Name: _____ Date: _____

The Ticking Helper on the Piano

Circle group

Many young players keep a small machine on the piano. It goes tick, tick, tick. It is a metronome. Its job is to keep a steady beat, like a heart that does not get tired.

Why do players need it? It is hard to play at an even speed. Beginners often speed up when the music is easy. They slow down when it is hard. The metronome does not change. Its ticks stay the same. So a player can hear when she rushes or drags.

The speed of music is called tempo. A composer writes a number at the top of the page. It tells how many beats fit in a minute. A bigger number means faster music. An old metronome has a rod with a weight. The rod swings like a pendulum. Slide the weight up and the ticks are slow. Slide it down and they are fast.

A smart player uses it to practice a hard part slowly. Then she speeds up a little at a time.

Questions

1. What does a metronome do?

_____

_____

2. What do beginners often do when music is easy?

_____

_____

3. What is the speed of music called?

_____

_____

4. What does a bigger number at the top mean?

_____

_____

5. How do you make an old metronome tick slowly?

_____

_____

6. Why practice a hard part slowly?

_____

_____

Words to know

metronome: a tool that ticks at a steady speed
tempo: how fast or slow music is played
beat: the steady pulse in music
pendulum: a weight that swings back and forth

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

Name: _____ Date: _____

The Ticking Helper on the Piano

Triangle group

Many young players keep a small machine on the piano that goes tick, tick, tick. It is called a metronome. Its only job is to keep a steady beat, like a tiny heart that never gets tired.

Why would anyone need such a thing? Because it is surprisingly hard to play at an even speed. Most beginners speed up when the music is easy and slow down when it gets hard. A metronome does not care. Its ticks stay exactly the same, so a player can hear right away when she is rushing or dragging.

Speed in music is called tempo. Composers often write a number at the top of a page, and that number says how many beats should fit into each minute. A bigger number means faster music. On an older metronome, a swinging rod with a small weight moves back and forth like a pendulum. Sliding the weight higher makes the rod swing slowly. Sliding it lower makes the ticks come faster.

A smart player does not rely on the metronome forever. She uses it to practice a hard part slowly at first. Then she turns the tempo up a little at a time until she can play the whole piece at the right speed.

Questions

1. What is the job of a metronome?

_____

_____

2. What do beginners often do when music is easy?

_____

_____

3. What is the speed of music called?

_____

_____

4. What does a bigger number at the top of the page mean?

_____

_____

5. How do you make an older metronome tick slowly?

_____

_____

6. Why practice a hard part slowly at first?

_____

_____

Words to know

metronome: a tool that ticks at a steady speed
tempo: how fast or slow music is played
beat: the steady pulse in music
pendulum: a weight that swings back and forth

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

Name: _____ Date: _____

The Ticking Helper on the Piano

Square group

Numerous young players keep a small device on the piano that goes tick, tick, tick. It is called a metronome, and its sole purpose is to maintain a steady beat, like a tiny heart that never grows tired.

Why would anyone need such a gadget? The reason is that playing at an even speed is surprisingly difficult. Most beginners hurry when the music is easy and slow down when it becomes challenging. A metronome is indifferent to all this. Its ticks remain exactly the same, so a player can tell immediately whether she is rushing or dragging.

The speed of music is known as tempo. Composers frequently print a number at the top of a page, and that number states how many beats should fit into every minute. A larger number calls for faster music. On an older metronome, a swinging rod with a small weight moves back and forth like a pendulum. Sliding the weight higher makes the rod swing slowly, while sliding it lower makes the ticks arrive faster.

A wise player does not depend on the metronome forever. She uses it to practice a difficult passage slowly at first, then raises the tempo a little at a time until she can perform the whole piece at the proper speed.

Questions

1. What is the sole purpose of a metronome?

_____

_____

2. What do beginners often do when the music is easy?

_____

_____

3. What is the speed of music known as?

_____

_____

4. What does a larger number at the top of the page call for?

_____

_____

5. How can you make an older metronome tick slowly?

_____

_____

6. Why should a player practice a difficult part slowly at first?

_____

_____

Words to know

metronome: a tool that ticks at a steady speed
tempo: how fast or slow music is played
beat: the steady pulse in music
pendulum: a weight that swings back and forth

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

For the teacher: The Ticking Helper on the Piano

Each student sheet carries a shape, not a level. The same topic and facts, written three ways.

Circle: The Ticking Helper on the Piano

Easier · 169 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 1.8

1. It keeps a steady beat.
2. They speed up.
3. Tempo.
4. The music is played faster.
5. Slide the weight up the rod.
6. She can get it right, then speed up a little at a time.

Triangle: The Ticking Helper on the Piano

This passage · 208 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 4.7

1. To keep a steady beat.
2. They speed up.
3. Tempo.
4. The music should be played faster.
5. Slide the weight higher on the rod.
6. It lets the player get it right, then speed up a little at a time.

Square: The Ticking Helper on the Piano

Harder · 212 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 7.4

1. To maintain a steady beat.
2. They hurry or speed up.
3. Tempo.
4. Faster music.
5. Slide the weight higher on the rod.
6. She can get it right, then raise the tempo a little at a time.