



Source Material for Reading 2025 MTC/IL Retreat Robin Keehn

It is important to select, or help students select developmentally appropriate sheet music after they have completed the SM Reading Program (Reading Rhythm, Reading Notes and Time for More Music).

Having a list of pieces that you are confident with is very supportive, especially as a newer teacher. Once you've gone through this process several times, it will be easier to pick out appropriate music.

Selecting Music

- You can select music that you enjoy playing
- You can pay attention all along the journey (from early levels) and take note of the genres of music your student gravitates to
- Depending on the maturity of the student, you can share the process of selecting music
- You can simply select music without the input of your student

Each of these options has pros and cons.

My take: There is too much wonderful music to play something you don't like.

What if....

What happens if it's too hard?

What happens if it's too long?

What happens if the student loses interest?

There is nothing wrong with stopping and picking something else.

Normalize this.

Acknowledge the tools and strategies that you discovered and used in the piece.

If your student wants to revisit the piece later, make a note of it and suggest at a later date (if appropriate).

In fact, pick some pieces that look quite challenging and go through the process but never put it on the piano.

The Process

Ask the following questions (for yourself first, before you introduce a piece of music):

1. Is there a treble and bass clef?
2. What are you counting to?
3. Are there any sharps or flats? (Do the Scale Journey here + identify the I-IV-V chords in this key signature)
4. Are there any rhythm patterns?
5. Are there any note (interval) patterns?
6. Are there any measures that repeat (LH, RH, BH)?
7. Are there any signs, symbols or words that you don't recognize?

You must be comfortable doing this for yourself.

When doing this with your students, DO NOT answer the questions for them. You can assist them in their discovery, but let them lead. Point to specific measures and ask leading questions (like, do you notice anything about the intervals in this measure - i.e. they are thirds apart. What does that look like to you?)

The Pieces

Here are pieces that I have used or would endorse using as material. I would also highly recommend the use of The Extensions Program and The Development Program. The Extensions Program was developed by Neil specifically to address teacher requests for additional pieces. The Development Program has been made available to all teachers, regardless of level. Many of these pieces are appropriate for students who have recently completed Time for More Music.

8notes.com- Search pieces by: FREE, GENRE, PIANO, EASY, BEGINNER, INTERMEDIATE, ADVANCED

Beginner: (60+ pieces)

<https://www.8notes.com/scores/13171.asp>

(Brahms Walz)

Why? Counting 3/4

<https://www.quittingculture.com/music-teachers-coach-2025>

Dotted quarter notes
Looking at slurs and dynamics

<https://www.8notes.com/scores/13170.asp>

Vivaldi - Spring from the Four Seasons

Why?

Easy intervals

Easy rhythm

Very simple LH

Interplay between LH & RH

Simple phrasing and dynamics

<https://www.8notes.com/scores/13177.asp>

Kyrie Elieison by Mozart

3/4

Intervals

Rhythm

Short

<https://www.8notes.com/scores/10381.asp>

Happy Birthday melody

Easy

Add LH (figure it out)

<https://www.8notes.com/scores/13174.asp>

Largo - New World Symphony by Dvorak

4/4

Dotted quarter notes

Phrasing

LH & RH separate, can add LH (what chords?)

<https://www.8notes.com/scores/38850.asp>

Maple Leaf Rag - Joplin

4/4, Rag

Intervals

Hands separate

<https://www.8notes.com/scores/29128.asp>

It is Well with My Soul - Bliss & Spafford

Gospel

Hands together

Simple intervals

Simple BHTog

<https://www.8notes.com/scores/29127.asp>

Holy, Holy, Holy
Simple hands together
Can make LH bigger using chords

Easy

<https://www.8notes.com/scores/452.asp>
Chopin, Nocturne Op9/2
In development Level 13?
Simplified but could use that one instead
Rhythm & Intervals not difficult but some more challenging measures for students to process

<https://www.8notes.com/scores/2811.asp>
Carol of the Bells
Great for students who have learned this playing based already
Increases in challenge as it goes
LH mostly single notes & chords

<https://www.8notes.com/scores/453.asp>
The Wedding March by Mendelssohn
Great piece for students to be able to play
Confidence if they're ever given the opportunity
LH simple notes and some chords

<https://www.8notes.com/scores/431.asp>
Waltz of the Flowers -Tchaikovsky
Great for Christmas
Triplets
Repetitive
Simple LH
Patterns

<https://www.8notes.com/scores/11902.asp>
Winter from the Four Seasons - Vivaldi
LH like August
Break into chords
Find repeating chords

<https://www.8notes.com/scores/531.asp>
The Entertainer - Scott Joplin
Rag, simplified
Great for students who love Ragtime

<https://www.8notes.com/scores/12240.asp>

St Louis Blues - Handy

For students who love the blues

Chords are denoted

Rhythm is not too difficult

LH gets more challenging as the piece progresses - can be simplified

Intermediate: 2842 pieces

<https://www.8notes.com/scores/48200.asp>

Sonata K 102

Scarlatti

Great for rhythm 3/8

Great intervals

Recognizing octaves

Hands together

Musescore: Search Easy Classical Piano, Search Intermediate Jazz

EASY:

https://musescore.com/official_scores/scores/6971853

Burgmuller L'Arabesque

For early stages

Great Burgmuller piece

<https://musescore.com/user/9292486/scores/5502983>

Harmony of the Angels - Burgmuller

Broken Chords

1 Sharp

Mostly hands separate

<https://musescore.com/user/34104354/scores/6264821>

Consolation - Burgmuller

Mostly hands separate

Repetitive

<https://musescore.com/user/34104354/scores/6275733>

Etude Barcarolle - Burgmuller

4 Flats

Hands together - easy

Can learn first half

<https://www.quittingculture.com/music-teachers-coach-2025>

<https://musescore.com/user/31902283/scores/5933450>

Clair de Lune - Debussy

EASY

Simplified - Key of C

Phrasing

Tied notes

<https://musescore.com/user/6450771/scores/3537686>

Married Life (Theme from UP) James Cullen

Easy theme

Repetitive

For students who love this piece

https://musescore.com/official_scores/scores/6938613

Clocks - Cold Play

Great Riff

Chords

Melody - easy

Fun Pieces:

Ragtime/Jazz

https://musescore.com/official_scores/scores/6950188

Hold that Tiger, Original Dixieland Jazz Band

Fast Swing

Denotes chords

Great intervals

Learn slowly to play fast

After into, repetitive

<https://musescore.com/user/97106398/scores/17398861>

Happy Birthday - Jazz Piano

<https://musescore.com/user/3402766/scores/1026276>

Autumn Leaves - Swing

Jazz Standard

No chords - great opportunity to

<https://musescore.com/user/24950681/scores/5394147>

Take 5, Dave Brubeck

https://musescore.com/official_scores/scores/6937593

<https://www.quittingculture.com/music-teachers-coach-2025>

Experience, Luciana Einaudi
Chord based
Key signature
Increases in difficulty
Long for some students

https://musescore.com/official_scores/scores/6937593
Confidence, Burgmuller
RH - chord based

<https://musescore.com/user/12461571/scores/3291706>
River Flows in You - Yiruma

<https://musescore.com/user/33574620/scores/7822463>
Theme from Amelie - Yann Tiersen