
Introduction

Being a good sight-reader is so important and it's not difficult at all! If you work through this book carefully – always making sure that you really understand each exercise before you play it, you'll never have problems learning new pieces or doing well at sight-reading in exams!

Using the workbook

1 Rhythmic exercises

Make sure you have grasped these fully before you go on to the melodic exercises: it is vital that you really know how the rhythms work. There are a number of ways to do the exercises – see *Improve your sight-reading* Grade 1 for more details.

2 Melodic exercises

These exercises use just the notes (and rhythms) for the Stage, and are organised into Sets which progress gradually. If you want to sight-read fluently and accurately, get into the habit of working through each exercise in the following ways before you begin to play it:

- Make sure you understand the rhythm and counting. Clap the exercise through.
- Know what notes you are going to play and the fingering you are going to use.
- Try to hear the piece through in your head. Always play the first note to help.

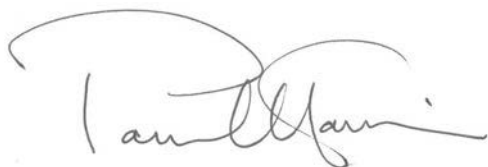
3 Prepared pieces

Work your way through the questions first, as these will help you to think about or 'prepare' the piece. Don't begin playing until you are pretty sure you know exactly how the piece goes.

4 Going solo!

It is now up to you to discover the clues in this series of practice pieces. Give yourself about a minute and do your best to understand the piece before you play. Check the rhythms and fingering, and try to hear the piece in your head.

Always remember to feel the pulse and to keep going steadily once you've begun. Good luck and happy sight-reading!



Stage 4

Shifting
(3rd position)

Rhythmic exercises

1

2

3

Melodic exercises

Set 1: Shifting in D major

1

2

2

3

4

Stage 6

Playing
musically

Whenever you speak you put expression into what you say: try to do the same with your sight-reading performances! As you're preparing the piece, as well as thinking about the notes and rhythms, think about how you'll interpret the piece, so you can play it musically and 'with meaning'. You'll need to consider these sorts of points:

- What are the important markings in the music?
- Does it require crisp or gentle and sustained playing?
- What would be an effective speed?

Have a look through this piece:

Marziale

The 'Marziale' marking suggests a strong, firm and march-like approach. Perhaps you'll play non-slurred notes slightly shorter than their full written value (with a tiny break between them). The tempo shouldn't be too fast, but with lots of vitality. Have a go, then try the next pieces, analysing them in the same way.

1



Lento espressivo

2



Spirito