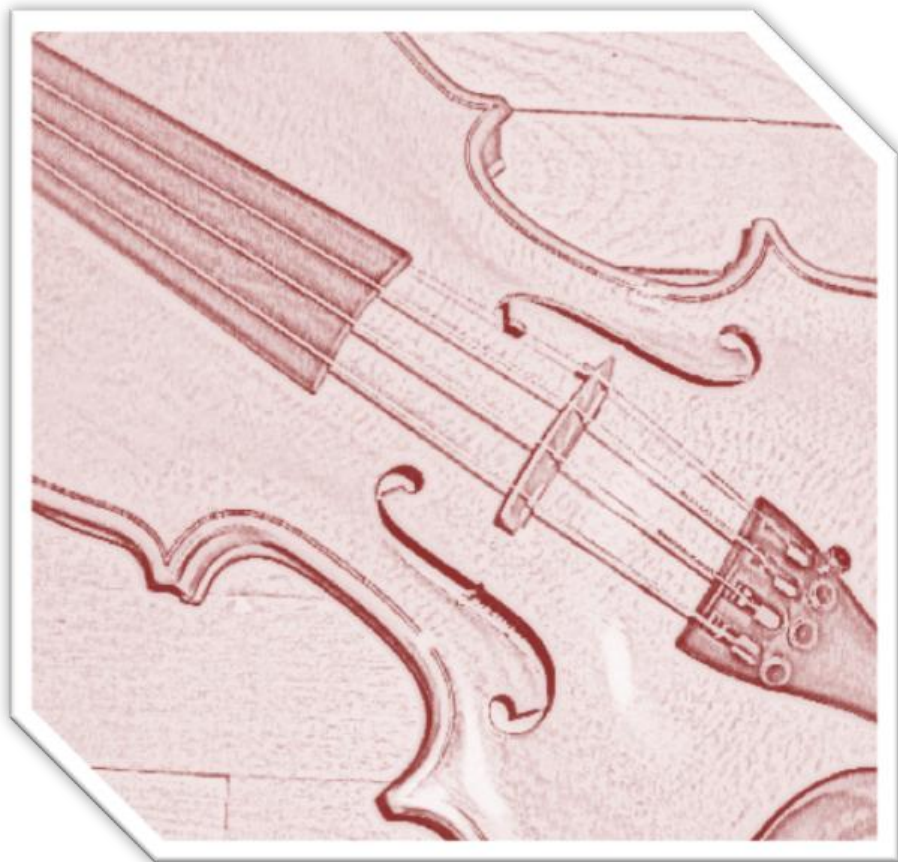


ELEMENTS OF MUSIC THEORY/ IMPROVISATION



Elaine's Violin
Studio

By Elaine Badiere

An adventure in working together to make music – ***our own music!***
Music improvisation for Suzuki and other Violin, Viola and Cello
teaching methods.

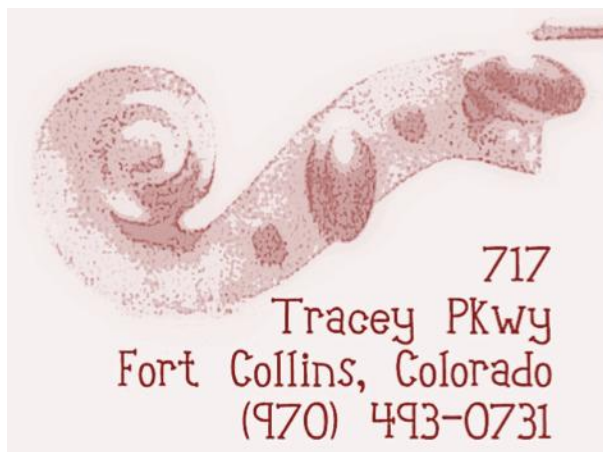
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PREFACE

Some may be wondering, why would a Suzuki violin teacher launch into Elements of Music Theory/Improvisation? After all, don't some Suzuki teachers even avoid teaching the note reading part of Music Theory? Some may, but here is my little personal contact with Dr. Suzuki story.

The last year that Dr. Suzuki came to the American Suzuki Institute in Steven's Point, Wisconsin, I was there. When we were given a chance to ask our questions, I asked about sight reading musical notation, as there was at that time, some question as to whether we should be teaching this skill. He inquired as to whether the children in my area learned to read musical notation at school. I replied that not always did they learn this skill at school. Where upon, he brightened and said,

“WHATEVER THE STUDENT NEEDS TO KNOW, THE TEACHER NEEDS TO TEACH!”

This has been my guiding principle in all of my teaching. So, because Improvisation is more and more a required skill for young musicians, I propose that we need to introduce it early on, as we do the other skills they need to develop. Let's take on the challenge of the present!

In this book, the beginning exercises are set up to be presented aurally to the student, Suzuki teaching style. We do get to exercises that obviously need to be presented in the printed form. The student needs to be at ease with note reading for these presentations to be meaningful. The teacher is in a position to advise on this matter. This presentation is not meant to be a full coverage of the broad subject of improvisation. It is merely a way to get fairly young kids and others to be familiar with the basic tools of improvisation and how to use them, or we could say, get started.

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THE ELEMENT OF MAKING IT UP

Using what is at hand

One of Mr. Webster's definitions of "improvise" is, "to use what is at hand". The first things at hand are open strings, Violin E, A, D, G. Viola and Cello, one octave apart A, D, G, C. So we do have overlap. Now, let's make sure we have something at hand to use, such as one octave of notes in the formation of a major scale. The young child doing the *Suzuki* violin method, can sing a little song first;

♪ **The little train goes up the hill. The little train comes down again.**

These words correspond to the notes of a major scale, first going up, then coming down. Singing the words to the notes of a major scale is quite easy. Once students can sing it they can learn to play it easily. The first one octave scale they learn to play on violin is A major, and D major for viola and cello, each starting on the second highest open string of each instrument:

A or D open string, 1, 2, 3 E or A open 1, 2, 3 (with fingers 2 & 3 together for the half steps) works for violin and viola. For Cello, Open 1, 3, 4 works.

When the student can ascend and descend the A or D major scale comfortably he/she is ready to start to learn *Twinkle Twinkle*, but also to start to use the notes at hand to make up something. I like to let the student start to learn *Twinkle*. Sometimes this process seems to move a little slowly, in which case I can introduce improvisation as something new. However the introduction of improvisation can happen any time, to add new interest, to understand the workings of Music Theory, or just for fun. At this point there is only one rule:

"Start on the key note and end on the key note," (in this case A or D open string).

In between the start and end notes, do whatever you like, for as long as you like, using the notes of A or D major scale.

So now the student is learning a given melody, *Twinkle Twinkle*. He/she is also learning how to mix up the notes of the A or D major scale in different ways to make his/her own melody. There is further a very basic thing going on. The youngster is getting the feel of a scale/key/home playing field! These are the first steps!

When the scale is comfortable, the student can easily transfer the fingering and bowing over a string and repeat it all in D or G major. Then another transfer over a string brings us to G or C major. As each scale becomes comfortable, improvisation within the new boundaries becomes possible.

Now, students can also *transpose Twinkle Twinkle*, the same way. They may well have gone on into the next several songs in the book by this time. That's OK too. Each musical selection introduces something new in the technique of violin, viola or cello playing which in turn gives us something more at hand to use in *improvisation*.

As the student proceeds through the first half of the Suzuki Violin/Viola/Cello School Volume 1, we have the chance to teach them the names of the scale notes they are playing on their instrument. It is advantageous to establish this step before they start to learn the names of the notes on the staff, so that the connection between the symbols on the page and the instrument geography is better facilitated.

Students can start to learn the notes on the staff by means of a book called *I Can Read Music, Volume 1 for violin/viola/cello*, by Joanne Martin. As the student becomes well established in the note reading exercises, he/she can start to follow the printed music in the Suzuki book with his/her finger, while listening to the recording. We still have concept development through the ears, as well as getting used to following printed notes. This way they can ease into using the printed page gradually. They can also develop the ability to hear what they see.

In the second half of the Suzuki Violin or Viola School Volume 1, the student learns 2 new finger patterns, which give us new notes. This allows us to start doing 2 octave scales. I like to assign the improvisation exercises in the lower octave and higher octave separately as the finger patterns are not the same in both octaves. This allows the student to adjust to this difference. I recommend another book called *String Class Fingerboard Geography*, by Barbara Barber, to facilitate and clarify this sort of learning.

Back to *improvisation!* A fun and useful addition to this game of improvisation, when the student is at ease with the process is: what would a sunny day family picnic sound like? Or, what would a thunderstorm sound like? Imagination is the stuff of improvisation! I really like to take advantage of this time and stage of growth to develop a readiness to make up, improvise, and set up imaginative settings and moods.

By this time, can you count all the building blocks we have ready to use?

We have the concept of notes in scale formation, on paper and in the ear. We also have folk songs (in the Suzuki books), which give us musical phrases and melodies, on paper and in our ears. Following is a review of some of these building blocks.

Notes and degrees of major scale

Major Scale with words to sing the scale:

Do	Re	Mi	Fa	Sol	La	Ti	Do	Do	Ti	La	Sol	Fa	Mi	Re	Do
I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	VIII	VII	VI	V	IV	III	II	I

The li - ttle train goes up the hill. The li - ttle train comes down a - gain

Letter names of notes of scales:

A B C# D E F# G# A A G# F# E D C# B A

D E F# G A B C# D D C# B A G F# E D

G A B C D E F# G G F# E D C B A G

C D E F G A B C C B A G F E D C

All this is absorbed little by little as appropriate.

Scales are made up of tones and semi-tones (Canadian usage), or whole steps and half steps (American usage). For violinists and violists this means: fingers apart for tones/whole steps and fingers together, (sometimes scrunched or pushing each other out of the way) for semi-tones/half steps. This idea, which is developed in practicing the scales, can help intonation immensely.

A big part of improvisation is *imagination*, just like when we build a house with blocks or Lego. So, along the way, let's stop often and reset our *imagination*.

Imaginative mood settings for improvisation:

These may be suggested to students and students can be encouraged to create their own list of imaginative moods.

- Thunder storm
- Sunny day or a picnic
- A visit to a friend's house
- Playing with my puppy/kitty
- Plus anything else you can come up with...

SETTING UP A BEAT

When the student feels ready and comfortable, we can put a *beat* with what they are playing in the improvisation exercise/game. Actually, if we have been playing 2nd violin, viola or cello parts or guitar or piano accompaniments with the Suzuki pieces he/she is learning, this step is rather easy. They already have the *feel* for the beat. We can show them how we might put a beat with some made up phrase or two, by using our feet to tap out a straight beat, preferably a rather slow beat so as not to intimidate the youngster. We can show the parent how to give the student a beat by clapping or slapping the knees or combining the two; it is again important to give a straight beat, and keep it rather slow. The teacher or parent, for best results, should just provide the beat, without asking for this or that during this exercise. The child needs a chance to settle into the beat. That is enough for a while.

Later, when the student is ready and eager, patterns of one quarter note followed by two eighth notes, for example, or any other patterns of two, three or four beats can be set up. These may be expressed by tapping, clapping or by means of a *Dr. Beat* metronome or similar device. Also the teacher can play the pattern on the key note of the scale being used, or in a chordal pattern. At first, of course, take easy paced beats to let the student work into it at his/her own pace. This way the student can take on simple meter, then work into compound meter, as simple or complicated as desired.

IMPROVISATION OF AN ACCOMPANIMENT

Now we come to a concept that needs a little more facility with our building blocks: chords that are built on various notes of a given scale. See the major scale and chord/ arpeggio sets, page 11 and on. The letters above the chords are the chord names, the name of the note upon which the chord is built. The Roman Numerals under the notes indicate the relationship of that chord to the key being used, as in, it is built on the first, fourth or fifth note, etc. of the scale/key. See also page 8.

Next we can give them a simple accompaniment pattern. When they have internalized the patterns by chord numbers and sound function, and can play the indicated chord patterns by memory/ear we can move on.

Let's start with *Twinkle Twinkle*. This is a set of notes that the Suzuki student is more than well acquainted with. So now we can add a new element from the chart for *Twinkle Twinkle*, and ask him/her to play the indicated chord patterns, fitting into the indicated number of beats. The given pattern of two eighth notes to the beat will work best to start. If the teacher or other player can play *Twinkle* an octave lower, the student can begin with the pattern starting on open A or D string. He/she will do the one beginning on the G or C string, when ready. Then he/she can trade back and forth.

In the following pages, you will find the scale and arpeggio sets for A and D major, D and G major, G and C major. The Suzuki student who has added *Twinkle* D or G major, and G or C major from early on, can probably add in the accompaniment exercise in these keys, fairly easily.

The student may be in Suzuki Book 2, 3 or 4 or farther by now. It all depends on the student's interest and when he/she started the improvisation project.

SCALES AND ARPEGGIOS

Score

Scales and Arpeggios

A major Violin

Trad.

Violin

Vln. ⁷

Vln. ¹³
I Tonic

Vln. ¹⁹
F# min
VI Submediant

Vln. ²⁵
D
IV Subdominant

Vln. ³¹
E7
V7 Dominant 7

Exercise 1

Score

Scales and Arpeggios

D major Viola

Trad.

Viola

Score

Scales and Arpeggios

D major Cello

Trad.

Cello



Vc.



Vc.

13

D



I Tonic

Vc.

19

B min




VI Submediant

Vc.

25

G



IV Subdominant

Vc.

31

A7



V7 Dominant 7

Exercise 1

Score

Scales and Arpeggios

D major Violin

Trad.

Violin

A single staff of music in treble clef, key of D major (two sharps), and 4/4 time signature. It contains a single melodic line representing the D major scale: D4-E4-F#4-G4-A4-B4-C#5-D5-E5-F#5-G5-A5-B5-C#6-D6.

Vln. ⁶ D
I Tonic

A single staff of music in treble clef, key of D major. It starts with a D major chord (D-F#-A) at measure 6, followed by the D major scale from measure 7 to 10. The scale is: D4-E4-F#4-G4-A4-B4-C#5-D5-E5-F#5-G5-A5-B5-C#6-D6.

Vln. ¹¹ B min
VI Submediant

A single staff of music in treble clef, key of D major. It starts with a B minor chord (B-D-F) at measure 11, followed by the B minor scale from measure 12 to 15. The scale is: B4-C4-D4-E4-F4-G4-A4-B4-C4-B3-A3-G3-F3-E3-D3.

Vln. ¹⁶ G
IV Subdominant

A single staff of music in treble clef, key of D major. It starts with a G major chord (G-B-D) at measure 16, followed by the G major scale from measure 17 to 20. The scale is: G4-A4-B4-C5-D5-E5-F#5-G5-A5-B5-C#6-D6.

Vln. ²¹ A7
V7 Dominant 7

A single staff of music in treble clef, key of D major. It starts with an A7 chord (A-C-E-G) at measure 21, followed by the A7 scale from measure 22 to 25. The scale is: A4-B4-C4-E4-F4-G4-A4-B4-C4-B3-A3-G3-F3-E3-D3.


Exercise 2


Score


Scales and Arpeggios

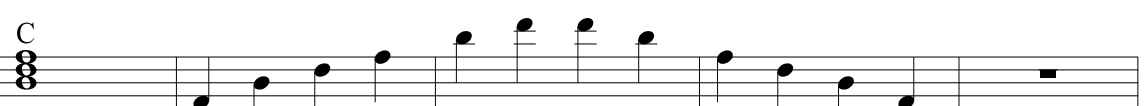
G major Viola


Trad.

Viola 

Vla. ⁶ 
I Tonic

Vla. ¹¹ 
VI Submediant

Vla. ¹⁶ 
IV Subdominant

Vla. ²¹ 
V7 Dominant7

Exercise 2

Score

Scales and Arpeggios

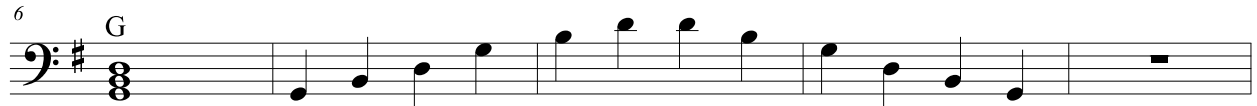
G major Cello

Trad.


Cello




Vc. ⁶ G
I Tonic




Vc. ¹¹ E min
VI Submediant



Vc. ¹⁶ C
IV Subdominant



Vc. ²¹ D7
V7 Dominant 7



Exercise 2


Score

Scales and Arpeggios

C major Viola

Trad.


Viola 

Vla. ⁷ 

Vla. ¹³ 
I Tonic

Vla. ¹⁹ 
VI Submediant

Vla. ²⁵ 
IV Subdominant

Vla. ³¹ 
V7 Dominant 7

Exercise 3

Score

Scales and Arpeggios

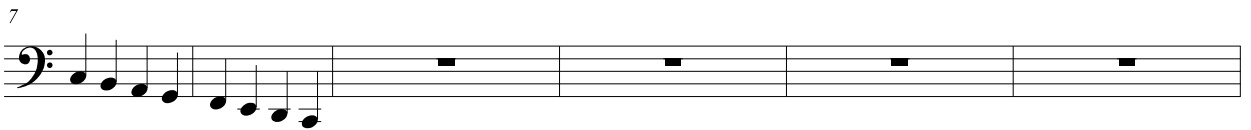
C major Cello

Trad.

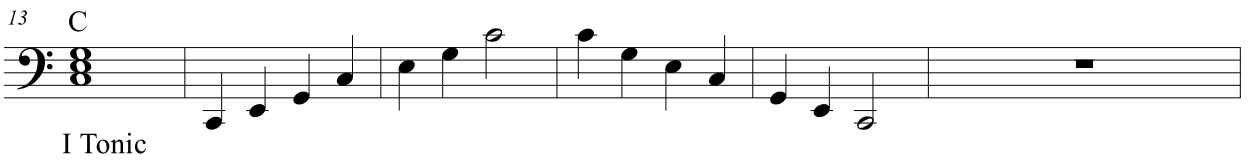
Cello



Vc.

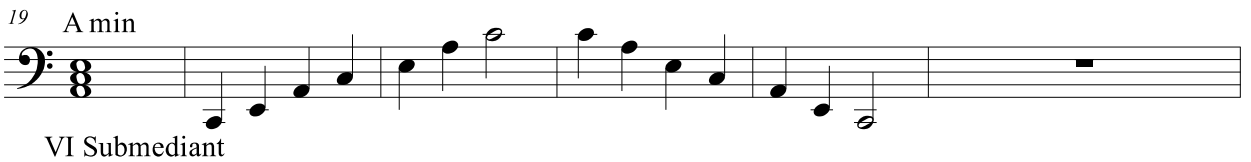


Vc.




I Tonic

Vc.



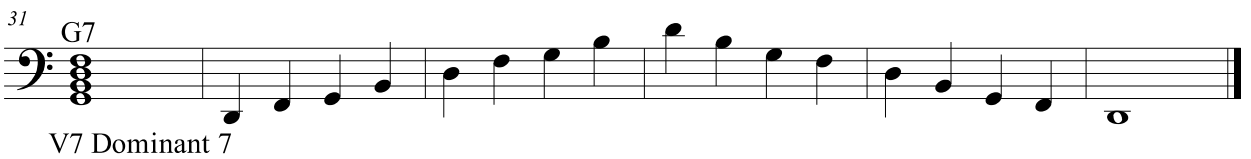
VI Submediant

Vc.



IV Subdominant

Vc.



V7 Dominant 7

Exercise 3

PATTERNS AND KEYS

Next we can use a simple combination of the chordal tones to form a basic accompaniment pattern, I, IV, V7. The same finger patterns would be used on different strings to get the different keys.

See Transposition Section, for an extended key lay out of the chart.

E. Badiere

The image displays three musical staves for Violin, Viola, and Cello, each in 4/4 time. Each staff shows a sequence of three measures corresponding to the I, IV, and V7 chords. The Violin staff is in treble clef and includes a sharp sign on the F note in the V7 measure. The Viola and Cello staves are in bass clef. The notes are: Violin (I: G2-A2-B2-C3; IV: C3-D3-E3-F3; V7: C3-E3-G3-B3); Viola (I: C2-D2-E2-F2; IV: F2-G2-A2-B2; V7: C2-E2-G2-B2); Cello (I: C2-D2-E2-F2; IV: F2-G2-A2-B2; V7: C2-E2-G2-B2). The text 'pattern for keys G, D & A' is placed below the Violin staff, and 'pattern for keys C, G & D' is placed below both the Viola and Cello staves.

TWINKLE CHARTS

Now we come to the charts for *Twinkle Twinkle*, laid out for Violin, Viola and Cello in their keys, A and D major, D and G major, G and C major. Move from one key to the next only when the current key is comfortable. Sometimes the student needs the teacher to play the melody a measure at a time with him/her until he/she gets the feel for how this works.

When the *Twinkles* are comfortable, try doing the folk songs, *Lightly Row* and *Go Tell Aunt Rhody* as indicated. When that is comfortable, can you transpose these songs using the keys and chords we used for *Twinkle*?

Score

Twinkle Twinkle Chart

A major Violin

Trad.

The score is written in A major (two sharps) and 4/4 time. It consists of three staves: Violin, Vln. (Viola), and Vln. (Cello). The melody is simple, with notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. Chords are indicated above the notes, and Roman numerals are written below the staff lines.

Violin Staff (Measures 1-8):

- Measure 1: A (I)
- Measure 2: D (IV)
- Measure 3: A (I)
- Measure 4: (E7) D (IV (V7))
- Measure 5: A (I)
- Measure 6: E7 (V7)
- Measure 7: A (I)
- Measure 8: A (I)

Viola Staff (Measures 5-12):

- Measure 5: A (I)
- Measure 6: (E7) D (IV (V7))
- Measure 7: A (I)
- Measure 8: E7 (V7)
- Measure 9: A (IV)
- Measure 10: (E7) D (IV (V7))
- Measure 11: A (I)
- Measure 12: E7 (V7)

Cello Staff (Measures 9-16):

- Measure 9: A (I)
- Measure 10: D (IV)
- Measure 11: A (I)
- Measure 12: (E7) D (IV)
- Measure 13: A (I)
- Measure 14: E7 (V7)
- Measure 15: A (I)
- Measure 16: A (I)

Exercise 4

Score

Twinkle Twinkle Chart

D major Viola

Trad.

Viola

5

Vla.

Vla.

Chords: I, IV, I, IV (V7), I, I, V7, I

Chords: I, IV (V7), I, V7, I, IV (V7), I, V7

Chords: I, IV, I, IV (V7), I, I, V7, I

Score

Twinkle Twinkle Chart

D major Cello

Trad.

Cello

5

Vc.

Vc.

Chords: I, IV, I, IV (V7), I, I, V7, I

Chords: I, IV (V7), I, V7, I, IV (V7), I, V7

Chords: I, IV, I, IV (V7), I, I, V7, I

Exercise 4

Twinkle Twinkle Chart

D major Violin

Trad.

Violin

5

Vln.

9

Vln.

Score

Twinkle Twinkle Chart

G major Viola

Trad.

Viola

5

Vla.

9

Vla.

Exercise 5

Score

Twinkle Twinkle Chart

G major Cello

Trad.

Cello

5

Vc.

9

Vc.

Chord diagrams: I, IV, I, (D7) C, G, D7, G, C, G, D7, G. Fingering: I, IV, I, IV V7, I, IV (V7), I, V7. I, IV, I, IV (V7), I, V7, I.

Exercise 5

Twinkle Twinkle Chart

G major Violin

Trad.

Violin

5

Vln.

9

Vln.

Chord diagrams: I, IV, I, (D7) C, G, D7, G, C, G, D7, G. Fingering: I, IV, I, IV (V7), I, IV (V7), I, V7, I. I, IV, I, IV (V7), I, V7, I.

Exercise 6

Score

Lightly Row Chart

D major Viola

Trad.

Viola

Measures 1-4: D (I), A7 (V7), D (I)

Measures 5-8: D (I), A7 (V7), D (I), A7 (V7), D (I)

Measures 9-12: A7 (V7), D (I)

Measures 13-16: D (I), A7 (V7), D (I), A7 (V7), D (I)

Score

Lightly Row Chart

D major Cello

Trad.

Cello

Measures 1-4: D (I), A7 (V7), D (I)

Measures 5-8: D (I), A7 (V7), D (I), A7 (V7), D (I)

Measures 9-12: A7 (V7), D (I)

Measures 13-16: D (I), A7 (V7), D (I), A7 (V7), D (I)

Exercise 7

GO TELL AUNT RHODY CHART

Go Tell Aunt Rhody Chart

A major Violin

Trad.

Violin

Vln.

Vln.

Score

Go Tell Aunt Rhody Chart

D major Viola

Trad.

Viola

Vla.

Vla.

Exercise 8

Score

Go Tell Aunt Rhody Chart

D major Cello

Trad.

Cello

D A7 D A7 D
I V7 I V7 I

Vc.

⁵ D G D G D
I IV I IV I

Vc.

⁹ D A7 D A7 D
I V7 I V7 I

Exercise 8

IMPROVISING ON A MELODY I

After playing an accompaniment gets easy, the student may like to try combining the melody with the accompaniment chord structure to try improvising on a melody. Use the notes of the chords to add notes around the melody. As with all the other exercises, start with a simple idea, as in two eighth notes to one quarter note. In the following example the Violin, Viola or Cello 1 part is the first phrase of the *Twinkle* melody and the Violin, Viola or Cello 2 part is an improvisation. Now can you continue this idea, in your own way?

Improvisation on Twinkle

A major Violin

Trad.

The image shows a musical score for two violins. The top system is labeled 'Violin I' and 'Violin II'. The bottom system is labeled 'Vln. I' and 'Vln. II'. Both systems are in the key of A major (two sharps) and 4/4 time. The Violin I part consists of two measures: the first measure contains a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter rest; the second measure contains a quarter note C5, a quarter note D5, and a quarter rest. The Violin II part consists of two measures: the first measure contains a quarter note G3, a quarter note A3, and a quarter note B3; the second measure contains a quarter note C4, a quarter note D4, and a quarter note E4. The bottom system is identical to the top system but includes a triplet '3' above the first measure of the Violin I part.

Score

Improvisation on Twinkle

D major Viola

Trad.

Musical score for Viola I and Viola II. The score is in D major (two sharps) and 4/4 time. Viola I plays a melody of quarter notes: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, D5. Viola II plays a bass line of quarter notes: D3, E3, F#3, G3, A3, B3, C4, D4. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Musical score for Viola I and Viola II. The score is in D major (two sharps) and 4/4 time. Viola I plays a melody of quarter notes: D4, E4, F#4, G4, A4, B4, C5, D5. Viola II plays a bass line of quarter notes: D3, E3, F#3, G3, A3, B3, C4, D4. A triplet of eighth notes (D4, E4, F#4) is marked above the first measure of the Viola I staff. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Score

Improvisation on Twinkle

D major Cello

Trad.

Musical score for Cello I and Cello II. The score is in D major (two sharps) and 4/4 time. Cello I plays a melody of quarter notes: D2, E2, F#2, G2, A2, B2, C3, D3. Cello II plays a bass line of quarter notes: D2, E2, F#2, G2, A2, B2, C3, D3. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Musical score for Cello I and Cello II. The score is in D major (two sharps) and 4/4 time. Cello I plays a melody of quarter notes: D2, E2, F#2, G2, A2, B2, C3, D3. Cello II plays a bass line of quarter notes: D2, E2, F#2, G2, A2, B2, C3, D3. A triplet of eighth notes (D2, E2, F#2) is marked above the first measure of the Cello I staff. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Exercise 9

IMPROVISING ON A MELODY II

Now we are going to consider the use of rhythmic variants in improvising. The Suzuki students are already on the path with this idea. They did the *Twinkle Variations* in the beginning of their studies. *Twinkle Twinkle*, employs the same note, two beats at a time, either two quarter notes or one half note all the way through. So the two beat pattern is rather easy for the student to use. Any Suzuki student will recognize the pattern of one eighth note and two sixteenth notes from the *Twinkle* variations. What is different here is that this melody is not the two beat note pattern of *Twinkle*. There are dotted quarter notes and eighth notes. So now the eighth and sixteenth note pattern has to follow the melody. Seeing and understanding this on paper is one thing. Can you do it? Easily? This is why it is good to practice chordal exercises and rhythmic exercises separately until one has enough ease with each to start putting them together, in his/her own imaginative way.

Improvisation on May Song

A major Violin

Trad.

Violin I

Violin II

The first system of musical notation shows two staves. The top staff is labeled 'Violin I' and the bottom staff is labeled 'Violin II'. Both staves are in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 4/4 time signature. The Violin I part consists of a melody with a dotted quarter note followed by an eighth note, then a quarter note, and a half note. The Violin II part consists of a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth and sixteenth notes.

Vln. I

Vln. II

The second system of musical notation shows two staves. The top staff is labeled 'Vln. I' and the bottom staff is labeled 'Vln. II'. Both staves are in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 4/4 time signature. The Vln. I part starts with a triplet of eighth notes (indicated by a '3' above the first note) followed by a quarter note and a half note. The Vln. II part continues with the rhythmic accompaniment of eighth and sixteenth notes.

Exercise 10

Score

Improvisation on May Song

D major Viola

Trad.

USING THE DORIAN CHURCH MODE

The minor scale is not dealt with in Book one of the Suzuki School, but there is a fun exercise the student can do because he/she does learn in the second half of the book, how to play all the natural notes on the D and A strings as in fingers 1 and 2 together. These natural notes, D open to D on the A string, form the Dorian Church mode. It is fun to play these notes as a scale and then use them to make up/improvise something, the same way we did with the major scales in our first exercise.

FIDDLE STYLE

One tool of improvisation is the use of different styles of music. Kids often find Fiddle Style fun to do and it can be incorporated into improvisation. Can you do a classical melody in fiddle style? A very good study of fiddling for kids is: *Children's Fiddling Method*, by Carol Ann Wheeler. She gives guitar chord indications for accompaniments. The teacher can help the student, if need be, to develop his/her accompaniment patterns from these chords.

Incorporating all three instruments: *Basic Fiddlers Philharmonic* by Dabczynski and Phillips.

COMPOSE

Once the student knows the notes of his/her first three basic scales, both on the instrument and on paper, and can use a time signature, he/she may want to try composing a little melody, and write it down. Usually this level of mastery of the basic notation skills is developed in the first Volume of the *I Can Read Music* book mentioned earlier. If the student enjoys making up little tunes improvising, often a little composition is the next challenge he/she is eager for.

TRANSPOSITION

To transpose is to take a melody or piece of music from one key and put it into another key. We have already set up this concept. We have dealt with several aspects of moving between A major, D major and G major for the violin and D major, G major and C major for viola and cello; these are the basic first position major keys for each instrument.

Next, we will discuss getting into slightly more complex transposition. The accompanying chart, *Patterns and Keys*, shows the relationship of the chordal patterns and keys the student has used up to this point, and likely quite beyond. This simple pattern can be done starting on open A or D, D or G and G or C strings. Then it is given starting with finger number one on G or C string, first position. The other suggested keys are achieved by moving to half position, second and third positions. Then again the pattern is given starting with finger number one on the D or G string. Again the suggested keys are achieved by moving to the previously mentioned positions. This works for violin and viola. Cello needs a little more shifting within each key or as given here. Obviously, these positions cannot be used until they are learned. So, we can use the chart progressively. These patterns would be used in accompaniments and also improvisations on a melody.

There is, of course, the matter of transposing the basic melody. Take *Twinkle Twinkle*, for example. You can start it on three of the open strings on your instrument. Try starting on finger #1 on any of the strings you have used to begin with before. Violinists and Violists use fingers #3 & 4 together for the half step rather than #2 & 3 as when we start on the open string. Cellos will need some shifting within each key. When you get the melody set up in this form, you can move to different positions and do it in different keys. Dr. Suzuki did this with the little melody *Perpetual Motion*, which he took from Book 1 and used in his book *Position Etudes* to acquaint the student with the feel of each position up to 7th position.

Also, it is probably best to start with melodies well known to the student, so that he/she can easily monitor the results. When a melody is comfortable in a new key, one can try accompaniments and then improvising on the melody.


The chart, *Key Signatures*, is designed to allow the student to clarify and monitor his/her progress in transposing melodies or chordal patterns.


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PATTERNS AND KEYS

Patterns and Keys

E. Badiere


Violin 
I IV V7 pattern for keys G, D, A


Vln. ⁵ 
I IV V7 pattern for keys A, A flat, B, B flat, C, D flat


Vln. ⁹ 
I IV V7 pattern for keys E, E flat, F, F sharp, G flat

Patterns and Keys

E. Badiere

Viola 
I IV V7 patterns for keys C, G, D

Vla. ⁵ 
I IV V7 patterns for keys D flat, D, E flat, E, F, G flat, G, A flat

Vla. ⁹ 
I IV V7 patterns for keys A, B flat, B, C, C sharp, D flat

Exercise 11

Score

Patterns and Keys

E. Badiere

Cello 
I IV V7 patterns for keys C, G, D

Vc. ⁵ 
I IV V patterns for keys D flat, D, E flat, E, F, G flat, G, A flat

Vc. ⁹ 
I IV V patterns for keys A, B flat, B, C, C sharp/D flat

Exercise 11

KEY SIGNATURES

Violin

Violin

Viola

Viola

Cello

Cello

ORDER OF SHARPS

Father Charles Goes Down And Ends Battle

ORDER OF FLATS

FAREWELL

And so, my friends, we come to the end of this little collection of improvisation building blocks. You may want to keep this booklet handy for reference because now you are going to find other songs and ideas on which to try these building blocks. You will find people who want to build music along with you. Look for people who are doing the kind of music you would like to do. Listen to them, learn from them and be open to sharing what you are doing with them. Remember that music can be a very great blessing to those around us! Be generous! Music is like the lives we live. What is lived and played from love is a blessing!

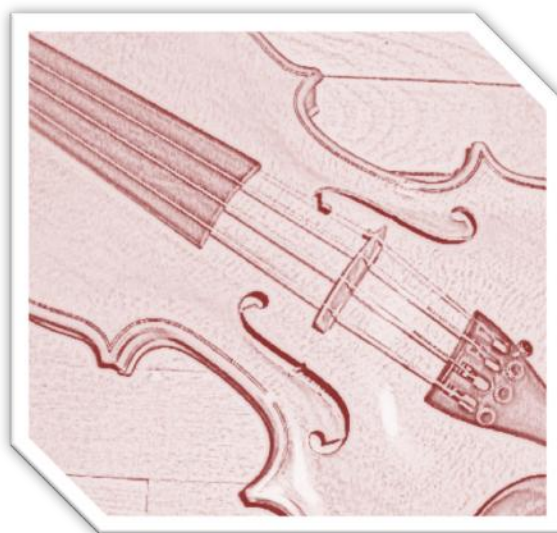
RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Barber, B. (2008). *Fingerboard geography: Violin : An Intonation, Note-Reading, Theory, Shifting System, Volume 1*. California: Alfred Music Publishing.

Dabczynski, A. and Phillips, B. (2007) *Basic Fiddlers Philharmonic: Old-Time Fiddle Tunes*. Van Nuys: Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.

Martin, J. (1991). *I Can Read Music: A Note Reading Book for Violin Students (Volume 1)*. Miami: Sammy-Birchard Inc.

Wheeler, C. A. (1992). *Children's Fiddling Method*. Mel Bay Publications, Inc.



COMPOSITION PAPER

A vertical stack of ten blank musical staves. Each staff consists of five horizontal lines and a treble clef on the left side. The staves are completely empty, intended for musical notation.

