

The Effect of Directed Practice Worksheets on Performance Outcomes

Pamela D. Pike, PhD & Carla Salas Ruiz, MM

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Purpose:

To explore the effects of using teacher-directed practice worksheets (PWs) on the performance of repertoire.

Research

Questions:

- Does using PWs affect musical outcomes?
- Do the PWs provide technical reinforcement for practice and performance?
- Does guiding students through PWs affect self-regulation during individual practice?
- Do the students report transferring the strategies to subsequent practice of the repertoire?

Participants:

First- and second-year music majors; group piano students (N=67)

Convenience sample subgroups:
Experimental (n=33)
Control (n=34)

Data Sources:

- Evaluation of performances
- Questionnaire responses
- Researcher observations
- Participant practice logs

Sample PWs for *Song for You* (Rollin):



The image shows two staves of musical notation for the piece 'Song for You' by Rollin. The top staff is for the piano part, featuring a melody with eighth and sixteenth notes, and the bottom staff is for the vocal part, featuring a melody with quarter and half notes. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The piano part includes a dynamic marking of 'mp' (mezzo-piano).

Sample PWs for *Ecossaise* (Beethoven):



The image shows three staves of musical notation for the piece 'Ecossaise' by Beethoven. The top staff is for the piano part, featuring a melody with eighth and sixteenth notes, and the bottom staff is for the vocal part, featuring a melody with quarter and half notes. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 2/4. The piano part includes a dynamic marking of 'mp' (mezzo-piano). The middle staff shows a sequence of chords with fingerings indicated above the notes. The bottom staff shows a sequence of chords with fingerings indicated above the notes.

Broad Themes:

- Students identified the following challenges:
 - Coordination, hand position changes, fingering
- Performances fell into an upper tier and lower tier for each group (see chart for specific practice and performance findings)
- Experimental Group:
 - Used more deliberate practice strategies; Reported more self-efficacy

Contact Us: pdpike@lsu.edu
csalas2@lsu.edu

General Themes & Findings	
	Experimental Group
Performance Assessment (Upper Tier)	Appropriate Tempo
	Sense of Fluency & Structure (even w/ minor hesitations)
	Practice Sheets Helped
Self-Assessment of Practice (Upper Tier)	Isolating Hard Parts
	LH Most Common Problem
	Practice sheets Helpful (one found interleaving uncomfortable)
Performance Assessment (Lower Tier)	Very Slow
	Many Inaccurate Pitches & Rhythms
	Many Restarts, Stumbles & Hesitations
	Little Sense of Structure
Self-Assessment of Practice (Lower Tier)	Practice Sheets Helpful (especially rhythm & LH blocking chords)
	Practiced HS Before HT
	Trouble with LH & Coordination
	Needed More Time (negative attribution)
	Control Group
Performance Assessment (Upper Tier)	Practicing Issues (problems on page 2)
	More Mistakes in LH (Tried to Keep Going)
	Lacked Fluency & Sense of Structure
	Lack of Mediated Practice Was Evident
Self-Assessment of Practice (Upper Tier)	Tapping
	LH Alone
	HT Phrase By Phrase
Performance Assessment (Lower Tier)	Very Slow
	Inaccurate Pitches, Rhythms, Leger Lines
	Many Restarts, Stumbles & Hesitations
	Most Played RH Only (Coordination Issue)
Self-Assessment of Practice (Lower Tier)	Separate Hand Practice
	Tried to Repeat Problems (1 st page only)
	Coordination Too Hard (negative attribution)
	Piece Too Hard (negative attribution)

