

SUZUKI STRINGS GRADUATION INFORMATION

History of Suzuki Graduations: Dr. Suzuki would wake up around 5:00 a.m. every morning and listen to hundreds of tape recordings sent to him from all over Japan. Dr. Suzuki incorporated a Suzuki Graduation System where students, when they reached certain playing levels, would record several polished review pieces and in return receive Dr. Suzuki's constructive comments about their playing. This was a celebration of accomplishment. It was never a "pass or fail " situation since Dr. Suzuki trusted that a teacher would only have a student prepare and submit a recording when they were musically ready. Dr. Suzuki also knew it was the process of preparing these recordings or performances where the real learning and progress took place.

Upholding this tradition in our Suzuki Strings Program:

We, the Suzuki violin teachers at NIU's Community School of the Arts, wish to continue Dr. Suzuki's vision of excellence and create a graduation system that strengthens our program collectively and individually. Below you will find pieces that correlate with 10 graduation levels. A student will be ready to record these pieces when they are in "review mode" rather than the pieces being newly learned. This means the student is up to the recording tempo and playing the piece with accuracy and ease and is therefore able to show musical intent with a beautiful tone. This recording and/or performance is then shared with your Suzuki violin teacher and a certificate of achievement is presented to the student.

The Primary Goals of this Graduation Project:

Make review relevant -we do not always realize the benefits of review until we do the work!

Offer another opportunity for performance – even though it is for a video camera or group class or home recital, it is a performance.

Foster self-evaluation – our goal is to give each student skills to eventually practice and learn independently. This begins with self-evaluation.

Begin an organized collection of recordings - to celebrate and benchmark progress from level to level.

Uphold a high standard for each level – as a group and individually.

Recording Details:

Please record your child's pieces when your teacher feels they are polished. You can upload the recordings individually or collectively to whichever format you are comfortable with that can be accessed by your teacher (unlisted YouTube Link, DropBox, Vimeo, etc.)

Accompaniment: You may wish to record your child performing with piano accompaniment either from the Suzuki recording, IMTEX or live with violin

accompaniment at your child's lesson. (Suzuki Duets or Marianne Rygner or Martha Yasuda's violin duet books). Playing unaccompanied is also acceptable so long as the tempo and rhythm is appropriate.

Be sure the area in which you record is free of distractions and check that both arms and hands are always in view. Most record from their phones, fancy recording equipment is not necessary!

Daily Listening to your recordings via CD or Apple Music, etc. (Hilary Hahn Recordings recommended for Books 1-3, Augustin Hadelich for upper volumes) Is imperative to sensitive tone, intonation and musicality!!! Listening and playing along with a slightly slowed down recording can make a world of difference!

Other Graduation Celebrations: In addition (or instead of) recording each piece, we recommend home recitals as part of a graduation to celebrate your child's accomplishments! This can be as simple as playing the graduation level selections for family members at your lesson to playing the entire book for the whole neighborhood! Performing is a great motivation for practicing, and it allows others to celebrate your accomplishments with you. Whether small family gathering or a larger event, students should design the invitations, program (and refreshments)? to make it their own! Each graduate will be given the opportunity to perform a polished piece from the graduated book at group lesson as well.

GRADUATION LEVELS

Twinkle Graduation

All Five Suzuki Variations and Theme of "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star."

Level I

Twinkle Variation of choice

O, Come Little Children

May Song

Allegro

Etude

Minuet II

Gavotte by Gossec

Level II

Chorus from "Judas Maccabaeus"

Hunter's Chorus

Long, Long Ago and variation

The Two Grenadiers or Witches' Dance

Gavotte from "Mignon" or Gavotte (Lully)

Minuet (Boccherini)

Level III

Gavotte in g minor (Bach)
Humoresque
Additional Book III piece
Bourree (Bach)

Level IV

Seitz Concerto movement of choice
Vivaldi Concerto movement of choice
Additional Book IV piece

Level V

Concerto in g minor, 1st or 3rd mvt (Vivaldi)
Concerto- a min., 2nd mvt. or Concerto - g min. 2nd (Vivaldi)
Concerto for Two Violins by J.S. Bach
Additional Book V piece

Level VI

La Folia
Additional Book VI piece of choice

Level VII

Two contrasting mvts of a Handel Sonata (F, D or A Major)
Concerto in a minor, 1st or 3rd mvt.
Additional Book VII piece

Level VIII

Two contrasting mvts of the Sonata in g minor (Eccles)
Two contrasting mvts of the Sonata in d minor (Veracini)
Additional Book VIII piece

Level IX

1st mvt. of a Mozart Concerto (G, A or D Major) plus cadenza

Level X

A major work decided upon by teacher and student