




# Guide for piece no. 3:

## «Triplet- and Twin-keys Song»

### Quickstart:






1. Watch the demo video of the piece first. By tapping the -button the demo video can be played back. On some iPhones, the button will not show, unless this text window is closed.
2. As shown in the demo video, the piece is available in three different presentation modes:
  - **Presentation mode 1:** Big tone symbols. The piece stretches over 4 pages. All four pages are played consecutively. Each page contains only one staff showing the tone symbols for both hands. At least the first two of the four pages should be worked through in two ways: First, with the pages set up in portrait orientation (reading direction from top to bottom) and then in landscape orientation (reading direction from left to right). If the pupil masters these two pages with ease, he can immediately proceed to presentation mode 2.
  - **Presentation mode 2:** Small tone symbols. The piece comprises two pages, each containing one staff. At least the first page should be worked through in two ways: First, with the pages set up in portrait orientation and then in landscape orientation. If the pupil masters this page with ease as well, he can also proceed directly to the next presentation mode.
  - **Presentation mode 3:** Small tone symbols. The whole piece is printed on one page that contains two staves. The two staves are separated by a thick gray line. In presentation mode 3 the page should mostly be set up and read in landscape orientation.
3. The -button (play) and the -button (full score) are only available in **presentation mode 3**.
4. When the pupil's part is accompanied by the teacher's part, it has to be played one octave higher than written; otherwise there will be collisions between the parts.
5. The pupil should be able to play this piece and all subsequent pieces in the following three ways:
  - a) Without looking at the keys on the piano, but instead actively reading along in the music.
  - b) Without reading the music but looking at the keys.
  - c) Neither reading the music nor looking at the keys.
6. The pages with blank staves which are inserted between the individual presentation modes of the piece are provided for writing and composition exercises (Detailed description see below.).
7. The teacher's part is not only intended as a mere accompanying part, but should also be used to make improvisation exercises with the pupil (Detailed description see below.).

### Detailed guide:

(with explanations, teaching ideas and background information)

### Functions

- This guide can be opened and closed again with the «?»-button in the upper right corner of the menu. The guide can also be closed by tapping the «X».
- To become familiar with the features of the app, it is advisable to watch the app guide video that can be accessed via the corresponding button on the homescreen.

- By tapping the -button the demo video can be played back. On some iPhones, the button will not show, unless this text window is closed.
- The whole score with ordinary notes (pupil's and teacher's parts) can be displayed by tapping the -button (piano 2). The button is only available in **presentation mode 3** in which the entire piece is printed on one page.
- The accompanying part of the piece can be played back by tapping the -button (play). This button is only available in **presentation mode 3**.
- Only the foremost content displayed on the screen (guide text, pupil part or score) can be printed by tapping the -button. If, for example, the pupil's part should be printed, this text window must be closed so that the pupil's part will be brought to the front. If, however, the score, which includes both teacher and pupil parts on a regular staff, should be printed, then this text window also has to be closed first. In addition, the score view has to be opened by tapping the -button

### Preparatory information

- When the pupil's part is accompanied by the teacher's part, it has to be played one octave higher than written; otherwise there will be collisions between the parts.
- The piece is available in three different presentation modes:
  1. Presentation mode 1: Big tone symbols. The piece stretches over 4 pages. All four pages are played consecutively. Each page contains only one staff showing the tone symbols for both hands.
  2. Presentation mode 2: Small tone symbols. The piece comprises two pages, each containing one staff.
  3. Presentation mode 3: Small tone symbols. The whole piece is printed on one page that contains two staves. The two staves are separated by a thick gray line.
- The lyrics of the piece help in understanding the rhythm.

### Changes in the notation system and the way of playing compared to the previous piece "Waltz of the Bear"

- The illustrated keyboard now shows only one twin group and one triplet group.
- The staff now displays, in contrast to the piece "Waltz of the Bear", only the bottom three lines of the treble clef and the dotted C-line. But, as before, this does not need to be explained to the pupil at this time. The lines are only intended to help with orientation.
- Both hands now have a fixed playing position, unlike in the piece "Waltz of the Bear."
- There are no double bars, but there are now the terms "Da capo al fine" and "Fine".
- The white rectangles are slightly shorter than the ones in the piece "Waltz of the Bear", because they now stand for half notes and not for dotted half notes.

### How to proceed in the piano lesson

- Watch the demo video of the piece first.
- The lesson should be started with the piece's **presentation mode 1** (big tone symbols). Initially, the first page of the piece has to be set up in portrait orientation so that the terms "bear hand" and "mouse hand" appear at the top edge of the page.

- Then the previous piece is placed in landscape orientation next to the previously set up first side of the current piece. The teacher then discusses together with the pupil the differences between the staves of the two pieces.
- Thereafter, the previous piece is taken away, and the pupil continues working with the first page of the "Triplet- and Twin-keys Song" in presentation mode 1 (**still in portrait orientation**). In presentation mode 1 only one staff per page is shown which, however, contains the tone symbols of both hands. The reading direction is from top to bottom (vertical reading direction).
- Now, the pupil should place the hands in position:
  - The fingers 2-3-4 of the mouse hand are placed on the keys G-flat, A-flat and B-flat.
  - The fingers 3-2 of the bear hand are placed on the keys D-flat and E-flat.
- Now the pupil can try to play the first page. The melody begins with notes played by the mouse hand and then it switches over to bear hand.
- If the pupil masters playing the first page in portrait orientation, then the sheet is **turned 90 degrees to the left** so that the illustrated keyboard is displayed on the left edge of the page. **The reading direction is then from left to right as on a regular staff.** Now the pupil can try to read and play the piece in this way.
- If the pupil feels that the new (horizontal) reading direction is too difficult to read, then the page could at first be **turned by only 20 degrees** to the left. Then the angle can be gradually increased, as the pupil plays, up to 90 degrees. Most pupils reach 90 degrees during the first or second time they play.
- If the pupil masters the first two pages of the piece in presentation mode 1 in both reading directions with ease, then he can immediately proceed to presentation mode 2 (small tone symbols). If this is still too difficult for the pupil, then he should just continue with pages 3 and 4 of the presentation mode 1.
- **Presentation mode 2** should also **be started first in portrait orientation**. Then the sheet should be rotated to landscape orientation.
- If the pupil is able to play the first page of the presentation mode 2 in both reading directions with ease, then he can directly proceed to presentation mode 3. Otherwise, he should just continue with the second page of the presentation mode 2.
- In **presentation mode 3** the sheet music should be set up and read mostly in landscape orientation.
- Concerning the cat-triplet-notes\* (= A-flat notes) at the end of the second staff, the teacher can make the pupil aware of the fact that the line underneath can help with differentiating between cat-triplet-notes and bear-triplet-notes\*.

\*) See guide for the piece "Hello!", paragraph "Triplet-key-position"

### **Didactical information**

**Important!! Writing and composition exercises should be done on a regular basis.** Otherwise, most pupils do not learn to read music.

The PianoSeesaw method provides special worksheets for that purpose. These are always inserted between the respective presentation modes of a piece or after those pieces that are created with a different staff graphic in comparison to the previous piece. The worksheets, hereafter named "writing-notes-worksheets", show empty staves matching the ones of the corresponding piece. They should be printed out and used as follows:

**Writing Exercise 1:** The teacher plays a key (here: a black key\*\*) and the pupil writes the corresponding PianoSeesaw tone symbol on a writing-notes-worksheet.

**Writing Exercise 2:** The pupil writes a PianoSeesaw-tone symbol (here: a square, which refers to a black key\*\*), the teacher plays the corresponding key and the pupil checks if the teacher has chosen the right one. Sometimes the teacher must of course choose a "wrong" key.

**Composition Exercise 1:** The pupil composes stepwise the first 2-4 bars of his own song using the five black keys occurring in Triplet- and Twin-keys Song \*\*). Note values should either be quarter notes or half notes.

With the first attempts at this composition exercise, the teacher may, depending on the pupil's motivation, take over the part of playing the notes which the pupil writes down. The teacher may initially also play different motives, consisting of 2-4 tones, and the pupil may choose from them. If the pupil comes with his own suggestions on how the piece can continue, then the teacher can gradually withdraw. However, if the pupil does not yet feel confident enough to make suggestions of his own, then the teacher should contribute with more ideas, possibly based on a single tone, which the pupil may choose respectively. It is important that the introduction to composing is held as simple as possible for the pupil in order to prevent that he loses heart already at the very beginning.

**Composition Exercise 2:** The pupil composes a melody at the piano, using the same tones as the current piece\*\*) and writes it down on a writing-notes-worksheet. It would be advisable to start with short melodies, because otherwise it can become too difficult for the pupil to keep the tones in his mind during the writing. To train the melody memory, the pupil should be encouraged to write longer and longer melodies before the melody must be replayed for memory refreshing causes.

\*\*) Within the writing and composition exercises the same tones should be used as in the current composition. Only the five black keys from C-sharp up to A-sharp in close position are used. in "Triplet- and Twin-keys Song." Therefore in the writing and composition exercises for this piece only these keys should be played or written down applying the corresponding PianoSeesaw tone symbols.

### **Improvisation:**

The teacher's part of "Triplet- and Twin-keys Song" works well for practicing on improvisation. To learn how to improvise on the piano and how to play by ear is just as important as learning how to play by reading the music. For more information on this subject see also below under "**Thoughts on improvisation, playing from sheet music and playing by ear**"

**If the pupil has made it this far, the next procedures should be as follows:**

1. The pupil puts the mouse hand on a triplet key group and the bear hand on a twin key group.
2. The teacher initially plays measures 1-4 of the teacher's part of "Triplet- and Twin-keys Song" in continual repetition. The pupil plays tone progressions with the tones G-flat (2nd finger mouse hand) and D-flat (3rd finger bear hand). After several rounds, the exercise can be completed by attaching the bars 5-8 of the teacher's part.
3. As for the rhythm, just quarter notes and half notes are played at first. To help the pupil get started, a rhythmical pattern may be specified, such as "fast-fast-slow". The teacher is free to play some examples using the rhythmical pattern and the pre-set tones to inspire the pupils.
4. The B section is added to the improvisation exercise. The pupil continues to play only G-flat and D-flat.
5. A third tone is then added: either A-flat or E-flat. If the A-flat is chosen first, then another exercise with only the E-flat should be done and vice versa. It is also conceivable to use one tone in the A-section and the other in the B-section. The process of adding tones should be held flexible and will be different with every pupil.
6. Both hands get two tones:  
Bear hand: D-flat and E-flat  
Mouse hand: G-flat and A-flat
7. All five black keys are included.

**The pupil should be able to play this piece and all subsequent pieces in the following three ways:**

1. Without looking at the keys on the piano, but instead actively reading along in the music. (haptic orientation)
2. Without reading the music but looking at the keys. (playing by ear)
3. Neither reading the music nor looking at the keys. (haptic orientation and playing by ear)

## **Thoughts on improvisation, playing from sheet music and playing by ear**

First of all, learning to read music is only possible for those pupils who are also able to learn to read (language). This is true for most children who are 6 or 7 years old, some younger, some older. The following thoughts apply therefore only for pupils who have reached this stage. For younger pupils and for some pupils older than approximately 11 years of age different principles apply.

Many piano teachers think that improvising, reading chords or playing by ear (i.e. free piano playing) is more important than playing from written music. These two methods are regarded as separate ways of teaching - thinking that the pupil doing free playing will lose the motivation to learn to read music while the other who reads music will not get the opportunity to be creative and play freely. Experience shows however that this is not the case and that both methods should be taught equally from the start.

Many think that it is easier for a new beginner to play freely rather than struggle to learn the written music. In doing so they overlook a very important factor. While playing freely the pupil can watch the keyboard all the time and check the position of the fingers. When playing from music this is not always possible as he has to read what is written and in so doing is able to develop an awareness of where to place his fingers without always looking at the keys. This ability is called "haptic orientation" and is an important skill, also when playing freely. Without this skill the pupil can develop a feeling of losing control if he has to look away from the keys in order to read the music.

Haptic orientation - a sensing and manipulation through touch - occurs at a more advanced level, i.e. when the left hand is playing an accompaniment with many jumps and the right hand has to play largely by feeling its way around. Also, when rapid passages are played, the eyes definitely must (and sometimes only can) aim at some single keys, while the actual control must be transferred to the sensory skills of the hands. These and many other difficulties can arise while playing from memory as well. It could therefore be arguably concluded that the lack of a distinct skill in haptic orientation will always result in many random errors and wrongly played keys, no matter if one plays the piano freely, by reading music or from memory.

Another reason why a pupil is not looking at the music is often found, when he is taught right from the beginning to read the regular music notation system, which unfortunately can not be read intuitively. Most pupils learn thereby subconsciously that the music sheet does not contain much usable information anyway and it therefore does not make sense to look at the music at all. To avoid that this negative attitude to the music emerges in the pupil the PianoSeesaw tone symbols were developed. These are immediately understandable, and therefore the above described effect is prevented.