



Southwest Guilford Music

Joseph Cox, Director

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Piano Lab Syllabus

Beginning and Intermediate Levels

Teacher: Joseph Cox

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Website: <https://www.gcsnc.com/Page/19819> (SWGHS staff webpage)

Course Description

Piano Lab is designed to teach the concepts and fundamentals needed to perform on the piano. It will increase musical understanding beyond just reading notes by teaching students vocabulary of chords and keys, accompaniment patterns, and improvisational techniques. Students will play melodies in several positions and have the opportunity to participate in ensemble playing. Students will develop good practice habits and learn techniques to increase the muscular agility and flexibility of their hands. We will delve into music at its source, find out how music is constructed, and discover the composers and history behind the music. At the completion of this course, the students will have learned to play some of the standards of piano repertoire while gaining a thorough understanding of the history and basic concepts of music.

Course Outcomes

Students will be able to:

- Follow classroom procedures regarding practice and instruction.
- Demonstrate basic competencies of piano performance in the areas of tone production, technique, and phrasing.
- Identify music notation and symbols relative to the level of proficiency.
- Identify basic musical forms within learned pieces.
- Identify proper performance habits.

Course Philosophy

The piano is a performance instrument, and the primary goal of this course is for students to become competent, independent performers on the piano. For this reason, students will be assessed largely based on their performances on the piano. It is equally important that a student develop the skills, discipline, and determination to prepare for a performance, therefore an equal portion of the grade will be derived from how well the student prepares and uses his or her practice time. Because not everyone has a piano at home, home practice is optional; however, students should come to class every day prepared to get the most out of the practice time they are given in class.

Grading Policies and Breakdown

Students will earn weekly participation grades based on the following:

- Practicing throughout the entire class period on assigned material
- Keeping fingernails short enough so proper hand position can be achieved
- Not drinking or eating in class
- Taking care of the school owned keyboards
- Being respectful of those around him/her

Performance tests will be given regularly and assigned well in advance. Students will be free to work at their own pace and be graded based on their own individual progress and work ethic. The goal is for each student to consistently develop their individual musicianship throughout the entire semester.



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Grades will be broken down into the following categories and weights:

- 50% Tests (performance and written)
- 30% Participation
- 20% Written classwork or homework

Materials

We will be using the Alfred Basic Piano Library series. If you would like to purchase these books for your child to practice at home, which is not required, please touch base with me after the first week or so of school. By then I'll have determined each student's appropriate level and be able to give you an exact book to purchase. Again, this is NOT required. Additional study materials may be used depending on the playing level and progress of each student.

Students should bring the following items to class each and every day:

- Pencil
- Headphones/Earphones with standard 3.5mm (1/8") jack
- Three-ring binder (may be kept in the Piano Lab)
- A good attitude and willingness to learn

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.