



Twinkling The Ivories

March 2012

Knowing One's Goal: The Importance of Listening in the Suzuki Approach

Η μουσική είναι θαυμάσια

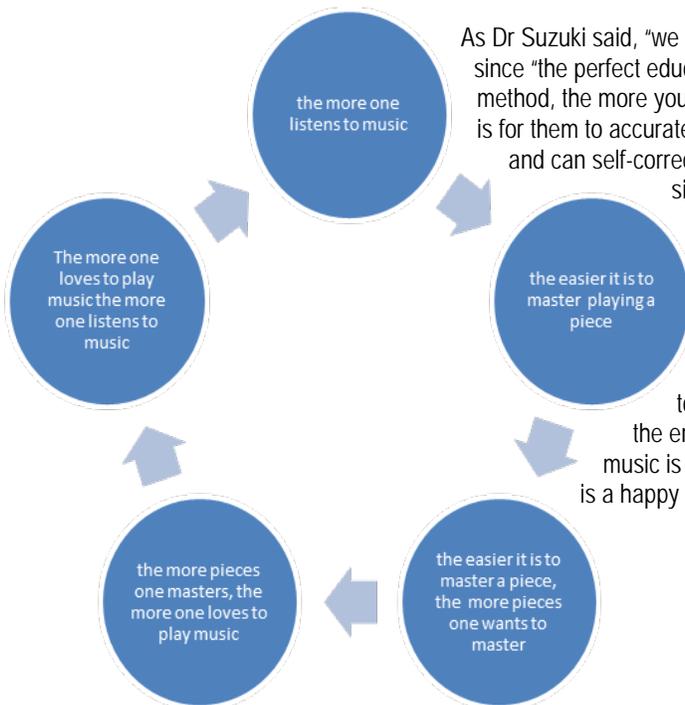
What in the world does this mean and how do you say it?

If you were up to the challenge, you could look up the Greek alphabet, learn the phonetic symbols and their sounds and practise reading this short sentence. You might try to impress your Greek friends by sharing your newly gained skill only to be frustrated because they would not understand what you were saying due to poor pronunciation. This means you would have to go back and try to figure out whether the vowels were diphthongs or monophthongs and where the intonation lay. This process would be followed by reading the phrase over and over again and hoping that this time your Greek friends understand you. Your effort at learning to read a single Greek sentence could take endless practice and end with you giving up.

Now, imagine if you learned this phrase by first asking your Greek friends to teach you how to **say** "Music is wonderful" in Greek. This process would be less frustrating, and you would be instantly gratified and confident that you could learn more. Your Greek friends would tell you how great you sounded and you would experience success.

So, why is it so much easier **saying** a sentence accurately in a foreign language once you've heard it, as opposed to learning to say it by reading it without having heard it? **When we know what the end product sounds like we know where we're headed: we know our goal.**

Music is first and foremost about sound, just like speaking. Before babies can say their first words "mama" and "dada" they have usually heard these words 2000 times. Moreover, parental positive reinforcement once babies utter their first word encourages them to want to say more. The next words come quicker and by the time children are five years old they have usually accumulated 5000 words, which they have learned by listening, saying and being encouraged to repeat them.



As Dr Suzuki said, "we are born with the natural ability to learn" and since "the perfect educational method [is the] mother tongue" method, the more young pianists listen to their pieces the easier it is for them to accurately play them because they know their goal and can self-correct in the process of reaching it. We can all sing familiar songs like "Happy Birthday" without voice lessons because we have heard these songs enough times to know what pitches to produce when singing them. If we know where we are headed, it is easier to get there; and, since music is an art for the ears we have to give our ears every opportunity to listen to the end product. Developing a talent and love of music is nourishment for the soul and a happy soul is a happy child!

Joyce Sipsas

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Joyce Sipsas' Tips for Listening to the Suzuki CDs

- Listen daily at the same time.
- Instill the love of listening to music by listening with your child.
- Sing meaningful words to the melodies (you can personalize them about your child).
- Take your CD with you on holidays. The piano may be too big but the CD isn't!
- Extra copies: copy the CDs and keep one in your car.
- New Pieces: Talk about the new pieces your child will learn as you listen to the CD.

"Listening until we remember is not enough. We must listen until we cannot forget." - *Shinichi Suzuki*

Register for The Spring Festival – April 21, 2012

Plan to attend our annual Spring Festival, where students prepare a piece, polish it to the highest level, and perform it in a class to a visiting teacher, parents, and other students.

Guest teachers Lana Ramsay and Joseph Fridman will evaluate the performances and provide written comments, which typically include suggestions for further study, practice tips, and encouragement.

The registration fee for ESPS members is \$20 (non-members \$40 and the deadline for registration is March 23, 2012. See your teacher for more information. See you at the Festival!

2012-2013 ESPS Registration

Watch for the 2013-2013 registration packages to arrive in your teacher's studio in mid-April. Within the package, you'll find registration information and forms for selecting volunteer options and marking group class preferences.

Please note that due to a high demand for lessons by new families, parents who do not submit forms and payment by this date cannot be guaranteed a lesson slot. In order to confirm your place in your teacher's studio, you must register by May 15th, 2012.

March 2012 Graduations

Congratulations to the following students for their hard work and well-deserved graduations:

Volume 1

Julia Dantas

Weiran Sun

Finnegan Taylor

Micah Truong

Gavin Yu

Volume 2

Darin Lee

Jennifer Li

Hannah Liu

Volume 3

Tereza Zitnansky

Volume 4

Bao Williamson

*"When love is deep,
much can be
accomplished."*

Shinichi Suzuki

Upcoming Events

April 21, 2012 *Spring Festival, Suzuki Charter School*

April 25, 2012 *ESPS General Meeting, 7:45 PM, Suzuki Charter School*

May 15, 2012 *2012-2013 Registration Forms Due*

June 3, 2012 *Group Concert, Suzuki Charter School*

June 10 & 17, 2012 *Summer Recitals, Convocation Hall*

June 24, 2012 *Graduation, Muttart Hall*

Try This Great Practice Idea!

Turn your practice into a performance and record the results. Watch it afterwards and help your child to observe their posture, fingering, or dynamics. What were their successes? What does your child think s/he needs to practice next? Use their observations to determine what to practice in the remainder of that session.