

## (Book 2) Lesson 34.

Yeah! O.K!

### What can I actually play with this stuff?

Now that you can read and play, reasonably well on the first three strings of the guitar, you may be asking yourself the above question. With younger students, the question may be coming from the parents.

It was assumed at the beginning of this book that you had already been well acquainted with first position playing and had at least good rudimentary skills in reading music. If you are hopeless at reading "syncopation" of even the easiest forms, you may still be a bit short on some important skills. The following page has been added to Book 2 to help students who have not been initiated to "syncopation."

Having completed most of this book, you have increased the pitch range on the first three strings to a full two octave range. (In open position, the pitch range on the first three strings is basically one octave.) Very few popular melodies have a range of two octaves. Only exceptional singers can generally sing a range of more than two octaves. The point is this: Whether you realize it or not, you now have the ability to play just about any popular, standard or jazz melody that was ever written. Not only that, but you can play it from "piano" score, in the octave in which it was originally written. (Remember that the guitar is a transposing instrument.)

You have practiced scales on single strings, pairs of adjacent strings, scales on three strings and a variety of fingering devices and shifting techniques. There is no such thing as the one and only perfect fingering for any melody passage, on the guitar. To try to catalogue all fingering possibilities for any one tune, would be a formidable task.

There are all kinds of Fake Books and such on the market. Any one of these books can supply you with lots of material for developing your reading and guitar skills. For now, I suggest you reserve your playing mainly to the first three strings.

Can I play in a band with the knowledge that I have? Sure you can! (Especially so if they are in need of someone who can play the heck out of the first three strings.) You would be surprised to know that lots of professional players have less musical knowledge that you have at this point. Many guitarists make a living with virtually no ability to read music and no theoretical knowledge. However, they do have lots of experience and that counts for an awful lot.

Chances are, that in the course of your guitar study, you may have already experimented with rhythm guitar chords, so the bleak description in the above paragraph may sound as comical as it was meant to sound. My teaching experience has shown, that most avid students, spend a fair amount of time, searching for answers to problems that may have not yet been discussed in these books. While these books try to answer most questions, they are far from being the absolutely definitive books on the subject. To write the definitive book, is in my mind, at least a most daunting task. (G.A.)

The lesson to be learned from this page is that you have more ability than you may realize.

The second lesson is that there are still guitar players out there who know a lot more than you do, so keep studying.