

Breathing New Life into Your Piano Organization

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***Below are ideas and suggestions on how to raise motivation with students **at or after** recitals and piano festivals. Any suggestion *can be adapted* in different and creative ways. These suggestions are just starting points for planning.

- **Meet This Living Composer** – Bring in a **living published composer** for students to meet and get autographs. In just a few minutes (about 10 to 15 minutes), the composer will tell students about his/her writing and answer questions posed by students. The composer might also perform one or more of his/her pieces. This session could be only 20 to 30 minutes and the composer could be scheduled more times during the day. (Keep in mind, the composer should receive some financial honorarium or his/her time and expertise)\
- **Piano Talk Forum** – With three or four selected students of various ages, conduct a short forum where students discuss their thoughts about piano lessons. The moderator could be a piano teacher in your organization. The teacher will ask questions about practice and performance and other pertinent issues in piano study that would include the interests of students.
- **Let's Use Technology Forum** – a qualified technology person will project on the wall or screen several interactive music/piano web sites for students to enjoy at their home computer. Parents and other family members are invited to attend. A handout should be provided with the web site information.
- **Be Cool – Play Jazz** – This title could very well become the festival theme, promoting an interest in jazz playing. Encourage students who really like jazz to choose a jazz solo for their ‘choice piece.’ Each student then would play in the jazz recital scheduled at the festival. According to entry forms submitted by the piano teacher, recital times would be scheduled. Those performing could wear a big sticker saying, “**I Feel Jazzy Today!**”

- **Where Did The Piano Come From?** – This title would be the theme for the festival. . Using a power Point, a special speaker will present a short presentation on the invention and evolution of the piano. Sharing of this information could be about 15 to 20 minutes and could be offered/scheduled more than once during the day.
- **Young Composers Recital** – This recital will be titled, “The Young Composers Recital.” The requirement for performing in this prestigious recital is that each student is required to bring his/her fully notated composition to the recital and submit it to recital chairman. This recital will require an entry form submitted earlier to the festival chairman..
- **My Favorite Living Composer Poster Session** - Provide a room where students display posters of their favorite living American composer. Students may also display some copies of the composer’s piano pieces. Students displaying a poster are to be at their designated place to answer any questions of attendees (students, parents, teachers, etc.). There could be one or more of these sessions. The sessions could be fairly short (30 minutes).
- **Tips for Practice** – Provide a room assessable all day where students can drop in and write on poster boards their ONE BEST TIP (suggestion) for every day practice at home. Attending students, parents/grandparents, etc. will get the opportunity to remain in the room long enough to read the tips written by other students. (To get this process started, one or two teachers should bring a student in (early in the day) to write his/her tip). Other students who follow then should be more comfortable writing their own tips.
- **Tips for a Great Performance** – The same idea above of “Tips or Practice” would apply here.
- **Who is the Mystery Composer?** – Locate and invite a male student either from a local university or local piano teacher’s studio to play the role of Bach, Beethoven, Haydn, Clementi, Kuhlau, etc. in costume. During this short session, the costumed composer will talk about his life and perform one or more short excerpts of his music. Students will be encouraged to ask the composer questions. Students will be given the opportunity to guess the

name of the composer. Composer stickers could be placed on every child who guessed correctly OR all of the students who attended the session.

- **Invention Convention** – This recital could very well encourage students to learn inventions. A student recital would be scheduled for students to perform one of the 15 Bach Two-Part inventions. The recital should be scheduled in advance with entry forms. One or more recitals could be scheduled according to the amount of the entries submitted. To add more appeal for entering this recital, a group photo could be taken and entered on the piano association's web page and/or submitted to area newspaper(s).
- **Family Duet Recital** – Piano-playing parents and siblings are invited to team up with students to play duets (and other ensemble materials). The scheduling should be done in advance with entry forms.
- **BOYS RULE RECITAL** – Boys and young men will have the chance to bond together performing in the festival in a **He-Man's Recital**. The scheduling should be done in advance with entry forms.
- **GIRLS RULE RECITAL** – The same concept as above applies here. Girls get equal opportunity!
- **Costume Recital** – In this recital such as the above recitals, young piano students will perform their piano piece in this fun-filled recital. Parents, grandparents, and siblings are invited to attend too. (Photos of this recital could be posted on the piano organization's web page).
- **Other Various Recitals** – Other recitals could be implemented. Composer recitals from the four periods (i.e.. Bach, Kuhlau, Debussy, Bartok) AND/OR by FORMS of music (i.e.. Sonatinas, Toccatas, Rondos Arabesques, Canons, Etudes, Minuets, Waltzes, etc.)
- **The GOAL is to get students and parents engaged musically and SOCIALLY at piano festivals and recitals. The sharing of music is vital to growth in music education.**

A BIG GOAL IS TO GET STUDENTS TO PERFORM MORE!!!

Performing *frequently* in community recitals and festivals MOTIVATES STUDENTS and PARENTS.

Lev Vygotsky (prominent educational theorist) advocated the concept of **SOCIAL LEARNING**. His focus was: Students learn from other students, not just parents and teachers.

Also, well-known psychologist William Glasser talked about the needs of all children and adults *that can be applied to piano students and instruction*.

***Love** – Piano teachers and students bond with each other and develop a loving, respectful relationship (sometimes for a lifetime).\

***Safety** – Piano teachers place students in ‘safe’ environments to perform.

***Belonginess** – Students *bond* and make friends with other piano students at recitals/festivals.

***Power** – By performing in public, students make a **positive and powerful impact** on music on people by sharing their skills and talents.

****Successful performances meet piano students’ needs!*