

TIPS FOR LEARNING A NEW PIECE

1. SILENT STUDY

What does the title of the piece tell me?

What is the time signature, key signature, tempo?

What are the musical markings?

What is the form: AB? ABA? Introduction? Coda? Repeats?

Are there repeated patterns, sequences, scale passages?

Where is the melody?

2. SIGHT READ

Set a VERY slow, steady tempo.

Sight-read from beginning to end.

Keep going no matter what happens.

Mark the trouble spots.

Pencil-mark each trouble spot so you know where to drill. These will be the areas you drill at least 5 times a day until mastered.

Decide what makes this a trouble spot so you know how to practice it. Is it tricky rhythm, fingering, notes, jumps, stretches?

3. NUMBER THE PRACTICE SECTIONS

Number the beginning of each practice section, using a pencil.

Practice sections should be short – approximately 4 to 8 measures – and should adhere to proper phrase markings.

Practice sections will later become memory sections.