

Pre-Twinkle Steps  
Adapted from Tanya Carey's Steps to Twinkle  
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**Focus/Body**

1. Listening
  - a. Models beautiful tone and style.
  - b. Music enters subconscious for ease of learning.
  - c. Motivational
  - d. Can be part of special listening time, or in the background (meals, bedtime).
2. Bow at beginning and end of practice
  - a. "I'm ready for my lesson."
  - b. "Thank you for my lesson."
  - c. Gives a definite beginning and end to practice.
  - d. Feet together, on bow-side of strap
  - e. Maintain balance.
3. Focus eyes to 10 or 20
  - a. Quiet eyes, quiet mind.
4. Sing with everything! Nursery tunes, Book 1 recording, etc.
  - a. You should have Book 1 lyrics in this packet
5. Cello fitness exercises
  - a. Do while seated with Book 1 recordings
  - b. Improves balance, strength, coordination, pulse
  - c. Change physical action in the B sections of pieces
6. Finger exercises
  - a. Finger touches thumb in various combinations
  - b. Mystery bag: Pick out mystery objects with thumb and 1 (or 2, 3, 4)
  - c. Hands behind back: Match parent's hand shape without looking
  - d. Finger flicks: Against thumb, or with a ball
  - e. Thumb flicks: Against fingers, or with a ball
  - f. Use round shapes
7. Cello handshake
  - a. Before you touch your child, take care of yourself and what kind of feelings you are communicating through your touch.
  - b. Arm relaxed, heavy, hanging
  - c. Twinkle rhythms
8. Focus eyes for an entire Twinkle
  - a. Cello in position
  - b. Body seated forward in chair
  - c. Feet flat on floor, beneath knees
  - d. Back tall, leaning slightly forward
  - e. Long neck
  - f. Arms hanging from shoulders, which are down
  - g. Hands relaxed on knees
9. Twinkle rhythms

- a. Knocking, tapping, saying, sliding hand on table, swing 'n' slide, shake hands
  - b. Words I use: Var. A: Mississippi Stop Stop; Var. B: Ti Ti rest Ti; Var. C: Grasshopper Grasshopper; Var. D: Peanut Butter Peanut Butter; Triplets: Pineapple Pineapple
  - c. You and your child may find other words!
10. Pulse
- a. Tennis ball games, Patting
  - b. Find pulse in Twinkles, or any other music that your family enjoys.
  - c. Read Pig Duck page with metronome
11. Bow vs. Cello hand
- a. Swedish Cello Song
  - b. Draw pictures on hands

### **Bow Preparation**

12. Bow hold
- a. Bunny. Floppy ears. Turn bunny sideways. Open mouth. Place 2 and 3, then thumb. Count to 10. Then place 1 and 4.
13. Mouse House
- a. Elements of a good bow hold should make a great Mouse House.
  - b. Ring the doorbell – soft, flexible thumb
  - c. Room for a mouse? – adult pinkie should fit inside house
  - d. 3 windows? – small spaces between fingers
  - e. Tall house – space inside hand should be roomy, not cramped
14. Perfect bow hold 1,000 times
15. Setting bow down while seated
- a. It's ok to move feet.
  - b. Set bow to right of chair, with tip facing forward.
  - c. No sound!
16. Up Like a Rocket
- a. "Up like a Rocket, down like the rain. Back and forth like a choo choo train. Round and round like a great big sun. Round and round like a kettle drum. Up like a Rocket, down like the rain. Check that it's soft, bring it back again."
  - b. Parent uses soft hands to feel child's soft hands.
17. Circles
- a. Draw circles with a horizontal bow.
18. Lift fingers
- a. Vertical bow
  - b. Lift fingers in various combinations.
  - c. Thumb bends, fingers lift
19. Walk and maintain bow hold
20. Fishing line
- a. Palm up
  - b. Bow tip points slightly to the right
  - c. Wrist on knee
21. Touch bow at tape

- a. Use pencil, parallel to ground, pointing at child, held where a string would be.
  - b. Child brings bow from knee to pencil.
22. Clap rhythms horizontally between parent hands
- a. Parent holds hands out, palms facing each other.
  - b. Child starts with bow hand palm touching parent's right palm.
  - c. Clap rhythms with child's palm and back of hand slapping against parent hands.
  - d. Always start with motion initially going right. This is a "down" bow.
23. Clap rhythms vertically between parent hands.
- a. Child uses a relaxed fist
  - b. Parent hands are above and below child's fist
  - c. Child starts by touching parent's upper hand
  - d. Always start with a "down" motion
24. Bow rhythms with hand on arm
25. Bow rhythms with bow on pencil
- a. Insert pencil between hair and stick
26. Balloon tip toss
- a. Keep balloon in the air using tips of bows
  - b. Parent can use a pencil eraser if no 2<sup>nd</sup> bow is available
27. Pass the paper cup
- a. Pass paper cup using tip of bow.
  - b. Again, parent can use pencil eraser if no 2<sup>nd</sup> bow available.
28. Life Savers
- a. Balance Life Saver candy on the tip of the bow
29. Step games
- a. Child does bow hold, go up a step. Mom does bow hold, go up a step.
30. Penny games
- a. Penny toss
    - i. Child does one bow hold to earn a penny.
    - ii. Pennies go into a pile.
    - iii. At the end of one set, child gets to try to toss pennies into a cup.
  - b. Line of pennies
    - i. Line up 5 pennies.
    - ii. When child does one bow hold, he moves a penny towards him. If parent does one bow hold, move penny towards parent.
    - iii. Count pennies at the end.
    - iv. No one wins. It's just information
  - c. Penny stack
    - i. Keep stacking pennies with each new bow hold.
    - ii. Continue the next day if child loses concentration for that particular stack.

### **The Cello**

31. How to pack and unpack instrument and bow.
- a. Child always packs and unpacks. Creates more ownership and empowerment with the instrument.

- b. Never leave bow in case alone.
  - c. Always put endpin back in.
  - d. Bridge is fragile.
  - e. Place cello on back or side while in case.
32. Always treat cello like a baby.
33. How to carry cello
- a. Cover strings
  - b. Hold the side
34. Setting down cello
- a. Always on side. Never on back or bridge.
  - b. Endpin touches floor first.
  - c. Slowly set down cello.
  - d. No sound!
35. Setting cello down while seated
- a. Cello goes to the left of chair, with endpin facing forward.
  - b. Move endpin from strap to a spot left of the endpin.
  - c. It's ok to move feet.
  - d. Set cello down slowly.
  - e. No sound!
36. Rest position, no bow
- a. Wrists crossed so that hands hang on either side of fingerboard. Tall back, relaxed shoulders and arms. Feet on floor below knees.
  - b. Hands relaxed on knees. Tall back. Relaxed shoulders and arms. Feet on floor below knees.
37. "Parts Song"
- a. Go up and down a D Major scale.
  - b. "What is this?" Child answers, "This is the \_\_\_\_."
  - c. It is best if child can sing alone, but parent can help child match pitch.
38. "I Love My Cello" song
- a. Eye focus, cello and body position relaxed.
  - b. Cello does not move while arms fly away.
39. "Ants" song
- a. Pizzicato with 4<sup>th</sup> finger
  - b. Left arm should naturally come around the cello to the C string.
40. "CGC" song
- a. Pizzicato with 4<sup>th</sup> finger
  - b. Left arm should naturally come around the cello to the C string.

### **The Left Hand**

41. Knuckle knocks
- a. Loose fist
  - b. Knock up to the scroll and down to the bridge.
42. Ski jumps
- a. Ringing tone
  - b. Be able to see watch (or sticker where watch would be) the entire time.
  - c. Hand ends up extended in front of body, not to side.

43. Tunnels
  - a. Place 4 fingers on C, G, or D string, and pizzicato strings underneath it.
44. Jumping Jacks
  - a. Like knuckle knocks, but with curved fingers on fingertips
45. Spiders
  - a. Crawl fingers from one string to another, like a spider.
46. LHP Acrobatics
  - a. First pizzicato “low” with 4<sup>th</sup> finger (near face), clap, right hand slaps low (head)
  - b. Then pizzicato “high” with 4<sup>th</sup> finger (at end of fingerboard), clap, right hand slaps high (head)
  - c. Pizz/slap on A with 4
  - d. Pizz/slap D with 3
  - e. Pizz/slap G with 2
  - f. Pizz/slap C with 1
47. LHP Race
  - a. Pizzicato 4 times with 4<sup>th</sup>, then 3<sup>rd</sup>, then 2<sup>nd</sup>, then 1<sup>st</sup> finger on A.
  - b. Then do the same on D, G, and C strings.
48. Magic School Bus
  - a. Use a yellow pencil, the “Magic School Bus”
  - b. Place fingers on pencil with round fingers on fingertips
  - c. Lift 4
  - d. Lift 2&3 together
  - e. Lift 1
  - f. See if bus makes it to school or crashes

### **The Bow**

49. Don't touch the hair
50. Tighten and loosen the bow
51. Rosin the bow
52. Clean rosin off of strings and body of cello
53. Helicopters
  - a. Bow lifts and touches string at tape
  - b. Check for soft hand and thumb, no clutching.
54. Grasshoppers
  - a. Place bow on string at frog.
  - b. Lift bow and place at middle.
  - c. Lift bow and place at tip.
  - d. Check for shoulders down, soft hand and thumb, heavy elbow.
  - e. T bows (bow perpendicular to string)
55. Strong tip of bow
  - a. Vertical and horizontal
56. Rock and Roll
  - a. Bow hair on top of bridge.
  - b. Bicycle handlebars – bow angle changes depending on string.
57. Open string rhythms. One string at first. The add new strings.
  - a. “Wait, Wait, Ready, Go!”

- b. Bow rolls (not jumps!) to new string.
- c. Clear, articulate sounds.
- d. Heavy, balanced bow arm.
- e. Soft bow hold.

**All Together!**

58. Harmonic Song – 3<sup>rd</sup> finger

- a. Thumb at base of neck
- b. 3<sup>rd</sup> finger is curved and on fingertip at halfway point on string.
- c. Place finger lightly. No need to depress the string.
- d. Don't squish the ants!

59. Harmonics on 1<sup>st</sup> finger

- a. Thumb at base of neck.
- b. 1<sup>st</sup> finger is curved and on fingertip across from thumb, on sticker.
- c. Place finger lightly. No need to depress the string.
- d. Don't squish the ants!
- e. This position is 4<sup>th</sup> position.

60. Tuning

- a. Compare the 3<sup>rd</sup> finger harmonics to 1<sup>st</sup> finger harmonics.
- b. Have student find two that are the same pitch. "Are those the same, or different?"
- c. Eventually, the pitches should match exactly. Gradually hone the hear to distinguish between two notes that *should* be the same, but are not *quite* the same.
- d. After child knows which harmonics are the same pitch, parent can make one string out of tune so the out-of-tune difference is more obvious.
- e. The make a string higher, turn the fine tuner so that the thumb moves towards the higher string. This rule remains whether seated at the cello or facing the cello.

61. Ringing 4<sup>th</sup> finger on D string

- a. Parent or child's right hand depresses the string, just below 4<sup>th</sup> finger tape.
- b. Child places 4 curved fingers on fingertips on string. Pull arm out to cling to string and fingerboard. No thumb.
- c. Release the string to allow the string rise into the fingers.
- d. Pizzicato the string. Listen for a ringing tone. Bow will probably make a more ringing tone than pizzicato.
- e. Posture elements to watch:
  - i. Secure feet
  - ii. Tall back
  - iii. Bicycle body
  - iv. Bird wing out
  - v. EWP line straight – Elbow, Wrist, base of Pinkie
  - vi. Drive the car into the garage – pencil parks in between finger joints. No clinging fingers.

62. Lift 4

- a. Play 3<sup>rd</sup> finger by lifting 4
- 63. Pull back for 1, then lift 2 & 3
  - a. Play 1<sup>st</sup> finger
- 64. Lift 1
  - a. Open D string

Hints:

- 65. "Wait, Wait, Ready, Go!"
- 66. Stop, Prepare, Play, Stop
- 67. Keep bow on string after stopping
- 68. Practice partners – one bows, one fingers
- 69. Look at bow, not left hand
- 70. Beautiful sound, beautiful heart
- 71. How does your child learn?
  - a. Aurally? Visually? Kinesthetically?
  - b. Whole to parts? Parts to whole?
  - c. Alone? With a few? With a group?
  - d. Through explanations? Through game-playing? Through creation?
  - e. As a student? As a teacher?