

Grade

1

Piano Exam Pieces 2019 & 2020

  
ABRSM

# Piano Exam Pieces

ABRSM Grade 1

Selected from the  
2019 & 2020 syllabus



## ABRSM Piano Exams

Here are some key points to help you prepare for your Grade 1 exam. All requirements are valid from 1 January 2019 until 31 December 2020. More detailed information on the syllabus requirements and syllabus overlap details can be found online at [www.abrsm.org/piano](http://www.abrsm.org/piano). In the exam, the requirements can be taken in any order.

### Pieces

(3 × 30 marks)

This book contains nine pieces from ABRSM's 2019 & 2020 Grade 1 Piano syllabus. In the exam, you will need to play three pieces, one from each of the three syllabus lists (A, B and C).

You can choose from the pieces in this book and/or the other pieces set for the grade: a full list is on the opposite page. You will need to observe all *da capo* (D.C.) and *dal segno* (D.S.) indications but omit all other repeats (including first-time bars) unless they are very brief (i.e. of a few bars) or unless the syllabus specifies otherwise.

### Scales and broken chords

(21 marks)

Learning scales and broken chords helps you to build strong technical skills by developing reliable finger movement, hand position, co-ordination and keyboard fluency. It also helps you to develop your musical understanding through familiarity with keys and their related patterns.

You can find a complete list of scales and broken chords required for Grade 1 in the back of this book. In the exam, they should be played from memory, without pedalling. You are free to start at any octave, provided the required ranges are covered.

### Sight-reading

(21 marks)

Learning to sight-read helps you to develop quick recognition of keys and tonality, rhythm and common patterns of beats. It also helps you to learn to keep going even when you make mistakes, and work music out for yourself – which makes learning new pieces quicker and easier.

In the exam, you will be asked to play a short piece of music that you have not previously seen. You will be given half a minute in which to look through and, if you wish, try out all or any part of the test before you are asked to play it to the examiner for assessment. For the full sight-reading parameters, please see the syllabus.

### Aural tests

(18 marks)

Aural skills enable you to assess the sound and balance of your playing, keep in time and play with a sense of rhythm and pulse. These skills also help you to develop your sense of pitch, your musical memory and to spot any mistakes.

In the exam, the tests will be administered by the examiner from the piano, and you will be asked:

- a To clap the pulse of a piece played by the examiner, and to identify whether it is in two time or three time.
- b To sing as 'echoes' three phrases played by the examiner.
- c To identify where a change in pitch occurs during a phrase played by the examiner.
- d To answer questions about two features of a piece played by the examiner.

For more detailed information on the tests, please see the syllabus.

(Total available: 150 marks)

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### Editorial guidance

We have taken the pieces in this book from a variety of sources. Where appropriate, we have edited the pieces to help you prepare for your performance. We have added metronome markings (in square brackets) and ornament realizations. Details of other changes or suggestions are given in the footnotes. These editorial additions are for guidance only: you do not have to follow them in the exam.



# Piano Exam Pieces

## ABRSM Grade 1

Selected from the 2019 & 2020 syllabus

Name

Date of exam

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Editor for ABRSM: Richard Jones

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| 5 | <b>Andrew Eales</b> Head in the Clouds. <i>Piano Star 3</i> (ABRSM)                                                                                                       |  |
| 6 | <b>Andrew Lloyd Webber</b> Close every door (from <i>Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat</i> ), arr. Bullard. <i>The Graded Piano Player, Grades 1-2</i> (Faber) |  |

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| 5 | <b>John Kember</b> Gospel Song (with straight quavers; observing alternative ending): No. 2 from <i>On the Lighter Side: 16 Pieces for Solo Piano</i> (Schott) |  |
| 6 | <b>S. Wilson</b> The Witch: No. 7 from <i>Hansel &amp; Gretel</i> (Forsyth)                                                                                    |  |

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A:1

# Theme

from Theme and Variations, Sonatina No. 4 in D

Thomas Attwood  
(1765-1838)

**Andante** [ $\text{♩} = \text{c.}108$ ]

Thomas Attwood was an English composer and organist who sang in the choir of the Chapel Royal from the age of nine. He studied in Naples and then with Mozart in Vienna (1785-7). After his return to England, he became music tutor to the royal family and later organist of St Paul's Cathedral, London, and composer to the Chapel Royal.

This piece is the theme from Attwood's Theme and Variations, and it illustrates his melodious style, which often seems to owe much to Mozart. When he was studying in Vienna, Mozart said of him: 'He partakes more of my style than any scholar I ever had; and I predict that he will prove a sound musician.'

Source: *Easy Progressive Lessons fingered for Young Beginners on the Piano Forte or Harpsichord* (London, c.1795). The tempo mark is editorial. In the original, b. 24 is identical to b. 8 (the bass quavers lead into the first variation). All dynamics and slurs are editorial suggestions only.

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Adapted from Attwood: *Easy Progressive Lessons*, edited by Richard Jones (ABRSM)

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# Minuet in C

A:2

from *First Book of Progressive Lessons*

William Duncombe  
(fl. late 18th century)

[♩ = c.120]

The musical score is written for piano and consists of 19 measures. It is in 3/4 time with a tempo marking of [♩ = c.120]. The key signature is one flat (Bb). The score is divided into two sections, A and B. Section A starts at measure 1 and ends at measure 8. Section B starts at measure 9 and ends at measure 19. The score includes dynamics (f, p), articulation (accents), and fingering (1-5). The key signature is one flat (Bb).

Little is known of William Duncombe beyond the fact that he lived in London in the late 18th century and was organist of St Dunstan's, Highgate. Many of his keyboard pieces are arrangements of existing music for other instruments, and in some cases by other composers. This minuet has a repeated-note theme (bb. 1-4) that sounds like a trumpet fanfare. The piece is in two sections (A and B, starting at bars 1 and 9), with the first returning at the end (b. 17); this is known as rounded binary form.

Source: *First Book of Progressive Lessons for the Harpsichord and Piano Forte* (London: J. Bland, 1778). All dynamics and slurs are editorial suggestions only.

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A:3

# Agincourt Song

Arranged by Heather Hammond

Anon. 15th-century English

**Quick** ( $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 138$ )

6

11

16a

*f*

*mp*

*ff*

getting slower

This famous 15th-century 'carol' celebrates the victory of King Henry V of England over the French at the Battle of Agincourt in 1415. It is a strong tune in the Dorian mode – that is, like D minor but with all white notes (though there is a B $\flat$  in b. 10). The words of the first verse are:

Our king went forth to Normandy  
With grace and might of chivalry.  
There God for him wrought marvellously,  
Wherefore England may call and cry:  
*Deo gratias.*

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## Cradle Song

5

# Wiegenlied

B:1

No. 4 from Five Songs, Op. 49

Arranged by Nancy Litten

Johannes Brahms  
(1833-97)

**Andante** [ $\text{♩} = c.80$ ]

*p dolce e cantabile*

1 3 2

5 2 4 *mp*

9 4 2 3 *p*

13 *rit.* 4 *pp*

1 2

The German composer Johannes Brahms settled in Vienna in 1868, and he remained there for the rest of his life. He was a prolific composer of *Lieder* (songs). His *Fünf Lieder* (Five Songs), Op. 49 (1868), includes one of the best-known of all his songs: 'Wiegenlied' (Cradle Song). The text is from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn* (The Youth's Magic Horn), which is a popular collection of German folk poetry.

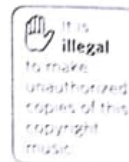
In Brahms's 'Lullaby', as it is usually called – originally for voice and piano, but here arranged for piano only – the well-known melody is accompanied by a rocking left-hand accompaniment.

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B:2

# The Echo

No. 14 from *Mayflowers*, Op. 61Theodor Oesten  
(1813-70)Pastorale [ $\text{♩} = \text{c.96}$ ]

The musical score is written for piano in 3/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It is divided into four systems of measures. The first system (measures 1-4) begins with a forte (f) dynamic in the right hand and piano (pp) in the left. The second system (measures 5-8) continues the pattern. The third system (measures 9-12) shows a variation with different dynamics. The fourth system (measures 13-16) concludes the piece. Fingerings and articulation marks are indicated throughout.

Theodor Oesten, a German composer and pianist, studied in Berlin and later became popular as a music teacher. He wrote a large number of piano pieces with attractive titles.

The opening motive recurs in b. 5, and then, in a varied form, in b. 9. For the echoes, the composer uses not only *f/pp* contrasts but also transposition to a higher octave. The performance direction 'Pastorale' suggests that these echoes take place in the countryside.

Source: *May-flowers...25 short, very easy and amusing pieces for the piano forte*, Op. 61 (London: Robert Cocks & Co., 1850)

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# The Lonely Road

No. 6 from *Work and Play*

B:3

Felix Swinstead  
(1880-1959)

**Andante** [ $\text{♩} = c.108$ ]

*p legato*

*cresc.*

*dim.*

*p*

*rall.*

Felix Swinstead was an English pianist and composer who studied at the Royal Academy of Music, London, where he was appointed professor of piano in 1910. Before the First World War he gave many piano recitals in London and elsewhere. Most of his published works are for the piano.

'The Lonely Road' is given a modal character by its G naturals (except in b. 8). Its main motive (bb. 1 and 3) is played just once by the left hand (b. 11) and recurs one last time in the coda (bb. 17-18).

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C:1

## Happy Day

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Ian King  
(born 1962)

Swing ♩ = c.120 (♩ =  $\overset{3}{\text{♩}}$ )

mf

p

mf

slow down

Ian King was a chorister at Hereford Cathedral, then studied music at Oxford University. He lives in Worcester, where he works as a composer, teacher and pianist. Ian specializes in writing classical choral music, particularly sacred works, though he also writes foot-tapping tunes for his family folk band, as well as jazz pieces for pupils. About this piece, the composer has written: 'Happy Day is a jaunty little tune which should be played in a spirit of light-hearted fun.'

© 2015 Ian King  
www.iankingmusic.co.uk

# Who Said Mice?

from *Cats*

C:2

J. M. Last  
(1908-2002)

**Furtively** [ $\text{♩} = \text{c. } 120$ ]

The musical score is written for piano in C major and 2/4 time. It begins with a piano (*p*) introduction. The first measure has a dynamic of *p*. The second measure has a *cresc.* marking. The third measure has a dynamic of *f*. The fourth measure has a dynamic of *f*. The fifth measure has a dynamic of *mp*. The sixth measure has a dynamic of *p*. The seventh measure has a dynamic of *cresc.*. The eighth measure has a dynamic of *f*. The ninth measure has a dynamic of *f*. The tenth measure has a dynamic of *f*. The eleventh measure has a dynamic of *f*. The twelfth measure has a dynamic of *f*. The thirteenth measure has a dynamic of *f*. The fourteenth measure has a dynamic of *f*. The fifteenth measure has a dynamic of *f*. The score includes a *più mosso* marking at measure 15. The piece ends with a brief coda.

This is a musical portrait of cats on the prowl. The 'cat tune' is heard twice (bb. 1 and 9), with its second phrase (b. 5) varied the second time (b. 13) so as to merge into a brief coda.

Joan Last was an English music educator, pianist and composer who taught the piano for many years at the Royal Academy of Music, London.

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C:3

# The Egyptian Level

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Egyptically [♩ = c.116]

Kevin Wooding  
(born 1964)

1 5

5 1 5

1 4 2

1 4 1

12 poco rit. a tempo poco rit. 5 2 1

pp

Ped.

This piece is selected from *Spooky Piano Time: Terrifying Pieces, Poems, and Puzzles* by Pauline Hall and Kevin Wooding. Wooding was born in Australia, but now works in Britain, teaching and composing. His piece is prefaced by the following poem:

Mummies here, mummies there,  
Mummies in their underwear.  
Drinking coffee, eating pie,  
Lying in sarcophagi.  
No, not mothers (as you thought),  
But mummies of the other sort.

Bandaged beasts from Khartoum,  
Yes, Egyptians in this room.  
Although they may be eating pie,  
I think that you had better fly...  
For ravenous relics love to munch  
And might mistake you for their lunch!

Wooding advises the player: 'To keep all those hungry mummies happy, you must make this piece as smooth and snaky as you possibly can!' The scale he uses, with its augmented 2nd, Bb to C#, gives the piece a distinctly Middle Eastern character.

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