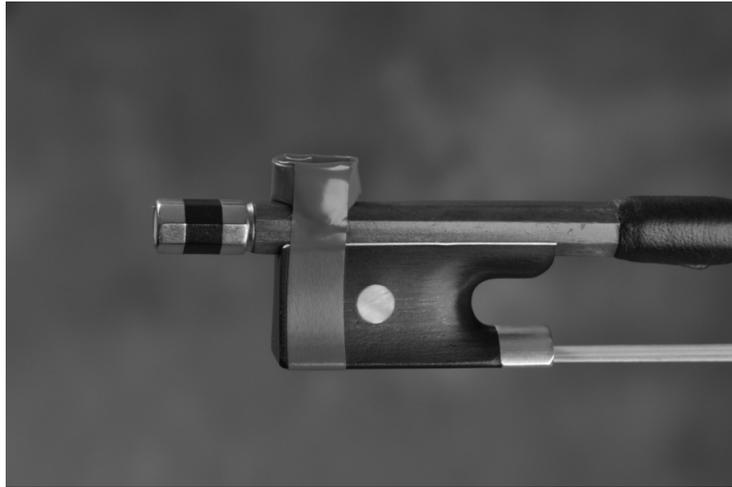
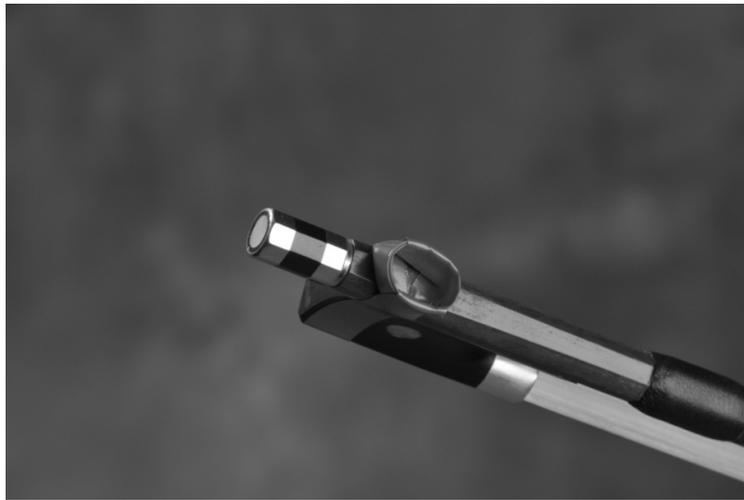


Figure 8. Top View of “Pinky House”



Introduction to Parts of the Bow

The “Naming Parts of the Bow” game is a fun way for children to learn the parts of the bow: tip, head, bow stick, bow hair, wrapping, leather thumb grip, frog, eyelet, and button or end screw. Teachers may use their own bow as a reference and ask children to name the parts. Teachers should begin with four or five parts, and gradually add more

parts of the bow as students become more familiar with the bow. This would also be a good time to review the parts of the violin.

Preliminary Bow Exercises

There are several preliminary exercises that teachers can use to show the beginner the proper way to hold the bow. Before allowing a student to hold a bow, Suzuki recommended that teachers show the proper bow hold by using a pencil. This allows the student to have the correct spacing between fingers without the extra weight of a bow. Suzuki introduced the hold by instructing the student to make a circle with the thumb and the middle finger. Using the same two fingers, the student would pick up a pencil and perform rhythmic patterns while holding it.¹¹ Zweig uses this pencil technique by placing a pencil under the relaxed curved right hand of the student. She then asks that the student first tap the index finger, then the two middle fingers together, saving the pinky for last. After this initial round of tapping, the process is repeated in random order. These motions are then repeated with the bow. Students can also tap to the variation rhythms of “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star” or any other rhythms that the teacher feels are helpful.

When the children first hold their bows, they are introduced to a thumb positioning different than normal, on the outside of the frog.

¹¹ Starr, *Suzuki Violinist*, 62.

Figure 9. “Suzuki’s Early Bow Hold”



Silent bow exercises are then practiced (in order of difficulty) to develop finger strength and flexibility:

Pinocchio

Students and teachers hold the frog of the bow on the tip of the nose, with the bow horizontal, the hair of the bow facing up. This motion gives students the experience of feeling the bow weight alternating between the index finger and the pinky.

Unicorn

Students and teachers hold the bow on the top of the head.

Stirring Soup

Students and teachers place the bow in front of them, well away from the body, pointing towards the ceiling, and make circles with the bow. Adding imaginary ingredients to the soup keeps their attention and also makes a good memory game.

Windshield Wipers

Students and teachers place the bow in front of them horizontally and make 180-degree half circles, like a windshield wiper.

Elevator

Students hold their bows parallel to the floor. The bow goes up and down like an elevator. Teachers should make sure that the tip and the frog are moving together.¹²

Space Shuttle

Tell students that they are going for a trip on a space shuttle and ask them where they would like to go. The student and the teacher bend their knees, and place the lower end (screw) of the bow on the floor, ready to take off. The teacher counts down from ten, then says “Blast off.” The teacher and students then stand up with the tip of the bow pointing to the ceiling, “flying” with their bows to their destination. A ring-shaped piece of gum-drop candy (e.g. Life Savers Gummy or Cheerio) can be placed at the tip of the bow. Students are encouraged to make sure the candy stays on the bow, and are rewarded by eating it if it remained on the bow tip after blast off.

The Rocket Poem

McCall suggests saying the following poem with coordinating actions:

“Up like a rocket,

Down like the rain.

Back and forth like a choo-choo train.

¹² Slone, *They're Rarely Too Young*, 120.

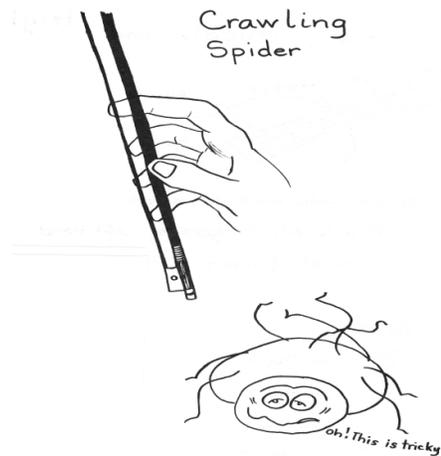
Round and round like a great big sun—

Bow on my head; curved pinkie, bent thumb!”¹³

Crawling Spider

Students hold their bows with the tips of their fingers, “crawl” up to the tip of the bow, and then back to the frog (see Fig. 10).¹⁴

Figure 10. “Crawling Spider” from *Games for the Young Beginner Pre-Reading Violin*, 3



Once students are comfortable with the bow hold, a piece of tape is placed at the middle of the bow to begin the next exercise. This is to show students how the bow should be divided at the beginning stages of learning. I suggest that students first learn to play the violin using only the upper half of the bow and not the lower half. I do so because it is easier to produce a good tone with the upper half of the bow, and it is better to train different muscles (upper-arm and forearm) separately. Some teachers will make a

¹³ Carolyn McCall, *Group Lessons for Suzuki Violin and Viola*, 14.

¹⁴ Evelyn Bedient Avsharian, *Games for the Young Beginner Pre-Reading Violin*, (Ann Arbor, MI: Evelyn Bedient Avsharian, 1975), 3.

“new tip” with the tape for their students whose arms are not long enough to reach the tip of the bow (see Fig. 11). The placement of the “new tip” depends on how close the student can get to the tip without hyper-extending their right arm.

Figure 11. “New Tip”



At this point, the circle block and toilet paper roll are introduced. The students put their bows through the circle block or toilet paper roll that is held on or above the left shoulder by the left hand. It is crucial to stress the importance of using only the upper half of the bow. This helps to separate the forearm and upper-arm motion needed to play in the upper half (use of forearm) and lower half (use of upper arm) of the bow. Students may then air-bow rhythms from the “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star” variations. They can also do these exercises by placing the bow on their left shoulder without the toilet paper roll.

PUTTING THE VIOLIN AND THE BOW TOGETHER

Teachers should never prematurely ask students to put the violin and the bow together. It is important to assess and confirm that all of the previously discussed fundamentals are thoroughly understood and executed consistently. Teachers should constantly remind students and parents that holding the violin and the bow should resemble our natural posture.¹⁵ The easiest way of playing the violin is the most natural way.

At this time, students should practice placing their bows on the A string at the middle tape. I often check that the students' bow hand is relaxed by having them tap their fingers on the bow (tapping first finger, two middle fingers, and the pinky). "Silent string-crossings" is an exercise that requires students to rock their bows from the G string to the E string and back. This exercise gives students the experience of the proper level for the right-arm on each string. String-crossing should be made by rotating from the shoulder joint in a relaxed manner.¹⁶

A–E–A

The first piece that WKU Pre-College Strings Program children play with the bow is "A–E–A." It is played in the upper half of the bow, using the martelé stroke. It is repeated twice, with no bow retakes, and is finished with a big up-bow circle at the end of the song. Before the students play this piece, teachers can have them practice the rhythm by playing "A–A–A–Rest" or "E–E–E–Rest" with the bow. When they are ready to play "A–E–A," it is beneficial to have them stop the bow before each string-crossing to observe proper right-arm level and check for relaxation in the shoulder joint.

¹⁵ Rolland, *Basic Principles of Violin Playing*, 8.

¹⁶ Zweig, *String Pedagogy*.

The next step is to add the pizzicato “G–D–G,” “D–A–D,” and “A–E–A” pieces to the bowed “A–E–A” piece. The students first place the bow on the floor, play the “G–D–G, D–A–D, and A–E–A” pizzicato sequence, then pick up the bow during another piano interlude to play “A–E–A” with the bow twice. Students are to stomp their right foot to the ground in the same manner that they do when they play with left-hand pizzicato. This is a fun piece for both the students and the parents, and popular at every recital (see Exx. 3, 4, and 5).

Example 3. “G–D–G,” played with left-hand pizzicato from Zweig, *String Pedagogy*

The musical score is for a piece in G major, 4/4 time. It consists of four systems of music. The first system shows the beginning of the piece, with the piano part playing a sequence of chords: G-D-G, D-A-D, and A-E-A. The violin part is silent. The second system continues the piano part with more chords and a section marked 'L. H. pizz. to end'. The third system shows the piano part playing a sequence of chords: G-D-G, D-A-D, and A-E-A. The violin part is silent. The fourth system shows the piano part playing a sequence of chords: G-D-G, D-A-D, and A-E-A. The violin part is silent. The score ends with a final chord in the piano part.

Example 4. “G–D–G” piano interlude, students pick up their bow during this interlude



Example 5. “A–E–A” with the bow, repeated twice; the second time through, starts with an up-bow



Magic X Placement

After this “G–D–G” piece, the children are introduced to pieces that use the left-hand fingers. Zweig uses the “Magic X” again to demonstrate the proper positioning of the hand. The “Magic X” should be neither too high above nor too far below the fingerboard (see Figs. 12 and 13). A “Penny trick” is useful when showing students the differences (see Fig. 14). Only when the student’s left hand is in its proper position will the penny stay in place on the top of the knuckles.

Figure 12. Magic X is too high



Figure 13. Magic X is too low



Figure 14. Proper positioning of the left-hand that can hold a penny on top



The contact point of the left-hand fingers with the string should be on the fleshy pad of the finger. This is to ensure good intonation, and create a more focused and stable tone.¹⁷ The hand should be balanced at the most comfortable position for the third and fourth fingers to ensure that the weakest finger (the pinky) gets more weight. Avoid having a bent-in wrist, bent-out wrist, or crooked wrist (see Figs. 15 and 16). Teachers can encourage students to have hooked “candy-cane” hands and “umbrella fingers,” and avoid “pizza server” hands.

¹⁷ Hsuan Lee, *Towards a Dynamic Pedagogy: Contemporary Pedagogical Approaches to Basic Violin Technique*, (D.M.A. document, University of Washington, 2008), 53.

Figure 15. Bent-in Wrist



Figure 16. Bent-out Wrist



Seesaw

The first piece (with left-hand finger usage) that the children learn is “See Saw,” a piece originated from Rolland (see Ex. 6).

Example 6. “See Saw,” from Zweig, *String Pedagogy*

The image shows a musical score for the piece "See Saw" from Zweig's *String Pedagogy*. The score is written for Violin and Piano. It is in the key of D major (two sharps) and 3/4 time. The Violin part is a single melodic line, and the Piano part provides accompaniment. The score is divided into two systems, each with a repeat sign at the end. The first system consists of four measures, and the second system consists of four measures. The notes in the Violin part are E, A, E, A, B, B, B, B, A, A.

The words to “See Saw” are “See Saw, See Saw, This is the way we play see saw”¹⁸ or “I like to play on my see saw.” Students can also sing along with words such as “See Saw, See Saw, 1–2–3–4–5–6, See Saw” or the name of the notes: “E, A, E, A, B–B–B–B–B–B, A, A.” This piece requires the use of the first finger on the A string. Teachers should place a colorful tape across the fingerboard to mark the first finger spot. Students can practice by curving their fingers around the “high dot” and sliding down the fingerboard along the “Magic X” to find the perfect position for their first finger. When children first learn this piece, I recommend that teachers divide the piece into three sections: the open strings (E and A), the six B’s, and the last two open A’s.

See a Little Monkey

The next song is the “Monkey Song.” This piece uses the same rhythmic pattern as the Variation A of “Twinkle,” the first piece in Suzuki Book One (see Ex. 8). Before

¹⁸ Jack M. Pernecky and Lorraine Fink, *Teaching the Fundamentals of Violin Playing* (Miami, FL: Summy-Birchard Music, 1998), 26.

playing the “Monkey Song,” students can practice playing this rhythm of four sixteenth notes (using the detaché bow stroke) followed by two eighth notes (using the martelé bow stroke) on the open A string. Piano accompanists can help make this process more interesting by playing chords to harmonize the open A string (see Ex. 7).¹⁹

Example 7. Harmonization to the “Twinkle” Variation A

¹⁹ McCall, *Group Lessons for Suzuki Violin and Viola*, 21.

Example 8. The “Monkey Song,” from Zweig, *String Pedagogy*

The musical score is arranged in four systems. The first system shows the Violin and Piano parts. The Violin part is in treble clef with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a 2/4 time signature. The Piano part is in grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The second system begins the vocal line with the lyrics: "See a lit - tle mon - key Climb - ing up the lad - der,". The third system continues with: "Climb - ing up so high to Pick the pink ba - na - na. See a lit - tle mon - key". The fourth system concludes with: "Climb - ing down the lad - der, Climb - ing down so low to Eat the pink ba - na - na." The piano accompaniment consists of a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a simple bass line in the left hand.

This song requires the use of the first, second, and third fingers. A third-finger tape is placed in addition to the first finger tape. A second-finger tape is not recommended throughout the students’ studies. “High twos” and “low twos” (e.g., C-sharp and C-natural) can become confusing because of too many tape marks on the

fingerboard. Teachers can simply ask that students place their second fingers close to the third finger for the note C-sharp.

The student's fingers and hand should remain relaxed. It is important to stop between the placing of each left-hand finger to ensure proper placement. Teachers can give clear instructions to their students, in a rhythmic fashion, during the rests:

- 1) Now we play the open A string.
- 2) Now we place the first finger (help students shape their finger, and make sure it is on the first-finger tape), then play.
- 3) Now we place the second finger (remind students that the second finger should be placed below the third-finger tape), then play.
- 4) Now we place the third finger (second finger and third finger are close together because they are "good friends"), then play.
- 5) Take off the third finger to play the note C-sharp ("high two").
- 6) Take off the second finger to play note B.
- 7) Take off the first finger.
- 8) Play the open A string.

A-major scale

At this point, the one octave A-major scale starting on the open A string should be taught in the same fashion as the "Monkey Song." This scale is played using the rhythmic pattern in "Twinkle." Teachers should instruct students to stop the bow before putting down and lifting each left-hand finger. Students should also stop to roll the bow to the E string and back. These instructions should again be given, in a rhythmic fashion, to students during the rests.