

THE KEY-STONE OF THE SUZUKI METHOD

by Shinichi Suzuki

First of all I would like to ask you to use the practice method which I describe below. This is the primarily important point for developing children's abilities through the Suzuki Method. If your children or students at home using this method every day, they will never fail to become wonderfully talented people.

This Is The Way Abilities Are Developed

When a student becomes able to play certain piece or music very well after studying with his or her teacher in the class, and practicing at home for some time as well as listening to the recorded tape or the piece again and again, you should let the student play with the tape and practice over and over again with it. After that, then you may allow the student to proceed to the next piece. Then he or she, of course, continues practicing the same piece, which he has already learned together with the recorded tape at home as well.

Working for perfection on the previous piece is the most important point for cultivating abilities. New home work for the piece should be secondary. When the student becomes able to play three pieces in this manner, he or she has to practice these three with the tape or in solo again and again in order to acquire the ability or producing a more beautiful tone. What I said previously should be habitual practice for children.

Repeated practice of the previous pieces which he or she has completely mastered creates a new ability for the process or learning. If you use this sort of practice method at home from the beginning your students or children will surely develop the ability to play well and will begin to progress at a marvelous speed later on.

Children always enjoy practicing the pieces which they can perform with ease. Gradually you should make the period of the review practice longer and longer. You might as well divide the daily practice into two parts. One part is for the review practice and the other for the new-material practice. Finally every child will come to enjoy at least two hours of work at home through this method and will surely grow as a fine person with high abilities.

Every Suzuki child practices two hours at least every day. If there are students who practice only twenty minutes or thirty a day they are not worthy of being called "Suzuki Children". Short time practices never develop children's abilities.

It is needless to say that the Suzuki Method is the way of teaching the mother tongue where every child can be highly developed without failure. Let us consider how a baby acquires his own mother tongue.

At first he speaks just a few words repeatedly every day, and then he gains more words little by little, day by day through the repetition. This shows that a baby is gradually acquiring higher abilities by repeating what he has learned and mastered.

The average child never fails to master his mother tongue. Every one in the world has a good command of his own language. Suppose a child was too interested in learning only new words, neglecting to use the words he had learned before, what would be the results? He would not only fail to acquire his own mother tongue, but also would develop certain learning disabilities.

If a student continues at home to practice only the piece which he is learning in the class with his teacher and neglect the review practice, then he is not using the Suzuki Method. In reality that person is going in the opposite direction.

