

Suzuki Guitar Method

Principles of Study and Guidance

Four Essential Points for Teachers and Parents

1. The child should listen to reference recordings every day at home to develop musical sensitivity. Rapid progress depends on this listening.
2. Tonalization, or the production of beautiful tone, should be stressed in the lesson and at home.
3. Constant attention should be given to correct posture and proper hand positioning.
4. Parents and teachers should strive to motivate the child so he will enjoy practicing correctly at home.

Through his experience in teaching young children for over thirty years, Dr. Suzuki has become thoroughly convinced that musical ability can be fully cultivated in every child if the above four points are faithfully observed.

Musical ability is not an inborn talent but an ability that can be developed. Any child who is properly trained can develop musical ability, just as all children develop the ability to speak their mother tongue. To insure the happy, effective progress of students, the four essential points listed above should be carefully observed and put to continual use in the home and studio.

Just as the alphabet is not taught when children first learn their mother language, so music reading should not be included in the study of the guitar until children have sufficiently developed their musical sensitivity, playing skill, and memory. Even after acquiring the ability to read music, however, the children should, as a rule, play from memory during lessons.

Education for Musical Sensitivity

Every day, children should listen to the recordings of the music they are currently studying. This listening helps them make rapid progress. It is the most important factor in the development of musical ability. Those children who have not had enough listening will lack musical sensitivity.

Tonalization for Beautiful Tone

Just as vocalization is studied in vocal music, tonalization on the guitar is introduced as an essential element of study. Tonalization should always be included at each lesson and should be a part of the daily practice at home.

Group Lessons

The group lesson is an extremely effective instructional and motivational tool. The students progress remarkably while enjoying these lessons. Dr. Suzuki recommends that group lessons be held once a week or at least twice a month.

Private Lessons to Develop Ability

A child should not proceed to a new piece simply because he has learned the fingering or notes of the present one. His ability must be cultivated further as he plays his piece. It should be said to the child, "Now that you know the notes, we can start the very important work of developing your ability, " and then procedures may be made to improve his tone, movements, and musical ability.

The repertoire found in these volumes has been carefully chosen to provide an enjoyable path towards technical proficiency. It is important that when a child can perform piece A satisfactorily and is given a new piece, B, he should not drop A but should practice both A and B at the same time. By continuously reviewing and refining pieces that he knows, as new pieces are added, he will develop his ability to a higher degree.

Parents and children should always observe the private lessons of other children. Lessons should vary in length according to the needs of the child. Sometimes a child may have a short lesson, stop and watch another child, and then return for more instruction.