

Succeeding at Piano

SPRING 2012

BIRMINGHAM KEYBOARD ARTS CENTER

HEATHER BYARS, DIRECTOR



Birmingham Keyboard Arts Center Students Know What it Takes!

“How would you advise a friend, just beginning to learn piano, to succeed?”

When posed this hypothetical question, our students proved that they are the experts. Read on for their enlightened answers and some advice of my own.

Abby Mather - Age 11

Always try your best when you practice and practice frequently.

Joshua Mather - Age 12

Don't forget to bring your books to

your lessons. Practice slowly at first until you can play accurately.

Sarah Mather - Age 9 Try to practice every day.

Katherine Howell - Age 8 Stay focussed. Look at the notes. Listen to your teacher. Have fun!



Ann Ardovino - Adult Make piano practice a priority. You have time to practice if you decide it is important to you.

Madison Walker - Age 11 Concentrate on playing with good

The metronome is your friend! ~ Miss Heather

posture. Don't be too stiff. Keep your eyes on the music.

David Kelley - Adult Practice every day, at least 30 minutes. You have to be committed to learn. Digital pianos, while very functional, don't fully capture the sound quality of an acoustic.

Hollie Hardin - Age 5 Try to learn the notes. Be friends with other piano players. Work on counting.

Hannah Hardin - Age 9 Don't let practicing be a chore, let it be fun. I LOVE practicing!

Will Womack - Age 8 Have your Dad play the drums with you.

Madeline Marx - Age 16 Take things at your own pace. Don't let piano lessons be an anxious endeavor. Let your music evolve when it is ready.



Eli Mrug - Age 5 You have to practice and try your hardest.

Sylvie Mrug - Adult You have to be committed and ready to practice regularly. Don't expect to play perfectly. Know that it will take years. Seek a good teacher who will both praise and challenge you. It's a good idea to take lessons before your children so you can stay ahead and make sure you are comfortable with the teacher they will be studying with.

Maya Barefield - Age 11 Know how to pronounce your composer's names. Remember to complete your theory assignment because it really helps you.

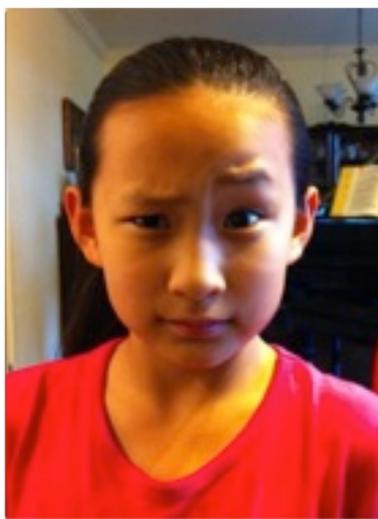


Kayla - Age 13 You need to practice! I would highly advise you to practice!

Alyssa Barefield - Age 15 The metronome is your friend. Be consistent with regular practice time.

Jordan Barefield - Age 13 Practice 20 to 30 minutes every day.

Natalie Myers - Age 18 Play what you enjoy. Get some lessons.



Katy Chen - Age 8 Practice every day. Don't put off your theory assignment until the last second. Keep your mind on what your teacher is saying, don't let it wander. Write in tricky notes. Make sure you really know your songs and aren't just passing them off by luck. Be

accurate. Practice each piece five or ten times. Make sure your hands are on the right keys before you start playing.



Rachel Vinson - Age 17 Practice every day, even if you only have a little time to practice. Practice performing. Work on your bow.

Maggie Morse - Age 14 Practice hard but have fun.

Kennedy McClure - Age 8 Keep your eyes on the music and never give up.



Jessica Vinson - Age 5 Reward yourself for trying your best. Never wear your shoes to piano, always be comfortable. Hug your teacher every week.

Kerry Stein - Adult Stick with it and practice.

Kate Bishop - Age 7 Learn your notes. Learn to keep your beat steady and always count.

Lauren Hancock - Age 8 Read the notes carefully.



Emily Browning - Age 8 Memorize your notes.

Sarah Buchanan - Age 11 Get a metronome so you can learn to keep your tempo steady. Pay attention to the fingering.

Izabella Kulczycka - Age 6 Warm up with some technique exercises to focus your mind and your body. Smile at your teacher. She loves you!

Walker Phillips - Age 9 Use the correct fingering, pay close attention when you are sight-reading.

Henry Phillips - Age 9 Play carefully and understand the music.

Margaret Armstrong - Adult Choose an awesome teacher. Choose with care.

Lillie Stephens - Age 15 Practice a LOT! Do your theory. It really helps you understand what you are playing. Choose music that interests you.

Audrey Brossette - Age 8 Learn your notes. Practice! Practice! Practice! Break your songs down into parts. If you have trouble wait and let Miss Heather help you.

Nathan Brossette - Age 11 Practice! Practice! Practice! (Something I could do better at.) That pretty much sums it up.

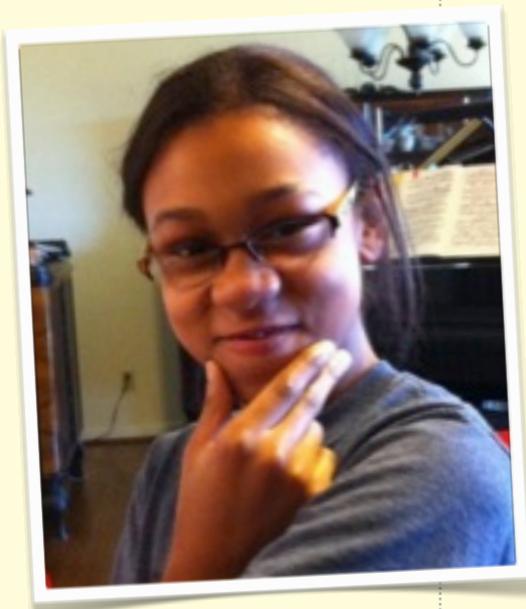
Olivia Odom - Age 15 Keep practicing and practice regularly. Play a wide variety of music and exercises. Learning scales is very helpful. Make friends with your scales and your metronome.



The reality about practicing:

- ☹ Sometimes daily practice will be hard.
- ☹ Sometimes you will fall short of what you want to achieve.
- ☹ Sometimes practicing will NOT be fun.
- ☹ Sometimes you will feel like quitting.
- ☹ Sometimes you will wonder why you are learning to play the piano.

This is normal. It's okay to feel these things, but you must press on. You must be diligent and practice most days. You must put your whole heart into doing the best that you can, because it will be worth it. It IS worth it!



If it is important to you, you will find a way. If not, you will find an excuse.

Daily Practice at the Byars Household



Anabel Byars - Age 9 Try not to let yourself get frustrated when you are learning a new song. Remember that everything is hard at first. Take a deep breath and relax. Be accurate. Work on the sections that are the hardest first but put them aside for a little while when you start to get frustrated. Don't try to play fast when learning a new song. Take your time learning the notes and study the music carefully. Practice with a metronome to help you keep your beat. Don't be afraid to share your talent with others. It helps to practice performing in front of friends and relatives. It doesn't matter how many trophies you get, or contests you win, just go out there and have fun. Compose your own music. It's fun to improvise with other musicians. Piano is fun!

Ben Goble - Age 8 Practice every day and make sure you play exactly what is on the page. Don't go too fast. Take your time and think carefully about what you are playing.

Jesse Garris - Age 17 Study drums to become a rhythm machine. Study piano to comprehend the language of music.

Hannah Stephens - Age 17 Don't ignore your metronome. Don't doubt yourself in performance. Trust your instincts and believe in your rehearsal preparation. Don't ever attempt to play a duet with your sister.

Emily Gray - Age 12 Practice a lot. Try to do your best. Have a lot of fun playing piano.

Theo Simonton - Age 8 Don't get frustrated if you don't play perfectly the first time.

Sadhvi Batra - Adult Of course, you must practice, but also fall in love with the way your fingers glide over keys skillfully designed to strike unique strings, producing melodies that may have once been otherwise unheard. Understand the language of music by listening to it over and over and imagining yourself playing the tune as gracefully as the pianists before your time.

Cynthia McCullough - Adult Practice, practice, practice! You will get out of it what you put into it. Try not to get discouraged. The notes and beautiful music will come in time.