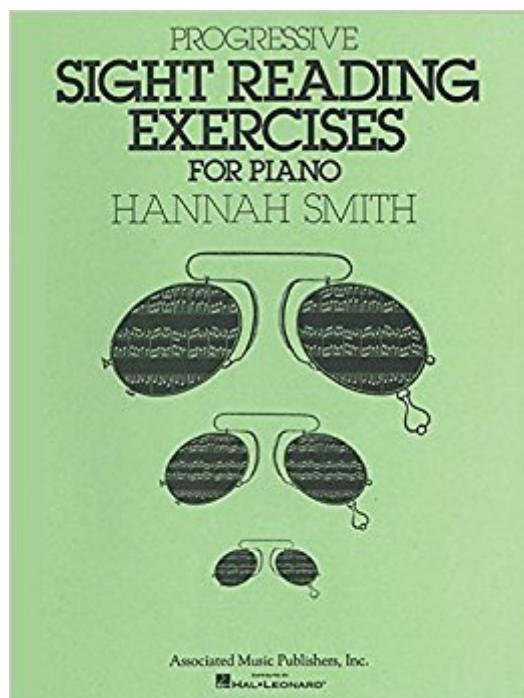


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Progressive Sight Reading Exercises: Piano Technique



Synopsis

These Progressive Sight Reading Exercises by Hannah Smith will help pianists improve their sight reading skills. These exercises are not to be studied. Each is to be played through but once, in a tempo slow enough to enable the pupil to read without hesitation. It is presupposed that the technical training as well as the thorough study of good music proceeds regularly with the sight reading.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I'm glad to have a book that has over 500 short reading exercises, however this book has a number of shortcomings: All of the exercises are five finger patterns where the hand doesn't move. The left hand either parallels at octave the right hand or mostly just plays 1-4-5, only occasionally other degrees. There are no key signatures, all notes are written as accidentals, even notes in the key. This is unhelpful I think. When sight reading normal music, you use the key signature as a sign post. The book says "progressive" but it is barely so, only the rhythms and keys progress from chapter to chapter. Since you are only playing five finger patterns, if you know your scales then the key hardly adds any challenge. Even given all that, I found it useful for some practice. I am halfway through after playing it for only a few days. I play 20 or so at a sitting.

This book is very simple, but it's absolutely fantastic. It's a great place to start reading for beginners, or even for more advanced players who have seriously neglected their reading skill. And while the

book may be easy, one of the biggest mistakes pianists make is dismissing an exercise or piece as too easy without actually putting their fingers to the keys to see if they can actually execute it. This ends up leaving lots of gaps in their playing ability. Too often the advice on improving sightreading starts too hard with suggestions like reading hymns, but what many poor readers really need is to start from the absolute basics and make sure their reading fundamentals in place and this book is absolutely pedagogically sound in that regard. There are over 500 exercises and they are all within a 5 finger pattern. For most of each section of the book both hands are doing the same thing. When the left hand does more, it's still not terribly complicated. The big upside of all of this is that no matter how bad you are at sightreading, you know where your fingers will be for the entire exercise and can keep your eyes glued to the page. You'll have a lot of success early on and become much more confident in your reading and be able to start reading ahead. These are key to sightreading, but since most people try to sightread to close to their absolute playing level, they don't get to practice these. They are too busy double checking where their hands are and not reading ahead. The exercises are short and non-memorable. A mistake many readers make is reading tunes they are familiar with. This leads to cheating on rhythm reading since they are just playing the rhythm they already know in their head. This often leads to students actually playing incorrect rhythms because they are playing what's in their head... not what's on the page. No problem with that here. And since they are so non-memorable, you could read through the whole book several times and still essentially be sightreading since it's all just a wash of similarish 5 finger stuff. You actually have to read what's on the page, though you may find that on repeat reading you're faster and faster as you've gotten more comfortable both technically and in terms of reading ahead. Additionally, there are just a ton of these. Improving your reading requires you to read in great volume and that can often be a problem to locate. But this book has it. Some people dislike that key signatures aren't used and this bothered me at first as well, but then I realized it's actually a pretty pedagogically sound approach. Many people panic when they see an accidental in music, but this book makes you very comfortable seeing them and actually thinking about what they mean rather than being worried about non-diatonic notes. Closer to the end there is more chromaticism even while sticking to 5 fingers and this will really make you think actively even more. Additionally, being forced to play somewhat awkwardly in a 5 finger pattern in keys like Db, Eb, F#, etc is actually nice way to get comfortable black keys. While the general rule might be not to use a thumb on a black key, in the real world, this happens a lot out of necessity and being comfortable with it can't hurt. I will admit the title is a bit of misnomer. The book is barely progressive at all other than in terms of gradually introduced rhythmic ideas. Even so, it's a book I don't think anyone should skip. If you've

had trouble with sightreading and you think this might be below you, DON'T! Grab the book and read through it and you might be surprised how many small issues in your reading it will help clear up. Then you can easily start working on other materials like the Paul Harris books or Mikrokosmos, but don't skip this one as a starting point.

Challenging but helpful way to learn to sight read. I'm a 66 year old Senior who has decided to finally learn to play piano by sight reading (rather than just by ear.) These exercises are helping me more easily and quickly recognize notes, steps between notes, and other elements of learning to read music.

GREAT sight reading exercises for a beginner. They progress very incrementally, so while they do provide challenge, you always feel it's within your reach to sight read perfectly the first time. It has over 500 exercises, each one or two lines long. This has been one of the most beneficial parts of my first year of piano lessons.

These are the books I learned to sight read when I was a child. I used this for older students and adults. Highly recommended for anyone who wants to learn to read music and play piano.

The sight reading exercises are good but would be better if the right hand and left hand played different things more often. It would also be great if there were more additions to this. It works great for younger kids but for adults who have a little piano skill, it was a little too easy.

This little book is exactly what I needed to improve my reading skills. My college teacher suggested it. Do the work daily and it helps.

I love how short the exercises are. I have been assigning my students a few every week. They seem to like them, too. Also, how cool is the cover design?

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