

## HOW TO PRACTICE (piano, recorder, voice, guitar, or anything else!)

Find a **PLACE** without distractions that works for the family.

Create a **ROUTINE** so you don't have cram practice time just before a practice bug is due.

Have **SUPPLIES** handy (book, recorder, pencil, eraser, recording, metronome)

Have a **GOAL** for practicing - learn a new song, fix the 2 problem measures you have, speed up the tempo of the entire song, etc.

### **Overall Practice Routine:**

- 1) WARM UP by playing a couple songs you know well
- 2) Work on the GOALS
- 3) Try sight-reading something totally new for FUN

### **For NEW SONGS:**

- 1) LOOK through the piece for patterns or things that look unusual
- 2) Choose a slow steady tempo and try to PLAY it. [this is called sight-reading]
- 3) FINGER the notes while you say/sing the note names
- 4) PLAY the piece at a slower tempo with correct rhythms.

Write in note names, counting, or other helps if you need them.

- 5) DETERMINE PROBLEM sections, if any

### **For PROBLEM SECTIONS:**

- 1) DECIDE what the shortest problem is.
- 2) Slowly FINGER it while saying note names until you can gradually speed up.
- 3) Slowly PLAY it until you can gradually play it faster
- 4) REPEAT the short section until it is played correctly 3 times in a row at the desired speed
- 5) Play a slightly LONGER section (maybe 4 measures) and follow steps #3 & 4 until secure.
- 6) Play the ENTIRE piece to determine any other problem areas
- 7) FOLLOW the same steps for those sections.

### **CHALLENGE YOURSELF** (in no particular order):

- 1) Try playing while lying on the floor or standing on one foot or walking in place for a challenge to yourself.  
When you go back to regular position, it might be easier to concentrate.
- 2) Try playing a song from memory
- 3) Try figuring out how to play a song "by ear" - no music, just trial and error
- 4) Try one time to play it twice as fast as you think it should go  
(however, if you can't do it, slow it down and gradually get faster using a metronome)
- 5) Learn a new note from the fingering chart in the book
- 6) Ask someone to sing with you - that will help you hear whether it is smooth or not

