

MOTIVATING IDEAS FOR KEEPING PRACTICE FUN!

REVIEW

Review Jar or Sack of Songs: Place names of all review pieces inside and choose a set amount per day until all pieces are played through and then refill! We have one for each book as well as scales.



Backwards or mixed-up practice: Play through from the last section to the first or mix up the sections of each review piece. Another example might be to play the B section only from each review piece one day.

Practice in different locations: Play each review piece in a different location. Ideas could be chosen from a jar or decided on the spot. Some options may include a particular room in the house, front porch, driveway, for a pet or even a bird outside an open window (we find them to be a very engaging audience!). Another idea may be to play some review pieces for a grandparent, relative or friend over Face Time or Zoom!

REPETITION

Deciding on the number of repetitions: Sometimes there are a set number of repetitions assigned by the teacher for a specific measure or section of a piece. Other times the child decides with their practice partner. Simply rolling a die can be helpful. My rule is that if a 1 is rolled, the child rolls again and it is added to the next roll. That issue can be solved by rolling two dice! I also have a bowl of numbers that works well. Playing cards are another way to choose. Aces represent the number one. Kings, queens and jacks can represent numbers as well, or be removed. I've used them to represent sections of review pieces. Jokers are a wild card and the child gets to choose the number of reps if drawn!



Keeping track of repetitions: Actively moving things like numbers, marbles, coins or even M&M's (to be eaten later!) is not only a fun way to keep track of repetitions, but also helps the child become mindful about resetting their position after each repetition. When my daughter Anna was learning the sections of Twinkle as a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, I made a sandwich from felt pieces to use as she practiced. We used our imaginations and continued adding layers (with cold cuts, veggies and condiments) to practice repetitions.



Other aids to practice repetitions or practice spots: It is important to create awareness with each repetition so that the child remains engaged and playing does not become robotic. Some other ideas might be to have the child touch their nose, scratch their head, high-five the practice partner, etc. between repetitions. Many children find patience can be challenging when using the “stop and prepare” technique (setting up the correct finger over the correct note) before playing. The challenge may continue in not playing past the practice spot. To help with this issue, we made stop and go signs with pictures printed online, cardboard and popsicle sticks.



Marble Jar: (Mr. Derek, Deanna Freedman)

We love a marble practice jar at our house. Fill the jar get a prize or treat. Lay out an incentive plan that focuses on things that your kid needs. Here's our working point system, marbles earned per task:

Practice at first ask: +3

Play review pieces (we have preset ones per day): +1

Play extra review pieces in addition to preset ones: +1

Play all repeats without prompting: +1

5x practice chunk: +1

Play new song 2-3x: +1

Play ensemble with siblings: +1

Freak out: -3

Not practicing at first ask: -3



*Lines on the jar represent levels for different rewards.

IDEA FOR OLDER STUDENTS

(Jennifer Kubinski)

My daughter's voice teacher has started a weekly virtual studio class where kids can showcase their piece. It only lasts for 45 minutes. Provides a great incentive for older students (high school) and is a great motivation tool. The kids provide each other with encouragement and supportive comments. Kids can also choose to just attend as audience members.

IDEAS FOR TRACKING PROGRESS (*See attachments*)

(Mr. Rhodes, Val Clifford)

Bow hold and posture sheet: print and hang up as a reminder for students.

10 different lists for reviewing songs: have students pick one random card per day. These are the review songs that they can practice for that day as a warmup.

7 Day Review sheet: more intensive review chart if you want to document/plan your week.

50-day challenge: Students can cross off each day or add a sticker for each day practiced. Goal is 50 in a row. (Sometimes I let Tommy and Cora have two practices in a day if they miss a day, just so they don't have to start over.)

100-day challenge: This sheet has different "prizes" for different days throughout the 100-day challenge that range from extra 20 minutes of videogames to choosing food for dinner. Feel free to customize it to your family/student.

Individual songs for pickup game: Throw the cut-out songs on the floor. Have students pick up one at a time to play/review.