

## **Wilson Area School District Planned Course Guide**

**Title of Planned Course:** Beginner Group Piano

**Subject Area:** Music

**Grade Level:** 9-12

**Course Description:** In this course, students will gain an appreciation of the art of making music. They will study the elements of music-melody, harmony and rhythm. They will have ear-training, sight-reading, technique exercises, composition/improvisation and repertoire study (the songs). They will learn note/rest values, music terminology and symbols. Students will perform in ensemble as well as individually. Students will participate in monthly recitals using a repertoire of the teacher's choice. After all students have completed Book 1 as a class, students will be allowed to progress at their own speed (tempo).

**Time/Credit for this course:** One Full Academic Year / 0.6 credits

**Curriculum Writing Committee:** Ann R. Hockin

## Wilson Area School District Planned Course Materials

**Course Title:** Beginner Group Piano

**Textbook:**

Alfred's Group Piano Course, Books 1-4  
By Palmer, Manus, Lethco, Kowalchuk & Lancaster  
Alfred Publishing Co. Van Nuys, CA 91419  
[www.alfredpubl.com](http://www.alfredpubl.com)

**Supplemental Books:** Public Domain Christmas Carols copied from many different sources.

**Teacher Resources:**

[www.pitt.edu/~deben](http://www.pitt.edu/~deben)  
[www.jmajormusictheory.org](http://www.jmajormusictheory.org)

## Curriculum Map

**August:** Introduction to the Keyboard, playing legato, correct body posture and hand position. What do all the buttons do? Black key discovery, whole/half notes, bar line, double bar, measures, beginner rhythms.

**September:** 1<sup>st</sup> recital. Whole notes, dynamic signs, repeat signs, low/high pitches, notes moving up/down, ensemble/individual playing, same/different rhythm/melody, rhythm dictation, Left Hand (LH), Right Hand (RH) stem placement, 4/4 time signature, shared middle C position.

**October:** 2<sup>nd</sup> recital. New dynamic signs, ensemble/individual playing, technique exercises (play legato-smoothly), new C position, new time signature-3/4, major/minor tonality, ear-training, sight-reading, rhythmic/melodic dictation, improvisation/composition and theory.

**November:** 3<sup>rd</sup> recital. Introduction of the musical staff, lines/spaces, notes moving up/down/staying the same, bass clef, treble clef, the Grand Staff, "stem rule", eye-training, dynamics, melodic/rhythmic dictation, ear-training, sight-reading, improvisation/composition, and theory.

**December, January, February:** Slurs, rounds (with the teacher and in ensemble), rests, playing with both hands at the same time, note spelling, legato playing, slurring from the LH to the RH and vice versa, ear-training, sight-reading, composition/improvisation, ensemble/individual playing, dictations and theory. Study of melodic/harmonic intervals from unisons through 5<sup>th</sup>'s and TIED notes. Recitals will occur during the 1<sup>st</sup> week of December, January and February.

**March, April, May:** Book 3. New G hand position, D.C. al fine, crescendo/diminuendo, staccato, accents, fermata, tempo words, ritardando, combining legato/staccato at the same time, sharps, flats, 8<sup>th</sup> notes/rests, note spelling, ear-training, sight-reading, improvisation/composition, theory, ensemble/individual playing. Students will review and prepare for the final exit exam and recital.

**May, June:** Book 4. Changing positions, use of damper pedal, 8va, arpeggios, tetra chords, new G position for LH, half/whole steps, whole tone scale and major scale.

## Curriculum Scope & Sequence

**Planned Course:** Beginner Group Piano

**Unit 1:** Introduction to the Keyboard

**Time Frame:** 3-4 week (pgs. 1-33)

**State Standards:** 9.1A, 9.1B, 9.1C, 9.1G, 9.1H, 9.1J

**Essential content/objectives:** At the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Recognize that the keyboard has a pattern and know finger #'s
- Locate anchor white keys: C and F
- Demonstrate good body/hand posture and legato technique
- Identify high/low pitches and hear the pitches moving up/down
- Describe basic music terminology of quarter/half notes, bar line, double bar, measures
- Perform correct counting/clapping of simple rhythms
- Recognize that RH = stems up and LH = stems down

**Core Activities:** Students will complete/participate in the following:

- Using fingers 2,3,4 and keeping a steady 4 beat count (count 1,2,3 move), students will play all 3-black note groups from lowest to highest with the RH and from highest to lowest with the LH, then vice versa.
- Using finger 2,3 and keeping a steady 3 beat count (count 1,2 move), students will play all 2-black note groups the same as above.
- Practice finding all of the C's (white key just before the 2-black key groups) on the keyboard and find all of the F's (white key just before the 3-black key groups).
- The teacher will play high/low pitches and the group/individuals will identify what they hear. (Students can be assigned to do this with each other in groups of 2 or 3.)
- The teacher will play 3 ascending/descending pitches for the group/individuals to identify. (Students can be assigned to this in groups of 2.)
- Through practice and performance of the repertoire, evaluate the production of correct pitches and rhythms and if legato was played.
- Demonstrating simple rhythm mastery by clapping and counting rhythms of the songs out loud.
- Recognize that (for now), stems up are RH and stems down are LH by seeing and playing these correctly in performance for the teacher.
- Read the book and complete theory exercises related to piano theory and notify the teacher when they get to sight-reading, improvisation/compositions as it appears in their books.

**Extensions:** Students will be given assigned supplemental repertoire materials to use for recitals.

**Remediation:** Students are allowed to sign out of study halls to come down and practice in the piano lab. Students may come down before/after school for assistance or practice. (7:10 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. or later)

**Instructional Methods:**

- Direct instruction
- Modeling
- Group discussion
- Ensemble playing

**Materials & Resources:**

- Student Text book: Alfred Beginner Group Piano Course, Book 1
- Teacher-provided theory books
- Teacher-generated supplemental songs

**Assessments:**

- Teacher Observation
- Rhythm dictation
- Ear-training
- Sight-reading

## Curriculum Scope & Sequence

**Planned Course:** Beginner Group Piano

**Unit 2:** Rhythms-What Do You Hear?, Dynamic Signs, Time Signature of 4/4, Learning the White Keys and Shared Middle C Position

**Time Frame:** 4-5 weeks

**State Standards:** 9.1A, 9.1B, 9.1C, 9.1G, 9.1H, 9.3A, 9.3E

**Essential content/objectives:** At the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Respond by circling the correct rhythm clapped/played on the keyboard
- Understand that 4/4 time = 4 beats per measure and the quarter note = the steady beat
- Differentiate between improvisation and composition
- Describe the dynamic signs: *f* and *p*
- Comprehend the pitch names of the white keys-essential to knowing the keyboard
- Demonstrate playing skills in the shared middle C position
- Move and develop playing skill after moving the LH to regular C position
- Explain the 3/4 time signature and the dotted half note
- Differentiate between major/minor tonality

**Core Activities:** Students will complete or participate in the following:

- Complete theory exercises and notify the teacher when reach ear-training and sight-reading
- Ear-training exercise where students will circle the rhythm pattern they hear clapped/played
- Improvise/compose melodies using a prescribed rhythm pattern
- Clap/count aloud rhythms of songs before playing
- Through the use of repertoire, practice playing loudly (*f*) and softly (*p*) according to the dynamic sign of the song
- Practice finding all of the C's and F's on keyboards and proceed with finding A, B, D, E and G. Learning the musical alphabet: A,B,C,D,E,F,G and playing all of the white keys in alphabetical order from the lowest to the highest and vice versa, saying pitch names aloud
- Practice songs in the Middle C and regular C positions by first clapping/counting the rhythm, then playing/saying the pitch names aloud
- Play songs in 3/4 time, clapping/counting the rhythms aloud to reinforce this new time signature. Then, they will play/say pitch names aloud
- Teacher plays major and minor tonalities and students will respond with what they hear in a group and individually
- Regular rhythm dictations to reinforce rhythm learning

**Extensions:** Teacher generated songs for recitals. Students can go online and download/print free music from the teacher resources to expand their song base.

**Remediation:** Before/After school/Study Hall assistance and practice time in the piano lab.

**Instructional Methods:**

- Direct instruction
- Group discussion
- Ensemble play
- Modeling

**Assessments:**

- Teacher observation of student performance
- Rhythm dictations
- Melodic movement quizzes
- Individual recitals with teacher/group critique
- Book 1 Exit Test
- October recital using the Recital Scoring Rubric
- Ear-training
- Sight-reading

## Curriculum Scope & Sequence

**Planned Course:** Beginner Group Piano

**Unit 3:** Introduction of the musical staff, pitch location on the staff, clef signs and the grand staff.

**Time Frame:** 4 weeks

**State Standards:** 9.1A, 9.1B, 9.1C, 9.1G, 9.3B, 9.3E

**Essential content/objectives:** At the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Differentiate between the Bass (LH) and Treble (RH) staves
- Recognize the lines and spaces of the musical staff and distinguish between a line and space notes
- Describe notes as moving up/down/staying the same on the staff
- Explain purpose of the white keys and their pattern on the keyboard and, ultimately their positions on the musical staff
- Recognize the Grand Staff
- Read pitches moving from the bass to the treble staves, fluidly
- Demonstrate an understanding of the *f-p* dynamic marking
- Recognize and know what the repeat sign is

**Core Activities:** Students will complete/participate in the following:

- Read Book 2 to gain an understanding of the theory to become familiar with the lines and spaces of the staff and the pitch names of the bass and treble clef on the staff.
- Play several pages of Bass (Also called F clef) Clef songs with the LH to reinforce the location of the pitches on the musical staff. Clap/count the rhythms aloud, then play and say the pitches aloud.
- Play several pages of Treble Clef (Also known as the G Clef) songs with the RH to reinforce the location of the pitches on the musical staff. Clap/count the rhythms aloud, then play and say the pitches.
- Review the pitch names of all white keys and their relationship to the keyboard: Find all the A's, the B's, etc. up and down the keyboard.
- Study repertoire to train their eyes to move fluidly from the bass to the treble clef and back.
- Learn the repeat sign and that the *f-p* dynamic means to play loudly the 1<sup>st</sup> time through the piece, then repeat the whole song but play it softly. Play individual notes softly, then loudly to recognize that the keys have a dynamic range.
- November recital

**Extensions:** Teacher-assigned songs for recitals; students may seek our other repertoire suitable to their level of proficiency, using web sites recommended under teacher resources.

**Remediation:** Students may come to the piano lab during study halls or before/after school.



**Instructional Methods:**

- Direct instruction
- Modeling
- Group discussion
- Ensemble playing

**Materials & Resources:**

- Text book
- Theory book
- Teachers resources

**Assessments:**

- Teacher Observation
- Melodic/Harmonic dictations
- Students self-critique
- Verbal/aural quizzes
- Recitals with scoring rubric
- Teacher/group critique of recitals
- Ear-training and sight-reading

## Curriculum Scope & Sequence

**Planned Course:** Beginner Group Piano

**Unit 4:** Slurs, Rounds, Melodic/Harmonic Intervals, Tied Notes and Rests

**Time Frame:** 11-12 weeks

**State Standards:** 9.1A, 9.1B, 9.1C, 9.1E, 9.1G, 9.1H, 9.3A

**Essential content/objectives:** At the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Differentiate between slurred and tied notes
- Demonstrate an understanding of harmony by playing canons (rounds) with the teacher and in ensemble
- Recognize the rest values for quarter and whole notes
- Know, See and Hear the difference between Melodic/Harmonic Intervals: 2nds, 3rds, 4ths, 5ths
- Be proficient at seeing and playing RH and LH note at the same time
- Be proficient at playing legato (smoothly) from the RH to the LH and vice versa

**Core Activities:** Students will complete/participate in the following:

- Playing more challenging repertoire to expand knowledge and skill.
- Play legato repertoire, which now includes the symbol for legato: the slur.
- Play songs with tied notes: an arched line connecting two notes of the SAME pitch and these are held down for the duration of the value of both pitches.
- Execute the correct playing of a rest by releasing the key upon seeing the rest.
- Participate in rhythm dictations that contain rests. The teacher will clap the pattern and students will echo-clap, then they will write their rhythm down on paper.
- Begin melodic intervals (2 pitches played separately) starting with 2<sup>nds</sup> and 3<sup>rds</sup>. Through the use of repertoire, they will recognize these on the staff.
- Study and practice songs using melodic/harmonic intervals up to a 5<sup>th</sup>.
- Practice songs that teach one's eyes to move fluidly from the bass to the treble staff and then, to play their two hands together at the same time.
- Class recitals during the 1st weeks of December, January and February

**Extensions:** Students may use online, free music sources for expanding their repertoire. The teacher will assign recital songs.

**Remediation:** Students may come in to practice or seek assistance before/after school/during a study hall.

**Instructional Methods:**

- Direct instruction using correct musical terminology
- Modeling
- Group discussion
- Ensemble playing

**Materials & Resources:**

- Text book
- Theory book
- Teacher resources

**Assessments:**

- Teacher Observation
- Melodic/Rhythmic quizzes
- Book 2 exit test, recitals with teacher/group critique and scoring rubric
- Aural/verbal quizzes
- Ear-training
- Sight-reading

## Curriculum Scope & Sequence

**Planned Course:** Beginner Group Piano

**Unit 5:** Book 3: The G position; sharps, flats, staccato, accents, D.C. al fine, fermata, tempo words

**Time Frame:** 11-12 weeks

**State Standards:** 9.1A, 9.1B, 9.1C, 9.1E, 9.1G, 9.1H, 9.3A

**Essential content/objectives:** At the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Understand and explain the pitch names of the white keys in the new G position and their location on the musical staff.
- Understand and apply what sharps and flats do to pitches
- Employ the Staccato Technique to the repertoire being practiced
- Execute accents and fermatas when these are seen above a pitch and know their meaning
- Understand and follow the direction of a D.C. al fine: understanding the “road map”
- Play, with full mastery, the crescendo and diminuendo
- Clap the rhythm of and play the pitches to 8<sup>th</sup> notes/rests in 2/4 time
- Demonstrate an understand that a song can begin with an incomplete measure which will be completed in the final measure of the song

**Core Activities:** Students will complete/participate in the following:

- Complete theory exercise in book (hand in to teacher upon completion) and notify the teacher when ear-trainings and sight-readings appear in their text.
- For the new G position, study, describe and apply the 7 new pitch locations to the musical staves, using the repertoire in the text.
- Study and practice songs with incomplete measures (less than what is dictated by the time signature) and explain that the missing beats are in the final measure.
- Clap/count melodic rhythms aloud, showing a comprehension of note values and rests within the repertoire. Echo clapping will reinforce what is heard.
- An introduction to sharps and flats with some familiar, classical repertoire. Distinguish that sharps will raise the given pitch  $\frac{1}{2}$  step and flats will lower the given pitch by  $\frac{1}{2}$  step.
- Practice and perform songs that have staccato (a dot above/below a note head), which is the opposite of legato. Repertoire will include playing staccato with one hand while the other plays legato.
- Play songs that require that the pitches be played gradually louder (crescendo) or gradually softer (diminuendo). Practice the technique by first playing a single pitch, successively striking the key harder to make a crescendo, then, striking hard and gradually striking more gently to achieve a diminuendo. Transfer this knowledge to the repertoire.
- Monthly recitals during the first week of March, April and May.
- Prepare and review for the final exit exam and choose a final recital song in collaboration with the teacher.

**Extensions:** Teacher-assigned repertoire for recitals. Online repertoire from teacher resources to expand student song base.

**Remediation:** Students may practice/seek assistance in the piano lab before/after school/during study halls.

**Instructional Methods:**

- Direct instruction
- Group discussion
- Modeling
- Good use of music terminology
- Ensemble playing

**Materials & Resources:**

- Text book
- Theory book
- Teacher Resources

**Assessments:**

- Teacher observation
- Teacher/student-critiqued recitals using recital scoring rubric
- Verbal/aural quizzes
- Melodic/rhythmic dictation
- Student self-critique
- Ear-training
- Sight-reading

## Curriculum Scope & Sequence

**Planned Course:** Beginner Group Piano

**Unit 6:** Final Exit Test Review, Final Exam and Final Recital. Book 4

**Time Frame:** 2 weeks

**State Standards:** 9.1A, 9.1B, 9.1C, 9.1D, 9.1E, 9.1G, 9.1H, 9.3A

**Essential content/objectives:** At the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Use the damper pedal correctly
- Be fluent in changing positions, with little or no pause in between
- Demonstrate an understand of whole/half steps and the whole tone scale
- Know and understand the pattern of a major scale through the use of tetrachords
- Demonstrate either Basic, Proficient or Advanced skill in piano playing, using both hands at the same time, for a final recital

**Core Activities:** Students will be able to complete/participate in the following:

- Book 4 drills and practice in the new LH G position, where the LH is an 8va higher than in Book 3. Learn 4 new pitch locations are presented - A,B,C,D in the bass clef, just below middle C.
- Use all facets of music terminology, theory, pitches, notes/rests, time signatures and musical symbols and demonstrate continual improvement via individual performance during class and guided practice.
- Damper pedal technique instruction one-on-one with the teacher. Begin with block chords and then to arpeggios.
- Study repertoire explaining whole/half and practice to proficiency, which is a springboard for a discussion and practice of tetrachords
- Major scales will be explained and practiced using tetrachords: two consecutive tetrachords, joined by a whole step, will produce a major scale.
- Final recital and exit exam. (Based on individual progression.)

**Extensions:** Teacher-assigned recital songs in collaboration with each student. Teacher resources used where students can choose a final recital song at their proficiency level and with the approval of the teacher.

**Remediation:** Students can come to practice in the piano lab or the grand piano during a study hall or before/after school.

**Instructional Methods:**

- Direct instruction using correct music terminology
- Modeling
- Group discussion
- Ensemble playing

**Materials & Resources:**

- Student text
- Theory books
- Teacher-assigned recital pieces
- Online music from teacher resources

**Assessments:**

- Teacher Observation
- Oral-aural quizzes
- Melodic/rhythmic dictation
- Tests
- Ensemble and individual playing
- Ear-training
- Sight-reading
- Final recital using Recital Scoring Rubric