

Developing Core Musical Skills

ABRSM November 9

What is the difference between teaching someone to be a musician and simply teaching someone to play an instrument or sing?

ABRSM November 9

Technical

Musician

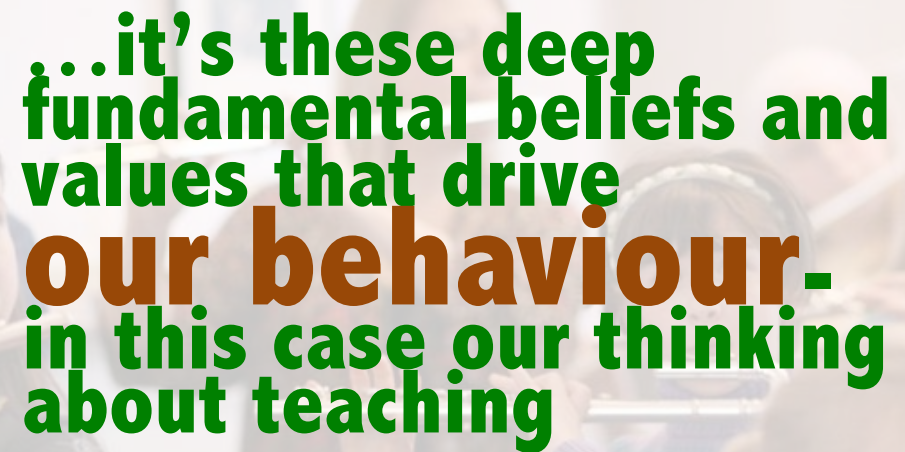
Artistic

Language

Core Musical Skills



Core Musical
Beliefs



...it's these deep
fundamental beliefs and
values that drive
our behaviour.
in this case our thinking
about teaching



What is
being musical?

Shaping a phrase beautifully

Playing or singing in time/tune

Playing a Beethoven Sonata

Interested in developing technique

Ability to sight-read

Regular practice

Understanding music theory

doing well at exams & assessments

Playing a Beethoven Sonata



Shaping a phrase beautifully

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Can our pupils be musical
without being or doing these things?

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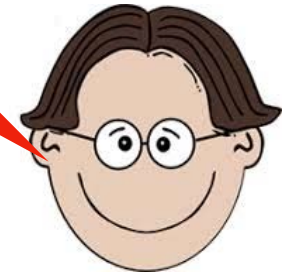
doing well at exams & assessments

Some people are more musical than others



"Someone told me,
that the music has to come
from both sides of the family,
for a person to be musical."
Jerome

"There's a well known Irish musician,
Professor Michael O'Sullivan, who believes it
has to do with our forefathers. He says, if they were
not musical, chances are, that those who follow on
won't be musical either."
James



"As with everything,
some people got it and some
people don't. Pointless to ask why.
My parents and my brother are as
non-musical as you get."
Ailin



Parents often
describe themselves
as 'unmusical'.
Often the result of
their experiences
with 'old fashioned'
teaching



Some people are
more musical than
others



Can anyone be
musical?



Are we born
musical or do
we become
musical?



Are we born
musical or do
we become
musical?

"To hear a sequence of rustling noises in dry leaves
as a **connected pattern of movements** is a very
primitive version of the ability to hear, say,
Mozart's *Jupiter Symphony* as a piece of music,
entire, rather than as momentary sounds which come
and then are no more ..."
(Jeremy Campbell)



**Are we born
musical or do
we become
musical?**

Mother/infant bonding

Singing, rhythmic stroking, patting, and rocking are primary modes of communicating with infants.

**Are we born
musical or do
we become
musical?**

We need music to survive.
Music is a species-specific trait of all humans

**Can anyone be
musical?**

**We all carry
beliefs and
values about
music**

Shaping a phrase beautifully
Playing or singing in time/tune
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Interested in developing technique
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What would we stand
to ~~lose~~ if we decided
to change our minds?



What is
being musical?



we are all,
fundamentally,
musical



someone who
likes, and wants to
engage with music



Composing

Listening

What is
doing music?

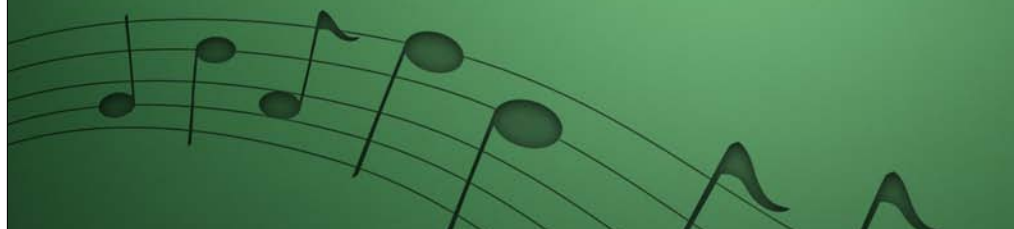
Learning

Playing

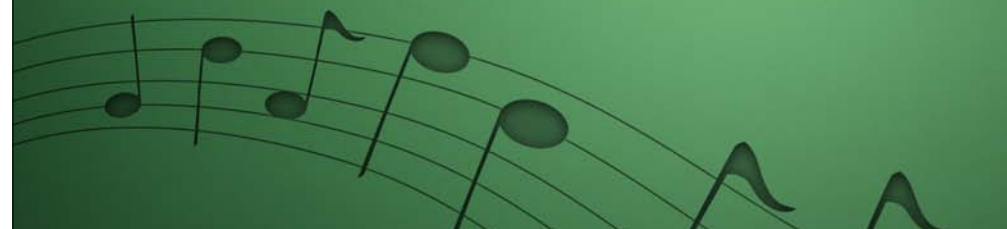
experiencing, engaging with and enjoying music
coming to know, play and sing music through
exploring and experimenting using instruments or
voice
learning to respond to music sensitively
developing an imaginative and creative approach to
music making



What are these Core Musical Skills?



Core Teaching Skills?

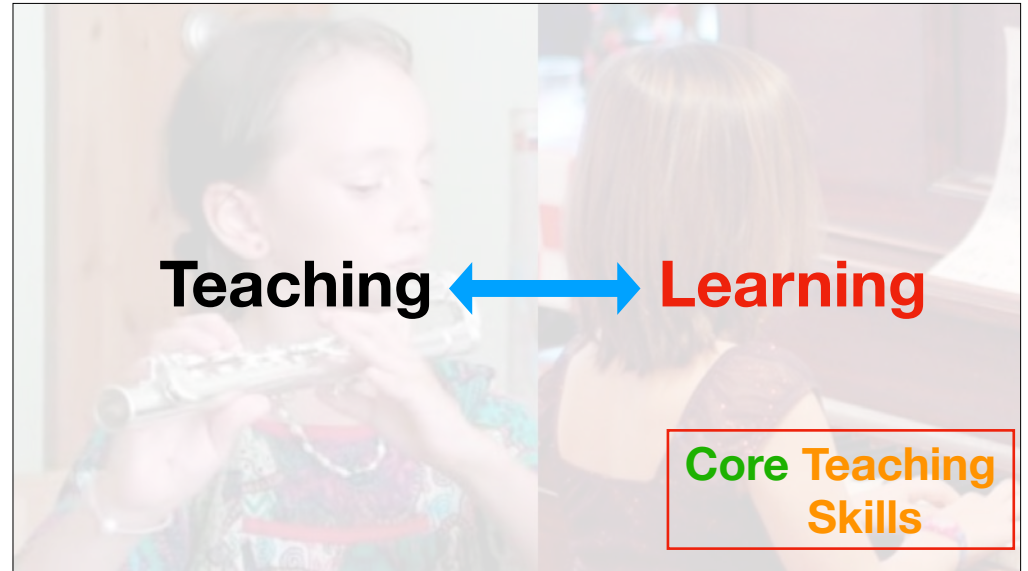


Kindness

Instant forgiveness

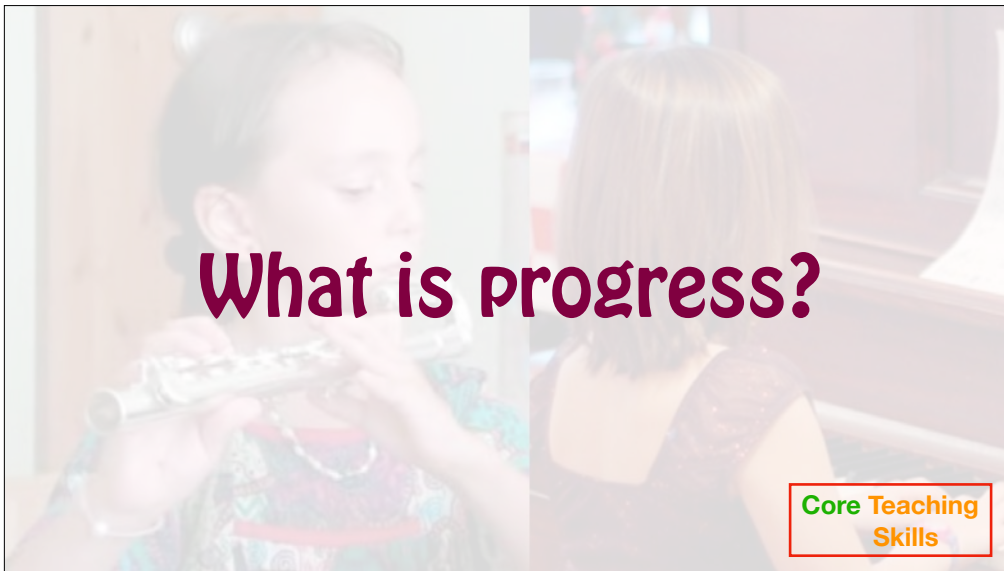


Core Teaching Skills



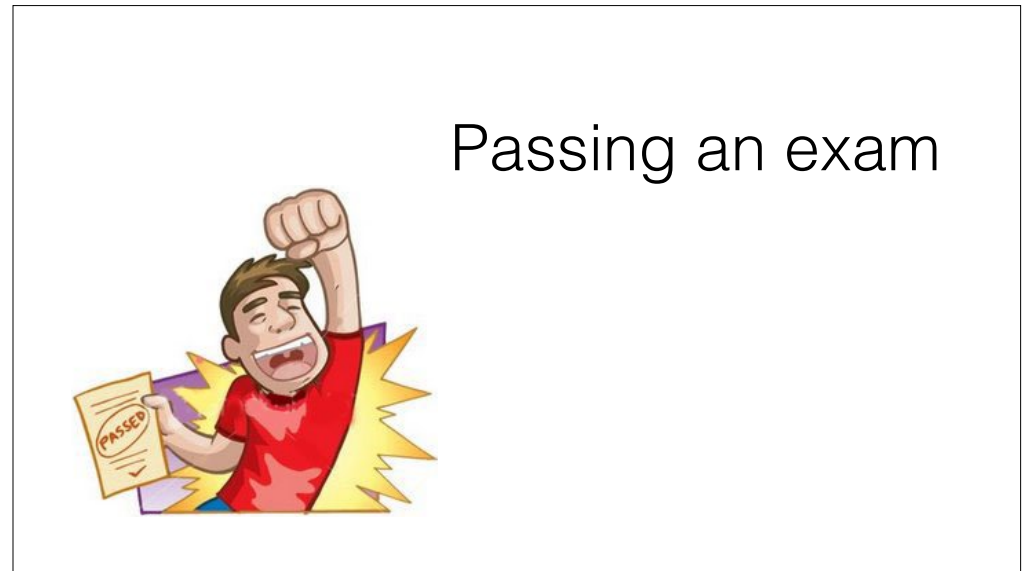
Teaching ↔ **Learning**

Core Teaching Skills

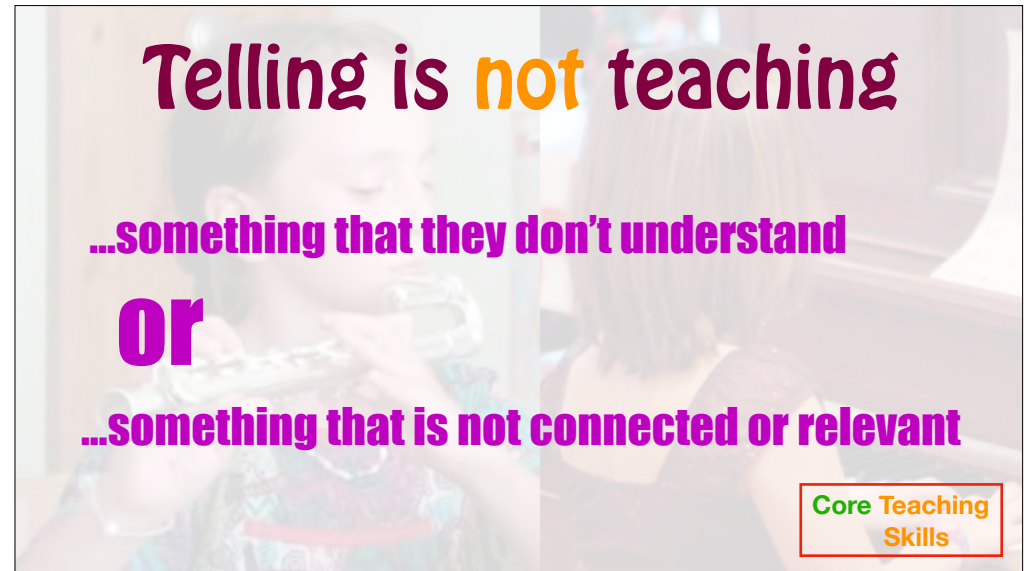
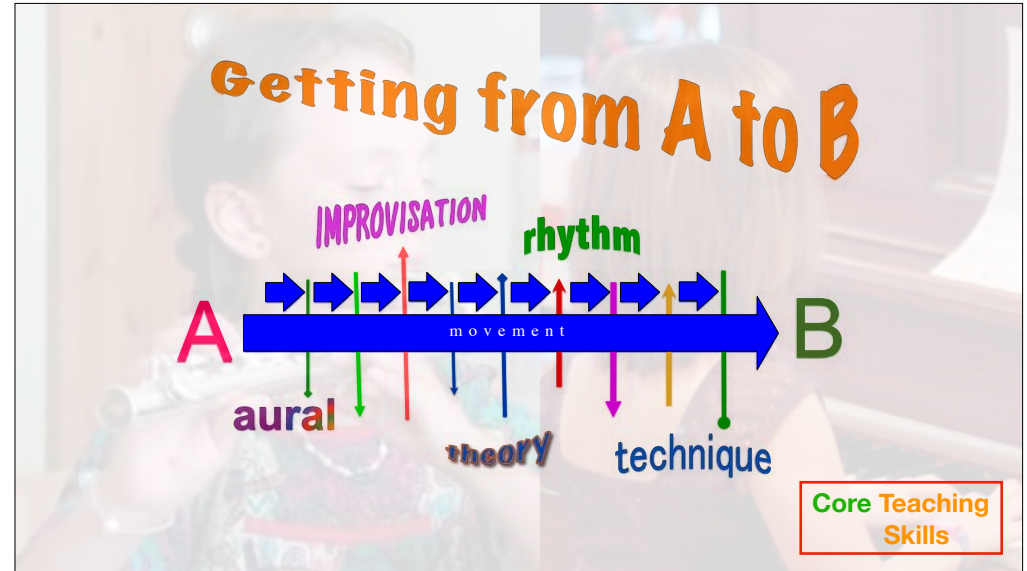
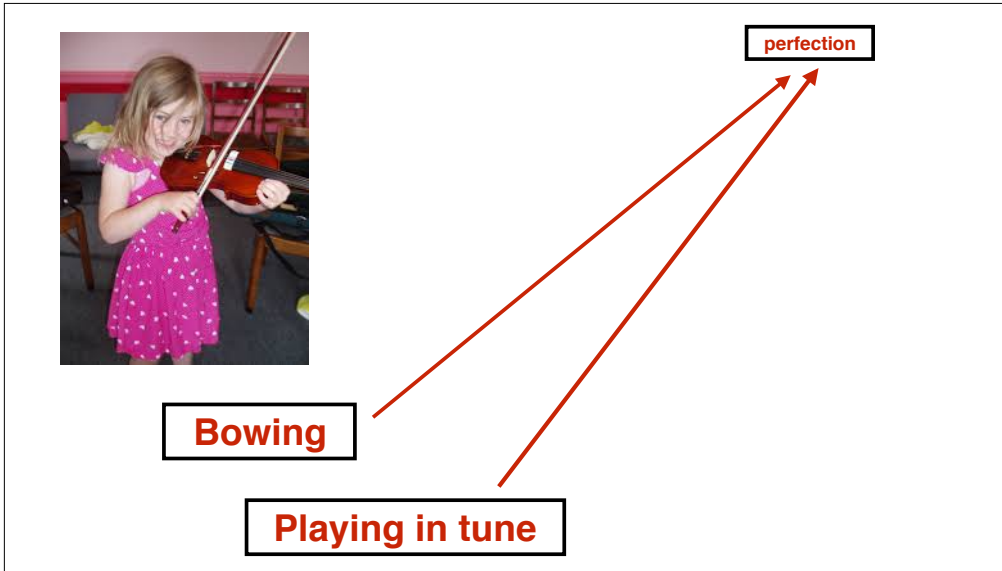


What is progress?

Core Teaching Skills



Passing an exam



Telling is **not** teaching

Asking is **is** teaching

Core Teaching Skills

Asking is **is** teaching

...something that they don't know

Or

...something that they can't work out

Core Teaching Skills

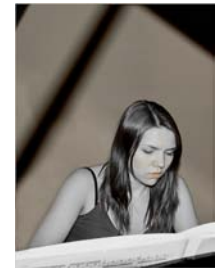
What are these **Core Musical Skills?**

Have an immaculate technique

Play with a highly-developed sense of rhythm

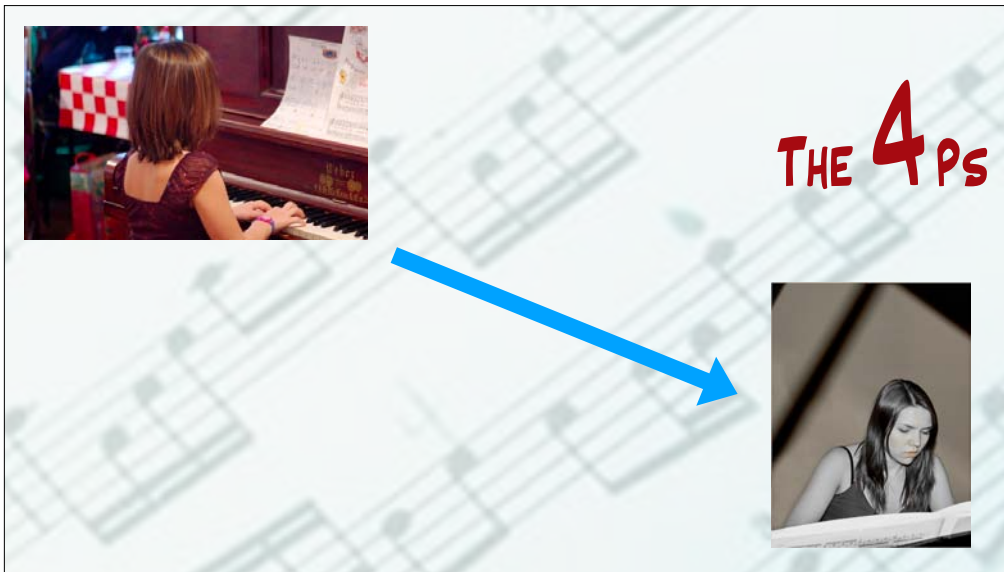
Have a sophisticated control of sound

Instil their performances with deeply felt musical meaning



THE 4PS

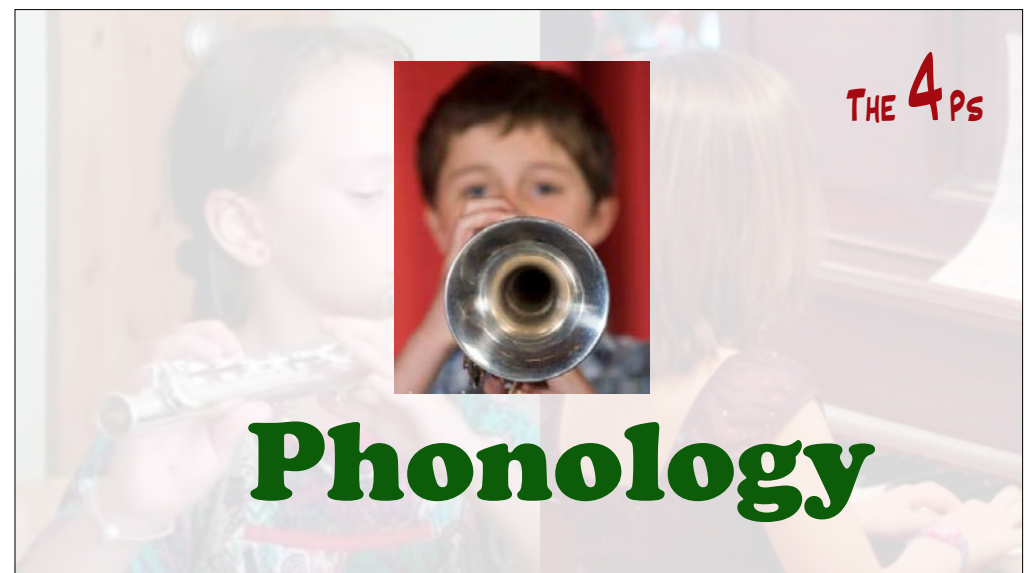
- POSTURE
 - PULSE
 - PHONOLOGY
 - PERSONALITY
- THE 4PS





First musical internalisation

- Clap pulse and count groups of 4 – aloud
- Continue whispering
- Continue mouthing silently
- Continue internally
- Continue but stop clapping
- Change numbers for internal honk/hooter/noise
- You've laid the foundations of a 'sense of pulse'



Personality

THE 4 PS



THE 4 PS

IMPROVISE



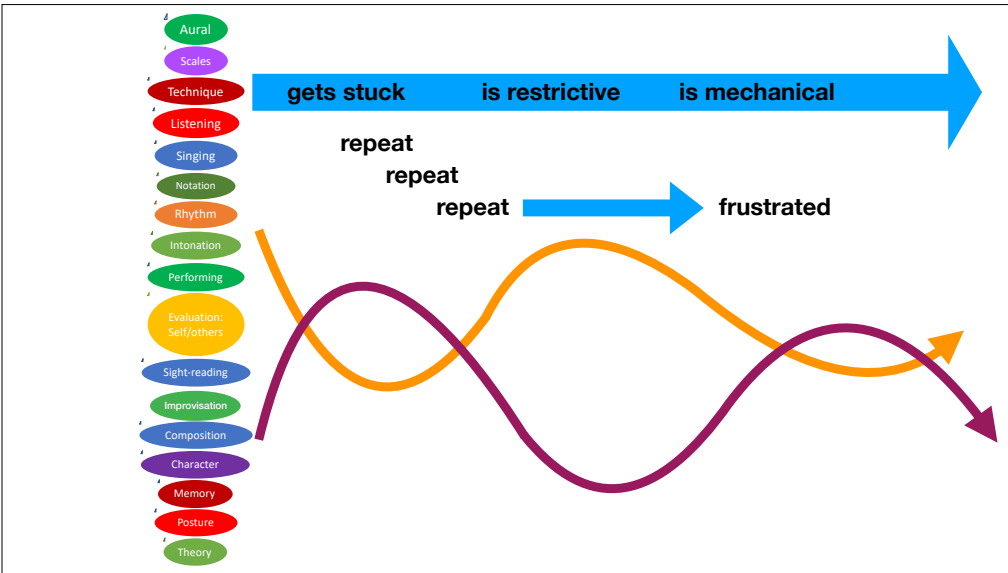
THE 4 PS PROVIDE
THE FRAMEWORK

THE 4 PS PROVIDE
THE FRAMEWORK

...and need permanent presence

AN APPROACH

Simultaneous Learning





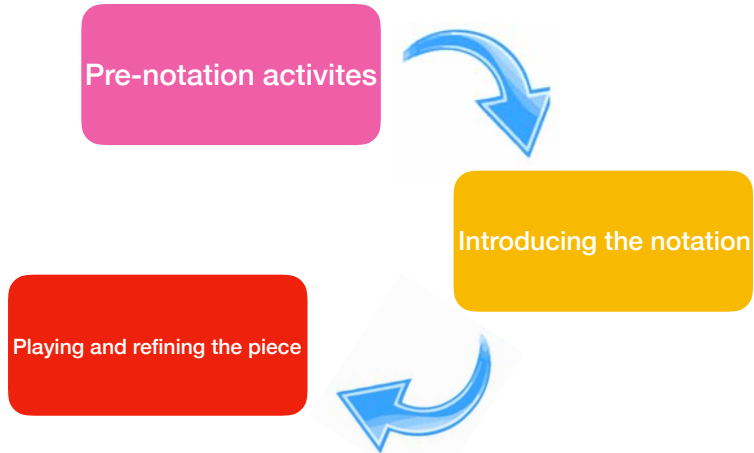
the connections
we make need to be
explicit
not implied



Find new routes



Three stages of learning a new piece

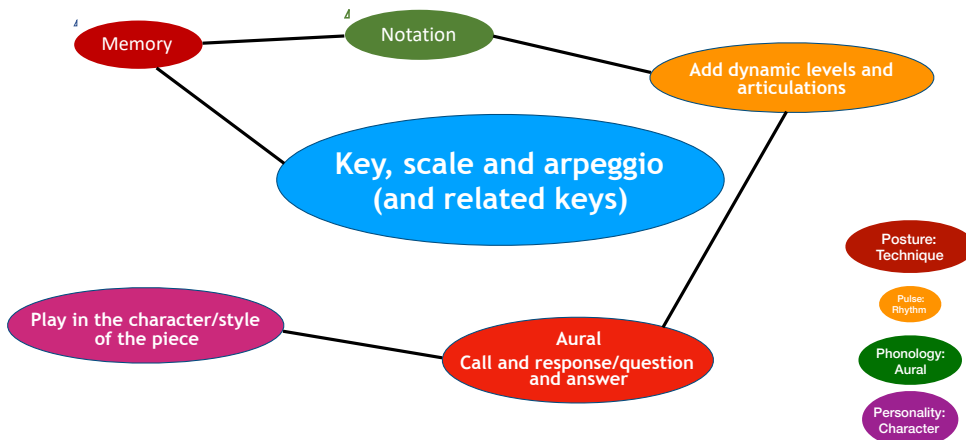


Three stages of learning a new piece

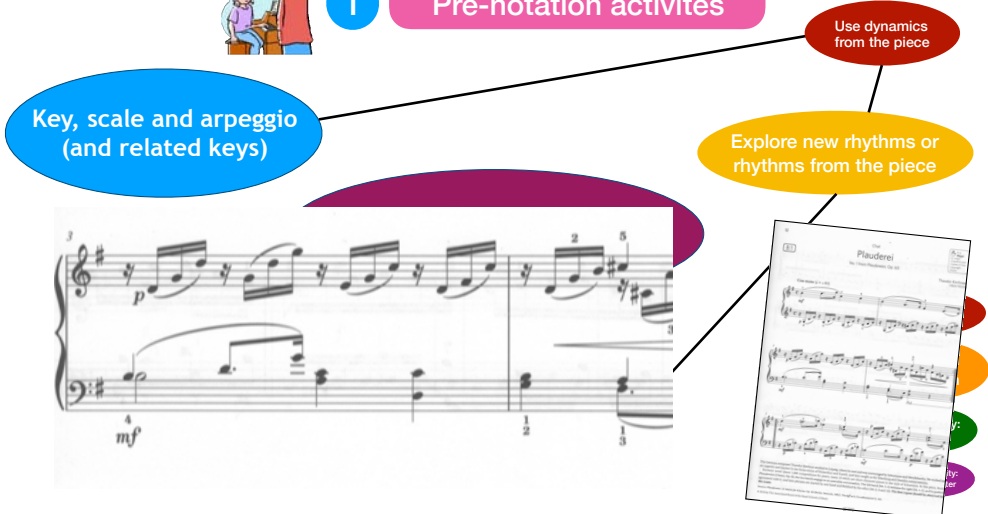
The image shows three pages of musical notation. The first page is titled 'Aria' and is marked '43'. The second page is titled 'Plauderei' and is marked '81'. The third page is titled 'Rektor' and is marked '113'. Each page contains a piano accompaniment with treble and bass staves.



1 Pre-notation activities



1 Pre-notation activities



1 Pre-notation activities

Character

- Discuss the title
- Identify musical features in the piece
- Explore specific ingredients
 - Ornaments
 - Sequences
 - Posture: Technique
 - Pulse: Rhythm
 - Phonology: Aural
 - Personality: Character

Aria
Fourth movement from Partita No. 4 in D, BWV 828

2 Introducing the notation

The Piece

- Understand markings
- Discuss recurring patterns: rhythmic and melodic

Aria
Fourth movement from Partita No. 4 in D, BWV 828

2 Introducing the notation

The Piece

Tap the pulse with a foot (or use a hand drum) and explore related keys. (Each hand of both hands together.)

Aria
Fourth movement from Partita No. 4 in D, BWV 828

3 Playing and Refining the piece

The Piece

- Perform the piece
- Regularly hear the piece internally
- Continue sight-reading pieces with similar ingredients
- Play the piece fluently, thinking about the markings and style
- Choose a bar or passage and play at a different pitch
- Compose your own similar piece
- Regularly play the scale and arpeggio (and related keys) in the style of the piece
- Develop images, stories, colours or shapes to aid character building



3 Playing and Refining the piece

The Piece

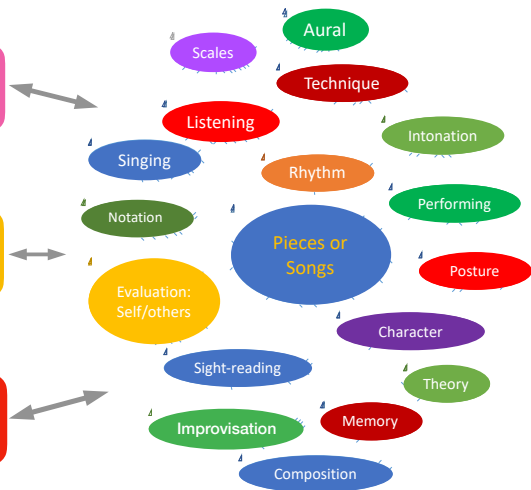


Repeat piece for practice and/or listen analytically.

Pre-notation activities

Introducing the notation

Playing and refining the piece



How many connections did I make?



Were the 4Ps (in some form) driving the lesson?



Technique

Mechanical



Musical



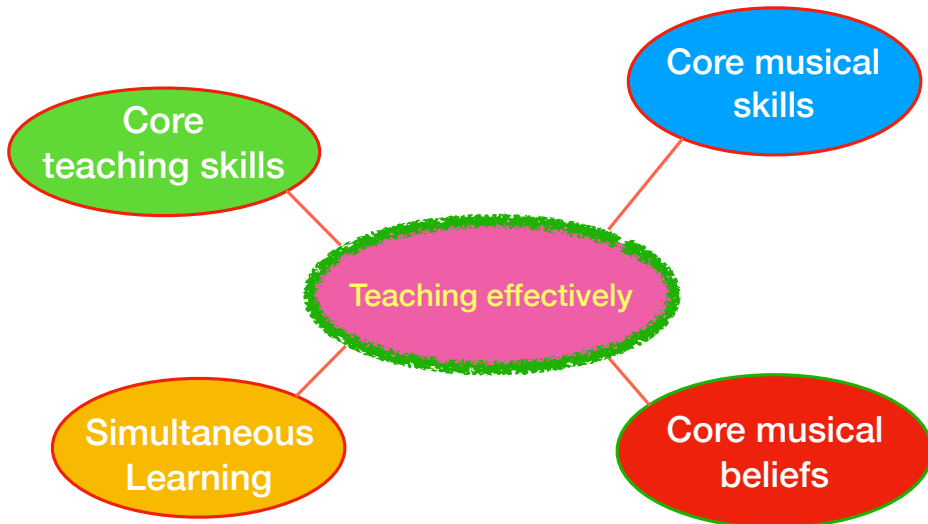
how *Musical* was that lesson?



What would you say is the most important outcome of a lesson?

My pupil wants to come back for another one

Core Musical Beliefs



...play our part in making the world a better place