EASY MUSIC

PARENT AND TEACHER HANDBOOK
Dear Music Lover,

Music is such a powerful language! Like perhaps no other medium, music has the ability to elicit the breadth of emotion, to captivate us in an instant, to express those very things we can’t quite put into words. Given that learning an instrument requires a comparatively large up-front commitment and that we want our children to have the opportunity to explore many potential interests, I am often asked this: How can music be a part of my child’s life without taking over his or her life?

With Easy Music’s intuitive, non-theory approach, your child will have fun exploring an evocative world while mastering skills fundamental to both performance and enjoyment of music. The lessons here are cleverly disguised as games, created by a team including professional musicians, designed to develop rhythmic ability, melody recognition, and musical memory.

Easy Music also exists as a sandbox with the Sand Castle (in fact, an actual virtual sandbox) in which your child can play to design and create his or her own compositions using an “orchestra” of friendly characters and sounds. These mini-masterpieces can be recorded so your child can both listen back to their creation and share it with you!

I believe this app will work well to enhance your child’s level of musical skills, whether used in tandem with lessons on an instrument or simply to instill confidence in them as they continue to engage with music later in life.

Happy Music Making!

Sincerely,

Evan Fein
Member of the Ear Training Teaching Faculty at The Juilliard School Precollege
Game Breakdown

THE WELCOME SCREEN

The adventure starts on the home screen, which represents the app's starting point. By touching the "Practice" button, the child will begin their music skills lessons. When the "Compose" button is touched, the child will have access to the castle where 3 music rooms await. This is where the child can play freely and experiment with different genres of music.

For your first go-around, we recommend choosing the Practice path. Here, the child will be greeted by a dragonfly who will take them to see 4 animals (the frogs, the whale, the bear and the fox). The dragonfly will provide clear instructions for each game, ensuring easy learning for all.

Once the child has completed these 4 games, the rainbow in the sky will be unlocked. This section of the app presents the child with a colourful piano, whose objective is to give him a taste for the instrument, ultimately peaking their interest to take their learning to the next level!
THE FROGS

NOTE AND MELODY RECOGNITION

The choir of frogs will help your child learn to differentiate between various notes. This exercise marks the child’s first exposure to memorizing musical sequences. As the child progresses through the levels, new gestures and sounds are added.

FROG TRACKS

Repeat after the frogs by tapping them (see more in the next page)

GESTURES

Level 1 - 4: The child discovers the first gesture to use with the frogs, the tap

Level 5 - 8: A new gesture appears, the swipe up

Level 9 - 12: Now it's the swipe down

Level 13 - 16: Harmonious touches now

Level 17 - 25: The last one is the long touch, now you can do all the gestures
THE BEAR

PERCUSSIVE HITS

Being able to count individual beats is the prerequisite for understanding rhythm. In this module, children will listen to the number of hits made by the bear and tap the flower the same number of times. Difficulty increases with the addition of different drum sounds.

BEAR TRACKS

#BEAR LOCATION
In the forest mostly
Close to the beach

GESTURES

Children will tap the flower the same number of times as the bear claps

BEAR PROGRESSION

Level 1 - 14 : The child can see the bear clapping

From Level 15 : The bear has now turned around making it impossible for the child to watch him clap. The child must rely exclusively on sound to carefully count the percussion hits
**THE FOX**

**RHYTHM**

Rhythm is quite a difficult concept to grasp for most children (and many adults). With help from fox and some pesky bees, the child will learn to keep a beat. As the levels increase with difficulty the visual aids will slowly disappear, so the child must rely solely on their ears to reproduce the rhythm.

**FOX TRACKS**

Children must tap the bees when they are over the target to make sure the fox doesn't get stung!

**GESTURES**

Level 1 - 16: the child must hit the target in rhythm to get the bees in the hive to protect the fox from getting stung

From Level 17: All the bees are in the hive. The child must get them out by playing in rhythm with the fox and by tapping on the target

**#FOX LOCATION**

In the forest where you can find bees

**FOX PROGRESSION**

COLLABORATORS:

TANYA / DESIGN
EVAN / MUSIC
MICHAEL / MUSIC
Developing a sense of relative pitch will allow the child to understand music from a new perspective and identify high and low tones. Children will practice this skill by comparing various pitches and reproducing their sounds in the correct order.

**WHALE TRACKS**

Level 1 - 5: The child discovers the first 2 vents
Level 6 - 10: A new vent arrives
Level 11 - 13: Now the child plays with 4 vents
Level 14 - 16: Now the 5th vent
Level 17 - 20: The child can play with 6 vents
Level 21 - 25: The last vent is unlocked (7 in total)

**GESTURES**

Repeat after the whale by tapping the vents in the correct order
MELODY AND SONG

Children use their ear for music to learn familiar tunes on the rainbow piano. First they receive step-by-step instruction, and then they will play from memory.

#RAINBOW LOCATION
In the sky after it rains

RAINBOW TRACKS

GESTURES
Follow the symbol to reproduce a melody

AVAILABLE SONGS

Au clair de la lune
Brother John
Mary Had A Little Lamb
Jingle Bells
Twinkle Twinkle Little Star
Free piano
**THE SAND CASTLE**

**COMPOSITION**

Children can create their own unique pieces of music and save them to a media library. This is the ultimate opportunity to apply their newfound knowledge to complete a creative activity.

**APPLE WATCH**

Stay Connected with your Child's Musical Journey on your Apple Watch!

With 4 simple percussion controls on your Apple Watch you can become a co-composer in your child's Sand Castle creations. Whether you are sitting in the same room and want to hear what a great duo the two of you make, or whether you are simply staying in-tuned with your child's learning - we've got you covered. We love technology!

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**LITTLE BEAR'S ROOM**

In this room, children will hone in on their Jazz skills and be on their way to becoming the next Louis Armstrong!

**FLAMINGO'S ROOM**

Children will be inspired by the music of the Islands and beaches to create feel-good jams!

**PANDA'S ROOM**

With DJs being all the craze these days, children can drop beats and spin records in Japan's room!
Getting the most out of the app

GAME PROGRESSION

Children can track their progression in Easy Music using the indicators displayed above each mini game. This encourages them to set goals for their learning and self-regulate.

The dragonfly has two important roles in the game:

1. To motivate your child to continue their practice
2. To provide your child with guided instruction when need be

“Repeat AFTER the frog by tapping it.”
Getting the most out of the app

CHILD PROGRESSION

Parents can follow their child’s progress and learn more about the skills acquired as a result of playing the app from the parental dashboard.

By touching the hands button, Parents will have access to the dashboard.

Track your child or student’s progress: by creating an account for either your family or classroom, you will be able to create individual profile for each child. It’s simple, free and ultimately the best way to monitor their musical journey!

You can add and manage 40 different children in the dashboard.
Getting the most out of the app

CHILD EXPERIENCE FROM EASY MUSIC

Consider the following tips for adding value to your child’s experience with Easy Music:

- Sing to your child and with your child! You don’t need to be Maria Callas or Pavarotti for your child to feel joy from hearing your voice. Singing to your child every day will help them develop their ear and encourage them to make their own music. And when they feel the urge to break into an impromptu song, embrace it and join in!

- Tune in to something! When you’re in the car, turn on the radio. Point out the instruments you recognize (e.g., “That part is being played by a guitar / trumpet / bongos.”). Definitely speak up enthusiastically if your favorite song comes on. Kids like to know that grown-ups have favorite things too.

- Ask them to remember! After a car trip, movie, or Easy Music session, see if they can remember any of the music they heard or created, and encourage them to sing it back or to describe it in their own words.
INNATE OR ACQUIRED?

The Gift of Music - Innate or Acquired?

It's an age-old question, are some children born with the gift of music or are they all born with the same musical blank slate? Studies and analysts show that musical prodigies are typically a product of their environment and upbringing.

Take Beethoven, whose father firmly guided him down the path of sheet notes and melodies or Mozart, who developed his passion and talent for music in a subtler manner but nonetheless grew up in a musical home. However, imposing music on children at a young age will not always end in the same result.

Canadian musician Glenn Gould was a prodigious pianist at the ripe age of 12 but had parents who would not let him play concerts before they felt that he was ready. There are always exceptions to the rule.

Music as a First Language

Faced with the endless discussion of innate versus acquired, the dialect of music has been forced to evolve. Shinichi Suzuki has held a lot of influence in this department.

The Japanese professor puts it very simply: children who learn Japanese must grasp the language's complex tones and pitches, so what is stopping them for learning the multifaceted language of music?

This theory alone could single handedly make music the world's largest common language. Other great performers have also realized this in-depth analysis. American pianist Abby Whiteside stressed the importance of listening before practice, "budding musicians must first start playing by ear before reading music.” Everything is a matter of memory.
According to Maria Montessori, music is an essential component to the child's well-being and ability to flourish.

In true Montessori fashion, the child begins their education with various tools and materials; bells and music bars being two examples.

With the first, children are presented with 13 bells on a wooden base. The bells allow the children to listen to the sharps, flats and chromatic scales of a C major. These audio "pair-up" activities require children to discriminate between various notes, resulting in an impressive framework of music intelligence.

With the second, music bars are used as a very simple tool for children to familiarize themselves with recurring notes. Children are encouraged to play freely and use music as an outlet to express themselves. Ultimately inspiring them to take their musical journey to the next level!
Tanya Lam is an award-winning illustrator hailing from Calgary, Alberta. She completed the Illustration program at the Alberta College of Art and Design in 2008.

She looks to both retro and contemporary art for inspiration and is enamoured with the idea of capturing the excitement of the everyday. Specializing primarily in conceptually-based editorial work and graphic novels, she is interested in venturing into the world of advertising illustration and illustrating children's books.
American composer Evan Fein was born in 1984 in Cleveland, Ohio and currently resides in New York City, where he is a member of the Ear Training Teaching Faculty at The Juilliard School Precollege and Evening Divisions. His music, known for its strongly lyrical and narrative qualities, has been widely performed at home and abroad — including in France, Germany, Iceland, the United Kingdom, and the Netherlands — and has been commissioned by organizations including Opéra de Poche, The Albany Symphony, The Juilliard School, The New York Choreographic Institute, and Cleveland Public Theater. He is the recipient of awards from the ASCAP Foundation, Boston Metro Opera, and the American Scandinavian Society.

Evan Fein began playing the piano and composing at the age of six. He holds a Doctorate of Musical Arts and a Master of Music from The Juilliard School and a Bachelor of Music from the Cleveland Institute of Music. In addition, he studied at the Freie Universität Berlin and L’École Normale de Musique de Paris. His primary teachers included Robert Beaser, Samuel Adler, Michel Merlet, and Margaret Brouwer.

His dissertation “The Ghosts of Versailles” by John Corigliano: An Evolutionary Study was completed in 2014. The first comprehensive study of the work commissioned by the Metropolitan Opera for its centennial, it is now available to scholars around the world. Equally at home in cinema, Evan holds an IMDb credit as primary orchestrator on the 2011 film Sedona, featuring Frances Fisher.
Michael has worked professionally as a musician, producer, re-mixer, and arranger for 25 years, playing such diverse genres as jazz, rock, drum & bass, salsa, techno, country, Hindustani, gospel, baroque and orchestral music. During this time he has recorded over 175 CDs, composed music for 8 films, toured internationally, and lived on 3 continents. He has performed at such diverse venues as Carnegie Hall, Roy Thompson Hall, The Fillmore West, Suntory Hall (Tokyo), San Francisco Jazz Fest, The Knitting Factory, and the Boom Festival (Portugal).

As a recording artist he has released a series of highly acclaimed solo CDs on boutique record labels, Hearts of Space, Daikini, and Six Degrees Records. Over the years he has had the opportunity to collaborate with a wide variety of artists including, Daniel Humair, Barry Finnerty, Donald (Duck) Baily, Chris Potter, DJ Crush; and Japanese producers, UFO. He has also worked with Montreal based artists such as internationally acclaimed jazz singer, Karen Young, and Grammy nominated, Benoit Charest.

Michael is an adjunct professor, blogger, and curriculum developer for Manhattan based DUBSPOT; the #1 electronic music production school in the world.
Easy Music is a game that teaches children how to play and learn songs using their ears for the joy of playing music. It provides a solution to what I have always felt is inherently erroneous with most current music education methods.

Through most of history, music has been taught and learned as an oral/sonic tradition. People would listen to what other musicians were playing, and attempt to recreate what they heard. Sometimes the musician would show what they were doing with their hands, but the underlying principle is that the tradition was passed through the ears. When sitting around the fire, or after a meal, sheet music was not handed out before music was played. People simply played, and soon anyone who wished to play along was invited to join in. Music has a knack for creating community among people.

Whenever I meet a new student, I always ask why they want to play music and what their goals are. The answer usually revolves around a desire to play music with others, accompany oneself while singing, and above all, to have fun. No one has ever come to me on day one with a book of score and said, “I want to learn how to read this.” I don’t discourage students from learning how to read music, but I feel they must make the connection between the instrument and their ears before doing so.

Once the student is really hearing what they are playing and making the connection, then it is fine to introduce the concept and tools to read music. This, of course, becomes especially important if students wish to pursue careers as musicians.

As an educator, there is nothing more satisfying than watching a student’s sense of empowerment as they figure out a song on the piano that they have heard on the radio. Anyone can do it, but we have convinced ourselves that we can’t without ever even trying. Easy Music was designed to help kids overcome that preconception about their abilities.

For many people, the ideal of playing music by ear is some mysterious, unattainable skill, which only a gifted few will ever achieve. I have come across so many adults who took piano or violin lessons as children and quit after a few years. Soon after, they forget how to read music, the pieces they have learned, then the names of the notes, and become convinced that they are not good at music. It saddens me that so many people have such a negative association with one of the greatest accomplishments of human civilization.

Anyone can play music. We just need to turn on our ears and stop relying on our eyes to play.

Easy Music is a series of games, which encourage children to open their ears to sounds and rhythms. In doing so, they will develop a trust in their ears and make associations between those sounds and rhythms. With this tool, they will instinctively listen to themselves and what is musically happening around them when learning to play an instrument. Your ears will guide you through the different games, and over time listening to music will become a game as well.

Playing music should not be a mysterious thing that only a few can master; it is a gift for all humanity that we can share together regardless of our perceived abilities.

Happy Music Making!
Sincerely, Michael Emenau