



PEDAGOGICAL PRINCIPLES OF TEACHING ACCORDION TO SPECIAL POPULATIONS

Mary Kathryn Archuleta, CEO/Artistic Director

The most important element in teaching accordion to a beginning student, regardless of age or any physical or cognitive challenges he or she may have, is to define each and every

pedagogical detail including technique and the simplest elements of music theory from the very first lesson, making certain that he or she thoroughly understands and masters every concept before to the next lesson. This will require much repetition, and the selection of practice exercises that are melodic and pleasing to the ear so that the PRACTICE IS ENJOYABLE & FUN!



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It is vital to create a blend of emphasis on aural training with the understanding of the written language of music as BOTH are IMPORTANT!

This **begins** with having the student **SING** each exercise or melody at the same time he or she is learning to read music notes on the staff. This will create an inner awareness of the actual sound (pitch) of the note name as it is visually recognized on the staff and it's relationship to the key on the keyboard.

While there are many excellent and familiar accordion methods that have been used for many years, it is often important to sub-divide the material presented into much smaller elements in order to accommodate for different learning styles and capabilities.



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The accompanying Power Point Presentation will give examples of how one might prepare a student to begin Palmer-Hughes Book 1A or regular Book 1. Beyond the examples shown, teachers may (as needed) develop supplemental exercises as preparation for learning new material.

Because the development of supplemental materials for individual students with differing types of special needs requires many different types of modifications, we are available to assist teachers with suggestions to help them better meet challenges in their studios.

I highly recommend Patricia Bartell's Online Accordion Life Academy for excellent video demonstrations.