

FOREWORD

Surrogate teachers would do well to rid themselves of the idea that there is only one way to teach. Each student will and should present a separate, individual challenge. It is the function of the teacher to produce the simple, knowledgeable language necessary to explain the learning procedures. These "magic words" are not easy to come by and may well tax to the limit the creative powers of the surrogate teacher. It is my opinion that this manner of teaching is beneficial to the teacher as well as the student. The surrogate teacher enjoys a great deal more pleasure from teaching and the student, realizing that in effect they are their own real teacher and therefore masters of their own destiny, helps create a much greater interest in the learning process. The resulting interchange between student and teacher will turn music lessons into what they should be.....a mutual pleasure for student and teacher. Students should understand that THE LEARNING PROCESS is designed as a complete on-going work, with best results being obtained by diligently working through each book in proper rotation. The skipping of books to arrive more quickly at the "good stuff" is not recommended and will most assuredly lead to complete confusion.

It is suggested that the often practiced "learning by repetition or memorization", be replaced by scientific endeavour. (a thought process) This will allow each student to work out their musical thoughts in a time frame necessary to fulfill their satisfaction. What really matters is not "slow" or "fast", but "learning." Practicing countless hours every day may very well help a student arrive at a tolerable "craft of playing" plateau, but it seems that unless the talent for music is innately part of your being, you may indeed end up a brilliant craftsman but not necessarily a brilliant musician. However, many students, during and after the learning of the craft, are pleasantly surprised and rewarded by finding a talent that theretofore had remained unexposed.

Any normally intelligent student may learn the craft and hopefully expose a satisfactory talent.

A MESSAGE TO THE STUDENT

Most teachers teach in the same manner that they were taught, using the same books and exercises. While the "Learning Process" presents a new approach to learning to play the guitar, it should in no way blunt the expertise of your chosen surrogate teacher. Your teacher is not the loyal opposition but rather a person who, with your cooperation, will share the necessary expertise to lead you to your desired goal. Be fair with your teacher. Your teacher, like you, is a person.

A MESSAGE TO THE TEACHER

Many students will request that you first teach them to play, take two or three hours or days in necessary, and then teach them that "other stuff." Be patient and kind as you try to explain the impossibility of this request. Your student will readily respond to any reasonable, sensible requests and will balk at any unnecessary authoritative mannerisms. Be fair with your student. Like you, your student is a person.

Since the rate of learning will vary from student to student, it is left to you to determine what portion of each lesson is necessary for the steady progress of the individual involved with you in the "Learning Process."

THE BASIC PRINCIPLES UPON WHICH THIS WORK IS BUILT:

1. Teach one thing at a time.
2. The subject matter is arranged in such a way that each step is a natural outgrowth of the last and leads logically to the next episode.
3. All lessons are cumulative. They should remain in the practice cycle until the pressure of time demands relief. At this point the student should start the procedure of eliminating the beginning lessons one at a time. However, some plan of careful review and rotation of the dropped lessons should be adhered to.
4. All lessons are to be learned, not memorized. Think of your brain as a sponge. Into that sponge you are going to store all of your musical knowledge. Your arms, hands and fingers (having no brain) can remember very little. Do yourself a favour and put the practice time into training your brain. This is where all your musical ideas spring from.

You are what you are because at birth you received a series of gifts (talents). You had no choice. Like them or not, they are exclusively yours. If through them you are a fast learner, you are just plain lucky but not necessarily smart. If you are a slow learner, welcome to the club. Whether you turn out to be a "good, excellent or great" guitarist will largely depend on these gifts and the quantity and quality of the effort expended by you in search for your musical self. Be kind to yourself. Be patient with yourself. Even you don't know the dimensions of these gifts.

Be informed that, while I have charted this course, you are the teacher. Your surrogate teacher can only show you "how". You must teach yourself to "do."