



GET SET!

PIANO

Tutor Book 2





Introduction ✨

This short teacher guide includes some tips to help teachers who are using *Get Set! Piano Tutor Book 2*, *Get Set! Piano Pieces Book 2* and the accompanying website resources.

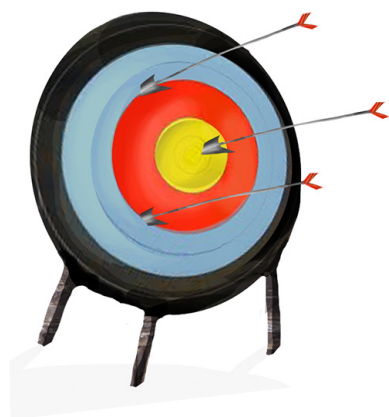
These books have been written to provide students with a curriculum to take them from Prep test level through to Grade 1. The progression and pieces have been thoroughly tested with students aged 8 to 12, as well as older children who have used the pieces to develop their sight-reading. The material has also been reviewed by other piano teachers.

We would advise teachers to add their own repertoire and resources alongside *Get Set! Piano Tutor* and *Pieces Book 2* (we have made some suggestions), however, these books include everything that is needed to get to Grade 1, and incorporates of all the Grade 1 technical and aural requirements from the three main examination boards.



Moving out of hand position ✨

This is one of the most difficult processes for any young pianist to achieve, as they move from the comfort of static hand positions to fingers moving to cover at least two octaves of the keyboard, or even up to four! Teachers need to be patient with students as they battle with these new challenges. Yet this is also a time where students can really blossom.



In *Get Set! Piano*, moving out of hand position has been introduced gradually. Book 2 carries on from book 1 and teaches greater hand movement with fingers and hands stretching, squeezing, and moving over and under in the 'Piano Gym' on p6. (Useful practise repertoire: 'Cake walk squeeze' p7 tutor book, 'Imogen's first sketch' p2 *Get Set! Piano Pieces Book*.) It can be helpful for students to practise these moves on the lid of the piano (with no sound) or on an electric piano (switched off) so that they can concentrate solely on the kinaesthetic sensations of moving their hands and fingers around the keyboard.

Pulse, rhythm and time signatures ✨

Identifying the pulse (beat) of a piece is a difficult thing to do, therefore numerous exercises have been included throughout the book to allow for lots of practice. It is a good idea to invite students to mark the pulse when first listening to a teacher play a new piece, and if able, to stress the first beat of each bar and identify the time signature. This is not only useful practice for music

examinations but also essential for general musicianship skills. Students could clap the pulse, mark it on percussion instruments, or even walk/march to it. Visual learners may benefit from seeing the tapping heart beat pictures (*Get Set! Piano Tutor Book 1*) as they mark the pulse.

Rhythm work has been included alongside 'Rhythm Time' activities in *Get Set! Piano Tutor Book 2*. Teachers can have fun with students using rhymes such as 'Chay, chay, koo-lay' (p9) to learn quaver rests and 'God save the Queen' (p14) to learn dotted rhythms. Swung quavers have also been introduced on page 39. The rhymes for 6/8 (p34), syncopation (p38), semi quavers (p40) and triplets (p44) are all useful for consolidating skills, as well as for improvisation. For example, 'Bele mama' (p45) (which has an excellent folk tune melody – ask the children to sing this before playing), can be improvised as a three part round. If you use the time at the end of one student's lesson, and the beginning of another's, you have a ready-made trio with yourself as the third to give this a go. The new time signatures introduced in *Get Set! Piano Tutor Book 2* are 2/2, 3/8, 6/8, 5/4 and 5/8.



Pitch, and the importance of singing ✨

It is important that students understand the concept of higher and lower notes. This is a tricky concept for a child to come to terms with, therefore, it is a good idea to encourage students to play pieces on higher notes (octave above) and lower notes (octave below), once they have mastered playing the music where it is written. We have encouraged students to do this in various places throughout the tutor and pieces book 2.

In addition, singing has also been incorporated throughout the tutor. As authors and musicians, we both feel that the voice is a valuable tool for music learning because it is the first instrument any student ever uses. Where possible, we have invited the student to sing the melody of the piece. Due to the choral nature of the ABRSM aural tests, it is important that singing is included in piano lessons from the early stages, such as singing back fragments of melody etc. Both London College and Trinity also request that students are able to sing the tonic. This valuable skill can be practised using the 'listen up' activities in book 2.

Note reading – including ledger lines ✨

There are exercises to practise new notes whenever they are introduced. In addition, there are 'Find, say and play' activities to reinforce note learning, as well as additional note quizzes. Students can benefit from writing down any compositions they create in the 'Rhythm time' sections.

Using note name flashcards, playing games on a life-size music



staff and doing note name quizzes can all help the children to improve their note reading. It is not an instant process – it takes time and lots of practise. Ledger line notes have been introduced and explained throughout the book, either by a note introduction or by an arrow on the music.

Scales, broken chords and arpeggios ✨

Scales, broken chords and arpeggios are an important part of developing the skills of a young pianist, and there is a 'scale sheet' printout to support the teaching of these skills. All of the scales, broken chords and arpeggios used traditionally by all three main examination boards are listed here. There are also duet accompaniments for all of the scales – in the various different keys – to make scale playing more fun and enjoyable for the student.



Throughout the book there are scale trails where the same tune is simply modulated into different keys. These little exercises prepare the student beyond what is expected within the graded examinations, such as playing both hands separately and together (in contrary motion). The focus in book 2 has been placed on playing scales one octave but teachers should aim to encourage students to play scales two octaves (the fingering is laid out for this on *Get Set! Piano Tutor Book 2* page 8). It is also a good idea to get students to focus on fingering patterns and to learn how these are used in different keys.

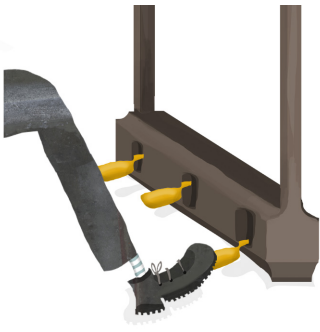
Students learn scales in different ways: some aural (hearing if it sounds right, or chanting the note names of the scale), some visual (looking for patterns of white and black notes on the keyboard), others kinaesthetic (feeling the shapes of the black and white keys). Children can practise the fingering on the lid of the piano or on the floor, stepping the tones and semi-tones pattern of the scale (saying the note names at the same time) or quite simply by playing the scales on the piano over and over again.

Technique – including the use of the sustaining pedal ✨



Good technique is essential for beginner pianists, therefore in book 2 we have provided a wide range of scales, arpeggios and broken chords (based on Grade 1 syllabuses from the three main examination boards). The chromatic scale has also been covered with a fun piece to test your students' skills in *Get Set! Piano Pieces Book 2* ('Dramatic chromatic' p10). This all supports good technique on the piano as well as good key recognition. In addition to this, we have provided two 'Piano gym' pages – one to practise moving the hand out of hand position (p6) and one which includes a range of exercises to develop staccato touch, a loose wrist, finger strength and part playing (p42).

Peddalling has also been covered in book 2. Some may feel it is a



little early for many little pianists however, when trialling the book we found that students (even as young as 8 years old) coped well and LOVED using the pedal. It is always important to train a student's ear before embarking on pedalling; they need to recognise when notes do not blend together, and highlight where the pedal needs to be changed.

Aural training ✨

Just like in book 1 there are whole ranges of 'Listen up!' activities that help to develop aural skills. These also complement the Grade 1 aural tests for all three examination boards. These include: marking the pulse, identifying two or three time, singing the tonic, singing back fragments of melody, identifying changes in pitch or rhythm, recognising major and minor keys, describing dynamics, and clapping rhythms. Playing by ear has also been included in the Tutor book (p35), where the student is invited to play the final part of 'Hickory dickory, dock' by ear. Students are also invited to work out the chords to 'Old McDonald' (p25) and 'Bele Mama' (p45).

Music theory and keyboard harmony ✨



Key elements of music theory have been integrated into the book, progressing from what has already been presented in book 1: new time signatures, key signatures (D major), note and rest values, dynamics, accidentals, tempo markings, articulation, chords, scales and intervals. Theory quizzes include: rests (p9 *Tutor*), identifying pentascales (p24), note names and values (p30), and Italian words (p38). There are also additional quizzes in the Pieces book: note names (p3), note values (p7), and rests (p15), as well as on the website. Theory activities are included on the inside back cover of both the *Tutor* and the *Pieces book 2*.

On page 25 of the *Tutor* book, students are introduced to the tonic, subdominant and dominant chords. As teachers, we feel that this is valuable information that can enable students to play by ear (harmonising a tune using just three chords) and can also provide a good foundation for future theory study such as cadences etc.

Creativity - improvisation and composition ✨

Children are naturally creative if we provide an environment in which they can be. This means sometimes simply letting the child take over the lesson a little showing you their latest composition, or playing an improvisation they have made up at home. As piano teachers, we can provide opportunities for children to really shine in this area. Throughout the tutor, children are asked to improvise tunes, using the 'Rhythm time' exercises. In addition, there are activities such as on page 26 of the *Tutor* and page 12 of the *Pieces* book, where children are encouraged to compose using

notes from the blues scale.

Make sure you point out the title of the pieces to your students – many of these were devised by children, by simply listening to our compositions. A title can make a real impact on creative interpretation, therefore discussing how the student is going to make the music sound like the title is a very worthwhile thing to do.

Independent learning ✨



Get Set! Piano puts learning into the hands of the pupil because we believe that when a child is empowered in this way, they learn lessons that they will remember for life.

The Tutor book pages are organised by topic, making it really easy to follow at home as well as in the lesson. There are also plenty of friendly characters such – as talking mice – to engage the child, and to provide tips and reminders. The quizzes and activities all encourage independent learning and reinforce the feeling of an adventure in musical learning.

Multi-sensory teaching ✨

Get Set! Piano uses a multi-sensory teaching approach which combines visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learning activities: seeing, hearing and doing. Each student has their own preferred learning style(s), therefore by including the whole range of activities that appeal to all learning styles, there is a greater chance of success with all students. Ask your students how they learn and try to recognise which activities they are the most comfortable with. Free questionnaires are available on the internet for students to find out what their learning styles are.

Ensemble playing ✨

Ensemble playing develops a whole range of skills in aspiring musicians. These include: maintaining the pulse, counting complex rhythms, listening to the person we are playing with, and ensuring our performance is balanced (eg one person isn't too loud).

In the *Get Set! Piano book 2*, several teacher parts have been included; in the tutor there are duet parts for 'Drunken sailor', 'Cake walk squeeze', 'Skateboard skedaddle', 'Cadets on parade' and 'Scale duets'. In the pieces book there is a trio 'Mr Bartok and Miss Brown', a duet 'Brand new puppy' and teacher



parts for 'Michael Finnegan', 'Spooks behind the sofa' (on the website), 'Frere Jacques', 'Judo James', 'Over the speed bumps' and 'Meet the triplets'.

Multi-sensory teaching ✨

There are a whole range of additional pieces, teacher accompaniments and a scale/arpeggio/broken chord resource on the Get Set! Website. There are also videos, music quizzes, practise sheets and certificates, as well as lots of additional resources to provide a holistic approach to teaching music and the piano.






















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Contents List

-  p. 2-3 Review quiz
Information for practising
-  p. 4-5 Three pieces with revision questions
-  p. 6-8 Stretching, squeezing, over and under exercises
C major scale trail, two minims per bar
-  p. 9 Rests revision
Introduction of quaver rest
-  p. 10 New RH notes: D (4th line up) and E (top space)
1st and 2nd time bars
-  p. 11 Hands crossing over tunes
Presto - very quick
-  p. 12 New LH notes: A (bottom space) and B (second line up)
-  p. 13 A natural minor scale, A harmonic minor scale
A minor scale trail
Poco adagio
-  p. 14 Dotted crotchet, dotted rhythms (crotchet followed by quaver)
Cantabile
-  p. 15 New RH notes: F (top line) and G (sitting on top of stave)
Playing both hands in the treble
Rit - getting slower/held back
-  p. 16 Key signature D major
Allegretto
-  p. 17 New LH notes: G (bottom line), F (below stave) and E (first ledger line)
Ledger lines explained
-  p. 18 Scale trails: G major, D major, D minor, E minor
-  p. 19 New LH notes: D and C (two ledger lines below)
Finger substitution
-  p. 20 New RH notes: A (one ledger line above), B and C (two ledger lines above)
-  p. 21 New scale fingering patterns for RH: F major scale, F major scale trail
-  p. 22 Playing both hands in the bass



-  p. 23 Chromatic scales
-  p. 24 Pentascales
Melody to sing
-  p. 25 Tonic, sub-dominant, dominant
Primary triads I, IV and V, working out which triads to use to make an accompaniment
-  p. 26 Blue scale on C
Composing using the blues scale
-  p. 27 Sustain pedal
-  p. 28 A tempo and simile
-  p. 29 Broken chords, root position, first inversion, second inversion
Broken chord of C major
-  p. 30 3/8
More pedalling
-  p. 31 Arpeggio in C major
Flat hand needed
-  p. 32 Broken chord and triad pieces
-  p. 33 Alberti bass, rotary (door knob) action for wrist
-  p. 34-35 6/8 time, start repeat sign, accelerando
-  p. 36 Phrasing
-  p. 37 Acciaccaturas
Puzzle practise
-  p. 38 Syncopation
-  p. 39 Swung quavers
Playing by ear
-  p. 40-41 Semiquavers
8ve higher sign
-  p. 42 Finger exercises - part playing, rocking wrist, loose wrist, strong fingers
-  p. 43 5/4 and 5/8 time signatures
Changing time signatures
Semi staccato
-  p. 44 Crotchet triplets
Quaver triplets
-  p. 45 Dotted quaver
Dotted quaver - semiquaver rhythm
-  p. 46 Concert pieces 1
-  p. 47 Concert pieces 2
-  p. 48 Pieces about grade 1 level

