

Avery Gunnell Piano Studio Teaching Philosophy

I believe strongly in the power of music. Music has the power to change lives for the better, to heal inner wounds, to spark creativity and joy, and to narrate the soundtracks of our lives. Music teaches hard work, resilience and the importance of hard work, but it also has the potential to be the greatest joy in our lives. I have seen this time and time again in my own life as I have sought out a formal education in piano performance and as I have performed hundreds of times in all different venues and for different purposes. It is one of my greatest blessings and I desire to help your student find their passion for music as I have found mine. Music lessons have shaped who I am as a person, so I understand the gravity of my position as a music teacher. I do not take this lightly. I desire the best for my students. There are several facets in which I teach my curriculum, and I have separated them into four groups:

Proper Technique

I strive to teach my students early on to have proper technique. Technique not only includes rudimentary skills such as scales and arpeggios, but includes proper hand placement, pain prevention techniques, and relaxation at the piano. When a student has proper technique, that student is able to play anything they want at the piano. It is my job as a teacher to essentially work myself out of a job and help your student to be self-sufficient and able to play on their own. I will work with them constantly on their technique, asking them questions and clarifying how to play without pain. This is the foundation of good piano playing, and the building block for everything else I teach.

Knowledge of Music History and Music Literacy

It is essential to know what you are playing. I primarily take interest in Baroque, Classical, Romantic, and 20th century music styles. There is a stark contrast in pieces that I

know well and know details about the composers rather than pieces I don't know well. This helps build the love of the piano mentioned earlier. When I can really dig deep and find out why the composer wrote this in a certain way or what time period this came from, I can really get closer to uncovering the magic of the music. I desire not only to play the music on the page, but to become one with it and to help students see that there is where true artistry lies.

Effective Practicing

Students will not progress without practicing. This is expected by me as a teacher but also in my own personal and professional life. I too have to practice consistently. The piano is an art, and playing it requires hours of dedicated practice. Without knowing how to efficiently practice, several hours a week may be wasted. I have tried and true practicing methods that I teach my students so that they can learn pieces quickly and effectively and become comfortable with their pieces. Constant repetition, compartmentalizing sections and slow metronome practice will transform your students' practicing. I will not only teach your students how to practice, but I will practice with them in lessons periodically to refresh this skill. This is essential to good piano playing.

Inspiring Performances

The goal of lessons is to be able to perform pieces with ease and to find the joy in music. My joy does come when practicing and when on my own, but true joy in music comes for me when I share it with other people. Whether collaborating with other instrumentalists, playing in recitals, or performing in a variety of different venues, I will coach your students to play with passion and with artistry. I will help them feel the music, and dig deep to find the true meaning of what they play. I will help them not only give a performance, but touch the hearts of the audience through their playing.

In conclusion, I am beyond thrilled and honored to teach your students. It is so inspiring to me to see the love that they have for the piano and the light in their eyes. I know how much the piano has changed my life and I strive to help other people see that in their lives as well. I know piano lessons will make such a difference in your students' lives. I look forward to seeing them in my studio!