

Happy MAY 11th, SMP musicians! All of the SMP staff/TAs/Tutors are hoping you're finding that playing your instrument at home is one of the few true creative outlets you have while in quarantine! It's actually a GREAT time to tackle some of the technical parts of playing an instrument (fingerings, note names, embouchure, bow hold, etc.) as well as a chance to have FUN because you're in control of your learning! Because we're an organization with a unified goal, we offer these lesson plans to keep us all on the same path but you're welcome to explore the book or other literature on your own. Even try to compose your own song!

Beginning Band:

#78, *Minuteman March*. We've focused on all the technical parts of this piece so now it's time to put it all together! Isn't it amazing how many details musicians cover while playing a piece of music? We're all geniuses! As you run through this, here's a quick checklist of all the musical elements we've worked on:

- Tone (always full and pretty – always a goal forever)
- Rhythm (remember..8th notes can come in sets of 2 or 4)
- Fingerings (basic knowledge of your instrument)
- Dynamics (drastic changes in this piece. We also added some!)
- Articulation (every note is tongued)
- Accidentals (bars 3 and 7)
- Phrasing (only take breath every two bars)

#81, *Frere Jacques*. Thank you ALL for working on this piece. Even though it's a simple tune from childhood for all of us, it's also an important tune because it introduces *harmony* and *rhythmic independence* to beginning musicians without adding new notes or fancy rhythms (other than the *measure repeat* sign). For now, make sure you're giving every note its full value/length so it doesn't sound *staccato*. If that's a new word for you, here's a brief video that explains this special articulation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AaKTBKRNvoE>

New Orleans Strut. Good news! Isaiah (Lowell percussionist) has a drum set at home. That means we'll be able to add the bass drum and/or the cymbal parts! For this week, I'd like you all to TRY to play along with the recording we've supplied on the SMP website. See how far you get today and then try to add a few measures every day. If this approach is a bit too difficult, just play along with your metronome at a slightly slower speed.

Advanced Band:

New Orleans Strut. Good news! Isaiah (Lowell percussionist) has a drum set at home. That means we'll be able to add the bass drum and/or the cymbal parts! For this week, I'd like you all to TRY to play along with the recording we've supplied on the SMP website. See how far you get today and then try to add a few measures every day. If this approach is a bit too difficult, just play along with your metronome at a slightly slower speed. Hey, trumpets and trombones...look on SMP's website for great videos from our tutors playing THIS piece!

Procession for a New Day. This is a very long piece! What that means for you (especially brass players) is that you'll need to be prepared to play long passages without your lips getting tired. How do we all do this in band? To build your endurance, check out this brief video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vjd-sEovBM4>. Throughout the week, try to increase your endurance so you can make it through this piece from top to bottom. Trombonists should watch the video on SMP's website that one of our tutors made playing this very piece!

Page 21, Montego Bay. It's time to play along with the recording! You'll find it on SMP's website and it'll help you to understand who plays where so you'll know how YOUR part fits in. If the tempo is too fast, feel free to just use your metronome at a slower speed for now. Hopefully, by the end of the week, you can increase your speed so you can play along with the recording. By the way, you can hear lots of bands playing this piece on YouTube. Check it out!

Beginning Strings:

#116, Song for Maria. This song should be fairly solid now. Our lesson plans over the past seven weeks have zeroed in on the basic "building blocks" of playing so now it's just time to refine all that you've worked on! Refinement takes repetition. This week, I'd suggest playing #116 at least ten times all the way through (we added a repeat) so you have a feel for the entire piece instead of little chunks to work on. Here's a little list of things to be aware of as you *refine Song for Maria*:

- Tone (always full and pretty – always a goal forever)
- Rhythm (remember..8th notes can come in sets of 2 or 4)
- Key signature (2 sharps in this one)
- Fingerings (basic knowledge of your instrument. Also note which fingering you'll use for A in this piece..it changes!)
- Dynamics (we added some!)
- Articulation (all those darned slurs!)

#125, Jingli Nona. Be aware of the new key signature (only ONE sharp) and that you'll be playing C naturals. Also, you may want to circle all the Ds in this piece because some are played on an open string and some are with your fourth finger (they're marked). This is a great week to play with a metronome ALL THE TIME. Mark down the tempo you're comfortable with and then mark your new/faster tempo the next day.

March of the Metro Gnome. Do you still have your yellow copy of this piece? If not, SMP can send you a link so you can download/print a new copy! Also, violinists should know that one of our amazing tutors added a video of this piece to our website for you to use as a resource! Again, it's time to start at the beginning and play all the way through without stopping (even if you make a mistake). At the right tempo, this piece takes 1.5 minutes. See how close you can come to that!

Advanced Orchestra:

March of the Metro Gnome. Do you still have your yellow copy of this piece? If not, SMP can send you a link so you can download/print a new copy! Also, violinists should know that one of

our amazing tutors added a video of this piece to our website for you to use as a resource! Again, it's time to start at the beginning and play all the way through without stopping (even if you make a mistake). At the right tempo, this piece takes 1.5 minutes. See how close you can come to that!

#192, Simple Gifts. This is such a pretty tune! As you work on your part, here's a quick checklist of things to be aware of:

- Tone (always full and pretty – always a goal forever)
- Rhythm (in advanced groups, the A and B parts often feature different rhythms)
- Key signature (for now, your pieces alternate between one sharp or two – notice which key you're in before starting!)
- Fingerings
- Dynamics (we added some!)
- Articulation (all those darned slurs!)

Dragon Hunter. Hey violinists - if you haven't taken advantage of our amazing tutors' videos of this song, check them out! Both the 1st and 2nd violin parts are featured and you can learn a TON from watching these experts play! Again, it's late enough in the year that we're at the point of playing all the way through this piece. Even if you stumble, it's wise to learn how to come back in because, even in middle school and high school, you'll make a mistake or get lost in a piece and you'll need to know how to come back in to contribute to your orchestra. Use a metronome and play the whole piece (along with the video if you can play at that tempo). Since this is our most complicated piece, I'd recommend warming up with a D Major scale (#64 in your book). Feel free to change the rhythm and/or tempo.