



Guitar Curriculum

I would like to thank the following faculty and staff for their assistance in developing the plectrum guitar curriculum:

Nero Catalano
Alan Ens
Mark Forchic
Luke Honer
Karin Orenstein

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Helen A. Eaton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Helen Eaton
Chief Executive Officer
Settlement Music School

Objectives

The curriculum is designed to follow a student beginner through grade twelve. Students starting at a different age, or who transfer from an outside place of study may enter the curriculum at a level deemed appropriate by the teacher and Branch Director. The projected progress of a student allows him/her to certify each year for a new level. Students may skip a level depending on their rate of progress in any given year if considered appropriate by the teacher and the Branch Director.

The objectives of the Settlement Music School Guitar Curriculum encompasses the overall development of a guitar player through his/her musical study.

The curriculum should lead to the development of basic musicianship through guitar study:

- a) By providing a logical sequence of repertoire from level to level that should represent a full range of styles and periods and including various levels of difficulty
- b) By supporting the building of guitar skills in a logical and sequential way, while simultaneously enhancing musical literacy through the basic understanding of harmony
- c) By developing technical proficiency sequentially per level

Concepts

All the concepts below should be incorporated from the beginning of study

Phrasing – Phrasing can be directly compared to speech. A clear understanding and execution of a composition’s phrasing includes taking into account the harmonic progression and the melodic direction as well as rhythmic accentuations, all of which create the intended shape of the musical line. One must understand the composer’s intentions and subsequently learn to execute the phrase through musical comprehension, developed by approaches such as singing of the musical line, understanding the underlying harmonic and rhythmic patterns, and learning to apply technical skills appropriate to the specific phrase. Actively engaging the imagination so as to encourage creative self-expression is also imperative.

Tempo – While the use of a metronome is vital in practice, students must develop an internal understanding of rhythmic pulse. The ability to hold a steady tempo and to make adjustments becomes the external manifestation of the internal pulse.

Dynamics – In beginning through advanced study, shaping and tone quality should always be a focus. At the earliest levels, students are taught to listen to the sounds they are creating, and to hear the sound they want to make prior to attempting to produce it by proper execution of various picking techniques.

Stylistic Interpretations – All music being played must be performed with the understanding of the era, history, and circumstances surrounding the piece.

Listening - Students must learn to listen keenly to the sounds they are producing to adequately understand what they are hearing. Strong listening skills will help students to discern texture as illustrated by the interaction of the vertical and horizontal elements of a phrase. These listening skills can be strengthened not only by listening to oneself, but also studying appropriate repertoire, recordings, and composers within a specific style and/or genre.

Practicing - Students need to learn how to practice. The mind must always be engaged. Students must be trained to think so that all of the multiple layers of hearing, determining and carrying out physical movements, responding to the results, and changing the approach where necessary, all become a part of the mental concentration which practicing requires. Students are taught to view challenges as opportunities with the option of trying different practice techniques. The process of practicing is emphasized rather than only searching for an end result.

LEVEL 3

TECHNIQUE

Scales

- Continue C, G and F Major Scales in open/first position
- E, D and A Natural Minor Scales in open/first position, two octaves

Chords

- Common and open position chords should immediately follow a scale
- Students should be able to demonstrate the following progressions:
 - I-V7-I
 - I-IV-V7-I
 - I-VI-IV-V7-I
 - I-VI-V7-I
- Introduce basic power chord shapes
- Basic 12-bar blues progression with common open position chords and power chord shapes in the keys of A, E, D and G Major

Blocked and Broken Chords

- Continue open position arpeggios, demonstrating from low to high strings, ascending and descending in the following progressions:
 - I-V7-I
 - I-IV-V7-I
 - I-VI-IV-V7-I
 - I-VI-V7-I

Picking

- Demonstrate alternate picking, use eighth note examples and selections from methods

Stylistic Techniques

- Introduce Rock guitar techniques such as bending, sliding, tapping and pentatonic harmony at teacher's discretion. Apply to appropriate songs.

REPERTOIRE

Methods

- *Mel Bay Modern Guitar Method: Grade 1* – Bay & Bay
- *Beginner Guitar Etudes for Pop and Rock Music* – Douglass
- *FJH Young Beginner Guitar Method: Book 3* – Groeber

LEVEL 3 continued

- *FJH Young Beginner Guitar Method, Exploring Chords: Book 3* – Groeber
- *FJH Young Beginner Guitar Method Performance Book: Level 3* – Groeber
- *Easy Pop Melodies* – Hal Leonard Corp.
- *Hal Leonard Acoustic Guitar Tab Method: Book 1* – Hal Leonard Corp.
- *Hal Leonard Guitar Method: Book 2* – Hal Leonard Corp.
- *Spanish Guitar for Beginners* – Hoppstock

CERTIFICATION

Repertoire

Three selections of contrasting style and mood to be drawn from methods, repertoire and/or teaching pieces. One choice must be a basic 12-bar blues progression with common open position chords and power chord shapes in the key of A or E Major. One selection should be chosen by the student. The student will be asked to explain why he/she chose the piece. The piece chosen by the student can represent any era or style including contemporary, pop or rock.