

# **The Well-Tempered Reader**

Music Moves for Piano



**By Marilyn Lowe  
& Garik Pedersen**

**In cooperation with Edwin E. Gordon**

**The Blue  
Book**

## THE WELL-TEMPERED READER

With the completion of the first volume of the Well-Tempered Clavier in 1722, J. S. Bach ushered us into a musical world in which pieces could be written, and played, in all the 24 keys. This epochal landmark in the history of music has been praised for its great artistic beauty and scope as well as its technical complexity. In it, Bach demonstrated that each of the chromatic pitches is employable as a tonal center in keyboard music played on a “well-tempered” instrument. Although there may be controversy as to the exact tuning Bach had in mind, there is no doubt that he provided an exhaustive demonstration of the tonal system and opened our ears to the remote modulations of Beethoven and later composers.

It is probable that Bach wrote the WTC to challenge himself as well as to teach others. Before WTC I, he had never written in the remote keys that this project required. In fact, several of the preludes and fugues were actually first written in simpler keys and then transposed. Is it possible that Bach felt some of the same unease while writing a piece in A-flat minor that we feel when playing in A-flat minor?

The three volumes of *The Well-Tempered Reader* are designed to provide beginning pianists an opportunity to think, feel, improvise, read, and write in all the major and minor keyalities in order to gain a complete grasp of the tonal system. Relative major and harmonic minor keys are presented together so that the student will recognize the overlapping melodic and harmonic patterns between them. In addition, the value of composition in learning to read with understanding can hardly be overestimated: we learn more about what C major is when we compare it to something that it is not.

Drawing from the wealth of easy teaching pieces written in the 18th and 19th centuries, *The Well-Tempered Reader* presents repertoire organized by key center. Just as Bach transposed preludes and fugues from “simpler” to less familiar keys, we have drawn from the plethora of wonderful pieces in C, G, D, and F major, transposing and arranging them as needed to fill out the full complement of pieces in all keys.

Other editorial decisions include enrhythmic notation (to familiarize the reader with the variety of ways rhythm patterns are notated), minor changes in accompaniments for artistic or technical reasons, truncation, and supplying titles and tempo markings.

Garik Pedersen • Eastern Michigan University • Ypsilanti, Michigan

# The Blue Book

## The Well-Tempered Reader

This book is written especially for students who learn music  
using an audiation-based approach

Use the following reference with this book:

*Keyalities and Tonalities: The Complete Book of Arpeggios, Cadences & Scales*

Music Moves for Piano is a Piano Series Based on the Music Learning Theory of  
Edwin E. Gordon and is Designed to Develop Audiation and Keyboard Performance Skills

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## Introduction

### ***Well-Tempered Reader Series***

**Focus of the *Well-Tempered Reader Series*.** This repertoire series is written for students who have completed *Music Moves for Piano Book 3*. The purpose is for students to apply an audiation process to music reading after they have developed both keyboard and audiation skills at a late elementary level and are becoming abstract thinkers.

**Repertoire in the *Well-Tempered Reader Series*.** Repertoire is from the Baroque and Classical periods of music. There are five duple or triple meter pieces in each major and harmonic minor keyality. The level of pieces is the same throughout the three books of the series.

**Audiation-Based Music Analysis Before Playing.** A “Music Analysis Form” is included in these books to provide students with an “audiation” way to study/analyze each piece before playing. When students make an audiation-based analysis *before* playing a piece, three things happen: a connection is made between sound and music notation, the comprehension of notation increases, and there is greater accuracy in performance.

### **Audiation, Keyboard Skills, and Music Notation**

Robert Schumann, in his “Musical Rules for Home and Life,” wrote, “Cultivation of hearing is most important.” “Sing from the music without the help of an instrument.” “When someone gives you a composition for the first time so that you should play it, look it over first.” Schumann’s advice underlines the philosophy of the *Well-Tempered Reader* series. The premise is to learn how to audiate; then apply this knowledge to learn new music from notation. Music notation, in itself, cannot teach music reading. In fact, when music reading is based on the application of a familiar music vocabulary it becomes possible to understand the unfamiliar.

**Audiation.** When students are young concrete thinkers, they can learn many skills to help them audiate, or listen to music with understanding. These young students, as well as beginning students of any age, acquire a sequenced audiation music pattern vocabulary through listening, performing, thinking, improvising, and using labels to discuss music. An internalized “audiation instrument” prepares students to develop reading and writing music notation skills.

**Keyboard Skills.** Successful music reading requires knowledge and experience with keyboard geography, creativity, and keyboard performance. Technical skills should be fairly well developed.

**Music Notation.** An essential pitch and rhythm vocabulary are the cornerstones for reading music notation and provides the groundwork for a purposeful audiation-based reading process. Music notation reminds us of what we know about pitch, rhythm, style, and expression. Fully understanding music notation requires abstract thinking, which develops around age 11.

Dynamics, articulation, and phrasing indications are not included in the *Well-Tempered Reader* pieces. For the beginning reader, too much information in notation unnecessarily complicates the reading process. However, essential fingerings are given because it is important to learn good fingering choices for each piece. After a piece is played accurately, students should add expression markings in the style of the composer with the teacher’s help. Playing with an understanding of musical style makes an interesting performance.

## Physical Considerations

Pieces in different keyalities/tonalities will “feel” different because of the keyboard black-white piano key relationships. To avoid developing tension, observe the following.

1. Keep the hand small. Do not try to fit five fingers over five piano keys. Spreading the fingers this way produces tension. When the hand is in its natural shape, five fingers normally fit over four piano keys.
2. Move the arm behind each finger when playing from one piano key to another.
3. Use in and out movement between black and white piano keys. Keep the arm/hand straight. Avoid twisting.
4. Use the arm to take the hand to a new place on the keyboard. Do not stretch or reach.
5. Learn how to move to a new place before it is time to play. Often one hand should move while the other hand is playing. When there are moving hands, decide which hand to look at first.

## How to Use this Book

Following are ten steps to use with each piece in the *Well-Tempered Reader Series*.

### Away from the Piano

1. Complete the “Music Analysis Form” for the piece.
2. Chant or sing, then audiate the patterns.
3. Sing the melody of each music staff in ensemble with someone else. Use a neutral syllable. Notice phrases that are the same and those that are different.
4. Chant the rhythm patterns in phrases for each music staff in ensemble with someone else. Use a neutral syllable. Notice phrases that are the same and those that are different.
5. Review the finger markings, especially noticing changes.

### At the Piano

6. Become comfortable playing in the keyality/tonality of the piece. For each DO signature, use the *Keyalities and Tonalities* book to practice the cadences and scales. Review familiar songs and study other tonalities that use the *same* DO signature.
7. Breathe and audiate the meter and the tonality, establish tempo, and think the starting tone and playing location.
8. Play the piece (or parts) hands alone, then immediately play hands together, either parts or the entire piece. Notice technically difficult spots and practice these separately.
9. Add expression markings and phrasings in the style of the composer and musical period after a piece is played accurately. The teacher may help with this.
10. Transpose the piece to different keyalities.

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# Street Dance

Meter: Duple Triple MB = \_\_\_\_

Tonality: Major/DO Harmonic Minor/LA Keyality = \_\_\_\_

Allegretto

Johann Christoph Friedrich Bach

1 3

2 1 1

5 4 3 2

2 1 3 5 3 2 1 2

9 1 1 3 4

1 1 2 1

13 1 1

3 3 2

# Taffy Pull

Meter: Duple Triple MB = \_\_\_\_

Tonality: Major/DO Harmonic Minor/LA Keyality = \_\_\_\_

Moderato

Louis Kohler

5

Fine

9

Compose a B Part in D Major

13

D. C. al Fine

**Music Moves for Piano** is the first piano method of its kind. It applies Edwin E. Gordon's Music Learning Theory to the teaching of piano. When music is taught as an aural art, lessons build a foundation for lifelong musical enjoyment and understanding. With guidance, "sound to notation" leads to fluent music performance, reading, and writing. Following are some of the major concepts of this approach:

- Rhythm is based on body movement: Feel the pulse and meter then chant rhythm patterns. Move in both a continuous fluid way and a pulsating way.
- Tonal audiation is developed by singing. Singing songs and tonal patterns develops pitch sensitivity, singing in tune, and a "listening" ear.
- Music pattern vocabularies are acquired and applied to listening and performing
- Various elements of music, such as rhythm, meter, pulse, tonality, harmony, style, and form, are studied.
- Creativity is fostered by using different elements of music, such as rhythm, pitch, harmony, and form to create with.
- Improvisation activities apply everything a student learns. Use familiar patterns from folk songs, transpose, change tonality and meter, create variations and medleys, and create melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic variations.
- Perform with technical freedom. Students learn how to use the playing apparatus from the beginning of lessons.

**Marilyn Lowe**, who has taught piano for more than 40 years, has used her experiences and knowledge to create a non-traditional piano method based on Edwin E. Gordon's theories of audiation. Other influences include the techniques and theories of Carl Orff, Shinichi Suzuki, Emile Jaques-Dalcroze, Zoltan Kodaly, and Dorothy Taubman. Lowe has been using this approach successfully with her students for more than 20 years. Her academic credits include degrees in liberal arts and piano from Knox College in Galesburg, Illinois, and a master's degree in piano from Indiana University in Bloomington. Lowe completed additional graduate study in organ and music theory at Indiana University. She would like to express appreciation to her former music teachers: Nadia Boulanger, Murray Baylor, Walter Robert, and Menahem Pressler.

**Edwin E. Gordon** is known throughout the world as a preeminent researcher, teacher, author, editor, and lecturer in the field of music education. In addition to advising doctoral candidates in music education, Gordon has devoted many years to teaching music to preschool-aged children. Through extensive research, Gordon has made major contributions to the field of music education in such areas as the study of music aptitudes, stages and types of audiation, music learning theory, and rhythm in movement and music.

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