

Curriculum Description

The curriculum was developed by breaking down the fundamental components of playing the guitar: technical movements of both the left and right hands as well as basic musical concepts for the participants.

The program was structured to develop the following:

Seating and positioning with the guitar

Basic right hand setup/positioning

Established contact points for right hand fingers

Right hand alternation (between index & middle fingers)

Right hand string crossing

Basic left hand setup

Development of left hand finger placement (contact points of fingertips)

Development of left hand finger independence: fretting the string from an open string position, left hand finger combinations: 1-3, 1-2, 1-4, 2-4, 2-1

Development of left hand horizontal shifts.

This graded curriculum first developed the right-hand technique of participants (the hand that generates sound from the guitar) using the open strings of the instrument and elementary rhythms to establish a consistent pulse. With the basic right-hand mechanics in place, elements of the left hand (which controls the overall pitch of the instrument) were then introduced. The introduction of the left-hand fingers was done individually with a short “piece” created for each individual finger. Additionally, there were pieces that created combined left-hand patterns to establish new physical challenges within a musical context.

Note: The repertoire chosen to develop these physical skills used small musical studies that worked on a particular physical skill within a musical context/accompaniment provided by the instructor.

Score examples

The material below was adapted and modified for the study from Adapted from “*The FJH Young Beginner Guitar Method Lesson Book 1*” FJH music company, Inc.

Olympic Bronze

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

i m i m i m i m i m i m i m i m i

Olympic Silver

5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5

i m i m i m i m i m i m i m i m i

Olympic Gold

5 5 5 5 0 0 0 0 5 5 0 0 5 0 5 0 5

i m i m i m i m i m i m i m i m i

Rain, Rain, Go Away

3 0 3 3 0 3 3 0 5 3 3 0

i m i m i m i m i m i m i m i

Hot Cross Buns

7 5 3 7 5 3

i m i m i m i m i m i m i m i

Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star

0 0 7 7 9 9 7 5 5 4 4 2 2 0

i m i m i m i m i m i m

5 7 7 5 5 4 4 2 7 7 5 5 4 4 2

i m i m i m i m i m i m i m

9 0 0 7 7 9 9 7 5 5 4 4 2 2 0

i m i m i m i m i m i m i m

- All notes are to be played on the high E string only (1st String)
- Numbers indicate which fret to be played in the music (0 means open string, no fretting)
- All notes are played with index finger of the fretting (left) hand, unless fret number is surrounded by a square. Square indicates ring finger.
- Letter ‘i’ indicates the index finger of the plucking (right hand) and ‘m’ is for middle finger.
- ‘  ’ or ‘  ’ indicates the index finger sliding between frets.

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- Olympic Bronze: alternating index and middle fingers of the plucking hand (right hand) on the first open string (no fretting hand involvement).
 - Olympic Silver: Index finger of fretting hand is held down on 5th fret.
 - Olympic Gold: Index finger of fretting hand practices placing onto and lifting off of the string.
 - Rain Rain Go Away: Ring finger of fretting hand is introduced and used in combination with index finger. Different rhythms are introduced (half notes and quarter notes)
 - Hot Cross Buns: Both index and ring fingers of the fretting hand. Index finger practices shifting between frets 3 and 5 by sliding over rather than lifting. Different rhythms are introduced (whole notes).
 - Twinkle Twinkle Little Star: All accumulated skills from previous songs are put to use (plucking hand alternating, fretting hand using two fingers, shifting, and lifting). Index finger practices shifting between frets 2 and 4, 4 and 5, as well as 5 and 7 by sliding over rather than lifting.
 - Strumming Practice: This involved the fretting hand holding down multiple fingers at the same time on different strings/frets while the plucking hand practiced strumming