

BOOK 2

Overview

Book 2 aims the student squarely at Grade 1. As a teacher I am in two minds about exams. They can be useful signposts along the journey but I find the syllabus at odds with what I would expect of a student at a certain stage. For example the two octave single-handed scale is an oddity I find little justification for. Far better to learn double-handed one octave scales in both contrary and similar motion.

Nevertheless we must offer our students the best opportunity to pass and I firmly believe the logic of 'overshooting' the technical standard. Some pieces in this book will be within the students technical ability because we have prepared for them, but might well sit closer to grade 2. Syncopated Walk for example is eminently playable because it is within the student's experience but is perhaps beyond grade 1 as far as examinations are concerned.

The objective is to develop a foundation of technical flexibility that creates a platform upon which other musical experiences can be safely built. It is always disappointing to hear and watch a student play a piece with some musicality but without the technical skill to fully realise their full potential.

TERM 1 – OPENING THE HAND LESSON BY LESSON

LESSON 1 – MORE ABOUT SIXTHS

Pg Nos. 6-7

Reprising the ideas of a movable hand with two studies is preparing the way for the main substance of this section – scales.

When playing scales it is vital that the arm travels with the hand otherwise we have the awkward elbow movement I see in some students as the arm tries to catch up at the bridge between octaves. This movement must be prepared in advance, correcting it later is a challenge.

The Movable Hand Study 1 has the student deliberately moving the hand by step.

The Movable Hand Study 1 has the student playing a scale but using fingers one and two only. This promotes the gradual movement of the hand and arm as it supports the thumb.

The Spider Spins a Web puts the movable hand in context. The section commencing bar 9 might be more easily negotiated with 1231234, but it is designed to promote the fingering marked. The LH accompaniment should be light and effortless – this harks back to those interval exercises in book 1.

AUDIO: **TK42. MOVABLE HAND STUDY 1**
 TK43. MOVABLE HAND STUDY 2
 TK44. THE SPIDER SPINS A WEB

LESSON 2 – INTERVAL OF A SEVENTH

Pg Nos. 8-9

The seventh is yet a wider stretch. The student is growing and some will reach this stretch comfortably. The exercises are demanding and should be practised very slowly. The first promotes rotation, the second the stepped movable hand concept. The chords include opening the hand and then holding the hand and moving the arm and wrist. These should be learnt and memorised. They concern technical control which is best observed and understood.

The final **Sevenths Warm-Up** brings us back to pedalling and prepares nicely for the piece that follows.

Daydreaming does not include pedal marking, but is an option. The hint of syncopation in the melody is in preparation. The RH includes C and A positions while the LH moving seventh chords. Bar 16 includes a 3 over 1 technique - an alternate fingering could be 5 on the E and then 4321.

AUDIO: **TK45. SEVENTHS WARM-UP**
 TK46. DAYDREAMING

LESSON 3 – INTERVAL OF AN OCTAVE

Pg Nos. 10-11

A Judgement on learning octaves can be put off, however, rather like ledger lines and semiquavers, we find them in Grade 1 pieces with alarming regularity so they are included here. This chapter can be bypassed if necessary.

The **Octave Warm-Up** should be treated similarly to the sevenths. Pace them slowly, play deliberately and memorise.

Ode to Joy is a development from the exercise but includes a celebrated melody. The gentle rotation should lean toward the top part so the thumb doesn't become too obtrusive. The second half harmonises the melody in the lower part – for the best students this will be an achievable challenge.

AUDIO: **TK47. OCTAVE WARM-UP**
 TK48. ODE TO JOY

LESSON 4 – CROSSING 3 OVER 1

Pg Nos. 12-13

Now we introduce the 3 over 1 technique formally. Again use the exercises to check the hand and arm are aligning.

Three Over One puts the process in context. The LH fingering at bar 16/17 might be 54321215 however by setting the hand in C position we are prepared for bar 20 and we execute the 3 over 1 exercise effectively. Teacher's discretion required as ever. The three note chords are in preparation for what is to come.

AUDIO: **TK49. THREE OVER ONE**

LESSON 5 – HOW TO MAKE A MAJOR SCALE

Pg Nos. 14-15

Having learnt the concepts of whole tone and semitone plus the 3 over 1 technique we can focus on the concept of the scale. Using the tetrachord we can identify that scales begin and end in the same way. This will be useful much later on when we look at the circle of fifths.

Can Can fortunately has a clearly identifiable descending scale – I often have my students supply a ha ha ha ha lyric to this – they never forget it.

My Clockwork Doll includes 8 scales, one of which is both hands. It is one of those pieces that appears harder than it really is. Once the scales are under the fingers the rest is relatively easy.

AUDIO: **TK50. CAN CAN**
 TK51. MY CLOCKWORK DOLL

LESSON 6 – MAJOR SCALE IN G & KEY SIGNATURE

Pg Nos. 16-17

Introducing G major immediately after C helps reinforce the ‘how to make a scale’ concept. I find this exercise best done at the keyboard. The semitone leading note is more clearly defined and, when we discuss the key signature, it is more transparent.

Andante is ostensibly to check the key signature is registered and observed. However, over its modest thirteen bars it has its own challenges – finger independence can be tested here.

My Rhythmic Curiosity is aptly named but also includes G major scales and scale fingering over D. Agile hands are required as it snaps for octave to five finger positions. The presto marking is advisory not compulsory.

AUDIO **TK52. ANDANTE**
 TK53. MY RHYTHMIC CURIOSITY

LESSON 7 – CROSSING 1 UNDER 3

Pg No. 18

The final jigsaw of the scale is now put in place. The 1 under 3 technique follows the same format as three over, and again, ensure the arm and hand are aligned. This is a harder technique as the thumb passing under cannot be seen. If it is achieved easily then begin lesson 8.

LESSON 8 –

Pg No. 19

Two part Inventions are, like Scarlatti sonatas, excellent teaching pieces. Agile and coordinated fingers are essential, as well as independence of hands and fingers. It is far too early to take on the challenge of Bach’s masterful set, but preparing them for this eventuality is a reason to suggest the idea.

My First Two Part Invention is literally a series of scales with a melodic extension. There is nothing in this piece that is outside the student’s experience, but it requires great attention to detail and concentration. Incidentally I count 16 scales overall.

AUDIO: **TK54. MY FIRST TWO-PART INVENTION**

LESSON 9 – SCALES IN C AND G

Pg No. 20

To close this section we introduce the scales and some suggestions on how they can be practised. It is unfortunate that in my experience I hear students practise scales in a repetitive fashion that betrays a lack of imagination. There are many things we can do with scales that challenge and amuse, but also they offer great opportunities for exploring technical ideas while being in the safe place of knowing what you are doing. The simple application of varied touch like Staccato and legato is at least a starting point.

LESSON 10 – ENSEMBLE –

Pg Nos. 21-23

Morning Chorus, like *The Cuckoo* and *The Butterfly*, has an orchestral sound and, if you are working with keyboards, the same instrumentation might be explored. The two upper parts offer quite a challenge in the middle section with its cascading scales, but these can be played between the hands if necessary. Again the bass part is relatively easier, however it has melodic fragments to which due prominence should be given.

AUDIO: **TK55. MORNING CHORUS PARTS A, B & C**
 TK55a. MORNING CHORUS PARTS A & C
 TK55b. MORNING CHORUS PARTS B & C
 TK55c. MORNING CHORUS PARTS A & B

TERM 2 - LESSON BY LESSON

LESSON 11 – TRIADS

Pg Nos. 24-25

We begin section 2 with an introduction to harmony. Knowing chords and basic harmonies is an invaluable skill that can change a student's life. The practical experience of harmony will help reading, interpretation and technique, not to mention the possibilities for creativity.

Just like the note names we have just seven basic triads – and this never changes – the combinations and qualities change but that is for another day. We begin with playing and saying the triad names. I used this rote technique with my A level students and it helped enormously. Even at that level of musical education this simple idea was not understood.

To prepare for **Folk Song** the triad exercise develops the moving hand – use the pedal to allow time for the hand to lift quite high as it steps up and down. I would also take it up an octave and use it for the right-hand too. The LH can remain as dotted minims at first, then add the gentle rhythm starting at bar 9.

AUDIO: TK56. TRIAD VOCABULARY
 TK57. TRIAD EXERCISE
 TK58. FOLK SONG

LESSON 12 – PRIMARY TRIADS & DOMINANT 7th

Pg Nos. 26-29

Primary Triads will be the essential building blocks for several of the pieces in this section so this theoretical lesson is well learnt. While we explain the theory of inversions we direct the student to the three versions of the chords most useful for performance including a version of the dominant 7th.

Soldiers March demonstrates explicitly how these chords are used by composers. The warm-up exercise is useful preparation.

AUDIO: TK59. PRIMARY TRIAD SONG
 TK59a. PRIMARY TRIAD SONG
 TK59b. PRIMARY TRIAD SONG
 TK60. SOLDIERS MARCH

LESSON 13 – BLOCKED AND BROKEN CHORD

Pg Nos. 30-32

It is curious how often I encounter students who, when faced with a series of broken chords insist on reading each note, failing to identify it as a simple broken chord. Making this distinction here will pave the way for quicker note reading as identifying the chord and allowing the fingers to simply play the pattern.

The four **Pattern Pieces** are included to clearly identify to the student how patterns can be easily read once the chord shape is established. These are in both C and G major, and right and left hand variations.

AUDIO: TK62. C SCALE BLOCK CHORDS
 TK62a. C SCALE BROKEN CHORDS
 TK63. PATTERN PIECE 1
 TK63a. PATTERN PIECE 2
 TK63b. PATTERN PIECE 3
 TK63c. PATTERN PIECE 4

LESSON 14 – SIGHT READING & THEORY

Pg Nos. 33-34

The Sight reading and theory pages are in some senses a diversion. The previous two sections may require more time, this lighter section allows for that.

LESSON 15 – ALBERTI BASS

Pg No. 35

We have explored exercises to develop rotation and there is no better example than the Alberti Bass.

G Scale Alberti Bass - We also establish the primary chords in G major using the same 'shapes' or inversions as we used for C.

Senor Alberti's Theme presents the famous bass in context. The simple classical melody is in a five-finger G position to avoid any additional difficulties.

AUDIO: **TK64. G SCALE ALBERTI BASS**
 TK65. SENOR ALBERTI'S THEME

LESSON 16 – THE EXTENDED HAND

Pg Nos. 36-37

Melodies that covers the octave appear regularly even in the simplest melodies. Over the Rainbow being an obvious example. The exercise can be adjusted for smaller hands or go directly to the preparatory exercise for The Ash Grove.

On Top Of Old Smokey features the extended hand, and the LH features inversions of primary triads. Identifying these and their patterns builds on the theory.

The Ash Grove melody covers the octave with 'extended hand' passages marked. I would mention the sequences in bars 9-16 – it might make this more accessible.

AUDIO: **TK66. OLD SMOKEY**
 TK67. THE ASH GROVE

LESSON 17 – SYNCOPATION

Pg Nos. 38-39

We have on occasion alluded to syncopation in some of the pieces played already. Now we tackle the problem head on, using accents to identify strong and weak beats we can clarify the impact of cutting across the main beat. The two melodies can be usefully used in a group situation with one section clapping the beat while the other claps the melody.

Syncopated Warm-Up prefigures the piece coming **Like A Motherless Child** which is in E minor, however focus on the syncopation here. The right hand melody is quite wide ranging and will reward short-section practise. The left hand is largely in a static E position, but bar 8 and 13 need some attention.

AUDIO: **TK68. SYNCOPATED WARM-UP**
 TK69. LIKE A MOTHERLESS CHILD

LESSON 18 – THE BLUES

Pg Nos. 40-41

We close this section with the Blues. It fits nicely with the primary triad theory and its allure for pianists is useful. The other elements we add are the blues scale and swing rhythm. Linking the former with finger 4 prepares for F major in section 3 while the latter builds on the syncopation of the previous lesson.

My First 12-Bar Blues Piece and its warm-up neatly package the 12-bar format. I would walk the student through this asking them to identify the bars and changes. I have used a variant here (I - IV -I -I -IV -IV -I -I -V7 -IV -I -I) to prefigure the ‘riff’ in the left hand of the piece. The piece itself is challenging but I find students enjoy the challenge because of the style – I happily intervene to establish the swing style.

AUDIO: **TK70. SHORT MELODY STRAIGHT**
 TK70a. SHORT MELODY SWUNG
 TK71. BLUES SCALE
 TK72. BLUES WARM-UP 1
 TK72a. BLUES WARM-UP 2
 TK73. MY FIRST 12-BAR BLUES PIECE

LESSON 19 – SYNCOPATED WALK

Pg No. 42

As mentioned previously this piece is a challenge and deserves a lesson of its own. It is a longer piece with several challenges not least of which is keeping the LH quiet and allowing the RH to sing. In some ways the LH helps the syncopation in the same way as one group clapping straight 4s while the other clap the melody would. It can be useful to have one group play the LH while the other play the right and vice-versa to establish the piece in everyone’s mind. Remind them this is ‘straight’ not ‘swung’.

AUDIO: **TK74. SYNCOPATED WALK**

LESSON 20 – ENSEMBLE – BLUES IN MY POCKET

Pg Nos. 43-45

Capturing the momentum of the recent weeks, it makes sense to finish on a Blues ensemble piece. **Blues In My Pocket** includes a ‘walking bass line’ stopped rhythms, and an opportunity for improvisation. The Coda is essentially a blues scale through all parts – a kind of pass the parcel.

AUDIO: **TK75. 12-BARS IN MY POCKET PARTS A, B & C**
 TK75a. 12-BARS IN MY POCKET PARTS A & C
 TK75b. 12-BARS IN MY POCKET PARTS B & C
 TK75c. 12-BARS IN MY POCKET PARTS A & B

TERM 3 - LESSON BY LESSON

LESSON 21 – RELATIVE MINOR SCALES

Pg Nos. 46-47

The relationship between major and minor keys is the best way to introduce them. I am always surprised when I come across students who are at a higher level who still struggle firstly to identify the relationship, and secondly to know its importance. There are problems as it is not a fixed set of notes and appears in three forms; natural; harmonic; melodic. For ease I recommend the harmonic as the starting point.

Soldier's Song is best learnt LH first. Allow this oscillating accompaniment to feel natural before embarking on the RH. Then concentrate on the 'duet' points of bar 16 and 20.

AUDIO: TK76. SOLDIER'S SONG

LESSON 22 – PRIMARY TRIADS IN A MINOR

Pg Nos. 48-51

Using the same format as the Major keys we identify the three Primary triads and dominant 7th and go through the process of root position and inversions, then broken chords.

Song by Bartok is a regular visitor on the Grade 1 syllabus but there are some issues worth reviewing. The LH pushes the thumb on to an F# which is not ideal but practical. I would prefer 51 to 32, but it depends on the ease for the student. Also the double treble clef catches many out at first view. I start with the LH, the RH is comfortably in A position.

The chord progression page follows a familiar format, but moves more quickly. I also added the challenge of harmonising the A minor descending scale – this is a useful guide to their cognisance of the rudimentary harmony we are teaching. Even if they simply reverse the example immediately above, that is sufficient to know they understand the exercise.

AUDIO: TK77. PRIMARY TRIADS ROOT
TK77a. PRIMARY TRIADS INVERSIONS
TK77b. PRIMARY TRIAD RHYTHM
TK78. SONG
TK79. A MINOR BLOCK CHORDS
TK80. A MINOR ALBERTI BASS

LESSON 23 – TIME SIGNATURES 3/8 & 6/8

Pg Nos. 52-53

In an ideal world I would teach compound time-signatures a little later but there are too many useful teaching pieces, and several appear on the syllabus too often for delaying. A short exercise of clapping and chanting will demonstrate the quaver divisions and the rhythm that ensues.

Brave Boy by Gurlitt is relatively simple, remaining within LH G position and RH C position so the student can concentrate on rhythmic fluency. The 3-8 rhythm flows naturally hand-to-hand throughout the piece.

Diabelli – Allegretto is a little more demanding and a former grade 1 piece. I would start with bar 9 – the lovely contrary motion of this section and the chromatic LH is an interesting challenge for both hands.

AUDIO: **TK81. THE BRAVE BOY**
 TK82. DIABELLI – ALLEGRETTO

LESSON 24 – SCHYTTE ETUDES

Pg No. 54

Schytte Etudes - To consolidate compound time, pedalling, and inversions in A minor I use what could be regarded as 19th century pattern pieces. They are attractive to play and extremely useful for developing the concept of the movable hand.

AUDIO: **TK83. A MINOR ETUDE 1**
 TK84. A MINOR ETUDE 2

LESSON 25 – A MINOR SCALE

Pg Nos. 55-56

The A minor scale can now be learnt and add arpeggios at this point – they are merely extended hand positions which students will have no problems playing.

Song Without Words is another grade 1 piece which consolidates 3-8, a minor and has an extended arpeggio at the close.

AUDIO: **TK85. SONG WITHOUT WORDS**

LESSON 26 – SEMIQUAVERS AND RESTS

Pg Nos. 57-59

Rather like compound time, semiquavers appear somewhat prematurely, however they are included on every syllabus, and they do add some excitement to the repertoire at this level.

Semiquaver Etude needs special care. Sometimes semiquavers can be intimidating and cause the hand to cramp. To avoid this take them in groups of 4 initially allowing the wrist to rise and fall through each passage -to gain velocity group in 8s and using the same technique and play lightly as advised. I recommend starting with the LH.

Gurlitt Op. 82 No 52 is also a grade piece and perfect for developing semiquaver technique. Gurlitt was a masterful teacher and his groupings of semiquavers develop the study idea within the context of a piece.

The Theory review is close to the exam format, but I recommend old papers or the on-line samples as the best test at this stage.

AUDIO: TK86. SEMIQUAVER ETUDE
TK87. GURLITT OP.82 NO.52

LESSON 27 – F MAJOR

Pg Nos. 60-61

Now students are familiar with the process of making scales, we can be succinct with the presentation of F major. Additionally we have already explored 4 over in the blues scale so the scale should be relatively comfortable.

Cradle Song is another Gurlitt miniature with much to commend it. The B naturals catch many a student unawares; especially the LH bar 11 and 14, and, after so many naturals, the RH Bb in bar 12 is often overlooked.

Air in F includes a trill. Judge the tempo from the performance of this ornament. Last features on Grade 1 in 1989, this is quite a difficult piece at this level. While the RH remains within the octave, the range of the LH is extraordinary. Point out the RH F major scale at the end of the piece it may free up the student to concentrate on the LH.

AUDIO: TK88. CRADLE SONG
TK89. AIR IN F

LESSON 28 – D MINOR & TWO OCTAVE SCALES

Pg Nos. 62-64

Reinforcing the major minor relationship is usefully deployed here. D minor is an attractive key as it seems to exaggerate the raised seventh due to the proximity of the Bb. Somehow students notice this rather more than the G# in A minor.

Aria in D minor is a useful companion piece to the Bach Air in F. They are from the same era and again the LH covers two octaves and the RH almost the same. There is also a typically Purcellian descending bass reminiscent of Dido's Lament. RH fingering at bar 12-13 might be better as 23 4341 depending on the student.

Two Part Invention in D Minor is a good finger work-out for the student as they look forward to up grading. The scales are a hidden in the texture and often incomplete, and, as is frequently the case for Baroque music, feature melodic minor. The student will need their wits about them to realise this Bach pastiche effectively.

AUDIO: TK90. ARIA IN D MINOR
TK91. TWO PART INVENTION IN D MINOR

LESSON 29 – TWO OCTAVE SCALES

Pg Nos. 65-66

Dotting i's and crossing t's is the concept of this lesson. I teach from memory from the beginning. They have the essential pattern ready, it is just the link they need to perfect. For

exam purposes I advise capturing the easy marks available in the technical section. The demands are modest and the marking simple and not open to interpretation. The pieces are always more vulnerable to nerves and interpretation, so the safety net of full marks for scales is a ready antidote.

LESSON 30 – TEACHER/STUDENT DUET – RUSSIAN DANCE **Pg Nos. 67-71**
ENSEMBLE – TOCCATA

Russian Dance - I always enjoyed playing duets with my students. I use them to secure rhythm and timing. They also offer a wonderful opportunity for the teacher to play in the student concert. I selected a rousing march as a fitting finale for this part of the course.

AUDIO: **TK92. RUSSIAN DANCE**
 TK92a. RUSSIAN DANCE SECONDO
 TK92b. RUSSIAN DANCE PRIMO

Toccata – the final ensemble piece is a lively piece and player one will need to be confident in both hands. The inner part is the most regular, but needs to be balanced carefully. The lower part is, as ever, the foundation and needs to be punctual throughout.

TK93. TOCCATA PARTS A, B & C
TK93a. TOCCATA PARTS A & C
TK93b. TOCCATA PARTS B & C
TK93c. TOCCATA PARTS A & B