

How Do I Find A Quality Music Teacher For My Child?

- Has the teacher asked you if you already own an instrument, and asked you about the instrument's regular tuning and overall capabilities?
- Has the teacher provided their credentials (background of musical training)?
- Is the teacher professionally active (i.e., currently works in a music-related occupation, performs regularly, participates in professional organizations, attends conferences, etc.)?
- Has the teacher asked in-depth questions about your child such as:
 - Age, prior experience in music (was it positive or negative)
 - Interest and willingness to learn music
 - Ability to sit still for the lesson (particularly if a very young child)
 - Involvement in current school music programs, other extracurricular activities that will impact the student's time to practice
 - Additional issues such as health, general outlook, etc.
- Has the teacher provided information about his/her practice time expectations?
- Has the teacher expressed some ideas about teaching style, technique, methods, etc.?
- Does the teacher require completion of Music Theory booklets for strong note reading and counting skills, use of a metronome?
- Does the teacher require good posture at the piano, regular guidance on hand and wrist position, information on appropriate finger placement on the notes ("fingering"), attention to dynamic markings, avoiding overuse of pedal?
- Regarding musicianship, does the teacher require great attention to the music's dynamic markings, offer explanation of expressive terms, and strive to foster attention to playing "with great sensitivity?"
- Regarding technical dexterity, does the teacher require strong note reading and counting skills, as well as scales, cadences and arpeggios, and regular exercise learning (i.e., Jr. Hannon progressing to Full-Volume Hannon, MacFarren, Czerny, etc.)?
- At the intermediate to advanced level, does the teacher indicate a preference for particular music publisher editions, with attention to commentaries and correct interpretation of, for example, ornamentation, avoidance of abridged or simplified versions, recommendation of particular recordings of pianists who subscribed to these same philosophies, etc.?
- How far is the teacher able to take your student as he/she progresses into their musical studies? Are they able to prepare them for recitals, local/regional/state/national competitions, and college entrance auditions (in-depth knowledge of repertoire, learning how to audition, recording their audition, etc.)?

These are but a few suggested topics for conversation as you seek to find your ideal teacher!