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***Music Reading and the Piano Method Books***

It is well known that the ability to read music notation is at the core of the music learning process. In the early years of piano lessons, music teachers rely extensively on piano method books to introduce and develop this skill. However, little research has been done to find out how musical symbols are introduced, sequenced and reinforced. The impact of the colourful illustrations found on every page of a piano method book is rarely discussed. And although method books usually value the development of good sight-reading skills, little is known about the perceptual span of young pianists or the importance of pattern recognition. In spite of the recognized importance of music reading, there exists no reliable tool to measure and quantify this skill in relation to piano music. Yet measuring this ability is essential for evaluating the impact of the various teaching strategies used in the different method books. This presentation will provide an overview of the multidisciplinary research approach used at the Piano Pedagogy Research Laboratory to examine each of these questions and provide insight on key aspects of music reading in the context of piano method books.