

The First Music Teacher

A short story
to help
in understanding,
just a little bit,
the beauty of Music



Rick Piccinino
edited by Mary Sue Piccinino
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Dedicated to Emma Grace Brooks

A little girl who has already made the world a little better!

The First Music Teacher

A long time ago there was a very pretty lady, named Melody, who went from village to village on her horse and buggy to do sewing repairs for the towns' people. You always could hear her from a distance coming into town, because she would fill the air with beautiful songs.

The children, and even many adults would gather around her to hear her sing. One child asked, "Melody, would you teach us to sing songs like you?" With the sweetest of smiles she responded, "Of course I will, I would love to do that."

"Now listen carefully," she said, "and sing along with me." She sung these words and the crowd sang them back. They practiced singing the tune over and over.

*"The flowers are happy,
the sky is bright.
It's such a beautiful day
and everything is perfectly right."*

It really was a lovely little tune, and it filled the towns people for days with smiles after Melody left to go on to the other villages for sewing work. The next week when Melody returned, the children greeted her, but this time, they sang their new song they thought they knew.

*"The frogs are singing,
the winds a blowing,
this is a day to remember."*

Upon hearing this, Melody was a little shocked and said. "Oh no, that isn't the song I taught you the last time I was here."

A sweet little girl, named Emma, spoke up. “Melody, we can’t remember exactly how that tune went, or even what the words were. Can’t we write this song down, to help us remember?” Melody stopped and thought then said, “Yes, that is such a great idea Emma, and to be able to do that would be very useful. But you see, there is one very big problem to solve.”

You see, way back then, there wasn’t a way to actually write any songs down. They were always just memorized and repeated over and over. Being a thinker and having a knack to solve problems, Melody said, “I need to come up with a way to write down this and many of the other songs. Oh, it would be a wonderful thing to have people from all the different villages singing the very same songs. I will have to come up with a new language, a music language, so that everyone can read and understand.”

So, as she usually did when visiting, Melody went to join her best friend, Heather, Emma’s older sister, on her porch. There they sat and enjoyed some tea. Looking over the fields of the town, Melody tried to figure out a way to write down a song. She noticed the split rail fence, and how the birds were sitting and chirping along the different rails of the fence. She also noticed how the farmers fields had row after row plowed, ready for planting. Then she excitedly jumped up and said, “I got it!”

She took a piece of paper and drew some straight lines. Then she pictured in her mind how each note of a song sounded. Some notes were higher, and some of them went down, very low.

Melody told Heather, but mostly just thinking out loud, “OK, I will put the lower notes on the bottom, and higher ones on the top. Let’s see, Do, Re, Mi, Fa, So, La, Ti, Do scale. Oh boy, those two Do’s sound so much alike, but one is a higher pitch than the other. Let’s call that an Octave, because at the 8th note, it repeats but at a higher pitch.

Then, Do to Ti is, 1,2,3,4,5,6,7 uhm, that’s 7 notes until the next octave. Great! We now have identified 7 Notes or Tones in our do, re, mi

primary scale, until the 8th one, the next octave. We will skip the Sharp and the flat notes until latter.

Now we will give each note a name, just like the alphabet, but we only need to use seven of the letters

Let's use;

A,B,C,D,E, F, G

These notes will always be able to be repeated as an octave higher, or an octave lower. Some would say, at a different Pitch!

A,B,C,D,E, F, G

A,B,C,D,E, F, G

A,B,C,D,E, F, G

Ok, now we need a way to write all of this down. We'll use lines like the fence idea and we'll give each line and the space between the lines a name of the notes we have, from A to G or Do to Ti. We will call these lines the Staff, a Music Staff. Oh Heather this is so exciting."

So Melody put her thoughts down to paper, beginning the new language of music, drawing 5 lines, which makes 4 spaces in between them. One note for each line and each space on the music staff.

Heather asked Melody, "I know there are so many more notes than the ones that can be shown on this music staff, what will we do?" Melody replied, "I know, there's more notes that anybody could even hear. Musicians, singers have a very good imagination and will figure that out. The need to keep the staff simple is what is important. Here is the staff with the named notes on it. Remember, the low notes are on the bottom."

E G B D F are the notes on the lines
(Every Good Boy Does Fine)

F A C E are the notes of the Staffs' spaces
(FACE)



Now let's write the Do, Re, Mi scale. A scale being a helpful grouping of notes!

Remember, from C to the next C is an Octave and if those 2 notes were played or sung at the same time, well you can hear and feel the magic of their vibrations!



Heather put on her serious face and spoke, “Melody, learning music seems like it will be so hard to do.” “Nonsense”, Melody quickly responded. “I remember a time when your little sister, Emma, couldn’t even say the words Momma or Dada. Now look at what she can do. There is no stopping her now! As you know, if someone has the desire to learn something, nothing will stop them. If not, no worries, there is so much more in the world to know about. The important thing is to learn, even if it is just a little bit, to appreciate the beauty of Music.

Whew, that’s enough for now Heather. I need to go on with my sewing projects.” Melody said. “Please tell Emma and anyone who would like to learn this new music language, to come to your porch next week, if that’s alright with you.” Heather replied, “Of course, this will be a beautiful language to learn and I can’t wait.” Then Heather, who was a teacher at the Village school added, “I will write a dictionary, to help keep track of all the musical terms you have mentioned.” With that, Melody left, borrowing a tune from her friend, Ms Poppins, from another village, singing;

*“If you know
the notes to sing
You can sing
most anything.”*

Heather started writing the “Dictionary of Musical Terms”, while little Miss Emma could be found playing out in the field and singing a little song that she made up, all by herself.

The End

or maybe

Just the Beginning