

PRESCHOOL PIANO METHODS AND DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICE

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to analyze preschool piano method books and identify ways in which they were or were not consistent with guidelines of *Developmentally Appropriate Practices in Early Childhood Programs* (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997) and developmental characteristics of children as identified in related research findings. The literature reviewed encompassed a historical overview, goals and designs of preschool piano method books, age-related developmental, musical, and learning characteristics of young children, and issues regarding curriculum, lesson planning, and instructional strategies. A qualitative, cross-case content analysis was performed, using as cases five preschool piano methods in publication at the time of the study. The five texts were found to represent two approaches: “traditional” or “whole-body” methods. Four themes emerged as a result of the initial constant-comparative analysis, which were used to guide data interpretation: philosophy, curriculum design logic, musical development, and non-musical aspects of the texts.

Findings of this study identified more DAP-relevant features within the whole body approaches as compared with the traditional methodologies. A set of principals grounded within the union of DAP guidelines and related research findings was developed and termed as the “Phil-Lo-Music-Aspect” principles. These principles were suitable for guiding the creation or analysis of future preschool piano teaching methods.