

Parent Meeting November 19, 2009

Topic: Practice Tips and Ideas

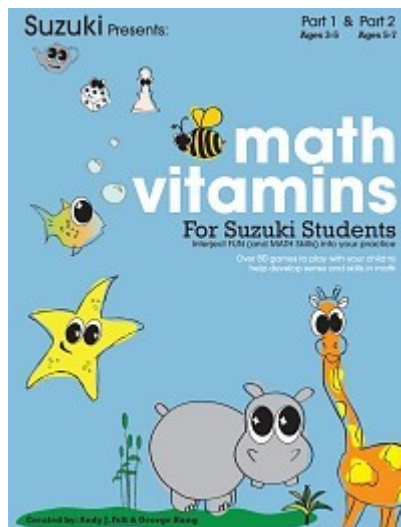
- Name the metronome, it's your friend, Freddie (so it's not so bossy)
- Play date with a Suzuki friend from group. Parents can even switch practicing with the other child. Switch children/parent combination for a fresh perspective. Remember to say 3 positive remarks before any constructive criticism to the child you are working with.
- Hire a practice partner (an older Suzuki student). It's almost like hiring a baby-sitter. Once a week, once a month. Write a list for them to have your kid practice.
- Blame the teacher. "Mrs. Teacher said...."
- Roll the dice for what to play or how many times to play
- Use a deck of cards for how many repetitions to do
- M&Ms, use as abacus for number of times to repeat
- "Math vitamins for Suzuki Students"

Math Vitamins for Suzuki Students

By Andy J. Felt & George Kung

Price: \$17.50

Interject FUN (and MATH Skills) into your practice! Contains over 50 games to be played between a parent and child, providing a fun way to develop math skills and sense. Your kids will love to beat mom or dad at games, and won't even realize they are doing math. The games are ordered to bring the next skill along at just the right time. Directions for each game are short and easy to understand. A game board is provided. For children ages 3-7.



- Have child explain to (doll) how to do a technique.
- Put review pieces in the hat/jar & pull them out. Song jar & job jar(techniques), etc. Put more pieces of paper with item that needs more work.
- Do the 100 days, etc. of practice...then take a break on camping trips!
- Keep instrument out & ready to play...it's more accessible & a visible reminder.
- Step the beat to get it established, then play while stepping.
- Video record a mock performance. Kids write out program, make treats, charge money. Kids will point out in the video what is not good. Parent has to point out positive things.
- Let child pick what he wants to review.
- Daily mini performance to dolls or stuffed animals for review pieces.
- Always begin with positive criticism
- Walk around the house to do a repetition in each room.
- Get creative with repetitions
- Establish a good time to practice
- RELAX!
- On days there's no time to practice, choose 1–2 things (newest thing, or something) for child to practice. Practice finger exercises in the car.
- Listen to songs & sing all the songs (there's a book with the violin music with words to all the songs). This is very helpful for tricky rhythms.
- A spinner with songs on it for review pieces
- Cut yourself some slack. This shouldn't be a lot of pressure. Don't damage your relationship with your child. If you have to back off, do that
- Listen to "From the Top" Sunday @ 10:00 a.m. on NPR. It focuses on young performers.
- Pulse or Beat: step the beat to get it established and then play a simple piece while stepping the beat. Older students can use a metronome to increase it gradually from 60, then 70, then 80 beats per minute. This lets them feel the tempo change with each

repetition, but the tempo stays steady while they are playing. It's challenging to keep the beat going in the feet while the bow arm moves in a rhythmic pattern.

- Video record a mock performance or family recital and watch it on the large screen. Ask them to notice positive things they see and hear. Then they can pretend they are a teacher and offer suggestions for improving a practice point. This allows them to step back from their own playing and notice things they hear and also see on the screen.
- When students need to do repetitive practice on a spot or a short phrase, walk around the house and try it in every room. Don't leave that room until the repetition is well done and improved.
- Think of what your child is interested in and integrate that into your practice-
- Dress up- can be quick and simple. Use your imagination and what you have. If you have fun- your child will too.
- Practice in different rooms- a few things in the echoing bathroom, standing on a chair at the dining table, lying on the floor, on the porch, etc.
- Invite imaginary guests to a "concert" Dr Suzuki, Joshua Bell, Everett Goodwin and bonk heads when you bow at the end!
- Draw a flower vase. Every piece played beautifully gets a flower drawn into the bouquet.
- Draw a cookie jar. Every piece played beautifully gets a cookie drawn in the jar.
- Draw a clown. Every piece played beautifully gets a colored balloon drawn on a string.
- Invite little animals to practice. Name them, speak in their unique animal voices. Kids love to hear suggestions from their animal friends rather than parents.