

Jacob Wang
Teaching Philosophy
December 2023

I am dedicated to nurturing a love for music and building self-confidence in my students through piano instruction. My teaching approach emphasizes the essential tools necessary for engaging with music: music theory, historical context, and practice skills, strategies, and techniques.

I believe in a student-centered approach, tailoring my teaching methods to meet the unique needs, goals, and learning styles of each individual. A core component of my teaching is the incorporation of music theory into lessons, enabling students to appreciate the broader context, form, and character of the music. I often use a question-and-answer approach to teach pattern recognition when introducing a new piece. I recognize that some students benefit from a more tactile and kinetic approach, feeling the rhythm and motion of the notes by mimicking the gestures with their forearms and hands. This approach helps them internalize and reproduce the music more effectively.

Creating a positive and encouraging learning environment is a priority for me. I aim to foster self-expression, self-discipline, and a strong work ethic in my students. My teaching methodology includes three key elements: demonstration, discussion, and discovery. Through demonstration, I provide clear examples, highlighting specific elements for the student to see and hear. For instance, achieving a phrase's desired taper can be realized when the student has an aural goal in mind. Discussion promotes thought-provoking and self-directed learning, encouraging students to develop their opinions, personality, and taste. For younger learners, I believe that guiding them to discover concepts is vital for retention and sustained interest.

Respect and empathy form the foundation of a trusting teacher-student relationship. I create a safe space where students can make mistakes and learn from them in a positive and encouraging manner. I adapt my teaching environment and language to accommodate students with unique needs, such as sight-impaired learners, ensuring they feel comfortable and supported. When students encounter challenges, I provide constructive feedback and motivation, demonstrating my belief in their potential for success. Additionally, I maintain open communication with parents, discussing lesson successes, new concepts, and opportunities for improvement to support their child's learning journey.

As an educator, I am committed to continuous self-improvement. I actively seek out new ideas and teaching approaches through workshops, conferences, and exploration of innovative methodologies. I continuously work with various beginner method books to be well-versed in methods that best suit a student's growth trajectory. In summary, my piano teaching philosophy aims to instill a lasting passion for music in my students, equipping them with the skills and knowledge to create music and become lifelong learners.