Cool Songs for Cool Kids™ Primer

21 Cool Piano Solos for Beginning Piano Students

Jerald Simon

Music that excites, entertains, and educates™ - Music Motivation®
Music Motivation® books are designed to provide students with music instruction that will enable them to improve and increase their successes in the field of music. It is also intended to enhance appreciation and understanding of various styles of music from classical to jazz, blues, rock, popular, new age, hymns, and more. The author and publisher disclaim any liability or accountability for the misuse of this material as it was intended by the author.
I hope you enjoy “Cool Songs for Cool Kids™ (the primer level)”’. This is the prequel book in the series (before volumes 1, 2, and 3). Each of the books contain “cool” piano pieces written for kids of all ages (whether they are age 9 or 99). The music is “adored by students and approved by teachers”™. The pieces in each volume teach skills (music theory, technique, transposing, improvising, composing, etc.) through fun and upbeat piano selections composed by Music Mentor™ Jerald M. Simon.

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Welcome to “Cool Songs for Cool Kids™” (the primer level). This book is designed for beginning piano students. There are 21 original piano solos written by Jerald M. Simon.

The Cool Songs for Cool Kids™ Series™ (primer level - for beginning students, volume 1 - for early intermediate levels, volume 2 - for early intermediate to intermediate levels, and volume 3 - for intermediate - late intermediate levels) is not a method series or a series of method books. Each book contains 21 original performance pieces (except for volume 3 which contains just 10 original piano solos) written by Music Mentor™ Jerald M. Simon.

Each book teaches music theory through music that “excites, entertains, and educates™”. There are several exercises or links to FREE downloadable exercises on the Music Motivation website (musicmotivation.com).

Each piece and each exercise in the books teaches a specific skill (which is found beneath the exercise or title of the piece).

These books were not intended to replace current books being used by teachers and students. The series is a supplemental series that may be added to any teaching curriculum or method. The pieces were written to inspire and motivate piano students with cool sounding music. Many were written specifically with boys in mind.

In the Primer Level book, rhythms and notes are introduced to piano students. Key signatures (the circle of 5ths), major pentascales, and triads built from the C major scale are also introduced in a fun and cool way.

In volumes 1, 2, and 3, music theory is introduced and taught through cool and upbeat piano solos teaching various styles: jazz, blues, boogie woogies, new age, classical, sound track thriller, polka, church chimes, rock, pop, ballads, etc.

On page 47 of this book, you will find the Music Motivation® Methodology™ (for piano). Use it as a guide for teaching students theory concepts. It is an outline I created for myself so I would know what I personally wanted students to learn in each of the three stages I created: (1) Apprentice, (2) Maestro, and (3) Virtuoso. It is only an outline or suggestion - add to it or subtract from it. If you are doing something different altogether that works, keep doing it. This is meant to give you ideas and supplement what you are already doing.
Learning music is similar to learning a foreign language. If you know your A B Cs you already know the musical alphabet. The musical alphabet is A B C D E F and G. On the piano, the white note farthest to the left is A. That is the beginning of the musical alphabet. The white notes then continue as the alphabet does: A, B, C, D, E, F, and G. After G, it starts over again with A and continues up the piano (to the right).

The piano has a total of 88 keys. There are 52 white keys and 36 black keys. The note farthest to the left is A and the note farthest to the right is C. Here is what the 88 keys look like on a piano:

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The first thing I have students do is play every note on the piano with one finger, starting with the lowest note “A” and continuing up to the highest note “C”. I have students “Say it and Play it” - meaning they say the note name while they play the note (i.e. A, B, C, D, E, F, G, etc.). After they have done this, I have them find the pattern of 2 black notes together followed by 3 black notes together. I have students take two fingers with the left hand (the middle finger and the index finger) and play all of the 2 black note groups (both fingers play together at the same time) up and down the piano. Then I have students take three fingers with the right hand (the ring finger, the middle finger, and the index finger) and play all of the 3 black note groups (all three fingers play together at the same time) up and down the piano. After they have done this, students play with both hands (left hand plays the 2 black note groups then the right hand plays the 3 black note groups) up and down the piano.

I then teach easy ways to find the musical notes according to these black note group patterns. All Cs are found to the left of the 2 black note groups (except for the last C - farthest to the right). Have the students find all of the Cs. All Fs are found to the left of the 3 black note groups. Have the students find all of the Fs. All E’s are found to the right of the 2 black note groups. Have the students find all of the Es. All Bs are found to the right of the 3 black note groups. Have the students find all of the Bs. Once students have found these notes, I have them find all of the Cs on the piano and play (with either hand) C D E F G. This is the C major pentascale (5 note scale). Have students find all of the Cs on the piano and have them play C D E F G, first with the left hand and then with the right hand or vice versa. Students should be able to identify all of the notes on the piano and find all of the As, Bs, Cs, Ds, Es, Fs, and Gs on the piano. Make sure they can play the pentascale (C D E F G) beginning on each of the Cs of the piano (except for the C farthest to the right, of course).
Now that you know the musical alphabet, let’s see how the notes are written down so you can read and play music. Music is written on what is called a staff. One way to think of the staff in use today is to compare the staff to your hand. There are five lines on the staff (this relates to the five fingers on your hand) and four spaces, one in between each line (because there is a space in between each finger). Here is what the music staff looks like - five lines with four spaces - one in between each line (hold your right hand horizontally in front of you).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAFF</th>
<th>5 LINES</th>
<th>4 SPACES</th>
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<tbody>
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</table>

The spaces on the music staff are numbered one through four counting from the bottom space (1) to the top space (4). The lines on the music staff are numbered one through five counting from the bottom line (1) to the top line (5). There are two principle staffs used in music when playing the piano (one for the right hand and one for the left hand). Each of these staffs has its own clef sign. Clef signs are symbols that organize a staff and help the musicians know the order and position of the notes.

In piano, the two most common clef signs are the **Treble Clef** and the **Bass Clef**. The treble clef is also called the **G clef** because the second line (counting up from the bottom) is the G note and the treble clef wraps around the line. The top of the treble clef also wraps around the top space outside of the staff (which is also a G note). The bass clef is also called the **F clef** because the fourth line (counting from the bottom) is the F note and the two dots after the bass clef are on both sides of the line. This is what the treble and bass clefs look like. When you combine the treble and bass clef together (treble clef on top - played by the right hand and the bass clef on the bottom - primarily played by the left hand) it is called the **Grand Staff**.

Music is written out by having notes, which look like circles or circles with lines on the side placed in the spaces or on the lines of either the bass or treble clef staffs. There is a different note (musical alphabet: A, B, C, D, E, F, or G) assigned to each space or line. Let’s look at the notes of the grand staff (treble and bass clefs). We’ll start with the bottom space of the bass clef. If you know your musical alphabet, it’s pretty easy. The 1st space (on the bass clef) is A. The 2nd line (on the bass clef) is B. It goes up alphabetically from there.
An easy way to remember the notes in the space of the treble clef is to say, “in the space there is a **FACE**”. Each of the letters in FACE is placed in one of the spaces from the bottom up. The empty space below the F is a D. The empty space above the E is a G. An easy way to remember the notes on the lines of the treble clef is to say, “on the line **Every Good Boy Does Fine**”. For memorizing the notes in the space of the bass clef, I like to have students say “**All Cowboys Enjoy Guns**” or “**All Cows Eat Grass**”. For memorizing the notes on the lines of the bass clef, I like to have students say “**Great Big Dogs Fight Animals**”. Make up your own - whatever will help you remember the names of the notes on the treble and bass clefs.

![Treble Clef Notes](image1)

![Bass Clef Notes](image2)

Music is made up of notes (whole, half, quarter, eighth, 16th, 32nd, etc.) and rests (whole, half, quarter, eighth, 16th, 32nd, etc.). For now we will introduce only the rhythms below. The whole note receives 4 beats (clap your hands once while counting to 4). The half note receives 2 beats (clap your hands twice while counting to 4 - clap once on 1 and once on 3). The quarter note receives 1 beat (clap your hands 4 times while counting on 1, 2, 3, and 4. The eighth note receives 1/2 of a beat (clap your hands 8 times while counting 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & - clap on everything. The rest means you don’t play anything for the same duration. I recommend the books “Rhythmic Training” by Robert Starer and “Logical Approach to Rhythmic Notation” (books 1 and 2) by Phil Perkins for a more indepth training in rhythm.

- **Whole Note**
  - 1, 2, 3, 4

- **Whole Rest**
  - 1, 2, 3, 4

- **Half Note**
  - 1, 2, 3, 4

- **Half Rest**
  - 1, 2

- **Quarter Note**
  - 1, 2, 3, 4

- **Quarter Rest**
  - 1

- **Eighth Note**
  - 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &

- **Eighth Rest**
  - &

C Pentascale Exercise
(5 note scale)

**Introduction**

I hope you enjoy “Cool Songs for Cool Kids” - the primer level for beginning students. Have a “cool” time with these cool songs!

**Watch your counting** (M.M. \( \frac{3}{4} \approx c. 120 \))

Have fun (Say it and Play it™ - count the rhythm out loud)

play the right hand first, then the left hand, and then both hands together

This is the time signature. This practice exercise is in 4/4 time signature. When you see this time signature at the beginning of the piece it means there are 4 beats per measure (clap and count to 4).
The 4 on top means that there are 4 beats in each measure and the 4 on the bottom means that the quarter notes receive one beat. An easier way to explain this is by saying there are 4 quarter notes in every measure or something that equals 4 quarter notes.

**I Pentascale Exercise**

(GOAL: 5 TIMES PER DAY)

This is the time signature. This practice exercise is in 4/4 time signature. When you see this time signature at the beginning of the piece it means there are 4 beats per measure (clap and count to 4).
The 4 on top means that there are 4 beats in each measure and the 4 on the bottom means that the quarter notes receive one beat. An easier way to explain this is by saying there are 4 quarter notes in every measure or something that equals 4 quarter notes.
Cool Piano Exercise #1

by Gerald M. Simon

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skill - C Major Pentascale (C D E F G), whole note, half note, quarter note, eighth note rhythms

Watch your counting (M.M. $\frac{4}{4} = c. 120$)

Have Fun (Say it and Play it™ - count the rhythm out loud)

Note to teacher, parent, or student: When you “Say it and Play it™” you should do it two different ways: (1) Count out loud the rhythm as you play the piece (1 2 3 4, 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & etc.). This will help you learn the rhythm faster, how to count rhythm correctly, and how to quickly identify the note rhythms (i.e. whole note/half note/quarter note/eighth note, etc.). (2) Say the alphabet names of the notes you play (i.e. C D E F G F E G F E D F E D C E etc.).

GOAL: 5 TIMES PER DAY
Skill - 3/4 time signature, finger exercises (i.e. 123, 234, 345 etc.)
dynamics ($p =$ piano or soft, $f =$ forte or loud), $\downarrow$ = decrescendo (to gradually get softer)

Get those fingers moving (M.M. $\frac{\sqrt{3}}{4} =$ c. 100 - 120) by Jerald M. Simon

Exercise of 2nd intervals (the distance between the two notes - i.e. C-D, D-E, E-F, etc. are all 2nd intervals)
Rhythmically Impaired

Skill - steady quarter note left hand pattern (quarter note against whole and half notes)

Can you feel the beat? (M.M. $\frac{3}{1} = c. 120$)  

by Jerald M. Simon

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Can you feel the beat? (M.M. $\frac{3}{1} = c. 120$)
```
Take a nice stroll down the avenues (M.M. $\frac{3}{4}$ = c. 120)

Practice playing all blocked fifth intervals up and down the keyboard using both hands - 1 octave (this will help you play the piece above better - play this exercise first before playing the piece above).
Like you're flying high in the sky  (M.M. $\frac{\text{j}}{\text{4}} = \text{c. 100}$)
Western Winds

Skill - 4/4 time signature, 5th intervals and rit. = ritardando (gradually slowing down)

by Gerald M. Simon

Freely (M.M. \( \frac{\text{d}}{\text{c. 130 - 140}} \))

This symbol (rit.) is an abbreviation of ritardando which means to gradually slow down.
# Key Signatures

## Major Pentascales, and Scales:

- **Sharps:** (in order as they appear)
  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Key Signature</th>
<th>Minor Key Signature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>#</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>f#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>c#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F#</td>
<td>d#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C#</td>
<td>a#</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Flats:** (in order as they appear)
  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Key Signature</th>
<th>Minor Key Signature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td><strong>Ø</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bb</td>
<td>g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C^</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ab</td>
<td>f#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eb</td>
<td>c#</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>g</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>d#</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>a#</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Check Off (when completed):**

- **Sharps:**
  - C
  - G
  - D
  - A
  - E
  - B
  - F#
  - C#
  - G#
  - D#
  - A#

- **Flats:**
  - C
  - F
  - Bb
  - Eb
  - Ab
  - B
  - F
  - C

---

**Major Pentascales:**

- **P = Perfect (interval)**
- **M = Major (interval)**

### Major Scales:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Pentascales</th>
<th>Major Scales</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C^</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G^</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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A Little Piece

Skill - pentascales in the keys of C, G, D, A, E, F, B♭, E♭, and A♭

With purpose (M.M. \( \frac{4}{4} = c. 110 \))

Key of C (no sharps or flats)

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{G} & \quad \text{C} \\
\end{align*} \]

Key of G (1 sharp) F♯

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{G} & \quad \text{C} \\
\end{align*} \]

Key of D (2 sharps) F♯ & C♯

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{G} & \quad \text{C} \\
\end{align*} \]

Key of A (3 sharps) F♯, C♯, & G♯

\[ \begin{align*}
\text{G} & \quad \text{C} \\
\end{align*} \]
Revenge of the Piranhas

Skill - C minor pentascale (C D E♭ F G)

This is the C minor pentascale (C D E♭ F and G) played one after another.

Scary and creepy (M.M. erchant = 130 -140)

Right hand goes up an octave on the repeat

Challenge Piece # 1

by Jerald M. Simon
Key of C (no sharps or flats)

1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 &

Key of G (1 sharp) F♯

Key of D (2 sharps) F♯ & C♯

Key of A (3 sharps) F♯, C♯, & G♯

Key of E (4 sharps) F♯, C♯, G♯, & D♯

Skill - pentascales in all keys
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Repertoire</th>
<th>Music Motivation® Book(s)</th>
<th>Music Motivation® Book(s)</th>
<th>Music Motivation® Book(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What Every Pianist Should Know (Free PDF)</td>
<td>Cool Exercises for Cool Kids (volume 1)</td>
<td>Cool Exercises for Cool Kids (volume 3)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cool Exercises for Cool Kids (pre-primer level)</td>
<td>Cool Songs for Cool Kids (volume 2)</td>
<td>Cool Songs for Cool Kids (volume 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cool Songs for Cool Kids (primer level)</td>
<td>Variations on Mary Had a Little Lamb</td>
<td>The Dawn of a New Age (volumes 2 &amp; 3)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cool Songs for Cool Kids (volume 1)</td>
<td>The Dawn of a New Age (volume 1)</td>
<td>Triumphant, Sea Fever, Hymns of Exaltation, Jazzed about Jazz (volumes 2/3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Songs in Pentascale position: Classical, Jazz, Blues, Popular, Students Choice, Personal Composition (in pentascale position) etc.</td>
<td>Jazzed about Jazz (volume 1)</td>
<td>Baroque, Romantic, Classical, Jazz, Blues, Popular, New Age, Student’s Choice, Personal Composition.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Music Terminology</th>
<th>Piano (p, Forte (f), Mezzo Piano (mf), Mezzo Forte (mf), Pianoissimo (pp), Fortissimo (ff), Music Motivation® 1st Year Terminology</th>
<th>Tempo Markings (say it and play it - count out loud)</th>
<th>Pocket Music Dictionary (2 - 3 years)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Circle of 5th/Circle of 4th (say it and play it - count out loud)</td>
<td>Thirty-second notes/rests (say it and play it - count out loud)</td>
<td>Harvard Dictionary of Music (4 + years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All Major and Minor key signatures (Identify each key and name the sharps and flats)</td>
<td>Sixty-fourth notes/rests (say it and play it - count out loud)</td>
<td>Music Composers (Biographies)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spiral of Fifths</td>
<td>One-hundred-twenty-eighth notes/rests</td>
<td>Music Motivation® 3rd Year Terminology</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Signatures</th>
<th>Names and Positions of notes on the staff (both hands - Treble and Bass Clefs)</th>
<th>Names and Positions of notes above and below the staff (both hands)</th>
<th>History of Music Notation (the development of notation)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C, G, D, A, F, B², E³ &amp; A⁴(Major) Begin learning all major key signatures</td>
<td>Circle of 5th/Circle of 4th (say it and play it - count out loud)</td>
<td>Identification of key signatures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Check out these best sellers by Jerald M. Simon

“Cool Songs for Cool Kids” (primer level)  
MM00001013  
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$10.95

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$13.95

“Sea Fever”  
MM00001005  
$13.95

“Jazzed about Jazz” (volume 2)  
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$13.95

“Jazzed about Christmas”  
MM00001009  
$9.95

“Jazzed about 4th of July”  
MM00001014  
$9.95

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$8.95

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MM00001001A  
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"My purpose and mission in life is to motivate myself and others through my music and writing, to help others find their purpose and mission in life, and to teach values and encourage everyone everywhere to do and be their best."

Jerald Simon

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($12.95 - Book)

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($12.95 - Book)

Cool Songs for Cool Kids Book 3
($12.95 - Book)

Triumphant
($18.95 - Book)

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