

Viva Voce Guide for Piano Preparatory Exams

Technical Work

- What notes make up the G chord? F chord? D chord?
- What does ascending mean?
- What does descending mean?
- What does contrary motion mean?
- What is the key signature for D major scales?
- Does G major have any sharps or flats?
- What is the key signature of F major?
- Explain what similar motion means?
- How many notes in an octave?

Magic Exercises

- Why is a chord a minor? Name the two chords played in No3
- Name the keys No 5 progresses in. Play chords evenly. All major chords.
- Name the time signature for each exercise
- Good knowledge of note names and values
- What intervals are being played in No 17? No 17 to be played smoothly and connected
- Name the sharps on exercise No 5 – what do they do? Raise the pitch of the note one semitone

Pieces in General

- What type of rhythm or style is this piece played?
- What does D.C. or D.S al Fine mean?
- What does Fine mean?
- What does Cantabile and poco a poco rit e diminuendo mean in the House of the Rising Sun?
- What is the key signature. Explain how to identify a minor key.
- Types of notes e.g. how many counts is a dotted quaver
- Name the chords and the notes being played
- What count do you start on? Is there an upbeat – anacrusis
- What is a waltz?
- Explain tempo markings for e.g Allegro vivace
- Point out any 1st and 2nd endings - explain
- Identify anacrusis or up-beat – e.g why has the last bar only have 2 beats?
- Types of rests – values and names
- Identify a pause sign

- Rhythmic bass patterns based on a chord – student may be asked to explain this for e.g. Moody Blues bars 1 -4 notes based on what chord?
- Knowledge of double bar lines, brace, parts of the staff
- Knowledge of accidentals e.g. what is this sign # mean? What sharp do you have to play in this piece?
- Explain the time signature e.g. compound timing
- What does loco mean? Just a Beat piece
- Explain bass rhythm pattern e.g. Western Ballad, boogie walking bass
- Why are notes written smaller in piece Bright Eyes? This is a fill - improvisation
- Explain ties and slurs
- Explain harmony, staccato, pedal signs.
- Point out the composer's name on the music – information about composer
- Explain dynamic signs and rit
- Identify ledger notes
- Explain Repeat signs
- Explain what accents do
- Explain 8va if in the piece – to play the piece 8 notes higher
- What does moderate swing mean?
- What is the song about?
- What country does the song come from?
- Good understanding of chords, arpeggios and key signatures.

Some Quick Facts

The Flying Trapeze – A movie, theme song from Those magnificent men and their flying machines.

Danube Waves – This is a waltz by Ivanovici. The Danube is the second longest river in Europe.

When Johnny comes Marching Home – a popular song of the American Civil War – expressing a longing for friends and family fighting in the war.

On Yonder Rock – From the opera Fra Diavolo by French composer Daniel Auber. First performed 1830 in Paris

House of the Rising Sun – a folk song from America. It tells of a life gone wrong in New Orleans. Best known rendition by the Animals in 1964

Dublin Town – This is an Irish jig. Dublin is the capital of Southern Ireland. First part of the song is Key G and after bar 9 becomes key of Em.

Green Door – a popular song in 1956 in America music by Bob Davie and Lyrics by Marvin Moore

Polish Dance – is a traditional folk dance in the Mazuraka style, characterised by the accent on the second beat. A lively round dance and one of the national dances of Poland.

Bright Eyes – Song written for the sound track of Watership Down by Mike Batt and performed by Art Garfunkel.

Remember to word questions differently each lesson. Often the student know will know the answer, but they need to get accustomed to being asked the question in different ways.

Number the bars – so you can ask questions in this manner, for example in bar 13 name the treble note on the second beat.

This document is a general guide only

Please create your own questions or facts where none is given.