

MTNA 2023 Joachim Reinhuber, DMA, NCTM

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Four Hand curated progressive list (sight reading)

(All scores are public domain can be found on IMSLP. Links were active March 15. They may change.)

Elementary

Josef Gruber: ABC, Vo. I and II. 50 pieces, student plays Primo, all in C major, with progressive rhythmic and melodic difficulty. Mostly parallel octaves, some chord reading.

Vol. 1: https://s9.imslp.org/files/imglnks/usimg/8/8a/IMSLP587369-PMLP945130-Gruber_ABC_HeftI.pdf

Vol. 2: https://s9.imslp.org/files/imglnks/usimg/7/70/IMSLP595344-PMLP945130-1904ABC_HeftII.pdf

Anton Diabelli: Melodische Uebungsstuecke. 28 pieces, student plays Primo, sometimes secondo, various keys, progressive complexity. Some contrapuntal reading.

<https://s9.imslp.org/files/imglnks/usimg/6/69/IMSLP108022-SIBLEY1802.10060.fc94-39087031985379score.pdf>

Easy

From: Album of Transcriptions for Piano Four Hands (Oesterle), Ed. Schirmer

Hornpipe from Water Music by Handel. Student plays Secondo. Parallel octaves (almost) throughout, both hands bass clef.

From "Two Ballets" from "Orpheus and Eurydice, No. 1. Student plays secondo. Count! Not many notes.

<https://s9.imslp.org/files/imglnks/usimg/b/b9/IMSLP396932-SIBLEY1802.16252.9b02-39087011322437score.pdf>

Intermediate

From: Album of Transcriptions for Piano Four Hands (Oesterle), Ed. Schirmer

"Brautlied" from "Lohengrin". B-flat major, some chords, some counterpoint, some chromaticism.

"Largo" by Handel. G major, slow tempo, first page is easy, second more complex with RH playing melody, LH accompanying chords

"Aria" from Fire Music by Handel. Could be read by two intermediate students (first read with teacher?). Secondo LH plays in octaves, could be simplified.

From “Romanze Senza Parole di F. Mendelssohn Bartholdy, ridotte per Pianoforte A 4 Mani da Carlo Czerny”, Ed. Ricordi. Yes, this exists.

Op. 19, No. 1. Primo just plays melody.

Op. 19, no. 2. Primo mostly plays melody, some accompanying harmonies.

Op. 19, no. 4 “Fiducia”. Student plays secondo.

Op. 19, no. 6 “Barcarola”.

https://s9.imslp.org/files/imglnks/usimg/a/a3/IMSLP252690-PMLP05355-Mendelssohn-Czerny_LOW_pf4h.pdf

“Meister für die Jugend”. Stücke für Klavier zu vier Händen bearbeitet von Adolf Ruthardt. Ed. Peters

Andante aus der Symphonie mit dem Paukenschlag, Haydn. First page intermediate, second page more advanced!

https://s9.imslp.org/files/imglnks/usimg/0/0b/IMSLP130035-PMLP253329-Meister_fur_die_Jugend_Ruthardt_p4_Haydn_Mozart-pl_7944.pdf

From: Joseph Haydn: Quartette für Klavier zu vier Händen bearbeitet von Hugo Ulrich und Rob. Wittmann. Ed. Peters. Band 1. Nr. 1-4

https://s9.imslp.org/files/imglnks/usimg/d/d0/IMSLP298272-SIBLEY1802.17075.23f5-39087011961812band_1.pdf

Quatuor I, G major. (Hob III, 66) 2nd movement: Menuetto. Student plays secondo. Tricky counting. Not many notes.

Early advanced

From: Album of Transcriptions for Piano Four Hands (Oesterle), Ed. Schirmer

Gavotte from “Paris and Helena” by Gluck. Transcription by Brahms. A major

From “Two Ballets” from “Orpheus and Eurydice, No. 2. Student plays primo. Tricky Rhythms, mostly single lines or parallel octaves.

“Meister für die Jugend”. Stücke für Klavier zu vier Händen bearbeitet von Adolf Ruthardt. Ed. Peters

For the next world cup (if you are a Germany fan): Volkslied “Gott erhalte Franz den Kaiser” by Haydn, now of course the German National Anthem.

Mozart: Menuett aus der Symphonie in Es dur K 543 (transposed to F major...)

https://s9.imslp.org/files/imglnks/usimg/0/0b/IMSLP130035-PMLP253329-Meister_fur_die_Jugend_Ruthardt_p4_Haydn_Mozart-pl_7944.pdf

Advanced

From: Joseph Haydn: Quartette für Klavier zu vier Händen bearbeitet von Hugo Ulrich und Rob. Wittmann. Ed. Peters. Band 2. Nr. 5-8

Quatuor VI in G major. (Hob. III: 66) 2nd movement: Allegretto. Student plays Secondo. 6/8, a few surprising modulations.

Menuetto. Student plays secondo.

https://vmirror.imslp.org/files/imglnks/usimg/9/9c/IMSLP298273-SIBLEY1802.17075.e3b1-39087011961812band_II.pdf

From: Joseph Haydn: Quartette für Klavier zu vier Händen bearbeitet von Hugo Ulrich und Rob. Wittmann. Ed. Peters. Band 3. Nr. 9-12

Quatuor XII. 3rd movement: Menuetto (Canon). Parallel octaves. Canon between secondo (Cello, viola) and primo (violin 1 and 2)

https://vmirror.imslp.org/files/imglnks/usimg/d/d2/IMSLP298274-SIBLEY1802.17075.333c-39087011961812band_III.pdf

From: Joseph Haydn: Quartette für Klavier zu vier Händen bearbeitet von Hugo Ulrich und Rob. Wittmann. Ed. Peters. Band 4. Nr. 13-15

Quatuor XIII. 2nd movement: Adagio. Student plays secondo

Quatuor XIV. 3rd movement: Menuetto. Student plays secondo

https://vmirror.imslp.org/files/imglnks/usimg/6/63/IMSLP298275-SIBLEY1802.17075.8a68-39087011961812band_IV.pdf

From: Album of Transcriptions for Piano Four Hands (Oesterle), Ed. Schirmer

Menuet from "L'Arlésienne". Wicket fun, not easy, but doublings can be left out.

"Pastoral Music" from Christmas Oratorio by Bach. Student plays secondo. Mostly parallel octaves +, 12/8 is unusual.

From: W. A. Mozart: Streich-Quartette zu vier Händen. Band I

Quartetto II d minor K 421. 2nd movement, Andante. Student plays secondo

3rd movement: Menuetto. Student plays primo. Mainly parallel octaves, Trio is tricky to read.

<https://vmirror.imslp.org/files/imglnks/usimg/8/8d/IMSLP282126-SIBLEY1802.8671.f89f-39087011962018.pdf>

"Meister für die Jugend". Stücke für Klavier zu vier Händen bearbeitet von Adolf Ruthardt. Ed. Peters

Arie des Figaro from Le Nozze di Figaro. And other arias from diverse Mozart operas, mainly about drinking and seducing women.

Galop du Diable by Ludovic. Transcribed from piano solo. Just wicked fun. Simple, but super fast.

<https://vmirror.imslp.org/files/imglnks/usimg/f/fe/IMSLP556722-PMLP879113-jpg2pdf.pdf>

Very advanced

From: Album of Transcriptions for Piano Four Hands (Oesterle), Ed. Schirmer

Andante con Variazioni, from “Death and the Maiden” String Quartet by Schubert. Starts easy, but gets very complex as the variations go on.

<https://s9.imslp.org/files/imglnks/usimg/b/b9/IMSLP396932-SIBLEY1802.16252.9b02-39087011322437score.pdf>

W. A. Mozart: String Quartet C major K465 (“Dissonanzen Quartett”). Four movements of various difficulties; Minuet and Trio Secondo is not as difficult. A wonderful example of Ulrich’s ability to capture the essence of this piece in an excellent arrangement.

https://vmirror.imslp.org/files/imglnks/usimg/4/47/IMSLP61663-PMLP05226-Mozart_String_Quartet_K465-4_Hand_Transcription.pdf

W. A. Mozart: Symphony G minor K550. Another excellent example of Ulrich’s skill as arranger: note how he turns the string accompaniments into something pianistic with similar effect.

[https://vmirror.imslp.org/files/imglnks/usimg/f/fa/IMSLP154983-PMLP01572-Mozart - Symphony_No40_Pf4h.pdf](https://vmirror.imslp.org/files/imglnks/usimg/f/fa/IMSLP154983-PMLP01572-Mozart_-_Symphony_No40_Pf4h.pdf)

J. Brahms: Serenade No. 1 D major op. 11, arranged by the composer. Nothing by Brahms is easy, this is relatively palatable. And of course, brilliantly transcribed. Now also available in a new critical edition by Baerenreiter.

https://vmirror.imslp.org/files/imglnks/usimg/8/8d/IMSLP13643-Brahms_Op.11_Serenade_No.1_piano_4_hands.pdf

J. Brahms: Piano concerto no. 1, op. 15, arranged by the composer. For the fearless.

<https://vmirror.imslp.org/files/imglnks/usimg/9/98/IMSLP17180-Brahms-PfConcOp15ar4h.pdf>

Anton Bruckner: Symphony no. 4. Probably the “easiest” of the symphonies.

<https://vmirror.imslp.org/files/imglnks/usimg/0/0e/IMSLP143804-SIBLEY1802.17105.2718-39087011324672score.pdf>

Bela Bartok: The Miraculous Mandarin, arranged by the composer. For the truly fearless.

https://vmirror.imslp.org/files/imglnks/usimg/2/2c/IMSLP169402-PMLP301137-BBartok_The_Miraculous_Mandarin_p4h.pdf

Igor Stravinsky: Le Sacre du Printemps, arranged by the composer. Public Domain in the US, not in the EU. For the ridiculously fearless.

<https://vmirror.imslp.org/files/imglnks/usimg/e/ed/IMSLP524703-PMLP179425-PMLUS00762-piano4hands.pdf>

Enjoy this live performance by Leonard Bernstein and Michael Tilson Thomas at Alice Tully Hall in 1981.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y5OGUrJmvXU>

Some Ideas for Teaching

1. Sight Reading practice for individual students. Teacher or advanced student plays the harder part (at the beginning secondo, later mostly primo).
2. Sight reading in group practice. If you have access to two pianos, you can go to some more difficult repertoire and have four students read one hand each. Left hand primo and secondo on one piano, right hand primo and secondo on the other.
3. Sight reading in larger groups. If you teach group piano and have access to a piano lab you can sit students at individual instruments. In larger groups they lose their inhibitions since the spotlight is not on them and they don't feel the responsibility of carrying one part by themselves.
4. With advanced students, take the last 10 minutes of a lesson and read through a movement of anything. Schedule two advanced students back-to-back, and they have 20 minutes together. Remember, perfection is not the goal.
5. Work on a movement of an orchestral work as repertoire.
6. Work on a movement of a string quartet. This can be performed beautifully at a student recital.
7. Use four-hand study as preparation for a concert in your community

What is the advantage of playing four hands on one instrument as opposed to two pianos?

- ▶ Orientation is easier. The hands are closer together, the reading mostly in the same clef.
- ▶ The musical communication is much more immediate. Your student will learn to follow and lead more sensitively.
- ▶ It teaches listening skills. Since two players must voice on one instrument, the secondo player must listen for balance and adjust.
- ▶ There is a greater range of difficulty levels in four hand literature.
- ▶ Student can focus on specific tone colors – they must imitate a treble or bass instruments, not both.
- ▶ It teaches a student to listen more carefully to the continuation of a line when they take it over or “deliver” it to the other player.
- ▶ It is an activity that students can do at home. Very few people have two pianos at their disposal!