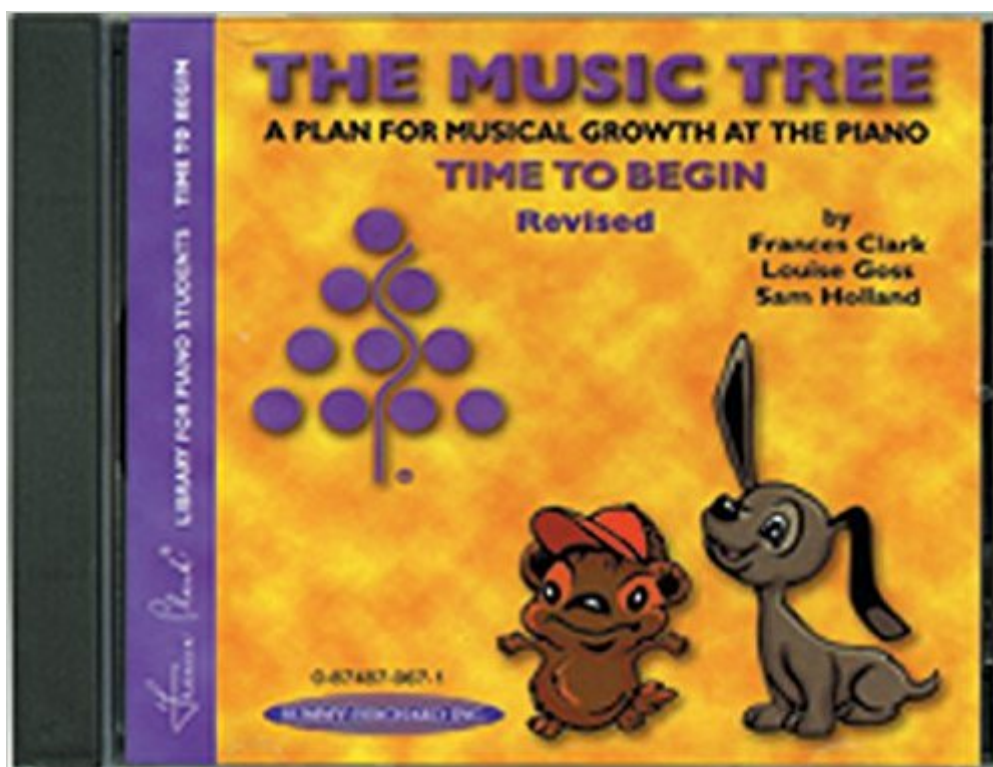


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# The Music Tree: Time To Begin: A Plan For Musical Growth At The Piano, Revised



## Synopsis

A most exciting addition to the classic Music Tree -- digitally mastered accompaniments for much of the repertoire. This new technology complements and enhances the music and provides a whole new dimension of incentive for practice. Artfully arranged by Sam Holland, each orchestral accompaniment has its own style. Some are improvisatory in feel using jazz and blues idioms, while others use sound effects to add humor. These imaginative new sounds will add adventure to home practice. Each title is played twice. The first time, the student part is played with the teacher accompaniment. The second time the accompaniment is played alone, allowing the student to play along.

## Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars Â Â See all reviews Â (36 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #318,928 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #69 in Â Books > Books on CD > Music #322 in Â Books > Books on CD > Nonfiction #553 in Â Books > Books on CD > General

## Customer Reviews

I had this recommended to me as a good tool to teach beginning note-reading and I've found the book is indeed step-by-step, i.e. it spends a lot of time teaching higher and lower, and then steps and skips on the staff. What I don't like is that it introduces an incomplete staff to start, and students are expected to read only steps and skips, going up and down. For a long time students are reading notes on one, two, or three lines, before the entire 5-line staff is shown. There is no correlation to the treble or bass clefs, the beginning note is indicated afresh for each song. I've found this to be confusing for some beginners. What is more, the actual music in this book sounds chintzy and simplistic because it revolves so much around two and three notes. I prefer the Hal Leonard series for teaching note-reading; in presenting the clef at once it is actually simpler to read, their pages are colorful but less distracting, and Hal Leonard does a great job of using good-quality music. I think having children play a good-sounding tune is inspiring for them and keeps them more motivated

than playing ditties revolving around two or three notes, as they feel they are playing actual music.

As a music teacher, I am constantly trying to find different piano books and series. The Music Tree books are the series that I return to each time I try something new. This book requires diligent teaching and learning. It is not the simplest piano method, but it is definitely the best. The kids learn notes, rhythms, and how to move on the piano from the very beginning. It is an outstanding way to begin to learn piano. My piano professor, the head of the music and fine arts department at the college, highly recommends this series and uses it for his young students. "There is no other series that better teaches kids how to move on the piano."

This book was part of the lesson plan for my 5 year old son who started piano in April ('08). His teacher uses this set of theory and work book to supplement the core Suzuki curriculum. 'Time To Begin' was easy to understand and sensible to follow for a 5 year old. I actually think not introducing the full staff to him helped to ease him into learning piano. The simplicity of the pieces helped him to gain confidence quickly and helped me to keep him at the bench longer. The book progresses at a comfortable pace that allows the student to fully master one piece and one concept at a time before moving on. I agree with the other review that the inclusion of time measures, forms, slurs, and dynamics add fun and variety to an otherwise dry topic of note reading. Now my son has moved onto The Plan for Musical Growth - Part 2A after only 6-month of taking lessons. My 60 year old mother and 65 year old father have borrowed The Time to Begin from him. They are surprised at how easy it is for them to start playing, even if the piece only has 4 measures. They have never thought it was possible in their life time to ever pick up piano. Now my father would come around and play "Graduation" (the last piece in the Time to Begin). I am very proud of them and am happy that the book has helped them to enrich their life after retirement. Highly recommended.

As a piano teacher, I've been using and recommending the Music Tree method for the past two years. I especially like how 'Time to Begin' and the corresponding 'Activities' book are geared toward beginning readers. Even students who can't read have no trouble practicing with these books. I also like how intuitive the lessons are. Musical ideas are learned one at a time, in a way that is easy for beginners with no previous musical experience to understand. For example, concepts like 8va, moving up and down the keyboard in octaves, is introduced very early. This helps the students get comfortable with more of the keyboard and is easy for them to do, as they recognize the black/white patterns. Other method books like Bastian and Alfred keep the student in one 'hand

position' for many pages/lessons, and students don't move around the piano until later levels. The lesson pieces almost always include a teacher duet. These duets introduce 'contemporary' time signatures and harmonies; even though the student may not know what they are hearing, it is excellent ear training and a welcome change from other method books which only stay in 4/4 or 3/4, and always use 'traditional' phrasing and cadences.

My five-year-old daughter loves this book. It moves at the right pace for her. She can learn the songs within a week of practice and move on to one or two more songs for the next week. I love that the book teaches more than just reading notes. She has learned rhythm, intervals and octaves, slurs, measures etc. All at a pace that a five-year-old can understand. I feel like she will get the inner workings of the music sooner this way, rather than just reading notes in succession to find the melody. She has been using this book with an experienced piano teacher, rather than just with me at home. Her teacher added pentachords and chords for practice, and uses the workbook along with this book. But in only five months she has made a lot of progress.

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