

Converting a Private Lesson Studio to Group Webinar Outline

© 2007 The Mayron Cole Music Conservatory, Inc
Any reproduction of this material is strictly prohibited under the
copyright laws of The United States of America.

Why Group Piano?

- Why Private Lessons?
 - Why did piano lessons ever evolve as a solo activity? Everything else is taught to children in groups.
 - The piano is why
 - A piano teacher could only own one acoustic piano
 - An acoustic piano is big, expensive, and loud
- Development of electronic pianos enabled classes
- Classes are energetic and fun
- Children pay attention when they are having fun



The Group Effect

- Surge in enthusiasm when having fun and playing games
- Surge in lesson preparation
 - Unsaid peer pressure to be able to play homework as well as friends can
- Superior rhythm counting and sight-reading skills
 - Independent students and comfortable playing with other musicians

Your Teaching Time Is Limited

- Why do you teach?
 - To earn money
- You only have about 3 hours between school and dinner in which to teach
 - six 30-minute private lessons = 6 students
 - four 45-minute groups of up to 6 students each = up to 24 students
- If you teach 4 afternoons a week...
 - 24 private students or up to 96 group students in the same amount of time
- If you charge \$60/month (as a hypothetical example) ...
 - 24 private students = \$14,400/year
 - 96 group students = \$57,600/year
 - In the same amount of time
- If you can only get 24 students in your area,
 - in groups you can teach the same 24 students in 3 hours instead of 12 hours



The “Switch-Over” Options:

- 1) **Keep your current students in private lessons and start only new students in groups** safest
- 2) **Gradually segue your private students into groups**
- 3) **Put all of your private students into groups**
- 4) **Start over** most daring

Option #1: Keep Current Students in Private Lessons and Start New Students in Groups

- Most prudent way to convert your private lesson studio to group piano
- Students that are used to private lessons don’t ever have to switch to group
- Normal attrition leaves vacancies in your schedule
- When a private lesson student quits, graduates, or moves away, fill the time slot with a group piano class
- When 3 private lesson students quit over the summer...
 - rearrange remaining private students to put the three 30 minute vacancies together
 - fill that 90 minute time slot with 2 group piano classes
- ALL new students go into a group class
 - Hold firm... only group piano for new students
 - Remember, you do not have to take every student that calls



Option #2: Gradually Segue Private Students into Groups

- Schedule existing private lesson students according to age and ability
- 15 minute private lesson + 30 minute group class
- Call the lesson “semi-private”
 - For students: a transition into a “semi-private lesson” is less traumatic for those who are used to private instruction
 - For parents: receive a 45 minute “semi-private lesson” for the same price as the 30 minute private lesson
- How to schedule 4 semi-private lessons:
 - 15 minute private student (for example 4:00 – 4:15; student does worksheets from 4:15 – 4:30)
 - 15 minute private student (for example 4:15 – 4:30)
 - 30 minute group class (for example 4:30 – 5:00)
 - 15 minute private student (for example 5:00 – 5:15)
 - 15 minute private student (for example 5:15 – 5:30; student does worksheets from 5:00 – 5:15)
- 4 semi-private students in 90 minutes
 - As opposed to 3 private 30 minute lessons in the same amount of time
- Students receive the advantages of group piano
 - site-reading skills, counting rhythm skills, musical independence
- Each student is always working on at least 2 pieces of music
 - one composition (or more) learned in the private lesson
 - one composition (or more) learned as a group



- During the 30 minutes of group class
 - Learn a piece as a group
 - homework for group class must be prepared
 - Theory games (15 minutes)
 - Ensembles (occasionally)
- All NEW students go straight into a group piano class
 - No option for new students to receive a private or semi-private lesson

Option #3: Put All Private Students into Groups

- Group your private students into classes based on age and ability
- Non-negotiable... all students are now in group piano
- You must SELL your upcoming group piano classes to your existing students
 - People don't like change
 - "Talk it up" to your students
 - Piano classes are fun
 - with friends!
 - play games!
- You must SELL your upcoming group piano classes to your existing parents
 - Getting a longer lesson for the same amount of money
 - Child will practice more because his/her friends will be able to play the assignment
- If you have decided that your new policy is to only teach group piano then hold firm
 - Some parents will fume
 - Their child deserves individual attention
 - Some students will quit
 - Keeping up with a class requires the student to work harder
 - Remember... you don't want unhappy parents or students bringing down the excitement of your group piano studio
 - If they want to quit, then wave good-bye
- You need to plan ahead to bring current students to the same levels
 - Speed up some students to catch up with a class by assigning extra music
 - Give "out of the textbook" material to other students to tread water while others catch up
 - Students and parents do not need to know that you are speeding some students up while others tread water
 - Have current private lesson students play the music along with our accompaniment CDs
 - Learn to play with other musicians
 - See how much fun it is to play with other musicians
- Use the summer to transition students from private to group
 - Have a "summer camp" where students play ensembles and theory games as a class
 - Enthusiasm will build!



Option #4: Start Over

- Send all of your existing private lesson students to other teachers
- Start over with only beginner group piano
- Only for teachers that are so fed up with teaching privately that they are ready to completely quit teaching
- Most risky way to convert from private lessons to group piano



Notes:



www.MCpiano.com

800-527-6873

The Only Piano Method That Takes Students from Kindergarten to College