

## TIPS FOR STUDENTS

- 1) If possible, **play your exercises before you go to your lesson** and wear gloves on the way to warm up your fingers if need be.
- 2) It's a good idea to **eat and drink something healthy** before you play the piano, and possibly midway through the lesson, for optimal brain function.
- 3) It takes awhile for the brain to process a new psychomotor skill (such as playing an exercise with the correct fingering and rhythm), so don't expect to learn new techniques quickly. **Practice a new pieces and techniques right before bed.** Sleep helps the brain to remember new skills.
- 4) Sadly, 70-90% of new information you learned at your lesson is forgotten (by everyone, not just older adults) within 18-24 hours of the lesson. Therefore, your most valuable practice sessions will be on the evening of your lesson day, and the following morning. **Playing the piano after your lesson helps to embed new concepts and skills into long-term memory.**
- 5) When playing the piano, take a short break every 15 minutes or so. Stretch, and take deep breaths, to oxygenate the brain. You might want to keep a bowl of carrots or raw nuts near by, and a closed water container on the floor (never on the piano!) **Healthy snacks and water awaken the brain.**
- 6) Write down your musical goals and note your progress in a journal. **Compile a list of songs and pieces you'd like to learn.** If they are too difficult, your teacher can help you find simplified arrangements. Maintain your focus and resolve. Think about how great it will be when you can play your song all the way through! By the end of *Book 1*, you will be able to play many songs. Take pride in your accomplishments. Each new song you learn is a milestone!
- 7) Remember, short daily piano sessions are much more effective than cramming just before your next lesson. **Start off playing for 10-15 minutes per day, 3-4 days per week.** If you miss days here and there, don't worry; even a little practicing is better than none. You are taking lessons for the joy of making music, and to keep growing and learning. No one ever feels that they have practiced "enough," so be patient with your self, and enjoy the process. Learning an instrument is difficult, but you can do it; with time and persistence, you will learn to play!