

Instructor Guide

The **GUITARIST'S LINK** *to Sight Reading*



INSTRUCTORS

GUIDE FOR

THE

GUITARIST'S

LINK TO

SIGHT

READING

- ◆ Easy Step-By-Step Method for Guitarists of Any Level
- ◆ Commonly Used Chart Symbols
- ◆ Major Scales and Pentatonics
- ◆ A Unique Approach Focusing on the Fifth Position
- ◆ CD Includes Accompaniments with Original Compositions in a Variety of Styles

by Jerry Jennings

FOR
GUITARISTS
WHO DESIRE
TO READ
MUSIC AND
FOLLOW
CHARTS



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COMPANY



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Instructor Guide

The Guitarist's Link *to Sight Reading*

By Jerry Jennings

Introduction

Thank you for choosing *The Guitarist's Link to Sight Reading*. I have prepared a few notes on each lesson that may assist you in your teaching environment. Please feel free to e-mail me at jerry@jenningspub.com with any questions that may arise.

Suggested Timetable

Here is a suggested timetable for a weekly private lesson. The CD is a new addition, and it may accelerate the process somewhat. I would hesitate to give the student free reign to rush through, because they need some repetition in each section.

For class teaching, it may be necessary to divide the class in two groups. If you have some novices, they would probably need a rudimentary approach to playing, whereas the more advanced student could bypass a lot of that and focus more on this book.

Week 1	Lesson 1 & 2	Week 12	Song 5 (Bar None)
Week 2	Lesson 3 & 4	Week 13	Lesson 9
Week 3	Song 1 (Avocados)	Week 14	Pentatonic Thrills 2
Week 4	Song 2 (Traces of Thought)	Week 15	Lesson 10
Week 5	Song 3 (Mirrors on Pluto) & Pencilquiz 1	Week 16	Lesson 11
Week 6	Lesson 5	Week 17	Pentatonic Thrills 3
Week 7	Lesson 6	Week 18	Lesson 12
Week 8	Pentatonic Thrills 1 & Pencilquiz 2	Week 19	Song 6 (Funky Weather)
Week 9	Lesson 7	Week 20	Song 7 (Some Kinda Blues)
Week 10	Lesson 8	Week 21	Song 8 (Bossa de Hot Sauce)
Week 11	Song 4 (Rebel Without a Pause)		

LESSON 1

Lower Triad—A, C, & E

Concentrate on the timing. Have the student play through the exercise on just one note (A) while you count. Once or twice through should be enough. Then have them use the actual notes.

If they falter in bar three, have them take it from bar three. There is no sense in learning measures one and two better than the rest of the exercise. Other than this scenario, I see no reason to fight the memorization process, as long as it is memorized evenly. I've known players who have allowed reading to become a crutch and never developed a strong memory. I try to avoid that.

Left hand positioning is important. It's good to have them place the first finger on "A" and the fourth finger on "C", while letting the other finger tips fall on frets six and seven. Make sure that fingers two and three are rounded naturally. Stress that as they play, they need to maintain that natural curve, and not allow the third finger to collapse on the "E" note.

Notes: _____

LESSON 2

Higher Triad—E, A, & C

Point out the difference between rolling and barring. The objective is to hear only one note at a time. Also point out that the three notes in exercise two are shown higher on the staff, and it's no coincidence that they sound higher, too.

Usually these two exercises are enough for the first week. Stress the importance of daily practice, even if it's only fifteen minutes in the book.

Notes: _____

LESSON 3

Lower Group—B & D

Start by playing through exercises one and two. Exercise three will usually be rocky on the first passage. After going through it once, have them play exercise one once, then come back to exercise three. By resolidifying the core notes, the new notes will be easier.

Notes: _____

LESSON 4

Higher Group—G & B

Again, start by playing the page rhythmically first, on just one note. Make sure, in the case of the quarter rest, that the silence begins right on a beat, just like a note does. It's actually a note of silence. It's easy for them to correct this against the sound of a metronome (tracks on disk).

In order to clear the hurdle of the new notes, it may be necessary to go back again, this time to exercise two. Strengthening the core notes will again make the new notes seem easier.

Typically this is enough for the second week. This brings the student up to ten notes: Five higher notes and five lower notes. There won't be any new notes until after the three songs. A good pace is usually to go one song per week. Each song re-enforces the ten notes, and each song introduces a new chart concept.

Notes: _____

SONG EXERCISE #1: *Avocados*

Stress the importance of learning both parts--the rhythm part (chords) and the lead part (melody). Explain that when doing the rhythm part, a steady rhythmic pattern is used. Often the student's first inclination is to be influenced by the melodic time values.

Each song introduces a chart concept, and for this song, it's the repeat sign. When the student misses the repeat, it's better to say "let's take it from the very beginning" than to just do the repeat and move on.

The instructor can play either part to accompany the student, and of course there is always the CD accompaniment.

Notes: _____

SONG EXERCISE #2: *Traces of Thought*

The new chart concept here is first and second endings. What usually needs attention is making a smooth transition with the repeat at the end of the first ending to the beginning. Also, that the second passage through should skip the measure of the first ending. When playing the rhythm part, the first ending is another measure of Dm. Sometimes they have a hard time getting that, and the fact that the second ending cuts the Dm short.

Notes: _____

SONG EXERCISE #3: *Mirrors of Pluto*

The chart concept for this song is D.C. al Coda, which is explained in detail. The only thing I should mention for this tune is that the rhythm player should strum mainly on the higher strings. Because the melody was written completely in the lower register, there are dissonances that only work well when there is no competition in the lower end.

Notes: _____

PENCILQUIZ 1

This gives the student a chance to be on the writing end of things. It is important to perceive this form of communication from all angles. On the left side of the page, they have a chance to try each of the note values. Traditional wisdom is that the note-heads on a quarter note should be the size of a space, but of the handwritten notation I've seen, the easiest to read is that in which they are a little smaller. Like you'd get from a smudge (see my note-heads). I'll leave it to you to decide.

Often a student will have a preconceived melody in mind before he begins to write. I tell them to avoid writing an existing idea, because they don't have the tools yet. It's better to start working with the ten written notes, and see what melodic ideas can come from that.

Once the student's composition is done, try playing it. They enjoy hearing what they've written come through another guitar. Usually, you will have some corrections to point out. Backward note heads, large note heads, awkward spacing, leger line distance are common errors. It's best if they've used a pencil, because then those changes can easily be made.

Notes: _____

LESSON 5

Middle—G & A

This is a good time to have the student play the exercise on one note while counting aloud. It's not uncommon for them to develop the habit of saying "one, two" for any note equaling two counts, rather than counting it according to its position in the measure. (Example: the first tie in this exercise should actually be counted as "four, one")

Notes: _____

LESSON 6

Middle—C & D

In the case of the whole rest, as with all rests, the timing of the silence is crucial.

It may be a good time to write out a supplemental exercise using only the four notes found on the 3rd and 4th strings. This creates a middle area to focus on, which can only strengthen the whole position.

Notes: _____

PENTATONIC THRILLS #1

The B's are removed to open up a scale familiar to most guitarists—the A minor pentatonic scale. Assuming it is familiar in their playing, the only difference is that now they can relate it directly to the staff.

Notes: _____

PENCILQUIZ 2

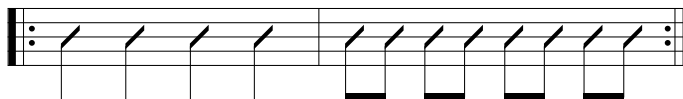
Have the student play the exercise he/she has written. Then you play it. In a class situation, perhaps they could pass their creations with the person next to them.

Notes: _____

LESSON 7

Add Lower F

It's a good idea to have the student play a two bar repeating exercise of all the same note; the first bar is four quarter notes, and the second bar is eight eighth notes. This helps them to burn in the concept of the eighth notes being exactly twice as fast as the quarter notes.



Notes: _____

LESSON 8

Add Higher F

Be a stickler for picking direction. It's important for them, at this stage, to let their pick do the counting, especially during ties and rests.

Notes: _____

SONG EXERCISE #4: *Rebel Without a Pause*

Again, one song per week, to help solidify notes.

Notes: _____

SONG EXERCISE #5: *Bar None*

For the rhythm pattern, you may have to discuss accents, since they are not formally introduced yet. A slight accent on 2 and 4 works well for this groove.

Notes: _____

LESSON 9

Middle B

The fingerings I've chosen here where the B is concerned, are intended to land the student back into the A minor block pattern, which is pretty authentic to blues styles.

Notes: _____

PENTATONIC THRILLS #2

Again, more re-enforcement of the A minor / C major pentatonic. This one involves some rolling acrobatics. Stress good rolling technique.

Notes: _____

LESSON 10

Flats (\flat)

Stress picking direction. Sometimes it takes a little patience on the part of the student, to get the picking direction to be on automatic pilot. Once they get that cooking, it moves right along. Sometimes penciling "1 & 2 & ..." below the staff helps.

Notes: _____

LESSON 11

Sharps (#)

There are some fingerings not indicated. My assumption is that now they are able to decide their own fingerings.

Notes: _____

PENTATONIC THRILLS #3

Still within the minor vein, I've attempted to let each of these be built around new tonal centers. The can of worms of leaving the 5th position area won't be opened in this book, but here they can see that most things can actually be played right here.

Notes: _____

LESSON 12

New Time Signatures: $\frac{6}{8}$ & $\frac{12}{8}$

Time to discuss the bottom number. I've gone into it pretty well in the book. I have seen two approaches to picking in $\frac{6}{8}$. I chose strict alternate picking, as opposed to beginning each three note group with a down stroke. Some people naturally gravitate toward that. It's a valid technique, but I still have them do it my way, just so they learn more control.

Notes: _____

SONG EXERCISE #6: *Funky Weather*

A lot of new concepts here, but nothing difficult. The last line of the song uses the word “vamp.” I like to explain that a vamp is an open section with no predetermined ending time. Sometimes vamps happen in the middle of the songs, too.

Notes: _____

SONG EXERCISE #7: *Some Kind of Blues*

The shuffle concept is explained in detail. There are a couple of other points that should not be overlooked, mainly “more on keys.”

Notes: _____

SONG EXERCISE #8: *Bossa de Hot Sauce*

I always like to point out that adding a dot to any note means you’re adding half it’s value. If you add a second dot, you’re adding half the value of the first dot. Similar to the “half life” in the carbon 14 method for dating fossils, if you start with a half note and a half rest, every time you add a dot to the note, the remainder of the measure (the rest) gets cut in half (just a fun thought).

Notes: _____

T h a n k s

There is much we have not touched on, and eventually there may be a book two. Check out our website at jenningspublishing.com from time to time, as I intend to post some follow-up materials as well as some tunes and exercises that could be used as supplemental material. You may want to peruse the jazz fake books for tunes you deem readable by your students, so they have some way to use their new skills. Also, leaf through the appendices. I've attempted to give nutshell approaches to a few necessary concepts. I hope you and your students enjoy the book.

Thanks again,

JERRY JENNINGS

