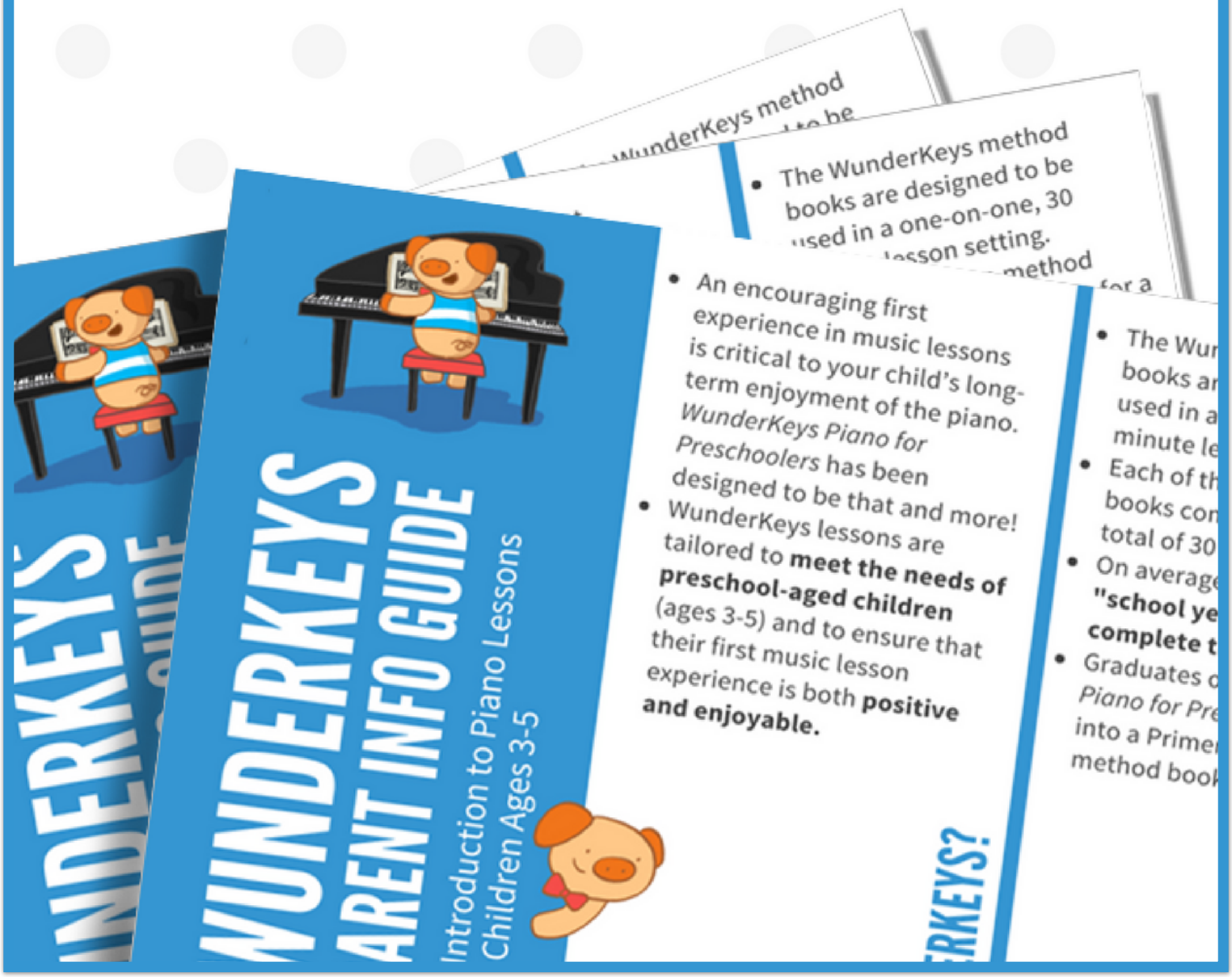
WUNDERKEYS

PRESCHOOL PARENT INFORMATION PACKAGE



WUNDERKEYS PARENT INFO GUIDE

An Introduction to Piano Lessons For Children Ages 3-5

WHY WUNDERKEYS?

- An encouraging first experience in music lessons is critical to your child's long-term enjoyment of the piano. *WunderKeys Piano for Preschoolers* has been designed to be that and more!
- WunderKeys lessons are tailored to **meet the needs of preschool-aged children** (ages 3-5) and to ensure that their first music lesson experience is both **positive and enjoyable.**

THE PROGRAM

- The WunderKeys method books are designed to be used in a one-on-one, 30 minute lesson setting.
- Each of the three method books contain 10 lessons for a total of 30 lessons.
- On average, **it takes a child a "school year" to fully complete the program.**
- Graduates of *WunderKeys Piano for Preschoolers* move into *WunderKeys Primer Book One.*

BENEFITS

- Numerous studies reveal the piano to be a powerful tool for developing mathematical thinking. It is relatively unknown that a "window of opportunity" exists during the preschool years when **learning the piano can facilitate neural connections in the brain** needed for mathematical and spacial understanding later in life.
- Knowing that this window of opportunity is relatively short, and with this research in mind, the WunderKeys materials were developed to **make the most of these important early years.**

YOUR ROLE

- The WunderKeys method books make it easy to assist your child at home **even if you have no prior musical experience yourself.**
- The books guide you and your child through several fun activities each week designed to reinforce what was learned in the lesson and to create "bonding on the bench" time at home.
- You can help your child to be successful by providing a home instrument and by adding regular time at the piano into your family's routines.

WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT?

- During a WunderKeys lesson your child will participate in musical activities both on and off the piano bench; created to **build confidence, increase enjoyment and solidify musical concepts.**
- Songs, rhymes, games, and imaginative activities keep your child engaged and begging for the next lesson!
- Teacher/student duets allow your young child to play music from day one.

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PHILOSOPHY

- This is a first introduction to one-on-one piano lessons for young children. There are many concepts they need to grasp before jumping into "traditional" piano pieces.
- WunderKeys encourages exploration of the piano in ways that are **accessible and appropriate for this age group.**
- All lessons are geared towards having young children understand everything they need to know before learning to read notated music.

THE BOOKS

- The three WunderKeys method books are full-color, story-based books filled with **loveable characters and imaginative adventures.**
- Each lesson follows a routine which includes a Rhythm Rhyme poem, exploration activities, a teacher/student duet, a math page to improve numerical understanding and a "cut-and-play" piano game.
- Read on for detailed info on the concepts covered in each of the *WunderKeys Piano for Preschoolers* books.

BOOK 1

- Learn symbol-to-sound recognition.
- Practice finger independence and coordination.
- Learn aural awareness.
- Play long sounds and short sounds on black keys.
- Play high sounds and low sounds on black keys.
- Play sounds moving higher and lower.
- Learn math skills to assist musical understanding.

BOOK 2

- Improve finger independence and coordination.
- Play simple, pattern-based melodies on black keys.
- Read preliminary notation.
- Improve aural awareness.
- Explore simple rhythmic patterns.
- Listen for musical patterns.
- Learn math skills to assist musical understanding

BOOK 3

- Play simple, pattern-based melodies on black keys.
- Read off-staff rhythmic notation (quarter, half and whole notes).
- Recognize directional movement in note reading.
- Explore "stems pointing up" and "stems pointing down".
- Listen for quarter, half and whole notes.
- Learn math skills to assist musical understanding.

A PARENT'S ROLE IN HOME PIANO TIME

How to practice the piano with WunderKeys Piano for Preschoolers

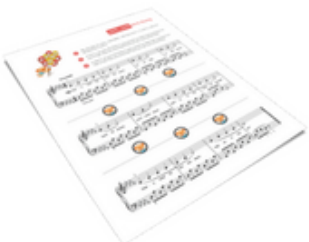
RHYTHM RHYME

- Read the poem to your child.
- Pause after every stanza and "say and clap" the provided rhythm.
- Have your child clap, tap, or play the rhythm back to you.
- Ask questions about the poem and picture and discuss to help your child **connect to the story.**

ACTIVITIES

- Read the instructions to your child and complete the first two activities as described.
- Assist your child in practicing the musical excerpts and keyboard awareness activities provided at the bottom of the page.
- Refer to the activities as you go about your week **making "real world" connections** for your child.

DUET

- Help your child to find his or her starting position (either a group of two or three black keys). *This information is provided at the top of the page.*
- Help your child to identify the correct fingers to use.
- "Chant" the lyrics and help your child to practice his or her portion of the duet.
- Help your child to **practice his or her part regularly** during the week to increase keyboard awareness and comfort.

MATH ACTIVITY

- Review the math activity page with your child.
- As you go about your daily activities, have your child count objects, **identify and complete patterns,** and recognize, trace and print numbers
- Assist your child in finding a "correct pencil grip" when writing his or her numbers.

PIANO GAME

- Every 2nd lesson contains a "cut and play" game with instructions provided on the back.
- You will need dice and some coins or buttons to play the games at home with your child.
- Children this age love repetition. **Play the games often** to allow your child to experience repeated success.

IS MY CHILD READY FOR WUNDERKEYS?

A check-list for parents

Readiness for piano lessons can vary widely among 3-5 year olds. Consider the following when assessing whether your child is ready to begin piano lessons.

If you find you are answering "no" or "not quite" to many of these questions, it is suggested that you wait a few months before beginning WunderKeys piano lessons.

Little ones develop and change rapidly! WunderKeys is designed to help them grow and learn, and **creates the most feelings of success** when children begin lessons once they are able to do most of the tasks listed.

INTEREST

- Does your child show interest in the piano?
- Does he like listening and moving to music?
- Is he excited about the prospect of piano lessons?
- Is your child comfortable being away from you for short periods of time?
- Does your child know the difference between "banging" on the piano keys vs. playing carefully?

COMMUNICATION

- Does your child respond well to questions asked by adults other than his parents?
- Does your child sit and listen to stories with interest?
- Is your child easily brought back to task when needed?
- Can your child speak clearly and make himself understood in most situations?

COORDINATION

- Can your child wiggle only his thumbs or only his index fingers when asked?
- Can your child hold a pencil or crayon?
- Is your child potty trained?
- Can your child follow two-part directions when asked? *(For example, "Use your right hand to pick up the glass and then take it to the table.)*
- Can your child focus on a single task for 5-minute intervals?

HOME

- Do you have a piano or an adequate keyboard at home *(or do you have plans to obtain one?)* A home instrument will be needed.
- Do you have the time to sit with your child regularly to assist with home piano time? Preschool piano students **need their parents to help them at home every day.**
- Do you have the ability to bring your child to lessons regularly? Consistency is important to your child's success.