

My First Pieces

Music for Beginning String Players

Cello

Composed, arranged and compiled by
Stephen Chin

Welcome to the wonderful world of making music with a bowed string instrument! By working with your teacher, following the instructions carefully and practising regularly, you will start a journey that you may continue to follow in the years to come.

The first few pages of each book contain details of each instrument's components, how to look after it and hold it correctly.

Carefully go over "Some Basics of Music Reading" pages as these simple facts will help you play your music easily. Important information appears throughout the book as you need it.

A glossary can be found at the back of the book so you can quickly find the meaning of the terms you have learned.

Piano accompaniments can be downloaded from the My First Pieces page at www.everythingstring.com. This may help you to experience the music in a fuller way. Your teacher may also be able to play the accompaniment, which is always lots of fun!

Enjoy!

Everything String

Stephen Chin

M Mus, B Mus, Dip Mus Comp



As a founding member of the Sydney Youth Orchestra, Stephen's interest and enthusiasm for music lead him to undertake further studies at Sydney University where formal training in both violin and composition were completed under former leader of the Australian Chamber Orchestra, John Harding and renowned Australian composer, Peter Sculthorpe respectively. Since that time, he has been invited to perform with such groups as The ABC Sinfonia, The Badinerie Players, The Queensland Philharmonic Orchestra, The Queensland Symphony Orchestra, The Queensland Pops Orchestra and Corda Spiritus.

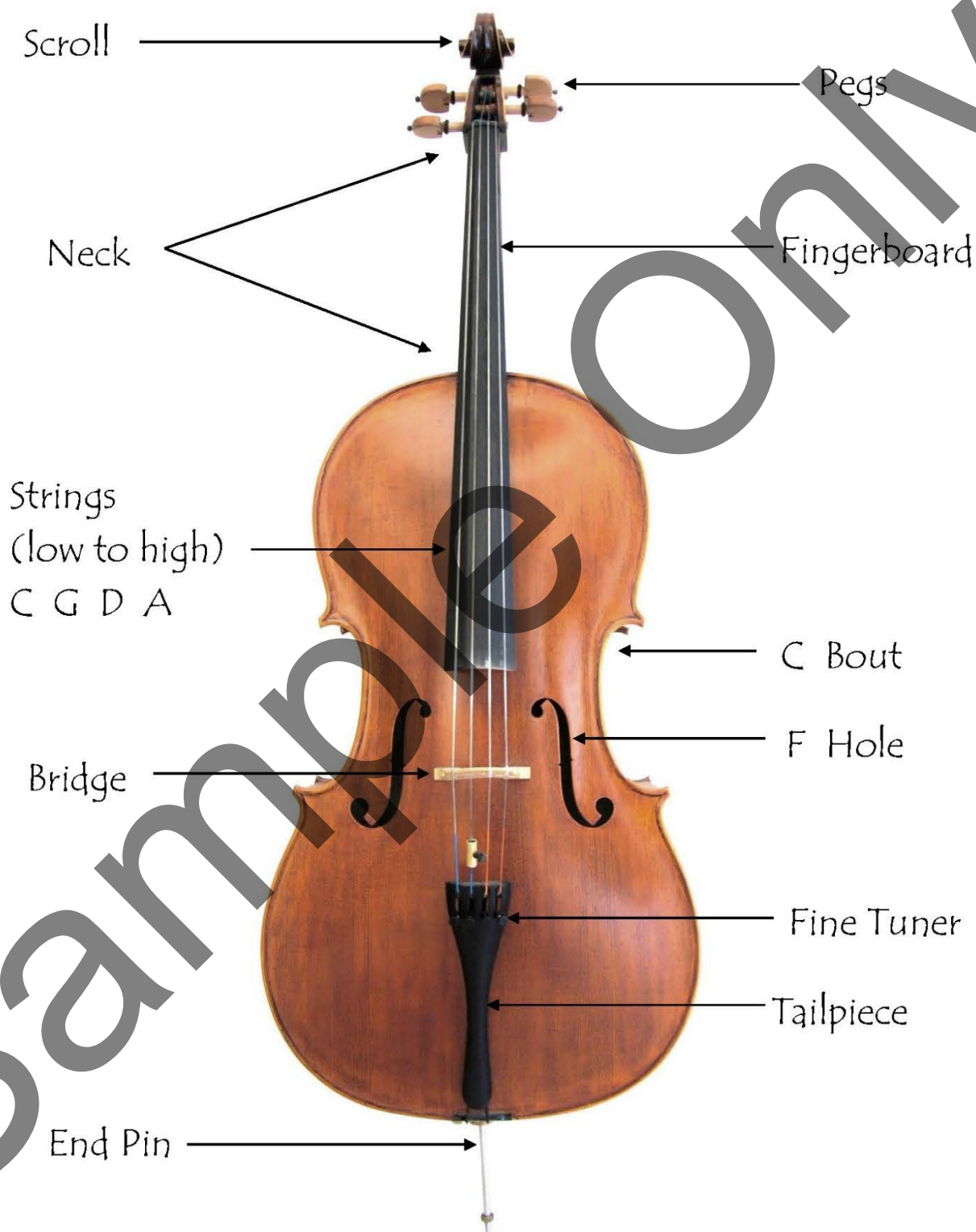
Stephen holds a Master of Music from Queensland Conservatorium of Music Griffith University specialising in violin performance and pedagogy. He is also an examiner for the Australian Music Examination Board (AMEB). In addition to this, Stephen performs regularly with a number of professional chamber ensembles. Stephen publishes a number of string compositions and arrangements which have been used as test pieces for a number of competitions throughout Australia and are also presented as examination pieces for the AMEB. Stephen has been invited many times to adjudicate various eisteddfods and competitions such as Queensland Festival of Music, The Western Australian Schools Orchestra Festival, The Hobart Eisteddfod and the Gold Coast Eisteddfod. He is also in demand as a string and orchestral clinician, regularly conducting a number of workshops and festivals both nationally and internationally including the Melbourne Youth Music Summer School, the Sunwater and Stanwell Winter Music School and the All State Senior Orchestra in New Mexico, USA.

From 2008 - 2013, Stephen was the conductor of the BEL faculty Chamber Orchestra at the University of Queensland. Stephen is presently National President of The Australian Strings Association (AUSTA), Principal String Teacher and Director of Orchestras at Brisbane Grammar School and lectures in String Pedagogy and Practicum at the Queensland Conservatorium of Music, Griffith University.

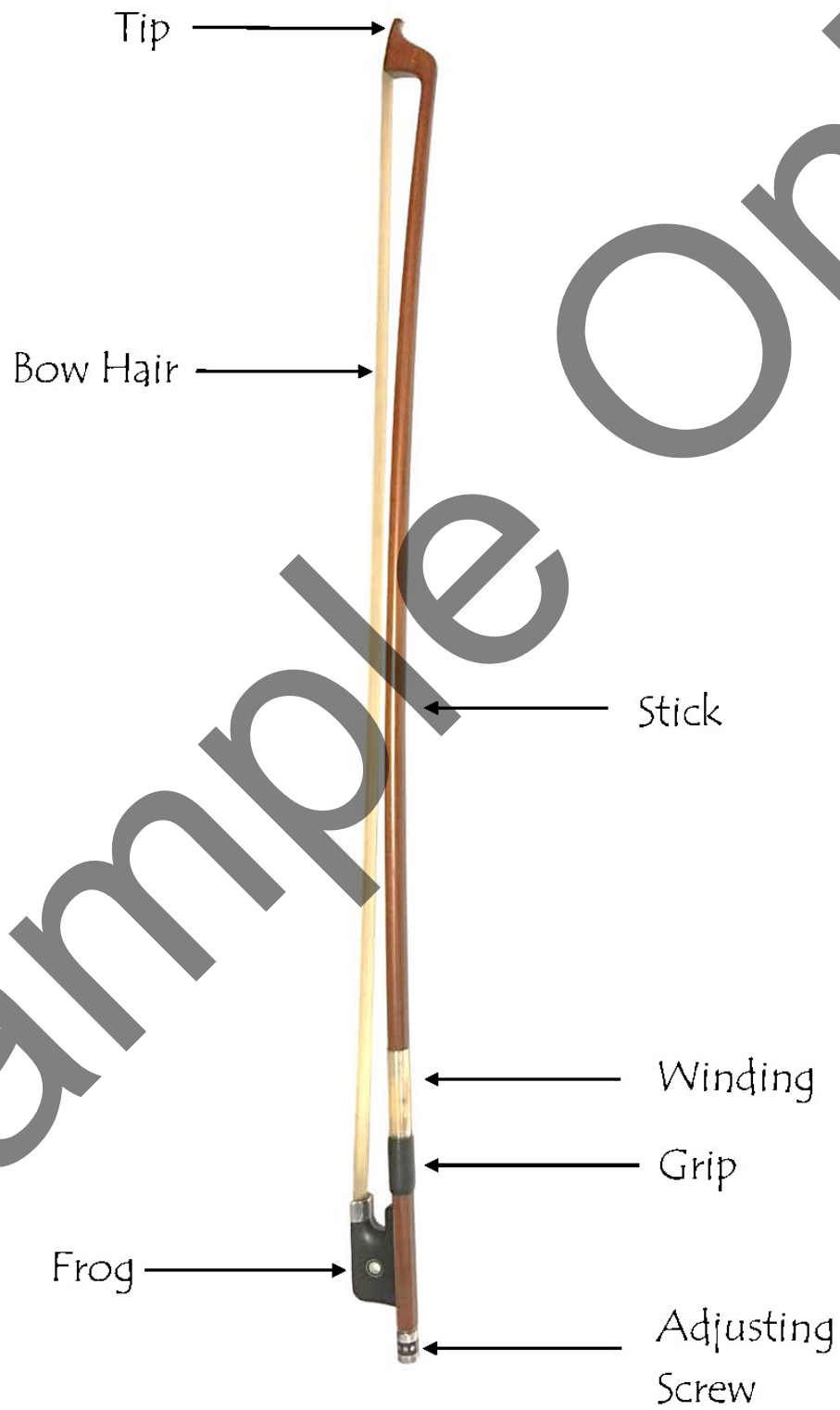
Caring for My Cello

- Lay your case flat on the floor when taking out both the instrument and bow.
- If you have a soft case, the bow is the first thing to come out and the last thing to be packed up.
- Always make sure the case is closed properly when packing up.
- Always leave your instrument in a place with a temperature that you yourself would be comfortable in.
- Tighten the bow just enough for a pencil to go through the space at the middle of the bow between the hair and the wood.
- Never touch the hair of your bow with your fingers.
- Always rosin your bow before playing – your teacher will show you how to do this.
- Regularly use a clean cloth to wipe off any rosin dust on the instrument and bow.
- Make sure that your bow hairs are loosened before the bow is placed back in the case.

The Cello



The Cello Bow



General Posture

- Sit on the front part of the chair.
- Cello is set on its spike an arm length from your body then rests back on your sternum.
- The feet are in a “V” shape and are placed: foot – spike – foot, in a slight outward curve from the seat.
- Keep the left hand fingers relaxed and well rounded.



The Bow-hold

- Holding the bow in your left hand, hang the fingers over the stick near the frog.
- The 2nd finger is placed over the metal nut on the frog, whilst the 3rd finger is placed in the middle of the frog.
- The little finger is bent and is put in the top corner of the frog.
- The crease near the nail of the index finger is on top of the stick.
- The thumb is bent, flexible and placed half on the frog and half on the stick
- All fingers are evenly spaced and relaxed.
- When bowing, keep the right hand in line with the “C” bout. Tilt the wood of the bow slightly towards you.
- **ALWAYS strive to make an even and beautiful tone.**



The Left Hand

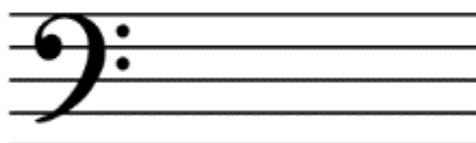
- Carefully set up the fingers 4, 3, 2 & 1 with the thumb opposite the 2nd finger, keeping the knuckles out at all times.
- Keep the fingers and thumb relaxed and well rounded.
- Keep your shoulders low.
- Your elbows need to be raised a little.
- Try to hear the note clearly in your head before placing your fingers.
- Let the fingers feel the string's vibrations as you play.
- Remember the string names **C G D A** from the lowest to the highest (or the thickest to the thinnest) this way:

Camels Go Down Asleep



Some Basics of Music Reading

STAFF LINES



↑ ↑
Bass Clef Staff Lines

Music is written on lines called a **Staff** (or stave). A **Bass Clef** tells us that the notes sound at a fairly low pitch.

The **lines** from the bottom are named:

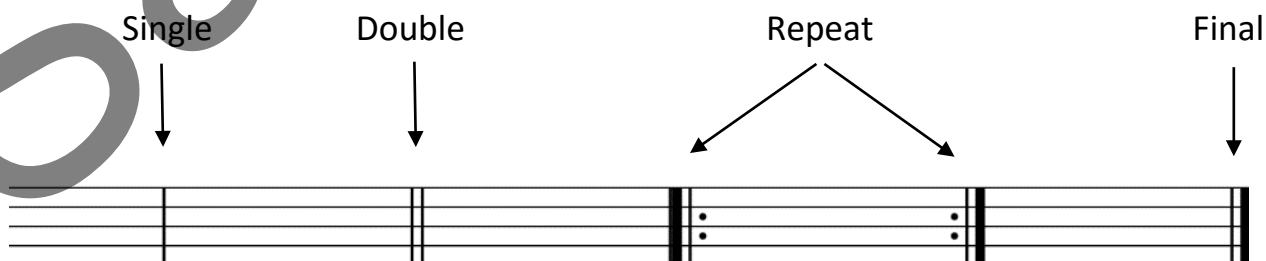
G B D F A

The **spaces** from the bottom are named:

A C E G

BAR LINES

Music is divided up into bars which are separated by **Bar Lines**. The **Single** bar line is the most commonly used. The other bar lines work as follows: **Double** – the end of a section; **Repeat** – play the music again between the signs; **Final** – the end of a piece.



TIME SIGNATURES

A **Time Signature** tells us how many beats there will be in a bar of music. The most commonly used time signatures are:

The image shows the time signature 2/4, consisting of a large '2' over a large '4'.

Two beats a bar

The image shows the time signature 3/4, consisting of a large '3' over a large '4'.

Three beats a bar

The image shows the time signature 4/4, consisting of a large '4' over a large '4'.

Four beats a bar

ACCIDENTALS & KEY SIGNATURES

Accidentals placed before a note are used to change the pitch. Often they are placed at the beginning of a staff to save putting them on every note that needs them. This is called a **Key Signature**. For instance, a sharp placed on the F line or F space means that every F will become F sharp.

We use these accidentals in music:

The image shows the sharp symbol, which is a hash mark (#).

Sharp - raises the note a half a tone from its letter name note.

The image shows the flat symbol, which is a lowercase letter 'b'.

Flat - lowers the note a half a tone from its letter name note.










The image shows the natural symbol, which is a stylized 'n' with a vertical line through it.

Natural - returns the note to its letter name note after a sharp or flat has been used.

NOTE VALUES

A **Note Value** tells us the length of time a sound lasts for. They are matched with a **Note Rest** which tells us how long a silence will be.

The most common note values and rests are as follows:

Note Value	Note Rest	Length in Beats
Crotchet 		1
Minim 		2
Dotted Minim 	Various combinations of the above rests.	3
Semibreve 	 May also be used for a full bar rest with any time signature.	4
Quaver 		1/2

Getting Ready for My First Play!

Set up left hand fingers
on the cello body



pizz. - pizzicato - pluck the string
with the right index finger.



Strings, lowest to highest, remember:
Camels **G**o **D**own **A**sleep

1. My Open Strings

pizz. Stephen Chin

0 0 0 0

C C C C G G G G D D D D A A A

2. My Open Strings the Other Way Around

pizz. Stephen Chin

0 0 0 0

A A A A D D D D G G G G C C C

3. Walking in the Park with Open D's & A's

pizz. Stephen Chin

0 0 0 0

D D D D A A A A D D D D A A D

4. Gypsy Open D's and G's

pizz. Stephen Chin

0 0 0 0

D D D D G G G G D D D D G G D

5. Hymn on Open G's, D's and A's

pizz. Stephen Chin

0 0 0 0

D D A A D D D D G G D A D G D

6. Open Strings for Two

Duet

You need to work out your open string notes before playing.

Duet - a piece of music written for two separate parts.

pizz. Stephen Chin

A

B

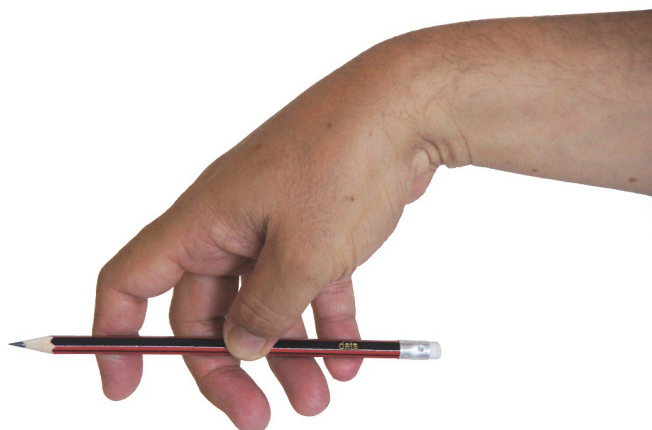
pizz.

7. Crazy Open String Challenge

You need to work out your open string notes before playing.

pizz. Stephen Chin

Practise holding a pencil to get ready for the bow-hold later on.



8. Plucking the Note D

Set up your left hand fingers 4 3 2 1 on D.
Lift all fingers just above the string.
Keep knuckles bent and wrist gently out.



pizz.

0

Stephen Chin

9. Plucking the Note E

Set up 4 3 2 1 on D.
Lift 4 3 2, leave on 1.



pizz.

1

Stephen Chin

10. Plucking the Note F sharp (F#)

Set up 4 3 2 1 on D.

Lift 4, leave on 3 2 1.



pizz.

3

Stephen Chin



Say "Fis" for F sharp

11. Plucking the Note G

Set up 4 3 2 1 on D.

Leave all on.



pizz.

4

Stephen Chin



12. Plucking the Note A

Set up 4 3 2 1 on A.

Lift all just above the string.



pizz.

0

Stephen Chin

A A A A A A A A A A A A

13. Fun with D's & E's

Set up 4 3 2 1 on D; lift all but get the 1st finger ready.

pizz.

0 1 0 1 0

Stephen Chin

D D D E E E D D E E D D

14. Odyssey in E minor

Set up 4 3 2 1 on D; lift 4 3 2, leave on 3 2 1.

pizz.

1 0 1 0 1

Stephen Chin


E E E D D D E E D D E E

15. Fast & Furious First Fingers

Set up 4 3 2 1 on D; lift all but get the 1st finger ready

pizz. Stephen Chin

0 1 0 1 0 1 0



D D E E D D E E D E E E D D

16. Stepping Out with D, E & F#

Set up 4 3 2 1 on D; lift all but get the 1st finger ready

pizz. Stephen Chin

0 1 3 0 1 3 1 0



D D E E F# F# F# F# D D E E F# E D


THE SET UP RULE

Set up all your fingers on the string you are to play on then lift as few fingers as possible to play the first note.

17. Ancient Echoes

pizz. Stephen Chin

1 0 1 1 0 1 3 1 0 1 0 1



E D E E D E F# F# E D E D E

18. Three Note Ping Pong

Duet

You need to work out your fingering and note names before playing.

Remember the Set Up Rule.

Stephen Chin

pizz.

A

B

pizz.

The musical score for 'Three Note Ping Pong' is written for two bass staves, A and B, in 4/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody for both parts consists of a sequence of eighth notes: F#2, G#2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, and F#3. The first system shows the first two measures, with a 'pizz.' (pizzicato) instruction above the first measure of each staff. The second system shows the next two measures, ending with a double bar line.

19. Hot Cross Buns

(pizzicato version)

You need to work out your fingering and note names before playing.

Remember the Set Up Rule.

Traditional
arranged Stephen Chin

pizz.

f

p

f

The musical score for 'Hot Cross Buns' is written for a single bass staff in 4/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody consists of eighth notes: F#2, G#2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, and F#3. The first system shows the first four measures, with a 'pizz.' (pizzicato) instruction above the first measure and a forte (*f*) dynamic marking below the first measure. The second system shows the next four measures, with a piano (*p*) dynamic marking below the first measure and a forte (*f*) dynamic marking below the third measure. The piece ends with a double bar line.

20. Mary Had a Little Lamb

(pizzicato version)

f Forte- play loudly ***p*** Piano - play softly

Remember the Set Up Rule.

pizz.

Traditional
arranged Stephen Chin

You can now practise holding your bow .



21. Au Claire de la Lune

(pizzicato version)

Remember the Set Up Rule.

Traditional
arranged Stephen Chin

pizz.

f

p

22. The Finger Twister

 **Crescendo** - gradually becoming louder.

Remember the Set Up Rule.

Stephen Chin


pizz.

f

p

f

23. Mirror Magic

 **Decrescendo** - gradually becoming softer.

Remember the Set Up Rule.

Stephen Chin

pizz.

f

p

24. Bowing the Note D



Down-bow - move the bow to the right.



Up -bow - move the bow to the left.

Arco - play using your bow.

MB - Play at the middle of the bow.

Stephen Chin

MB arco

MB - Play at the middle of the bow.

Stephen Chin

f

25. Bowing the Note E

Stephen Chin

[illegible]

26. Bowing the Note F Sharp (F#)

Play using the bow from now on
unless the music is marked pizz.

Stephen Chin

[illegible]

27. Bowing the Note G

Stephen Chin

[illegible]

30. Moving in Minims

 Minim - hold for two beats.

Be sure to keep the bowhair always at a right angle to the string.

♩ = 92

Stephen Chin

MB

f *p*

Minim - hold for two beats.


WB - Whole Bow.

Be sure to keep the bowhair always at a right angle to the string.

$\text{♩} = 92$

WB

Stephen Chin



f

p

31. Hop, Skip and Jump

LH - use the lower half of the bow; **UH** - use the upper half of the bow.

Using the bow from LH to the UH is called "dividing the bow".

♩ = 92

Stephen Chin

WB UH WB LH WB UH

f

Detailed description: This block contains the musical notation for 'Hop, Skip and Jump'. It is written on a single staff in bass clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a 4/4 time signature. The tempo is marked as ♩ = 92. The notation includes six measures of music. Above the staff, bowing directions are indicated: WB (Whole Bow) for the first measure, UH (Upper Half) for the second, WB for the third, LH (Lower Half) for the fourth, WB for the fifth, and UH for the sixth. Vertical lines with 'V' marks indicate bow changes. The first measure starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The piece ends with a double bar line.

32. Norwegian Folk Song

Be sure to follow the bowing markings to help you play the dynamics (louds and softs).

Andante - the speed of an easy walking pace.

Traditional
arranged Stephen Chin

Andante ♩ = 72

LH WB LH WB

UH WB UH WB

f *p* *f*

Detailed description: This block contains the musical notation for 'Norwegian Folk Song'. It consists of two staves in bass clef with a key signature of two sharps and a 4/4 time signature. The tempo is marked as Andante with a tempo of ♩ = 72. The first staff has four measures with bowing directions LH, WB, LH, and WB. The second staff has four measures with bowing directions UH, WB, UH, and WB. Dynamics are marked as *f* (forte) at the beginning of the first staff, *p* (piano) at the beginning of the second staff, and *f* at the end of the second staff. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

33. Boil Them Cabbage Down

ff **Fortissimo** - play very loudly.

Allegro ♩ = 120

Allegro - fast and lively.

Traditional North American
arranged Stephen Chin

MB

f *ff*

Detailed description: This block contains the musical notation for 'Boil Them Cabbage Down'. It consists of two staves in bass clef with a key signature of two sharps and a 4/4 time signature. The tempo is marked as Allegro with a tempo of ♩ = 120. The first staff has four measures, with a bowing direction MB (Middle Bow) indicated above the first measure. The second staff has four measures. Dynamics are marked as *f* (forte) at the beginning of the first staff and *ff* (fortissimo) at the end of the second staff. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Pages 25 - 61 not included
in this sample.