

INSIGHTS & PIANO STUDY

GUIDE 1A

Tom Gerou ▪ Scott Price

GUIDE 1A

PREPARATION
MUSICIANSHIP
ARTISTRY

guide ▪ learn ▪ create

A Comprehensive Piano Course
Based on Aural Acculturation,
Adaptive Assimilation, and
Skill Reinforcement



TOMGEROUMUSIC ▪ COM®

Copyright © 2025 by TOMGEROUMUSIC (ASCAP)

All rights reserved.

No part of this book shall be reproduced, arranged, adapted, recorded, publicly performed, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted by any means without written permission from the publisher. In order to comply with copyright laws, please apply for such written permission and/or license by contacting the publisher at info@tomgeroumusic.com.

ISBN-13: 979-8-3507-6121-4

guiding the process

Music Learning Theory

INSIGHTS & Piano Study was designed to incorporate current research in Music Learning Theory.* In this process, students are immersed in an environment where they listen to sound (acculturation), equate sound with key combinations on the piano, imitate sound, progress to creating their own music with the stipulated sound through improvisation activities, then viewing the printed score to discern the labels for various music reading concepts. Research found in *Piano Study & Autism: A Basic Teaching Vocabulary* by Dr. Scott Price is incorporated in the *INSIGHTS & Piano Study* curriculum through the use of learning and teaching routines, careful choices in vocabulary, and literal and specific delivery of instruction through step-by-step procedures.

Three Levels of Focus

INSIGHTS & Piano Study consists of three levels of instructional books: Preparation, Musicianship, and Artistry.

Preparation Level 1 books include the basic foundations of piano study: pattern identification, music counting, and technique. Pattern identification and recognition is approached through sound acculturation and through appropriate Create book assignments.

Musicianship Level 2 books build on the Preparation Level by introducing expressive concepts, music notation reading, and counting.

Artistry Level 3 books include more sophisticated repertoire and advanced expressive concepts.

Literal and Specific Vocabulary (Imagery, Analogy, Metaphor)

All vocabulary used in instruction consists of literal and specific words and descriptions. Imagery, analogy, and metaphor should be avoided unless carefully explained and coupled with a literal definition. Examples of vocabulary usage occur in the sample *Order of Instruction* accompanying each concept.

Music Reading Approach

INSIGHTS & Piano Study avoids abstraction in the learning of music reading. Students are guided to equate the notes on the page directly with the assigned keys on the piano. In this process, a student looks at the note in the printed score, locates the assigned piano key, chooses the correct hand and finger, and touches/pushes the key for the stipulated amount of time indicated by the rhythmic notation.

Music Counting Approach

INSIGHTS & Piano Study avoids abstraction in the music counting process by utilizing Directive Words to facilitate music counting. Directive Words tell a student what to do with their bodies to create the rhythm in sound at the piano. In this process, a quarter note is counted as "push," and a half note as "push-hold," a dotted half note as "push-hold-it," and a whole note as "push-and-hold-it."

Multi-Book Correlations

At each level, the three core books (Learn, Create, Guide) offer page-by-page correlation to support all concepts introduced.

- In the LEARN book, each new concept introduced presents a pairing of a left-facing "**concept**" page for the student, with a right-facing "Insights" page for a teacher/parent. The right-facing "Insights" page includes an *Order of Instruction*, with examples of literal vocabulary usage and specific step-by-step breakdown in the instruction and learning processes (modeling), as-well-as musical exercises for the student with duet accompaniments.
- The coordinating CREATE book contains additional **musical assignments**, improvisation exercises, and activities that may be used in the lesson or for practice assignments at home. Such repetitions support teaching and reinforce learning.
- The accompanying GUIDE book contains detailed explanation of the **educational process** contained in *INSIGHTS & Piano Study*, and more information on the educational needs of all students, including those with autism or other neurodiverse issues.
- For student inclusivity in a **recital setting**, a next-stage challenge, or a reward, a RECITAL solo is available for each concept introduced.

* Edwin E. Gordon. *Learning Sequences in Music*. Chicago. GIA Publications, 2012 Edition.

Gross Motor Skills

INSIGHTS & Piano Study contains information on helping students to develop and manage gross motor skills through the use of graphics that demonstrate correct body posture, arm, wrist, and hand posture, and instructions on how to move the body.

Fine Motor Skills

Fine motor skills are managed through the use of Directive Words that tell a student what to do with their fingers by touching/pushing/poking keys as necessary and appropriate.

Expression and Artistry

INSIGHTS & Piano Study encourages expression and artistry by providing examples of literal and specific vocabulary usage coupled with body movements designed to allow students to avoid abstraction and focus on the movements needed to produce a wide variety of expressive sounds. Examples of vocabulary and process are contained in the *Order of Instruction* for each concept.

Repertoire

The repertoire contained in *INSIGHTS & Piano Study* is pattern oriented and designed to be broken down into step-by-step teaching and learning routines. Improvisation exercises and increased numbers of pieces for each concept allow students to spend more time learning and coordinating body movements. Increased numbers of pieces also allow for greater sound acculturation. The recital solos provide advancing students a slightly more challenging, patterned piece for performance.

Educational Process

INSIGHTS & Piano Study uses an educational process where a concept is modeled, the student has an opportunity to explore the concept aurally and physically through improvisation activities, subsequently followed by repertoire showing the concept as it appears in the printed music score.

- **Concept** (*Introduction*)
- **Aural & Physical Realization** (*Improvisation*)
- **Reading** (*Repertoire*)

Working in the Process

INSIGHTS & Piano Study requires teachers to learn along with their students and to be present throughout the student's learning and working process. Teachers should be active throughout the process guiding their students' learning, focusing attention, managing behaviors, and providing assurance and validation.

Teaching Process

INSIGHTS & Piano Study encourages teachers to use a cognitive-friendly teaching routine for the presentation of each concept.

Black circled numbers (❶) indicate concepts
Gray instructions (❶) indicate teacher modeling.
Orange instructions (❶) indicate student trial activities and practice assignments.

A lesson should include the following
Order of Instruction:

Order of Instruction

Open (<i>Joint Attention</i>)	Presentation
Consent (<i>Overview</i>)	
Teacher Model	Application
Student Trial	
Facilitation of Process	
Assessment	Reinforcement
Practice Assignment	
Close	

Student Process

INSIGHTS & Piano Study encourages students to use a routine in their learning and practice:

I will not be afraid to:

- ❶ **Talk**
- ❷ **Say** "I don't know."
- ❸ **Question** "what," "why," or "how."
- ❹ **Request** to "explain it again."
- ❺ **Ask** to "try again."

Reference

Dr. Scott Price, *Autism & Piano Study: A Basic Teaching Vocabulary*, Los Angeles, TOMGEROUMUSIC.COM, 2023.

Edwin E. Gordon. *Learning Sequences in Music*. Chicago. GIA Publications, 2012 Edition.

Acknowledgement

The authors extend sincere appreciation to Dr. Beth A. Bauer, Nicole Burns, and Dr. Olivia Colomaio for their insight and participation in the classroom testing of this method.