

Romantic pupil-centred approach

Scenario

- Heather is a middle aged lady with a passion for classical music.
- She is mad about Mozart and after learning with me for 1 year I encourage her to look at other styles of music that she may like to explore.
- Heather is of around a Grade 4 standard but she often tackles far more complex material. So it is with much suspicion that the attached Chopin Prelude #4 is received.
- I have purposely avoided a graded book and when she challenges the fact that it looks easy we embark on a discussion about musicianship and the qualities of Romantic music which will mean exploring the piano's different tone colours and hence learning about how to develop her technique
- Satisfied with this explanation and new challenge she immediately begins playing hands together very literally and without regarding the term *espressivo*
- When she hits a wall (ie makes a few mistakes) and is about to dismiss the piece saying she just needs to practise it at home, I cut in and ask her to listen to me playing RH alone- 1st in a monotone yet comically "boring" way then *espressivo*- and ask her which she preferred and why?
- A discussion about tempo and rubato then ensues
- Melody lines are explored and we sing how we would like to play them
- I then discuss the elements that LH has to consider so that it sounds delicate and not clumsy or overpowering