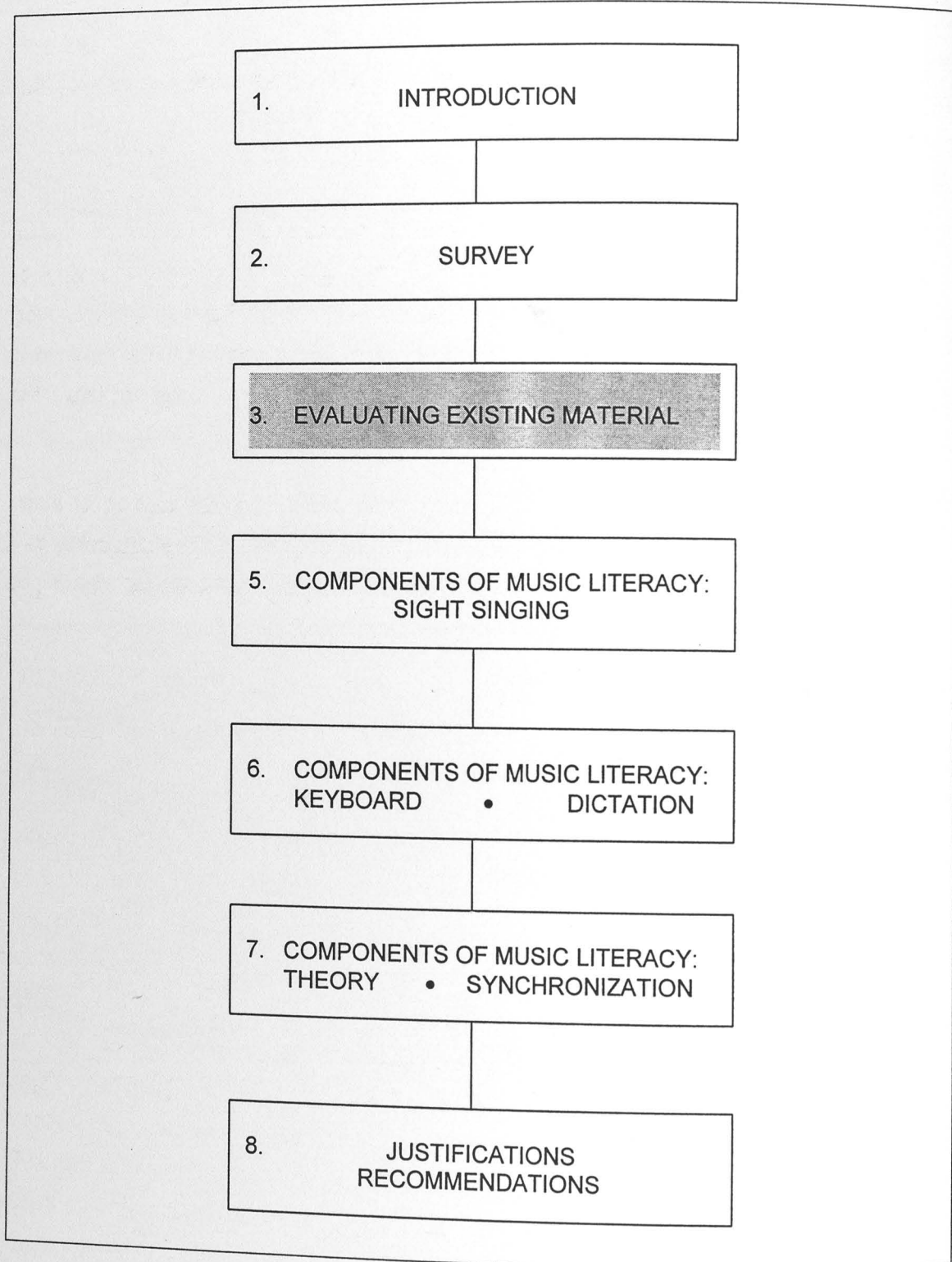


## CHAPTER 3

### Evaluating existing material



## CHAPTER 3

### Evaluating existing material

#### 3.1 General remarks on the three groups of material

No single series or complete programme has been encountered which covers all the facets the full *Music Literacy* programme necessitates.

Material **commonly used in South Africa** is evaluated in this chapter. For the purpose of identifying certain causes of problems, knowledge of the material which educators use, is important. Naturally, the educator's approach and method as well as the way of presenting the material should also be taken into account. Some material, however, also comprises a definite approach and method which determines the tuition to a great extent. Such material, with integrated approach and methodology, does not leave the educator much choice.

**Prescribed syllabuses** of education departments in this country as well as of music examining bodies, local and British, are also an important factor. They determine to a high degree the contents, the way of teaching and the underlying school of thought. Some of them offer specimen tests and papers and some even offer complete exercise books. These also need to be assessed.

Material, **not in common local use** yet which was explored for this study, is another group which is assessed.

At least five books/series were chosen for evaluation for every component, representative of the three groups of material. They are listed in 3.2. Alphabetical order is used to list, evaluate and to discuss the books/series in the various components. All material is evaluated according to the previously compiled requirements (see 2.3.5) for a music literacy programme, firstly, by way of tables in 3.3. Subsequently, in 3.4, the pros and cons of each are pointed out, followed by the main reasons why each book/series does not meet the requirements and why it does not fulfil the specific need in this *Music Literacy* programme. In the tables a four-point scale is used for measuring the specific requirements. With the aspects to be avoided, a negative two-point scale is applied for indicating the degree of inappropriateness, according to the list described in this thesis.

By adding the points and subtracting negative points, the total will be an indication of its usability, approximately, for the purposes under discussion.

Books with little value for the purpose of a music literacy programme are briefly discussed and reasons for inappropriateness are generally described, without lengthy reference to examples. This is apart from their evaluation in the tables. Some books might seem outdated. Such books are included because they are still in use and/or they are not without merit for this purpose. In 3.4.8 material which contains combinations of components, is reviewed in general. The specific learning matter, in such a source, for each of these components is separately evaluated and discussed under that particular component.

As can be seen from the sources consulted in this thesis, far more books/series were studied than those specifically discussed in 3.4. This chapter concentrates on the books about which this researcher could make the most useful remarks and motivate the clearest criticism. From the tables and the discussions it should be evident that in general, the main reasons which prevent existing material from being suitable, apart from its specific purpose and target group, is the general approach and way of communication with learners, students and even educators. On the one hand material is presented in a playful manner, often underestimating the ability of the general learner. On the other hand there is lack of insight, thus no concept of the very basic needs of learners. Programmes, courses or books are often mainly theoretical or academic. Thus they lack the practicality and the relevance which should be the outstanding features for various purposes in music education but especially for a music literacy programme.



### 3.2 Lists of books for evaluation, grouped according to components of the programme

#### 3.2.1 Sight Singing: Rhythms

- i. **Dandelot, G.** *Studies for Rhythm: In five books/Étude du Rythme; En Cinq Cahiers.* Series.
- ii. **Ghezze, M.A.** *Solfège, Ear Training, Rhythm, Dictation and Music Theory: A Comprehensive Course.*
- iii. **McLachlan, P.** *Fun with Notes/Notepret: Handleiding vir die Lees van Musieknotasie.* Series.
- iv. **Rees, E.** *Pathway to Music Reading: A Sight Reader for Schools/n Handleiding vir die Lees van Musiek: Bladlees vir Skole.* Series.
- v. **Van der Horst, F.** *Maat en Ritme: 150 Oefeningen in het Uitvoeren van Ritmen naar Moelijkheidsgraad Gerangschikt.* Series.
- vi. **Wiseman, H. and Northcote, S.** *Singing at Sight: A Handbook for Soloists and Choir Members.*
- vii. **Wright, C.** *The Step Scheme in Music Exercise.* Series.

#### 3.2.2 Sight Singing: Keys

- i. **Egmond, M.** *Van't Blad Zingen: Zonder Rhythme. Part I.*
- ii. **Ghezze, M.A.** *Solfège, Ear Training, Rhythm, Dictation and Music Theory: A Comprehensive Course.*
- iii. **McLachlan, P.** *Fun with Notes/Notepret: Handleiding vir die Lees van Musieknotasie.* Series.
- iv. **Rees, E.** *Pathway to Music Reading: A Sight Reader for Schools/n Handleiding vir die Lees van Musiek: Bladlees vir Skole.* Series.
- v. **Wiseman, H. and Northcote, S.** *Singing at Sight: A Handbook for Soloists and Choir Members.*
- vi. **Wright, C.** *The Step Scheme in Music Exercise: Series.*



### 3.2.3 Sight Singing: Melodies

- i. **Crowe, E., Lawton, A. and Whittaker, W.G.** *The Folk Song Sight Singing Series*. Series.
- ii. **Egmond, M.** *Van't Blad Zingen: Met Rhythme*. Part II.
- iii. **Ghezzo, M.A.** *Solfège, Ear Training, Rhythm, Dictation and Music Theory: A Comprehensive Course*.
- iv. **McLachlan, P.** *Fun with Notes/Notepret: Handleiding vir die Lees van Musieknotasie*. Series.
- v. **Rees, E.** *Pathway to Music Reading: A Sight Reader for Schools/n Handleiding vir die Lees van Musiek: Blad lees vir Skole*. Series.
- vi. **Wiseman, H. and Northcote, S.** *Singing at Sight: A Handbook for Soloists and Choir Members*.
- vii. **Wright, C.** *The Step Scheme in Music Exercise*. Series.

### 3.2.4 Keyboard Harmony

- i. **Hoek, A.** *Music Theory Workbook: Extra-curricular Music*. Series.
- ii. **Loeb van Zuilenburg, P. Compiler.** *Gehoortoetse en Gehooropleiding: 'n Inleiding*.
- iii. **Malan, J.D.** *Harmonie by die Klavier: 'n Inleidende Studie*.
- iv. **Shumway, S.N.** *Harmony and Ear Training at the Keyboard*.
- v. **Van Wyk, C.** *First Year Keyboard Harmony: A Basic Primer*.

### 3.2.5 Keyboard Reading and Playing

- i. **Bastien, J. and J.S.** *Piano Lessons: The Bastien Piano Library*. Series.  
\_\_\_\_\_. *The Older Beginner Piano Course: The Bastien Older Beginner Piano Library*.
- ii. **Burnam, E.M.** *Ministeps to Music: Edna-Mae Burnam's Piano Course. With Close-Phased Grading*. Set.

- Burnam, E.M.** *A Dozen a Day: Pre-Practice Technical Exercises for the Piano to be done Each Day before Practicing. / A Dozen a Day: Pre-Practice Technical Exercises for the Piano.* Series.
- iii. **Feldtmann, E.** *Noot vir Noot.* Series.
- iv. **Rodgers, I. and Phillips, L.** *Piano Book for Little Jacks and Jills.* Set.
- v. **Rolfe, W.** *A Child's Primer / 'n Eerste Musiekboekie: 'n Moderne Manier van Klavieronderrig vir die Jong [Oudjies] Gebaseer op die Storie van Tannie Middel C.*
- vi. **Schaum, J.W.** *Piano Course: Leading to the Mastery of the Instrument.* Series.
- vii. **Thompson, J.** *John Thompson's Easiest Piano Course.* Parts I & II.  
 \_\_\_\_\_. *John Thompson's Melody all the Way!: Piano Tuition on a Tuneful Basis.*

### 3.2.6 Music Dictation

- i. **Egmond, M.** *600 Dictees.*
- ii. **Ghezso, M.A.** *Solfège, Ear Training, Rhythm, Dictation and Music Theory: A Comprehensive Course.*
- iii. **Schouten H.** *Eenstemmige Muziekdictees.* Set.
- iv. **Sekles, B.** *Musikdiktat: Übungsstoff in Dreissig Abschnitten.*
- v. **Warburton, A.O.** *Graded Aural Tests for all Purposes: With Suggested Methods of Working.*

### 3.2.7 Music Theory

- i. **Cloete, S.J.** *Credo: Musiekteorie Opleidingsprogram.* Series.
- ii. **Ghezso, M.A.** *Solfège, Ear Training, Rhythm, Dictation and Music Theory: A Comprehensive Course.*
- iii. **Hoek, A.** *Music Theory Workbook: Extra-curricular Music.* Series.
- iv. **Koh, J.** *New Practice in Music Theory: Based on the New Syllabus of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music.* Series.

- v. **Minnaar-Van Niekerk, T.** *Music Theory: Manual for Grades I-V.* Series.
- vi. **Schreuder, H.** *UNISA. Theory of Music Workbook.* Series.

### 3.2.8 Combination of Components

- i. **Egmond, M.** *Van't Blad Zingen: Zonder Rhythme.* Part I.  
*Met Rhythme.* Part II.
- ii. **Ghezze, M.A.** *Solfège, Ear Training, Rhythm, Dictation and Music Theory: A Comprehensive Course.*
- iii. **King, N.** *Specimen Ear Tests: From 2001.* Trinity. Series.
- iv. **Loeb van Zuilenburg, P. Compiler.** *Practical Musicianship: UNISA.* Series.
- v. **McLachlan, P.** *Fun with Notes/Notepret: Handleiding vir die Lees van Musieknotasie.* Series.
- vi. **Rees, E.** *Pathway to Music Reading: A Sight Reader for Schools'n Handleiding vir die Lees van Musiek: Bladlees vir Skole.* Series.
- vii. **Wiseman, H. and Northcote, S.** *Singing at Sight: A Handbook for Soloists and Choir Members.*
- viii. **Wright, C.** *The Step Scheme in Music Exercise.* Series.



### 3.3 Tables for evaluating existing material against requirements

#### 3.3.1 Sight singing: Rhythms

Books/Series/Sets	Specific requirements (in no particular order)																							Aspects to be avoided					
	i.	ii.	iii.	iv.	v.	vi.	vii.	viii.	ix.	x.	xi.	xii.	xiii.	xiv.	xv.	xvi.	xvii.	xviii.	xix.	xx.	xxi.	xxii.	xxiii.	i.	ii.	iii.	iv.	v.	vi.
i. Dandelot, G. <i>Studies for Rhythm</i>	3	2	2	1	1	0	2	3	1	3	n.a.	1	n.a.	1	1	0	0	2	1	2	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	n.a.	0
ii. Ghezze, M.A. <i>Comprehensive Course</i>	0	1	0	0	2	1	3	3	2	2	n.a.	1	n.a.	1	3	0	0	3	2	3	1	3	2	0	0	-2	-2	n.a.	-2
iii. McLachlan, P. <i>Fun with Notes</i>	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	1	1	0	n.a.	2	n.a.	2	0	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	n.a.	-2
iv. Rees, E. <i>Pathway to Music Reading</i>	2	2	3	1	1	2	2	0	1	2	n.a.	1	n.a.	1	0	1	1	3	1	2	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	n.a.	-1
v. Van der Horst, F. <i>Maat en Ritme</i>	0	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	n.a.	1	n.a.	1	2	1	1	1	3	1	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	n.a.	-1
vi. Wiseman, H. and Northcote, S. <i>Singing at Sight</i>	0	2	0	0	2	1	1	2	1	2	n.a.	0	n.a.	1	3	0	0	3	3	2	2	2	3	-2	0	-2	0	n.a.	0
vii. Wright, C. <i>Step Scheme in Music Exercise</i>	1	2	3	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	n.a.	1	n.a.	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	-1	n.a.	-1

#### Scale for specific requirements:

3 = meets requirement fully  
 2 = meets requirement fairly  
 1 = does not meet requirement  
 0 = not at all  
 n.a. = not applicable

#### Scale for aspects to be avoided:

-2 = meets avoidance fully  
 -1 = meets avoidance fairly  
 0 = not at all  
 n.a. = not applicable

## 3.3.2 Sight singing: Keys

Books/Series/Sets	Specific requirements (in no particular order)																							Aspects to be avoided					
	i.	ii.	iii.	iv.	v.	vi.	vii.	viii.	ix.	x.	xi.	xii.	xiii.	xiv.	xv.	xvi.	xvii.	xviii.	xix.	xx.	xxi.	xxii.	xxiii.	i.	ii.	iii.	iv.	v.	vi.
	One new aspect at a time	Systematic in all ways	Sufficient repetition	Interesting repetition	Musical sense	Agreeableness of exercises	Purposefulness	Omission of non-essentials	Attractive appearance	Suitable size of print	Limited writing by learners	Music making association	Suitability for non-pianist educator	Maximum use of senses	Holistic approach	Differentiation opportunities	Opportunities for creativity	Orderly layout	Immediate usability	Straightforward information	User-friendliness	Logic is exploited	Short duration of programme	Crash course	Theoretical course	Theoretical plus practical course	Package programme	Telematic programme	Drawn-out programme
i. Egmond, M. <i>Van't Blad Zingen</i>	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	n.p.	2	n.p.	2	2	3	2	2	3	3	3	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
ii. Ghezze, M.A. <i>Comprehensive Course</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	3	2	n.p.	1	n.p.	2	3	0	0	1	1	1	1	3	0	0	0	-2	-2	n.p.	-2
iii. McLachlan, P. <i>Fun with Notes</i>	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	1	1	0	n.p.	2	n.p.	2	0	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	n.p.	-2
iv. Rees, E. <i>Pathway to Music Reading</i>	3	2	3	1	1	2	2	0	1	2	n.p.	1	n.p.	1	0	1	1	3	1	2	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	n.p.	-1
v. Wiseman, H. and Northcote, S. <i>Singing at Sight</i>	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	2	n.p.	0	n.p.	1	3	0	0	3	3	3	2	3	3	-2	0	-2	0	n.p.	0
vi. Wright, C. <i>Step Scheme in Music Exercise</i>	1	2	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	n.a.	1	n.a.	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	-1	n.a.	-1

**Scale for specific requirements:**

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 2 = meets requirement fairly  
 1 = does not meet requirement  
 0 = not at all  
 n.a. = not applicable

**Scale for aspects to be avoided:**

-2 = meets avoidance fully  
 -1 = meets avoidance fairly  
 0 = not at all  
 n.a. = not applicable



## 3.3.3 Sight singing: Melodies

Books/Series/Sets	Specific requirements (in no particular order)																							Aspects to be avoided					
	i.	ii.	iii.	iv.	v.	vi.	vii.	viii.	ix.	x.	xi.	xii.	xiii.	xiv.	xv.	xvi.	xvii.	xviii.	xix.	xx.	xxi.	xxii.	xxiii.	i.	ii.	iii.	iv.	v.	vi.
i. Crowe, E. et al. <i>Folk Song Sight Singing</i>	1	3	2	3	3	3	3	1	1	0	n.a.	3	n.a.	2	2	1	1	3	3	3	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	n.a.	0
ii. Egmond, M. <i>Van't Blad Zingen. Part II</i>	1	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	n.a.	2	n.a.	2	2	1	1	3	3	3	2	2	2	0	0	0	0	n.a.	0
iii. Ghezzeo, M.A. <i>Comprehensive Course</i>	0	1	0	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	n.a.	2	n.a.	1	1	0	0	3	2	3	1	2	0	0	0	-2	-2	n.a.	-2
iv. McLachlan, P. <i>Fun with Notes</i>	3	2	3	1	2	1	1	1	1	0	n.a.	1	n.a.	2	0	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	n.a.	-2
v. Rees, E. <i>Pathway to Music Reading</i>	2	2	3	1	1	1	2	0	1	2	n.a.	1	n.a.	1	0	1	1	3	1	2	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	n.a.	-1
vi. Wiseman, H. and Northcote, S. <i>Singing at Sight</i>	0	1	0	0	2	2	2	2	1	2	n.a.	2	n.a.	1	3	0	0	3	1	3	1	3	3	-2	0	-2	0	n.a.	0
vii. Wright, C. <i>Step Scheme in Music Exercise</i>	1	2	2	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	n.a.	1	n.a.	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	-1	n.a.	-1

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 0 = not at all  
 n.a. = not applicable

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 -1 = meets avoidance fairly  
 0 = not at all  
 n.a. = not applicable



## 3.3.4 Keyboard Harmony

Books/Series/Sets	Specific requirements (in no particular order)																							Aspects to be avoided					
	i.	ii.	iii.	iv.	v.	vi.	vii.	viii.	ix.	x.	xi.	xii.	xiii.	xiv.	xv.	xvi.	xvii.	xviii.	xix.	xx.	xxi.	xxii.	xxiii.	i.	ii.	iii.	iv.	v.	vi.
i. Hoek, A. <i>Music Theory Workbook</i>	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	3	n.a.	2	0	1	1	2	2	3	3	0	2	1	1	0	0	-2	-2	n.a.	-1
ii. Loeb van Zuilenburg, P. <i>Gehoortoetse en Gehooropleiding</i>	3	2	n.a.	n.a.	3	3	3	3	1	1	n.a.	3	1	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	1	3	1	0	0	0	0	n.a.	0
iii. Malan, J.D. <i>Harmonie by die Klavier</i>	2	1	1	1	2	3	2	2	3	2	n.a.	3	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	n.a.	0
iv. Shumway, S.N. <i>Harmony and Ear Training at the Keyboard</i>	2	2	2	2	3	2	3	2	3	3	n.a.	2	0	3	2	2	2	3	1	1	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	n.a.	-2
v. Van Wyk, C. <i>First Year Keyboard Harmony</i>	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	n.a.	2	0	1	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	0	0	0	-2	n.a.	0

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 1 = does not meet requirement  
 0 = not at all  
 n.a. = not applicable

**Scale for aspects to be avoided:**

-2 = meets avoidance fully  
 -1 = meets avoidance fairly  
 0 = not at all  
 n.a. = not applicable

## 3.3.5 Keyboard Reading and Playing

Books/Series/Sets	Specific requirements (in no particular order)																							Aspects to be avoided						
	i.	ii.	iii.	iv.	v.	vi.	vii.	viii.	ix.	x.	xi.	xii.	xiii.	xiv.	xv.	xvi.	xvii.	xviii.	xix.	xx.	xxi.	xxii.	xxiii.	i.	ii.	iii.	iv.	v.	vi.	
vi. Bastien, J. and J.S. <i>Bastien Piano Library•Older Beginner Library</i>	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	0	2	3	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1		0	0	0	-2	n.a.	-1	
vii. Burnam, E.M. <i>Ministeps to Music</i>	2	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	1	2	2	1	1	1	1		0	0	0	0	n.a.	-1	
viii. Feldtmann, E. <i>Noot vir Noot</i>	3	3	3	1	3	1	1	2	1	1	3	0	3	1	0	0	0	3	1	3	2	3	0		0	0	0	0	n.a.	-2
ix. Rodgers, I. and Phillips, L. <i>Piano Book</i>	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	3	2	2	3	1	0	1	1	2	3	2	2	1	1		0	0	0	0	n.a.	0
x. Rolfe, W. <i>Child's Primer</i>	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	0	1	1	3	2	1	2	1	2		0	0	0	0	n.a.	0
xi. Schaum, J.W. <i>Piano Course</i>	1	2	1	2	2	2	2	0	3	3	2	2	3	1	0	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1		0	0	0	0	n.a.	-1
xii. Thompson, J. <i>Easiest Piano Course•Melody all the Way</i>	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	0	3	3	0	2	1	1	0	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	2		0	0	0	0	n.a.	0

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 n.a. = not applicable

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 -1 = meets avoidance fairly  
 0 = not at all  
 n.a. = not applicable



## 3.3.6 Music Dictation

Books/Series/Sets	Specific requirements (in no particular order)																							Aspects to be avoided					
	i.	ii.	iii.	iv.	v.	vi.	vii.	viii.	ix.	x.	xi.	xii.	xiii.	xiv.	xv.	xvi.	xvii.	xviii.	xix.	xx.	xxi.	xxii.	xxiii.	i.	ii.	iii.	iv.	v.	vi.
i. Egmond, M. <i>600 Dictees</i>	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	1	2	3	1	1	3	1	2	2	3	1	0	0	0	0	n.a.	-1
ii. Ghezzeo, M.A. <i>Comprehensive Course</i>	0	0	0	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	0	1	3	0	0	3	2	3	1	2	0	0	0	-2	-2	n.a.	-2
iii. Schouten, H. <i>Eenstemmige Muziekdictees</i>	3	2	3	2	3	2	3	3	3	2	2	3	2	3	1	2	2	2	3	3	3	2	3	0	0	0	0	n.a.	0
iv. Sekies, B. <i>Muzikdictat</i>	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	2	3	3	2	2	2	1	1	3	3	3	3	3	1	0	0	0	0	n.a.	-1
v. Warburton, A.O. <i>Graded Aural Tests</i>	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	0	2	2	2	3	0	3	2	2	2	2	3	1	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	n.a.	-2

**Scale for specific requirements:**

3 = meets requirement fully  
 2 = meets requirement fairly  
 1 = does not meet requirement  
 0 = not at all  
 n.a. = not applicable

**Scale for aspects to be avoided:**

-2 = meets avoidance fully  
 -1 = meets avoidance fairly  
 0 = not at all  
 n.a. = not applicable



## 3.3.7 Music Theory

Books/Series/Sets	Specific requirements (in no particular order)																							Aspects to be avoided					
	i.	ii.	iii.	iv.	v.	vi.	vii.	viii.	ix.	x.	xi.	xii.	xiii.	xiv.	xv.	xvi.	xvii.	xviii.	xix.	xx.	xxi.	xxii.	xxiii.	i.	ii.	iii.	iv.	v.	vi.
i. Cloete, S.J. <i>Credo</i>	3	3	3	2	2	1	0	1	2	3	1	1	3	1	1	2	2	3	2	2	2	3	0	0	-2	0	-1	n.a.	-2
ii. Ghezzeo, M.A. <i>Comprehensive Course</i>	0	1	0	1	3	2	1	0	2	2	3	0	1	2	2	0	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	-2	-2	n.a.	-1
iii. Hoek, A. <i>Music Theory Workbook</i>	2	2	2	3	3	2	3	2	2	3	3	3	0	2	0	3	2	3	3	0	1	2	1	0	0	-2	-2	n.a.	-1
iv. Koh, J. <i>New Practice in Music Theory</i>	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	2	3	3	3	1	0	1	1	1	1	3	2	3	3	1	1	0	-1	0	0	n.a.	-1
v. Minnaar-Van Niekerk, T. <i>Music Theory</i>	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	1	2	1	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	2	3	0	-1	0	0	n.a.	0
vi. Schreuder, H. <i>UNISA Theory of Music</i>	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	3	3	3	1	3	1	1	2	2	3	1	0	3	2	0	0	-2	0	0	n.a.	-2

**Scale for specific requirements:**

3 = meets requirement fully  
 2 = meets requirement fairly  
 1 = does not meet requirement  
 0 = not at all  
 n.a. = not applicable

**Scale for aspects to be avoided:**

-2 = meets avoidance fully  
 -1 = meets avoidance fairly  
 0 = not at all  
 n.a. = not applicable

### 3.4 Brief discussion of existing material in the various components

All material evaluated in 3.3 is also briefly discussed in the same order.

#### 3.4.1 Sight Singing: Rhythms

- i. **Dandelot, G.** *Studies for Rhythm: In five books / Étude du Rythme: En Cinq Cahiers. Series.*

This series is presented in five books and covers the various facets of time and rhythm reading. The titles of two of the books can be confusing as they are wrongly translated from French; 'mesures composées', meaning compound metres, is translated as 'mixed' (elsewhere as 'composed') and 'gemischte', in English and German respectively.

These exercises are compiled in a purely technical way. 'The five books are arranged progressively and conceived in a very clear manner' (the publisher's note). Although Dandelot treats one new aspect at a time and mainly with sufficient repetition, too many shortcomings prevent the series from being suitable. Most exercises are merely studies in counting beats while the musical and practical sides are totally neglected. The order of introducing new items is also questioned by this researcher. Some examples are the following:

- At first glance, on page 1 of book 1, an important shortcoming is immediately noticed; the average learner, even the young beginner is underestimated: five of the six exercises contain mere repetition of a single note value, some for as many as ten bars. At the same time there is obviously no challenge and no possibility for musical phrasing or any musical experiencing, which leaves learners without motivation.
- Almost in the beginning, in exercise 17 of book one, notes are tied and even tied across the bar line. Before duple, triple and quadruple time are established, alternating of metres begins in exercise 21, with ties across the bar line in no. 23. All these, as well as the various rests, are practised before introducing quavers.
- The number of bars per exercise varies from the beginning with all exercises. Thus, the concepts of regularity of metres and musical/sensible phrases consisting of musical patterns/motifs are not at all taken into account.
- Beginning with no. 59, three of the four initial common semiquaver patterns are treated within only nine exercises before the quaver triplet is introduced. Thus, the semiquaver patterns are not established and interwoven and the triplet is not



preceded by common time. In the fourth triplet exercise, rests and ties are applied within the triplets and in the fifth one, triplets are mixed with semiquaver patterns.

- The way compound time is introduced, in the beginning of book 2, makes it impossible for learners to understand what compound time is, as the beats are not immediately mixed with divisions thereof. As with simple time exercises, the beats are tied, also across the bar line, before the beats are divided into their subdivisions.
- No introduction, guidelines or any kind of educational hints, no suggestions for learning systems or explanations for the specific practices accompany any of the books.

These are but a few examples of the most important aspects/requirements which are lacking altogether. However, the third book which is compiled for pianists, 'for putting both hands together', can be enriching for a much wider target group than just pianists. The same order of introducing new items is also applied here. For this reason, learners should rather have covered all basics before thinking of using this book. It is suggested that educators obtain and have this series available for learners who need additional challenges; the unexpectednesses of some sudden unusual new patterns and the two-hand exercises can be very beneficial. Afterwards, such learners often return to their musically compiled exercises with appreciation and experience even more enjoyment from them.

ii. **Ghezze, M.A.** *Solfège, Ear Training, Rhythm, Dictation and Music Theory: A Comprehensive Course*

See 3.4.8 for a discussion of the entire course.

The rhythm exercises in this book are unsuitable in a music literacy programme for the following reasons: The majority of lessons each contain two or at most four rhythm exercises, each with new facts, some with more than one new pattern, without any repetition before application in 'solfège', i.e. Sight Singing: Melodies. Although the rhythms are first treated separately in every lesson and new items are mostly systematically introduced, they progress far too fast, with no opportunity for reinforcement. The order and way in which new items are learnt is also questionable. This is illustrated in lesson 10: triple time, which is a common metre and an easy concept, as well as the dotted minim and dotted crotchet, also easy when treated wisely, are all



introduced only after quite advanced melodies occurred in 'solfège' and in dictation. These melodies contain tricky and fast rhythms with difficult intervals which are actually in instrumental style. The arithmetical manner in which dotted notes are introduced cannot be agreed with. All these items plus the entire F clef are introduced and applied in the various sections of lesson 10. This is but one lesson showing why these rhythm exercises are unsuitable for the purpose of music literacy. Thus, for the average learner in music literacy this book cannot be recommended in the rhythm component.

iii. **McLachlan, P.** *Fun with Notes/Notepret: Handleiding vir die Lees van Musieknotasie.* Series.

See 3.4.8 for a discussion of the complete series.

As mentioned in 3.2.8, this series is useful in preparing the young learner, during the general music classes, for following the proposed **Music Literacy** programme. However, for the instrumentalist and choir singer, the treatment of rhythms is not sufficient, when using only this series; it progresses far too slowly.

iv. **Rees, E.** *Pathway to Music Reading: A Sight Reader for Schools / 'n Handleiding vir die Lees van Musiek: Bladles vir Skole.* Series.

See 3.4.8 for a discussion of the complete series.

Learning of rhythms is firstly done through the solfa system before being treated on the staff. Thus metres, note values, rests and rhythm patterns are all learnt in two ways. Apart from taking longer this way, in this series new rhythms and metres are introduced quite slowly. Eventually, only the very basic rhythm patterns are included. For some learners in the elementary grades this might suffice. However, for the average choir singers and instrumentalists, this series cannot be recommended for learning to read rhythms.

v. **Van der Horst, F.** *Maat en Ritme: 150 Oefeningen in het Uitvoeren van Ritmen naar Moeilijkheidsgraad Gerangschikt.* Set.

This publication consists of two parts, each with a brief list of contents which states clearly the title/purpose of every section. There is no additional written information, such as an introduction or any kind of guidelines, suggested learning system or explanations.

This series is obviously not meant for the total beginner. Even though all basics are covered, it is done as a run-through in the beginning while mixing simple, compound and irregular metres. This is an indication that the series is compiled for the learner/student who is already playing/singing and therefore has quite some experience. For this reason the series is not suitable for the very important initial stage of music literacy.

After the run-through the subsequent exercises progress systematically. However, the order of introducing the main items bears no relation to reality. The following are some examples:

- Book 1 is divided into three chapters, each focusing on another note value.
- Quavers, semiquavers and demisemiquavers are taken one by one and treated more or less in the same way. Thereby subdivisions and finer divisions become quite difficult to read and unnecessary in common practice. This is only needed in advanced studies for orchestral playing.
- Upbeats are only introduced towards the last third of book 1. Generally in music, even with simple songs and beginner's pieces, phrases without upbeats are more exceptional than *vice versa*.
- Irregular note groups are introduced only in book 2 and immediately mixed with quite complicated patterns. The triplet, which is the most common pattern, is treated after the duplet and immediately in the same exercise in two different note values, i.e. triplets in quavers and in semiquavers. Also in that exercise a duplet of crotchets is added. This extremely difficult way in which acquaintance takes place is totally impractical.

Book 1 contains, nevertheless, interesting and valuable exercises as additional material for those who need extra challenges. For more advanced studies, subsequent to the systematic and thorough treatment of all fundamentals in the **Music Literacy** programme, both books are recommended for the educator's library.

vi. **Wiseman, H. and Northcote, S.** *Singing at Sight: A Handbook for Soloists and Choir Members.*

See 3.4.8 for a general discussion of this book.



As mentioned in 3.4.8 and as can be perceived in the tables, the qualities needed in rhythm exercises for a music literacy programme are lacking here. Nevertheless, learners who are interested in a different approach or further confirmation of basics in rhythms, apart from the proposed programme, are advised to read through chapter two as well as pp. 20 and 21 in this book. Even though skills in dealing with rhythms are not specifically developed, acquaintance with rhythm fundamentals is made in an easy way, including the use of French time-names.

vii. **Wright, C.** *The Step Scheme in Music Exercise. Series.*

See 3.4.8 for a discussion of the complete set.

The positive qualities of these exercises, regarding rhythm, are pointed out in the tables in 3.4.3. However, there are the following objections:

- Compound duple time is called six-pulse measure and not two-pulse measure or duple time. The treatment of the entire matter becomes confusing when speaking of pulse divisions where the dotted crotchet is divided. This is seen on pp. 10 and 11 in book 2.
- In simple time the crotchet is sung and written as **taa** and the dotted crotchet as **taa a**, whereas in compound time **taa** is used for both. There is thus no logic in applying the French time-names. This can be quite confusing.
- Rhythm singing develops very slowly as it is combined with pitch throughout the three books. The ability to recognize rhythm patterns automatically cannot develop easily if it is not also practised separately and if the more complicated patterns are not also included.
- Initial learning of rhythm reading through the solfa system before relearning from staff notation, is regarded as totally unnecessary in any course. In a music literacy programme, where immediate usability and speed in the process are prerequisites, this statement is even more valid. The rhythm aspect of the set is thus not at all suitable.

For these reasons the set cannot be recommended for the development of rhythm reading without a suggestion of additional rhythm material.



### 3.4.2 Sight Singing: Keys

#### i. Egmond, M. *Van't Blad Zingen. Zonder Rhythme. Part I.*

See 3.4.8 for a discussion on the set.

As mentioned in 3.4.8, the framework of this set was used when designing the solfa syllable and key exercises of the proposed *Music Literacy* programme. However, material had to be newly created for the following reasons:

- The tonic **do/la** should be stated more often and also frequently repeated in confirming the tonality. The necessity for returning to **do** is especially felt in the initial units and when leaps are introduced. This also applies to the high **do**, once it is introduced.
- Stepwise returning to **do**, after **fa** and **ti** are introduced, is a strong need in the first paragraphs of solfa syllable exercises.
- When adding a new degree it should immediately be repeated and approached in all the various ways before continuing with other matter. This is not always the case with Egmond's exercises.
- A new leap should not immediately be repeated to and fro. It should first be followed by stepwise movement. New leaps should, nevertheless, receive more repetition than in Egmond's syllable exercises.
- Awareness of the broken tonic chord, including the high **do**, should be done more prominently and more often, and as soon as possible. This does not happen soon enough in Egmond's syllable exercises.
- The high register is not yet safely established before mixing it with the rest.
- Preparing for the minor key necessitates more practising around **la**. For the total beginner the existing exercises are not sufficient.
- When adding **ti** with the lower register its stepwise descending combination with **la** and ascending resolution to **do** should first be practised thoroughly before any leaps to and from **ti** are added. This is extremely important for learners whose natural key

system differs from the common Western system. Without sufficient repetition in the syllable exercises in the major mode, **si** and other chromatic changes in the minor mode become a frustration. This tends to happen when Egmond's exercises are not supplemented.

- The easiest way to become acquainted with the augmented second is not followed by Egmond. The syllable exercises in this book lack sufficient repetition of **fa-si** and of various combinations with the augmented second, especially **fa-si-lā-tī-dō**.
- The range of the voice should be extended beyond the octave and already practised in the syllable exercises. It should not be left for developing in key exercises as is mainly done in Egmond's book.
- The use of the syllable **sel** for the raised **so** cannot logically be explained and associated, even if it is customary in some European countries.
- Extended intervals, i.e. intervals of more than an octave, occur suddenly. If they are prepared and followed more carefully, beginners will find them easier.
- As every unit is often practised separately it should begin and end on **do**, or on **la** in the minor mode. Another option, in more advanced exercises, could be to begin and end on any note of the tonic triad, provided that the tonic note follows shortly in the beginning or precedes the last note. Egmond's exercises often begin and end on various degrees. The key is thus not confirmed and exercises are prevented from being used as independent units.
- The twenty preparatory exercises for keys with spots (note heads without stems), instead of notes, and without clefs and key signatures, are regarded not only as superfluous, but even detrimental. Once learners are used to taking the first note (or spot) always as **do** instead of associating the particular clef and key signature plus the specific note for determining **do**, they have to relearn and develop new associations. This is a waste of time. In fact, the explanation preceding these preparatory exercises can be confusing. Egmond states that the spot on the stave where D occurs when the G clef is used, is the **do** of four scales.
- Egmond begins exercises for singing in keys with D major, followed by D<sup>b</sup> major, thus in the chromatic order. For the total beginner this is not suitable. The simplicity of C



major is the easiest initial key and the order of the circle of fifths the easiest way of learning to sing in all keys.

- Brief explanations and guidelines before every chapter are easy to understand. However, the educator/learner who is not fully informed about keys is advised by Egmond first 'to go and learn them from a book for music rudiments'. Instead, the circle of fifths should rather have been included in one of the open spaces in the beginning. This would have sufficed. However, these introductory notes are an indication of the kind of learner the set is intended for.

In the 280 key exercises more or less the same scheme is followed, causing the same matters, preferences, order, etc. not to be entirely appropriate for the purpose of music literacy.

Most of the criticism of this book points to the fact that it is not intended for the total beginner following a music literacy programme.

- ii. **Ghezzo, M.A.** *Solfège, Ear Training, Rhythm, Dictation and Music Theory: A Comprehensive Course*

See 3.4.8 for a discussion of the entire course.

Pitch singing, called 'intonation exercises' in this book, is treated in every lesson and precedes melody sight singing, called 'solfège'. Even though the solfa system is recommended and the two different uses of solfa are explained, no preparatory exercises in solfa syllables are provided; the solfa syllables and alphabetic notation on the staff are introduced concurrently. Additionally, the entire octave is practised in the very first lesson. In the subsequent lessons new intervals proceed far too fast for the average learner with no background. The new intervals occur as isolated notes without any application in the much needed interesting repetition exercises.

The order of learning new keys is disputable. Learning solfa in a new major key is far easier, in the initial stage, than beginning the minor scale with the various tricky chromatic changes. Exercises in all sections of each lesson remain in C major up to lesson 4 where the mode of a minor is introduced. Only in lesson 11 a new major key, i.e. G major, is added.

All these shortcomings, regarding pitch and key acquaintance, are the main reasons which prevent recommendation of this book for the purpose of learning solfa and keys in a music literacy programme.

- iii. **McLachlan, P.** *Fun with Notes/Notepret: Handleiding vir die Lees van Musieknotasie.* Series.

See 3.4.8 for a discussion of the complete series.

As mentioned in 3.4.8, rhythm, pitch, keys and melodies are treated simultaneously and in alternating exercises in this series. These aspects can therefore not be discussed as separate components. Intervals are often first treated in a melody with words and possibly learnt by imitating the educator. This is read from notation on a staff without clef or key signature. Afterwards it is sung with solfa syllables, thus, learning the intervals in an analytical way. The point of departure is the typical child call with a falling minor third, i.e. **so-mi** followed by **so-la**. Other aspects, as mentioned in 3.4.8, also point to the fact that the target group with the first two books, at least, is the very young child. Even though the books are without any foreword or introduction this is obvious. For the purpose of a music literacy programme for all age groups this series cannot be considered in the component for developing the pitch and key aspects in sight singing.

- iv. **Rees, E.** *Pathway to Music Reading: A Sight Reader for Schools / 'n Handleiding vir die Lees van Musiek: Bladles vir Skole.* Series.

See 3.4.8 for a discussion of the complete series.

For the purpose of a general acquaintance with solfa and applying this in a few keys, using elementary rhythms, the series suffices. Also the format contributes in serving this purpose. Thus, for example, in general music classes in the primary school the set can be quite suitable. The order of learning new intervals in the scale is well planned and works well for the average learner. Additionally, the simplicity of the set as a whole might make it attractive and accessible for the less informed music educator. This involves the straight-forward appearance of the books, inside and outside, with exercises progressing not too fast, much repetition, and eventually concluding with exercises which are and should appear uncomplicated. However, the lack of any accompanying explanations might necessitate some educators seeking information.



This series provides an excellent general background for learners who continue with the proposed *Music Literacy* programme.

- v. **Wiseman, H. and Northcote, S.** *Singing at Sight: A Handbook for Soloists and Choir Members.*

See 3.4.8 for a discussion of the complete series.

As mentioned elsewhere (3.2.1 and 3.2.8) and as also seen in the tables, the qualities necessary for learning solfa and for singing solfa in various keys are lacking in this book. Nevertheless, the easy, brief and pleasant way in which solfa and keys are explained and combined is worth taking note of. This book can be placed at the disposal of learners for additional reference; especially for the faster learners who will benefit and will not become confused with a different approach, this book can be useful.

- vi. **Wright, C.** *The Step Scheme in Music Exercise. Series.*

See 3.4.8 for a discussion of the complete set.

Although some requirements are met, as seen in the tables in 3.4.3, the omission of clefs and key signatures in a third of the exercises of the set, causes this component to be inappropriate for the initial phase. Mainly as a result of this serious shortcoming, the first book cannot be recommended. Due to the slow progression of new rhythms in book 2, learners can concentrate on pitch and keys. For this reason and because of some other positive qualities, as seen in the tables, it can be utilized where additional material is needed in this respect. The exercises cannot be seen as melodies. In book 3 several items are combined, i.e. various rhythms, some new keys, chromaticism and modulations. The short introductory interval exercises in semibreves without rhythms before every new pitch or key item, should be regarded as preparation for the subsequent melodic exercises. Much repetition and thus initiative and self-discipline are needed to benefit from the interval exercises. As chromaticism and modulations do not quite fall in the basic requirements of a music literacy programme, book 3 can be used as supplementary material towards the end of the programme for learners who need additional challenges.

### 3.4.3 Sight Singing: Melodies

i. **Crowe, E., Lawton, A. and Whittaker, W.G.** *The Folk-Song Sight Singing Series.*

The compilers/editors of this series summarize it as follows:

'A collection of Folk Tunes of many countries, carefully graded for schools and colleges, with notes and advice as to use. In all cases phrasing and expression marks are added, and the origin of the tune stated' (Crowe *et al* 1961: outside back cover).

For all learners, but especially for choir singers, who are acquainted with or who are in the process of studying solfa, the series can be quite useful and enjoyable. These 834 folk-songs are arranged in a systematic order regarding rhythms and solfa pitching. The practicality of the series is worth mentioning. All printing might be too small for younger learners. Nevertheless, the division of the tunes in ten books and the format of each book, cause them to be affordable and easy to handle. The eleventh and twelfth books are of no significance here. They consist of a collection of previous items given completely in solfa, thus rhythm included. In the first ten books clear and simple information and advice can assist the user. Some users might find the detailed phrasing and interpretation marks a nuisance. Others can benefit from them as examples to learn from. The same list of contents of new items in all books appears on the back page of each book. This facilitates the selection of any specific choices. Even though no South African indigenous tunes are included, the wide range of nationalities presented here offers an interesting variety, also for local users.

ii. **Egmond, M.** *Van't Blad Zingen. Met Rhythme. Part II.*

See 3.4.8 for a discussion of the set.

As briefly mentioned in 3.4.8, Egmond's set is regarded here as being by far, musically and educationally, the most appropriate set for its purpose. For the purpose of music literacy, Egmond's framework and some other qualities were followed. However, an altogether more basic and expanded initial phase is needed. The exercises need to progress gradually in difficulty, eventually up to the level of Egmond's beginning. For the purpose of music literacy, Egmond's melodies lack the much needed sufficient basic material.



Similar to the case with Egmond's melody dictation, the idea of alternation of major and minor exercises cannot be applied in the initial phase of music literacy. Melody sight singing should be experienced as soon as learners are basically acquainted with solfa and rhythm reading. The satisfaction which melody singing provides is always a strong motivation as they experience some of the outcomes. For this reason the initial melodies should be in all ways as easy and thus as elementary as possible. Egmond's book serves as an ideal follow-up for such a book. The only shortcoming in this book is the lack of two-part singing exercises. The importance of this need is described in 4. Conventions no. 13. This aspect necessitates the use of additional two-part material.

iii. **Ghezso, M.A.** *Solfège, Ear Training, Rhythm, Dictation and Music Theory: A Comprehensive Course.*

See 3.4.8 for a discussion of the entire course.

Although some individual melodies can be selected, the majority of them cannot be recommended for a music literacy programme, for the following reasons:

- As mentioned in 3.4.8, the number of new items per lesson as well as the order of introducing them are questionable for the purpose of any introductory course. One example is the new material treated in lesson 10:

The entire bass clef, which is already far too much for one lesson, together with the dot and tie of the minim and crotchet, as well as triple time, are all introduced and directly applied in the sight singing melodies and also in melody dictation.

- Almost from the beginning the melodies are in instrumental style, i.e. they contain leaps in fast moving passages and also other intervals which are not easy singable, thus not vocally natural and comfortable. Additionally, the range is mostly beyond that of the average voice. Singing in a minor key, already from the fourth lesson onwards, might be playable with instruments but is not easy to sing.
- Every melody needs much practising with guidance. This does not serve any purpose in sight singing in a music literacy programme.

The melodies are nevertheless interesting and they prepare learners for the more unusual keys and styles in certain musics. For this reason, as mentioned in 3.4.8, these melodies are recommended for learners furthering their studies, who need specifically to become acquainted with modal, chromatic and atonal systems.

- iv. **McLachlan, P.** *Fun with Notes/Notepret: Handleiding vir die Lees van Musieknotasie.* Series.

See 3.4.8 for a discussion of the complete series.

As mentioned in 3.4.2, this series cannot be considered just like that in a music literacy programme. It focusses on the primary school child, is for general music classes, and some text and tunes seem outdated in the twenty-first century. In various ways it is thus not suitable for a music literacy programme which serves all age groups. These books, however, seem still to be available in some schools, shops and with private educators. It is therefore worth recommending the fine collection of folk tunes from various origins, which can be selected from books 3 to 5. The text, which is all in Afrikaans or English, can even be skipped and the melodies sung on solfa.

- v. **Rees, E.** *Pathway to Music Reading: A Sight Reader for Schools / 'n Handleiding vir die Lees van Musiek: Bladles vir Skole.* Series.

See 3.4.8 for a discussion of the complete series.

In this series the sight singing melodies do not feature strongly, compared to other sight singing books and series. This concerns all original exercises in the books, even though some have typical melodic qualities such as balanced fore and answering phrases, ending on suitable notes for implied cadences and using the necessary contrast without spoiling uniformity. The main reason for not being perceived as melodies but why they remain exercises in pitch, is because of the slow developing of the rhythm aspect in the series as discussed in 3.4.1. Some well-known melodies and extracts from western classical repertoire are included towards the end of book 3. They should give learners the musical satisfaction which they, most likely, do not experience otherwise in this series; some learners will find them quite pleasing and for others they can be enriching. These melodies, plus the two-part exercises beginning in book 1, can all contribute to music making. Unfortunately, when sung in the given keys most of them are too high; even for the high voice they are uncomfortable. The range of some melodies causes many of them not to be singable at all. Generally, they can be regarded as being too technical and instrumental and are thus not recommended as really suitable in this component.



vi. **Wiseman, H. and Northcote, S.** *Singing at Sight: A Handbook for Soloists and Choir Members.*

As mentioned in no. 3.2.8, this book is not suitable in the initial stage of music literacy for the learner with no background. However, the two groups of 24 exercises each, in simple and compound time respectively, for 'combining pitch and rhythm' serve as ideal supplementary material. Learners studying the proposed **Music Literacy** programme, who need additional challenges apart from the proposed **Sight Singing: Melodies**, can certainly benefit from these exercises. They consist of musical fore and answering phrases and they serve as fine examples of well balanced melodies. 'These exercises are progressively more difficult and should be done in the order indicated' (Wiseman, 1962:25).

vii. **Wright, C.** *The Step Scheme in Music Exercise. Series.*

See 3.4.8 for a discussion of the complete set.

As mentioned in 3.4.2 and 3.4.8, this set does not provide attractive or musical melodies. Book 1 is not recommended at all. In books 2 and 3, most of the melodic exercises can rather be regarded and used as pitch exercises. Even though they are balanced and they make musical sense, most of them do not serve the purpose of providing ideal examples and of being beautiful, enjoyable models for learners who are in the process of learning to write their own melodies. Besides, the emphasis on chromaticism in book 2 and modulations in book 3 falls beyond the basic requirements of the music literacy programme. Preparatory exercises for every new aspect are all in solfa, including rhythm reading. Seeing that this causes extra acquaintance with rhythm reading, these exercises cannot fully be utilized. Even though all preparatory exercises are well planned with gradual progression, they unfortunately do not serve the purpose of the programme. However, for learners who can cope with chromaticism and modulations without the preparatory exercises, the fine collection of extracts from classical repertoire can be a challenge which can provide some enjoyment.

### 3.4.4 Keyboard Harmony

i. **Hoek, A.** *Music Theory Workbook: Extra-curricular Music. Series.*

See 3.4.7 for a discussion of the series. It is reviewed here for the reason of offering material for a **Keyboard Harmony** component as an integral part of theoretical work.

It is understandable that experienced educators in South Africa who have been using purely theoretical material for many years, regard this series as a truly practical system. Learners are expected, from the beginning, to use the piano for locating notes in the G and F clefs and for playing chords and scales. They are instructed to clap rhythms and to sing some exercises on solfa. The educator is expected to require dictation.

When looking at the requirements for a music literacy programme this might make a good impression. However, learners are in no way assisted with piano playing, no guidance is given to educators and no material is provided for sight singing and dictation. Although there is no mention of it, it is assumed that learners can already read and play the piano basically. Nevertheless, some quite advanced playing is expected as early as grade I. Many of the applications are grouped under 'Additional Exercises'. This gives the impression that the author does not regard the keyboard and all other practical activities as essential or as an integral part of the learning material and learning process.

When taking all the above points into account, in spite of many fine qualities, the series cannot be regarded as containing a Keyboard Harmony component. It cannot be unreservedly recommended in a music literacy programme for the following reasons:

- **The theoretical approach** is still prominent in this series.
- **It is piano centred.** Thus, mainly the piano student is provided for instead of developing the skills of all learners to use the keyboard as an aid in the process of becoming music literate.
- **There are pre-conditions** for maximally benefiting from the series. Learners need already to be able to read from solfa or to receive tuition with sight singing elsewhere. They need to be able to read staff notation and play the piano basically. The educator needs to obtain a systematically compiled dictation book.



- **The harmonic** and some other aspects of dictation and **recognition are not included**. Theoretical treatment of chords and chord progressions is not always preceded by playing and not at all by listening and recognizing.

For the purpose of music literacy for the learner with no background and no skills, this series cannot be recommended in the Keyboard Harmony component.

ii. **Loeb van Zuilenburg, P.** *Gehoortoetse en Gehooropleiding: 'n Inleiding.*

The title of this book might rather have been: An Introduction to Practical Musicianship or even An Introduction to Music Literacy. Although the title indicates that this book is about 'Ear tests and Ear training', only the first of the seven chapters carries the same title. Mainly in this chapter, the traditional concepts of ear tests and ear training are treated. A broader understanding of aural development is treated throughout the book with a chapter for each component and with chapter five called 'Practical Harmony'. All aspects of music literacy, thus all components, are discussed in this book with aural development as point of departure. The text consists of well thought through practical ideas resulting from much experience. Valuable advice and background gained from this contributes to forming a healthy and musical approach towards music literacy and music education generally.

Chapter five of Van Zuilenburg's book served as a guide for the component of **Keyboard Harmony** in the proposed **Music Literacy** programme. Exercises were selected from the addendum in this book when compiling the material of the proposed **Keyboard Harmony** component. The initial progressions, plus a few others, were included. The more advanced harmonic progressions, variations and harmonizations of melodies had to be omitted. Instead, an introductory section, with specific ear training exercises had to be added in the proposed programme for learning scales and chords in all major and minor keys. For the requirements of the basic nature of music literacy, most of Van Zuilenburg's other exercises are not suitable. Ideally, however, learners should continue with these after completion of the **Music Literacy** programme. Van Zuilenburg's Practical Harmony is for the learner with some background and not for the total beginner. For this reason, the books on practical harmony by other authors which he recommends for additional material, were not at all considered.

Nevertheless, Van Zuilenburg's entire book is strongly recommended to all music educators. The more experienced educator will surely find this book most enriching and applicable in all components in music literacy but also in other sub-fields in music education. In this thesis, not only the component for **Keyboard Harmony** benefited from the book; many valuable ideas and conventions were taken and/or were borne in mind when creating all components in the proposed **Music Literacy** programme. Van Zuilenburg provides merely a framework and the exercises for practical harmony appear only in outline. For the purpose of music literacy in South Africa, thus for learners studying independently and for some educators with limited keyboard skills, detailed exercises had to be notated with specific guidelines and explanations.

iii. **Malan, J.D.** *Harmonie by die Klavier: 'n Inleidende Studie.*

No date is given in this book. Judging from some outdated terms, such as 'ruimtes', 'kadans' and 'verklein', it is not a recent publication. Yet, the contents are still relevant. The purpose of the book is for the secondary school learner with music as subject. It is also mentioned in the introduction and preface that harmony at the piano is necessary for such learners for 'hearing' what is written when studying the subjects harmony and composition, as well as for improvisation. 'The use of solfa is one of the most important aspects of the book for facilitating the process of hearing what is written...' (Malan, n.d.: Introduction). Learners are expected, beforehand, to be able to read solfa in major and minor keys, to know all keys, to read staff notation and play the piano at a basic level. For this reason the book cannot be recommended for learners in the initial phase of music literacy. The book's point of departure is to learn to harmonize melodies consisting only of harmonic notes. However, this remains elementary, as no non-harmonic notes, no modulations and no harmonic rhythms are treated. The order of introducing chords on the various degrees and of cadences and other basic progressions, is not agreed with. Nevertheless, the book might be of value, provided learners receive additional practical exercises. In spite of the possibility of being useful for its purpose, the following objections remain:

- Even though it begins with totally basic information of chords, the book **does not provide** the necessary systematic **repetition** or imprinting exercises for becoming practically acquainted with all aspects of chords in the various keys before commencing with progressions.



- The way in which harmony rules are conveyed is mainly prescriptive with **few or no explanations or justifications**.
- Important **information is often omitted**, such as
  - explanation of figuring of chords,
  - mentioning of passing chords falling on weak beats,
  - why and when the third of VI is doubled.
- Exceptions to principles/rules often occur without reason.
- There are several **mistakes in the examples**, according to the given rules and also to what is generally not allowed.
- There is **not always logic** in the order and treatment of items, e.g. in chapter eight, which is called Inversions, this practice is discussed while already in chapter six the cadential  $\frac{6}{4}$  is introduced.
- **Instructions are not always clear**. This might cause confusion for, especially, those who do not play the piano.
- **Voice-leading and the doubling of appropriate notes are not priorities**.
- Several **learning principles are often neglected**. For this reason, especially, the specific requirements for music literacy are not met.

These objections are another reason why learners are not recommended to use this book without already having a basic understanding of harmony and harmonic progressions. Even as a subject on secondary school level, guidance is needed when using this book, for benefiting from it and not being confused by the above-mentioned aspects.

iv. **Shumway, S.N.** *Harmony and Ear Training at the Keyboard*.

For its purpose, this programme can just be recommended. There is no need for discussing all its merits here. In the preface Shumway expounds the value and need of harmony and ear training at the keyboard. This information is illuminating for any user. It is also an indication of Shumway's thinking and therefore, to a great extent, of the

contents of the programme. His aim with this book is 'to provide an organized set of teaching-learning materials which survey the subject of harmony in a logical, concise, and hopefully enjoyable manner' (Shumway, 1980: viii). Due to its versatility he regards the piano as indispensable for any musician, not only as a performing medium but, as with this programme, 'as an everyday tool' (Shumway, 1980: 3). 'It is this utilitarian function of the piano which is developed in this book.'

In the first chapter, called 'Keyboard Orientation', Shumway begins with basic 'pitch-making' and five-finger position exercises. However, he states in the preface:

'All that is required as preparation for this programme of study is an understanding of the fundamentals of tonal music – rhythm and meter, intervals, scales and key signatures. Some familiarity with the piano keyboard is also desirable...' (Shumway, 1980: viii).

These requirements prevent Shumway's creditable programme from being considered for the **Keyboard Harmony** component of any music literacy programme. Additionally, without mentioning it, he takes the learner's ability to sing from sight, for granted. Nevertheless, investigating the book brought confirmation in this thesis for the proposed **Keyboard Harmony** component in music literacy. The aural point of departure, the need of several other specific items, but especially the entire outlook coincides with that of the proposed programme.

v. **Van Wyk, C.** *First Year Keyboard Harmony: A Basic Primer.*

This book was developed for the first-year student at tertiary level in South Africa, assuming that some students will be above this level and others might be far below. The exercises are spread over 24 lessons, including tests. Van Wyk states that a keyboard laboratory is indispensable when using this primer in a group situation. He also refers the student throughout to two additional books for ancillary exercises: one on improvisation and one for analysis.

Even though Van Wyk's book was encountered long after the proposed programme in this thesis was finalized, it is interesting that this book concurs, to a great extent as regards content, with the **Keyboard Harmony** component of the proposed programme. The main difference lies in the **Keyboard Introduction** section of the proposed programme which is intended for the total beginner for learning all basics by way of the



keyboard. In his 'Note to the Student', Van Wyk states the need of being already acquainted with a certain amount of theory, including a working knowledge of

major and minor scales, key signatures, time signatures, accidentals, clefs (treble and bass), intervals, triads.

Thus, no time is allotted and no exercises provided for practising these basics specifically on the keyboard. However, all basics are explained throughout the book. It is done thoroughly, but briefly and clearly and an informal language is used which suits the purpose of this book very well.

The main objection to Van Wyk's book is the use of only keys with a few sharps or flats, the so-called '**easy keys**'. Additionally, he never treats the **key system as a whole** as it occurs in the circle of fifths. These omissions do not contribute to making students aware of the full spectrum of keys and their relationships. The natural preparation for modulations is therefore also lacking.

Another objection to this book is the lack of apposite **ear development** while progressing with harmony. There should at least have been continued reference to the important aural aspect while treating keyboard harmony. For the above-average student with a good ear or with good background and already a developed inner ear, this might come naturally. For the majority, however, and for the total beginner in a music literacy programme, the auditive conception is of utmost importance in the initial phase. This shortcoming isolates keyboard harmony from the rest of the components of a music literacy programme.

Although this primer aims at approximately the same accomplishments as the proposed programme for music literacy, it cannot be approved of for this purpose without recommendation of some continual additional material and exercises.

### 3.4.5 Keyboard Reading and Playing

- i. **Bastien, J. and J.S.** *Piano Lessons. Primer Level. The Bastien Piano Library. The Older Beginner Piano Course. Level 1. The Bastien Older Beginner Library.*

The Bastien 'course' offers a wide variety of beginner's books for various purposes. At times the Bastien books have been widely used locally. However, only two of the books

can be singled out for serving in a music literacy programme and for being evaluated in the tables. These two meet several of the requirements as seen in the tables in 3.3.5 and can therefore be fruitfully applied in the keyboard component, albeit with reservations.

The various sets are probably called a 'course' because of the accompanying background, additional learning matter and theoretical work which form an integral part of the piano tutor. This appears almost an attempt towards a music literacy programme, yet the essential components for sight singing and ear development through recognition are lacking altogether. Naturally the main purpose with this 'course' is to learn to play the piano and not to use piano skills for serving as one of the components of music literacy. Objections to the recommendation of the 'course' are the following:

- It is too **costly**. The tutor, i.e. 'Primer Level', comprises at least four books and so does each of the following levels. Essentials are spread over these books in such a way that no one can be omitted. The four books are for 'method', 'theory', 'technique', and 'solos'. 'Note speller', 'sight reading' and 'flashcards' are also constantly referred to, even in the 'Older Beginner Piano Course'. Therefore to benefit fully, all seven should be obtained, and this is only for the primer level, which normally lasts for a very short time. A tutor is not reused once basic reading and playing are progressing. Such a primer set is not an investment, thus not for using permanently. The entire set might cost more than some keyboards and definitely more than some other instruments. For local circumstances this price cannot be expected from learners.
- While progressing with a book, learners are constantly referred to other books in this set. When educators/learners decide to use only the 'Lessons', they might miss the enjoyment of pieces, etc. Some educators/learners regard these references, which regularly necessitate the purchasing of another book in the series, as being for commercial reasons. This creates **negative attitudes** towards the books.
- The compulsory use of a set is **impractical**. In a music literacy programme, where this is but one of several components, the need for a single brief book is even greater. Besides, educators usually prefer to use more than one book from different authors concurrently in the initial phase. Afterwards, when continuing with the next phase, space is needed for storing sets instead of single books which are used only once.



- Generally, Bastien's books contain too many **unnecessary additions**, i.e. writings (for the educator), explanations, filling-in exercises, illustrations, 'reviews', keyboard pictures and theoretical information (duplication of theory). This happens before and on the pages with music. In fact, in 'Piano Lessons Primer Level', piano playing from the grand staff begins only after the middle of the book instead of on the first page. This is surely not what any beginner is looking for.
- With most preparatory exercises a **single staff** is used. Especially in the initial phase, the combined staff image with rests in the one staff is preferable.
- The entire approach cannot be agreed with. It is one of being extremely **prescriptive** for learners as well as for educators. Only for the independent learner are these many instructions necessary. Even the less informed educator does not need all the detailed directions.
- Names of keyboard **notes are learnt one by one** instead of in pairs, groups or patterns and through easy practical associations. Their methods of learning notes are not the quickest and safest way.
- Their way of **learning notes in the F clef** by beginning with the second space C is questionable for two reasons: firstly, it causes much confusion when having to associate simultaneously the same series of notes for the two clefs with totally different lines and spaces. Middle C as common point of departure in the two clefs simplifies everything. Secondly, in this way they begin with the weak part of the left hand. It is technically extremely difficult for the weak fingers, when the strong fingers have not yet been developed. This causes much frustration.
- **Additional parts for educators** are often added. This seems to compensate for unattractive or dull material. Learners' exercises should always be interesting, musical and pleasant when being practised on their own. In fact, learners should constantly be reminded of attentive listening to their own playing and they should enjoy doing so.

The two books which can be used as additional material, but definitely not as tutors in the beginning, are: 'Piano Lessons, Level 1' and 'The Older Beginner Piano Course, Level 1'. Learners should already be acquainted with note reading around middle C, and the five-

finger position should already have been established. The same objections, as for the rest of the books in this 'course', apply to them.

However, some specific qualities, different from the others, make them useful in a music literacy programme. They are:

Both books begin and continue with broken chords and thus with chordal playing. This is needed in a music literacy programme. 'Piano Lessons, Level 1' will be suitable for the younger beginner. For learners in their teens and older, and especially for the adult student, 'The Older Beginner Piano Course' provides a fine collection of pieces including preparatory studies. Through some of the preparatory studies in both books, learners gain ideas for making their own accompaniments. Additionally, the studies can replace some of the material found in Burnam's 'A Dozen a Day' for the initial phase. Educators, who normally add 'A Dozen a Day', to whatever tutor(s) they use, will most likely find they can omit Burnam's 'Book 1', when using one of these two Bastiens. Another advantage lies in the use of various keys. New keys are wisely introduced with the necessary preparatory short studies and in the order of the circle of fifths.

For the above reasons, yet with the reservations mentioned, the two books in the 'course' should be taken note of.

ii. **Burnam, E.M.** *Ministeps to Music: Edna-Mae Burnam's Piano Course: With Close-Phased Grading. Series.*

*A Dozen a Day: Pre-Practice Technical Exercises for the Piano to be done Each Day Before Practicing. Series.*

The 'Ministeps' series of six books was designed, as mentioned in the foreword of Phase 1, with five- and six-year old piano pupils in mind. For obvious reasons this series was therefore not considered when developing the music literacy programme. Yet, it has fine qualities for serving its purpose. It has been and still is used by educators across the country and is available in music bookshops. A background in this series can be beneficial to learners continuing with the music literacy programme. For these reasons the series is evaluated in the tables and is briefly discussed as follows:



- As the title and subtitle indicate, the books **progress very slowly** and systematically. This is usually too slow for the average learner following the music literacy programme.
- **Chord playing is not a priority** in the order of learning items as is the case with music literacy. It begins only in the third book, thus after the introducing of octave playing, chromatic changes, crossing over of hands, use of quavers, etc.
- **Pieces and studies are not very attractive**, due to the limited variety of rhythms, range and the lack of chords in the first two books. For this reason an accompaniment for the educator is needed to enliven learners' playing.
- From the very beginning, the **grand staff is wisely used throughout**, also in all illustrations, exercises and even in all pitch games.
- **Writing**, explanations and theoretical information are **limited to the essentials** and pictures are quite small. In this way the attention is not distracted and space is not wasted.
- **Note values are counted** instead of using the rhythmically safer, more musical and educationally better French time names. The word syllables of songs are often not correct and accurate presentations of note values. Thus, the time aspect is not treated in the best way.

Another series by the same author which needs to be mentioned, is 'A Dozen a Day'. This is not a tutor but a system for developing technique through musical concepts. Thus, technical exercises are practised in musical patterns or ideas. This supplementary material is in general use by piano educators across the country. The first three books are strongly recommended for additional reinforcement, refinement and extension of the basic keyboard skills treated in a music literacy programme.

iii. **Feldtmann, E.** *Noot vir Noot*. Series.

This series is thorough and primarily technical. Apart from the negative evaluation in 3.3.5, according to the requirements of music literacy, some points need to be singled out:

- The book progresses absolutely **stepwise and smoothly**. Throughout, only one new item at a time is introduced. It is then approached and treated in various ways before adding the next item.
- Resulting from the particular way of handling new material, **sufficient repetition** for reading as well as for technical purposes is provided, apart from the additional book for initial finger exercises. Reading together with technique is the main purpose with this series, as is also mentioned in the introductions to each book.

Despite these points and some other positive qualities, the following aspects result in the series not being conducive to a music literacy programme:

- Even though all exercises make musical sense, in general they cannot be described as **musically satisfactory**.
- The **printing** is far too large. This causes everything to be spread out too much for observing or grasping the whole. Even for young learners the printing is unsuitable. It is appropriate only for the weak-sighted.
- The **illustrations** might amuse only very young learners. Their associations do not contribute to faster learning of note patterns or any musical concepts.
- It **progresses** very slowly. By the end of the second book it is limited rhythmwise to semibreves, minims and crotchets in simple time. Only in the last few exercises of book 2, are one flat and one sharp added as accidentals and not yet as key signatures.
- The lack of any **chordal playing** might cause learners' playing to sound unnecessarily thin or dry, and not musically satisfactory. By failing to utilize this important pianistic feature in the initial phase, some of the basic requirements for music literacy are not met.

Even though this series is not without merit it cannot be recommended for learners studying music literacy primarily.



- iv. **Rodgers, I. and Phillips, L.** *A First Piano Book for Little Jacks and Jills: A Beginners' Book, Specially Planned for Children of Pre-School Age*

**Rodgers, I.**

*A Second Piano Book for Little Jacks and Jills*

This series cannot at all be considered for using in any music literacy programme. It is aimed only at the very young beginner. These books might appear old-fashioned; yet they are still found in music shops and seem to be still in use by some experienced teachers in South Africa. Apart from evaluating the books in the tables in 3.3.5, the particular reasons for not recommending this series need to be described. They are as follows:

- The use of a single staff for piano notation often through the 'First Book' cannot be agreed with.
- The childlike illustrations, pictures for colouring in, headings and text for singing, do not contribute to any useful associations. All the additional matter only distracts the attention of learners.
- Except for the very young ones, the general appearance of the outside and inside of the books might just put learners off.
- The exercises are not systematic in all ways. Often more than one item is introduced at the same time. Sometimes exercises are technically not feasible for the average beginner.
- Additional material for reading and for technique needs to accompany this series. Thus, this series cannot be used on its own when treated as a piano tutor.

For the purpose of a music literacy programme, these shortcomings plus the low scoring shown in the tables with requirements contribute to its unsuitability.

- v. **Rolfe, W.** *A Child's Primer / 'n Eerste Musiekboekie: 'n Moderne Manier van Klavieronderrig vir die Jong [Oudjies] Gebaseer op die Storie van Tannie Middel C.*

As with Rodgers' series, Rolfe's book is intended for the very young learner and is also still in circulation in spite of several new, perhaps much more updated tutors on

the market. The Afrikaans translation might have helped to bring this about. Even so, it can definitely not be recommended as a component in a music literacy programme, also not for young learners, as can be seen in the tables, in 3.4.5. The following detail needs to be added:

- Often **word accents** in the Afrikaans text do not coincide with metre accents in the music (e.g. on p. 16). Some are even wrong and some are not consistent in the same piece (e.g. on p. 19).
- The progression is **not at all systematic**, e.g.
  - The **extension of the five-finger position** happens far too soon, long before the basic position is established.
  - Introduction of **new keys** comes too soon and mostly without any immediate repetition.
  - More than one, sometimes a few, **new aspects** are treated in one piece without sufficient, and sometimes no repetition.
- Articulation and other **interpretation marks** do not only confuse the beginner but also complicate matters.
- Instead of French time names, **counting is done in figures**, which is an unreliable system and regarded by many educators as outdated.
- Many unnecessary explanations, text for singing, information on theoretical matters, illustrations, etc. **distract the attention**. Almost the first half of the book consists of written explanations (in small print and most probably for the educator) and notated examples, often with the caption: 'Do not play'. This is followed by 22 short pieces covering all the basics plus more aspects.

From these remarks it is evident that additional reading and technical material is needed if this tutor is used, whatever the purpose might be with this book. It can thus not be used independently and does not promote independence in any way.



vi. **Schaum, J.W.** *Piano Course: Leading to the Mastery of the Instrument. Series.*

For the purpose of a piano tutor in a music literacy programme, regardless of age of learners, the following aspects prevent the series from being suitable:

- Many **unnecessary items** appear on the exercise pages, i.e. all kinds of sketches, pictures for colouring and other illustrations, written explanations, information on theory and diagrams, to mention but a few. Numbering of beats, unnecessary fingering, text for singing and other signs appear even in, on and around the staves. These additional items do not contribute to visual learning, but rather distract the attention. The impression might be created of being busy and complicated, some might cause confusion and all together they delay speed of progress. The childlike illustrations might also have a negative effect on the attitude of learners in higher grades and of students.
- Some **other aspects**, which cannot be agreed with, eventually also hamper speed of progress. It is, however, not necessary to discuss all of them here. The series, in particular Pre A book, does not meet several of the requirements in a music literacy programme, as seen in the tables in 3.3.5.
- The main objection, however, is the **purpose of the series**. These books do not guide learners of various ages directly and speedily by way of **keyboard harmony** to:
  - reading of staff notation,
  - developing of technical skills; chord playing in particular, begins only in the latter part of the first book,
  - understanding and learning of totalities, e.g. all keys,
  - promoting of immediate independence.

When skills are developed this way, it enables learners to make their own arrangements, reductions, simplifications, transcriptions and harmonizations. Aiming at these outcomes is not found in the books in spite of many other positive aspects.

The series also has been translated into Afrikaans. It has been, and is still, in use countrywide. Many learners benefit from the books, due to some fine qualities when treated for a different purpose. The series is readily available and contains useful

additional material for sight reading, for acquaintance with simplified classical compositions and for serving as examples of melodies with simple accompaniments.

vii. **Thompson, J.** *John Thompson's Easiest Piano Course*. Parts I and II.

*John Thompson's Melody all the Way!: Piano Tuition on a Tuneful Basis*. Grade I.

In many ways this series resembles Schaum's 'Piano Course', discussed in 3.4.5 vi. Almost all qualities which prevent the first book in each series from being recommended at all, are the same.

- In Thompson's 'Part One' the **two hands never play together**, where Schaum uses at least the cadences of the last third of his 'Pre A book' as well as a few other instances for putting the hands together.
- **Chord playing is postponed** even longer than in Schaum's series. It begins in the latter part of the second book with only a few instances. However, in the third book the broken chord and the Alberti bass accompaniment are introduced.
- As with Schaum, it is also regarded here as unnecessary to discuss all aspects in Thompson's series which cannot be agreed with and which, eventually, **hamper the speed** in the learning process.
- Perhaps the main difference in the two books is the **accompaniments for the teacher** in Thompson's first book. They go with most of the folk tunes and with some technical exercises. Thompson might have felt them necessary for making the exercises more interesting, for compensating for the lack of any chordal playing in 'Part One' and thus for promoting pleasant music making.
- As is the case with Schaum, the main objection lies in the **purpose of Thompson's series**. It is aimed only at the quite young beginner and only as a piano tutor.

Although the series appears only in English, it is also in general use in South Africa. The folk tunes and simplified pieces from classical music in Thompson's 'Grade I' are also recommended here as additional reading material and as examples for making own accompaniments.



### 3.4.6 Music Dictation

#### i. Egmond, M. *600 Dictees*.

This book for melody dictation is divided into twelve chapters with thirty exercises each. Positive characteristics are the following:

- The rhythms of melodies remain quite plain, with only one new rhythm aspect per chapter. This quality makes melodies sound natural and easy to remember and to recollect.
- Exercises become progressively and very gradually more difficult, regarding intervals.
- All exercises consist of four bars. This prevents them from being long memory exercises and learners can hear, remember and reproduce every exercise as a whole.
- All melodies are original. They are pleasant and all make musical sense.
- All keys are practised. They are treated in chromatic order, alternating major and minor keys. Learners are thus not restricted to only the few 'easy' keys as is often the approach in all kinds of exercises in various books and systems.

Egmond's book is not intended for beginners, as described on the introductory pages. It is specifically compiled for the student at tertiary level, preparing for examinations in a vocational course. This book is, however, strongly recommended as an ideal book for its purpose, thus as a follow-up of the dictation component in a music literacy programme. For this reason '600 Dictees' needs to be preceded by a preparatory dictation book designed with the same approach and in the same style. It should contain exercises, first in basic rhythms and melodic patterns in 'easy' keys, and then with elementary four-bar melodies first in all major keys, followed by elementary melodies in all minor keys.

In the proposed *Music Literacy* programme the author attempted to design this much needed preparatory book as part of the **Music Dictation** component.

ii. **Ghezzo, M.A.** *Solfège, Ear Training, Rhythm, Dictation and Music Theory: A Comprehensive Course.*

The reasons why this book, and especially also the dictation section, cannot be used for a music literacy programme are given in 3.4.8. As discussed there, the purpose and approach are not at all suitable. Even though all aspects are treated systematically and thoroughly, the various ear training and dictation exercises proceed far too fast. This is apart from the musical background needed by learners for following Ghezzo's course. Nevertheless, as with the other sections in the lessons of this course, the ear training and dictation exercises are useful in a follow-up for a music literacy programme. In such an advanced course the initial exercises can serve as a run-through for revision and for confirmation, followed by the rest for furthering dictation skills.

iii. **Schouten, H.** *Eenstemmige Muziekdictees.* Set

This set of melody dictation exercises consists of two parts. The first one comprises 150 exercises and precedes the second one containing 100 exercises. Schouten's approach, as described in the foreword, amounts to the following:

Well balanced sentences with latent harmonic background, some attention to church modes and to polyphonic structure of melodies, with ranges far beyond the normal vocal compass, and with some notated in the F-clef. Schouten claims that the degree of difficulty is so well prepared in the exercises, that learners progress smoothly from simple to advanced exercises.

The main objection is the length of exercises. When asked, such exercises have to be played and repeated in shorter sections. Even for advanced learners who might be experienced in memorizing long phrases, these are not feasible. Learners are thus not expected to write a melody as a whole. If they have to be divided anyway, the melodies should rather have been constructed as shorter complete sentences, i.e. two-bar melodic patterns for the initial phase and eventually not more than four-bar sentences. For the purpose of music literacy, thus for learners usually with limited background, dictation needs to begin with elementary rhythm and melodic patterns, but always as a whole. This is the main reason for not recommending the set.



Another less serious objection is the order and kind of new items in the first book, namely:

- The following are applied far too soon: The F clef, the interval of a seventh, some chromatic notes and  $\frac{6}{4}$  time are all introduced long before  $\frac{6}{8}$  time, before the dotted crotchet, the dotted quaver and the other common semiquaver patterns.
- Not all keys are practised. Not more than three sharps and flats are mainly used. Only towards the end of the first book, a few exercises occur in keys with four sharps and flats.

The second book is for all practical reasons not applicable for a music literacy programme. The very first exercise is already far more difficult than will ever be needed for this purpose.

The first book is nevertheless strongly recommended for additional material. Exercises are pleasant, well balanced melodies with interesting twists. For some learners who need extra challenges, this book offers not only dictation; it can even, perhaps better, be used as additional sight singing material. These melodies also serve as fine models for melody writing. In the **Keyboard Harmony** section of learning sessions this material can fruitfully be applied for constructing elementary left hand accompaniments; implied harmonic background of the melodies offers ample opportunity.

iv. **Sekles, B.** *Musikdiktat: Übungsstof in Dreissig Abschnitten.*

This well-considered programme of melody dictation exercises is systematic in all ways and new aspects are introduced strictly one at a time, i.e. either rhythmically or pitchwise. The book consists of 30 sections. Each section contains 30 four-bar exercises, thus a total of 900. In every section all keys are treated in a chromatic order and with alternation of major and minor modes. The point of departure, regarding pitch, is the broken tonic chord. Other degrees in the scale are added, only one at a time in every second or fourth or sixth section. Thus, all possible combinations with that specific tone are treated and sufficient repetition and thorough reinforcement are provided before the next degree or rhythm is introduced.

Beginning recognition, and thus also dictation, with the intervals of the broken tonic chord, and not with stepwise movement, might be a possibility. This might succeed if the broken tonic chord was regularly treated in sight singing or if, more or less, the same order of

introducing new aspects was experienced in sight singing exercises. Although these exercises are not specifically attractive melodies, they always make musical sense and all of them are short balanced sentences with fore and after phrases.

The reasons why this book is not appropriate for a music literacy programme, are the following:

- Mixing major and minor keys from the very beginning is not the easiest way to introduce dictation. On the contrary, with the average learner this causes confusion and thus slows down progress. As with sight singing, a thorough foundation in major modes is needed first.
- No exercises occur in compound time. In the foreword, Sekles reasons that experience in  $\frac{2}{4}$  and  $\frac{3}{4}$  time suffices and that this can be transferred and applied in all other metres, thus without any exercise. Wisely the same reasoning is not applied when it comes to the 30 keys. The triplet is treated thoroughly and even rhythmically varied, which is surely unnecessary. Instead, the compound beat should rather have been treated directly in compound time.
- No preparatory melodic patterns or separate rhythm diction exercises are compiled or recommended.

This book has excellent qualities and the material can be fruitfully used after a music literacy programme has been completed. Sekles describes his target group as young conservatoire learners, studying music in a serious music course. Even if they are at any school level, they surely have a different background, due to a serious and well structured general music education. The purpose of this book is definitely for learners who are experienced in recognitions of various kinds and not for learners with no or a limited background who follow a music literacy programme.

v. **Warburton, A.O.** *Graded Aural Tests for all Purposes: With Suggested Methods of Working.*

As the title and subtitle indicate, this book comprises graded aural tests for all purposes. In the preface (p. xii) the two main purposes are stated; it is a course in 'ear training' but at the same time it provides material 'for the many public examinations'. For the reason of



the various British examinations, a great part of the book is focused on the specific requirements of all those examinations.

Reasons why this book is not solely suitable for the purpose of music literacy, are the following:

- The much needed elementary recognitions, as they appear in the proposed **Music Literacy** programme, are not offered as such. All of them need to be practised separately as well as in combinations, before being asked in more advanced tests. This background is lacking in the book.
- Being comprehensive for the purpose of examination requirements causes it to become roundabout when used as part of a programme. The educator needs only exercises and to-the-point guidelines in all the various sections for every learning session of the programme.
- Not all keys are treated. Even in the advanced tests, learners do not experience the complete set of major and minor keys, thus the key system as a whole.
- Learners do not participate by learning to play any exercises themselves. They experience recognitions only through the playing of an educator or through recorded tests.
- The non-pianist educator was not taken into account in the designing of the tests as stated in the tables. In fact, the book is piano centred as mentioned in the preface, p. xii. However, this approach does not prevent other instrumentalists and singers from benefiting from the tests if playable by the educator.
- Most exercises for written dictation are too long. When melodies have to be played in sections or phrases, they could just as well have been shorter. Learners should rather be expected to remember and reproduce a melody as a whole.

The educator is, nevertheless, strongly recommended to have this book to hand for the **Music Dictation** component of the proposed **Music Literacy** programme. Apart from scoring a high mark in the tables (see 3.3.6), the following qualities are worth singling out:

- Plenty of exercises, offering an interesting variety, are provided for the various kinds of recognitions, identifications and written dictations at most levels. The book can thus be used when additional material is needed, but especially for continued studies after the *Music Literacy* programme.
- The book comprises comprehensive explanations and suggested methods of working, for the educator. These can be useful for the totally uninformed educator. For others it provides confirmation and additional ideas and for some perhaps useful new approaches.

### 3.4.7 Music Theory

#### i. Cloete, S.T. *Credo. Musiekteorie Opleidingsprogram. Series.*

This is probably one of the most widely used series in South Africa. It is specifically compiled as preparation for writing UNISA theory examinations. Credo is a comprehensive programme which presents the learning matter and exercises in such a way that learners can work through them independently and at their own speed, with the minimum assistance of an educator. It accommodates the young learner in the lower grades of the primary school. For this reason the language and way of presenting information is not suitable for the adult and for secondary school learners. The progress is thorough but very slow. All aspects are always treated in the finest detail throughout the various grades, making it an extensive programme.

The following qualities prevent this programme from being used effectively as the theory component in a music literacy programme:

- All the theoretical particulars as well as some other **detail is unnecessary** in a programme where accomplishing of basic knowledge through practical skills is a priority.
- For any music literacy programme all the reading and writing of theoretical matter throughout the series is superfluous, time consuming and cumbersome. This aspect only **hampers the speed**.
- Credo is a purely theoretical programme **without any practical preparation, motivation or application**. These are crucial aspects in a music literacy programme.



- Due to the specific purpose of Credo, it focuses on the exam papers of UNISA. Learners are prepared to give written answers to questions asked in various ways. Learners following a music literacy programme need knowledge of theory mainly for practical use. This series **does not provide for such a purpose**.
- The prescriptive and childlike approach without any practical and relevant application might cause **adult and secondary school learners** to develop a **disinclination** for music theory.

For its purpose, this series is experienced by many educators as thorough and effective. Learners studying music literacy who do not mind its specific approach, learners who have time and especially those studying on their own can benefit from this programme. It should, however, be used additionally to the **Music Theory** component of the proposed **Music Literacy** programme due to the lack of practical preparation and relevant application.

ii. **Ghezzo, M.** *Solfège, Ear Training, Rhythm, Dictation and Music Theory: A Comprehensive Course.*

See 3.4.8 for a discussion of the entire course.

For all practical reasons, the component in this course called 'Theory', cannot be evaluated and reviewed like the other books/series of this component. It consists merely of new theoretical information for every lesson. This should always, in every lesson, precede the other four components, as recommended by the author (Ghezzo, 1993:4). For the purpose of a music literacy programme, receiving and learning theoretical information before any practical experiencing and without any participation of learners by way of answering orally or in writing, is not at all considered. This approach clashes with the requirements for the music literacy programme and is in conflict with the basic learning principles. Additionally, it does not even provide for the needs of any other learners for singing and playing. This is apart from the order in this course, of introducing new items: e.g. accidentals and all three kinds of the relative minors are already treated in the fourth lesson, before most basics have even been touched. Thus, due to a totally different purpose of this course, its 'Theory' component needs no further comment in this thesis.

iii. **Hoek, A.** *Music Theory Workbook: Extra-curricular Music.* Series.

This series is widely used in South Africa. As stated in the preface, it is compiled in such a way as to correlate with the syllabuses of all education departments and of the University of South Africa. Naturally, the approach is that of preparation for examinations. The series consists of, as is indicated by the title, books in which learners work, thus only filling in exercises. Even though all of this in itself is good, for the purpose of music literacy it is not a priority. As with the discussion of many excellent books in this thesis, the fine qualities for its purpose are here of no consequence. For music literacy the series is not appropriate, as is seen in the tables and for the following reasons:

- **Additional handbooks are needed.** No information or any learning material is provided even though there is continual reference to theoretical matters, keyboard knowledge and all aspects of dictation and sight singing. Therefore, various supplementary handbooks need to be obtained when using this series, which might not necessarily correlate with it in all respects.
- **Pre-acquired skills are expected.** The ability to perform the various kinds of practical activities, especially on piano and with solfa singing as preparation and application, is expected of the learners. Piano skills are also expected of the educator. This series can, thus, not be fully benefited from, without already some practical skills from both concerned.
- **The series is piano centred.** Even though, in some instances, Orff instruments or 'an available instrument' (Hoek, 1987, Gr. 2, p. 22) are mentioned and provided for in the examples, keyboard knowledge and playing is used throughout from the very beginning. Keyboard harmony is regarded, in this thesis, as an integral part of music literacy. However, initial development of basic keyboard skills for all learners should go hand in hand with theoretical knowledge. Although the stopping for guitar of the primary triads is provided in Grade 3, this series is not aimed at singers and learners of other instruments.
- **This is a package series.** Exercises and activities in each grade are grouped together and divided in weekly packages varying from 24 to 32 packages per grade. The practicality and ultimate feasibility of all activities, without an additional well structured practical musicianship programme, are questioned.



- **Items are not studied as a whole.** Thus, the logic of constructions is missed. Due to the selecting and grading of material for exam purposes, learners never receive the total image and are not expected to study or reproduce the wholes, e.g.
  - Instead of the entire circle of fifths only a few keys are treated at a time and treated in isolation.
  - Rhymes are given to remember the order of sharps and flats instead of the logic of the whole key system and the interrelationships.
  - Semitones of intervals are counted, learnt and practised instead of determining them in the context of keys.
  - The kinds of chords and chords on various degrees are treated prescriptively instead of by way of studying sound, characters and functions of chords and chord progressions.

The series is, nevertheless, certainly recommended as additional filling-in exercises in a music literacy programme due to its systematic compilation, practical approach, representative exercises covering all aspects and presentation with brief and clear instructions, stripped of unnecessary reading and writing.

iv. **Koh, T.** *New Practice in Music Theory: Based on the New Syllabus of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music.* Series.

This series is based on the theory examinations of the latest syllabus of the Royal Schools of Music. Koh's series seems to be, in some ways, an improvement on the previous series for Royal Schools, i.e. **Music Theory in Practice** by Eric Taylor, first published in 1990. There is no need here for comparisons. Only one series is discussed in the thesis as they have the same purpose and thus many similarities.

Both of them seem to be used not only by educators who enter their learners for the Royal Schools of Music. Most likely, due to many fine qualities of both, the books are purchased for various purposes, such as preparing learners for the various grades of music as a school subject in South Africa.

Koh's series is rated quite highly as seen in the tables in 3.3.7. There is thus no need for reasons here. However, some special qualities still need to be singled out, e.g.

- A keyboard picture, or sections of it, appears in the first four books. Regular reference to this picture is indispensable for learners in music literacy, especially for those without their own instruments.
- All information, explanations and instructions are given in a clear, simple and understandable way for everybody, even for very young learners. The books succeed in supplying much background information clearly, comprehensively but briefly, e.g. in grade four, the tables for ornaments.

The series can be recommended for additional material but with some reservations. The main reasons, and thus aspects, why the educator is warned to be careful when using the books, or even parts of it, are the following:

- The counting of semitones for determining intervals, is regarded not only as unmusical but may become a bad habit with learners who do not yet know their keys.
- No aural reference and no playing take place. A purely theoretical approach is thus cultivated.
- In the various grades, inevitably, topics are always treated partially. However, learners should not be deprived of experiencing the wholes, e.g. learners should be made aware of the entire circle of fifths while only three sharps and flats are treated. This shortcoming is found with several topics in the series.
- All books in the series are expensive compared to local material.
- Even though application of, analysis of and examples from beautiful classical literature can contribute to pleasant associations and practical experiences, the need for some pieces from South African musics prevents the exercises from being fully relevant.

v. **Minnaar-Van Niekerk, T.** *Music Theory: Manual for Grades I-V. Series.*

This series might seem outdated when taking into account the changes in the new syllabus of UNISA, for which it was initially compiled. However, due to many fine qualities which meet the requirements for music literacy as reflected in the tables, it was used in the proposed programme as a model for the **Music Theory** component. Even though the various grades do not particularly tie in with the specific grades of any of the current



examination systems, this series provides learners with a solid foundation in music theory, needed in and suited for any syllabus or examination system. For preparation of any chosen examination the particular additional items, such as prescribed pieces, can be brought in afterwards. The specific kinds of questions of some systems and required ways of answering them can be exercised through their specimen papers.

The main objection to accepting the series is the lack of extracts from existing literature. The need to justify each item and clarify the purpose of every exercise is not addressed through relevant pieces in this series. For motivation, enjoyment, upliftment, enrichment and association in the learning process, examples from, reference to, application and analysis of specific music are a strong need. Songs, pieces or extracts from well-known or popular music, from various cultures but especially also from classical literature, should be included.

Some of the other less crucial shortcomings are:

- Even though the key system as a whole is continually brought to attention through the triangles of key signatures, the key relations and key derivations need to be presented more clearly and easily through **the circle of fifths**.
- Although primary triads are introduced early enough, **acquaintance with chords** is not immediately pursued in the various keys and ways.
- **Introduction of the relative minor** keys does not happen by way of the submediant degree or triad; the unmusical counting of semitones cannot be agreed with.

Also in the later phases more aspects need to be adapted, items introduced and exercises added to be fully effective for the purpose of music literacy. However, the framework, structure and general appearance of the series, including the way of providing information and explanations, the straightforward filling-in exercises with brief and simple questions without waste of time or space, serve as an ideal model for the **Music Theory** component in music literacy.

vi. **Schreuder, H.** *UNISA Theory of Music Workbook. Series.*

This is a recent publication but already widely used in South Africa. The series is specifically compiled by UNISA for UNISA theory examinations. Questions are asked and instructions given throughout all grades in a brief and simple way. Even for young

children all should be clear. The series consists of a book for each grade with filling-in exercises of various kinds for every item. This eventually amounts to exercises in abundance, ensuring safe covering of all aspects as prescribed by UNISA. Application and analysis of examples from the classical literature are included from the very beginning.

For the purpose of music literacy, nevertheless, there are several objections:

- **Additional material is needed** for providing the necessary information. Only basic elements of notation and guidelines to music terminology are included.
- There is no reference to nor are there examples taken from indigenous musics in South Africa. Even though theory is from the beginning and throughout integrated with examples from the classical literature, the **relevance and association** for learners of music literacy with **familiar material are lacking**.
- **The point of departure is purely theoretical**. The author of this series recommends educators and learners to play the examples and states in the preface of Grade 3: 'Teachers may also endeavour to integrate practical musicianship [with] the teaching of theory... It is of utmost importance that all music theory components be taught by means of examples in sound.' However, no material, no guidelines and no reference to suitable additional material for developing the practical skills, are provided.
- **The approach** in learning theory, and in particular harmony, **is too technical and too time consuming** for a music literacy programme, for example: numerous written exercises are given for separate chords on all degrees in all different ways before commencing with the first cadence.

For a programme where basic knowledge and skills need to be acquired speedily for enabling learners to play and sing while promoting independence, this series is not suitable. However, due to excellent qualities, especially the integrating with literature, the series is definitely recommended for purely theoretical examinations.



### 3.4.8 Combination of Components

- i. **Egmond, M.** *Van't Blad Zingen: Zonder Rhythme*. Part I.  
*Met Rhythme*. Part II.

Of all sight singing books and sets, this one is by far the best in all ways, for its purpose. For this reason it was mostly used as example when designing the material for the two components, **Sight Singing: Keys and Melodies** of the *Music Literacy* programme. The set has been in use by several institutes in various European countries and also countrywide in South Africa, for the past few decades.

The general framework has been found suitable for the purpose of music literacy. Thus finer points, specifically needed in music literacy material, were changed. These points necessitated the creating of totally new learning matter in both components. These components are discussed in 3.4.2 and 3.4.3. Most criticism points to the fact that this set is aimed at another target group for which it is actually ideal. Several aspects, regarded as shortcomings for music literacy, serve as necessary challenges and opportunity for creative thinking for the specific purpose of this set.

- ii. **Ghezso, M.A.** *Solfège, Ear Training, Rhythm, Dictation and Music Theory: A Comprehensive Course*.

This is the only book, claiming to be a complete course, which the author found worthwhile to consider for the music literacy purpose. It is a package programme and consists of 51 lessons. The lessons are grouped in four parts, according to tone systems, and called: Tonal system, Chromatic system, Modal system and Atonal system. Every lesson is divided into five sections which are called: Theory, Ear training, Rhythm, Solfège and Dictation. In her recommendations to the instructor, Ghezso states:

‘The order of ear training and rhythmic exercises is flexible, but they should come after the theoretical explanation of the topic of each lesson’ (Ghezso 1993:4).

Apart from the real purpose, the main objection against the book is its approach. The course is designed in such a way that all practical work is dependent on and needs to be preceded by that specific theoretical treatment. This amounts to learners merely receiving information, rules and instructions. They are not given the opportunity nor the guidance to make their own derivations from practice, to come to conclusions themselves, nor,

eventually, to attempt to make their own definitions. Learners do not even participate in the learning process of theory by doing any written exercises, analyzing or applying new information. Additionally, the new theoretical information is presented in such a way that those with no or little background in western music, cannot easily relate to it.

Even though lessons consist mainly of practical and no written activities, the keyboard is totally eliminated. In this way learners are restrained from experiencing the note patterns with successions of tones and semitones and the resulting keys with triads and harmonic progressions in a concrete manner. The basic/ideal learning principle, especially in music, for implementing all possible senses, i.e. visual, aural and touch organs, is altogether neglected. This learning is done in a theoretical way and with sight singing.

Ghezzi does not specify her target group. However, in her recommendations to the student, she states:

‘This book has been written for those who are willing to undertake the long and intricate journey of becoming professional musicians.’

From this it is not clear what kind of learner, exactly, she has in mind. Yet what is certain is that the course is intended for learners/students with a particular background which will enable them to keep up with a certain amount of new material at a certain level in the various activity sections of every lesson. They are either experienced players/singers or they have received general class music in school in the manner and at the level of some European countries, e.g. Hungary. Whatever the case, this course is totally inappropriate as a music literacy programme for local circumstances. Nevertheless, due to some fine qualities of this course with valuable practice material, its merits and usability cannot be overlooked. Ghezzi is recommended for learners who have completed the proposed **Music Literacy** programme and especially for those who want to further their studies in the various styles of first world music, including the contemporary tendencies.

iii. **King, N.** *Specimen Ear Tests: From 2001. Trinity. Series.*

This series is used by quite a number of educators in South Africa, not only in urban areas but also around several rural centres. Such educators enter their students for the practical examinations of Trinity College of London. The series consists of twelve sets of specimen tests for each of the nine grades, commencing with Initial up to Grade 8. Each set contains the full spectrum of tests. All information, explanations and instructions are



given very clearly and precisely. Additionally, each book contains one or two CDs with demonstrations. Through the CDs any uncertainties or obstacles can be removed, e.g. the educator who is not a pianist is assisted in this way. In the syllabus, concentration is on memory and on recalling. No sight singing or written dictation of rhythms, pitch or melodies is required, nor are any keyboard skills expected. Theoretical knowledge and understanding are needed in some ear tests, especially in the higher grades. The theory component, however, is altogether separate and limited to the paper work. Aural Awareness and Viva Voce are both optional sections in practical examinations. Even when all are taken into account, this does not change anything or contribute in any way to the suitability of this series for music literacy.

Thus, according to the requirements for the contents of music literacy with various components interlinking, this series is inadequate. For this reason the Trinity series cannot be recommended for using in any component in a music literacy programme.

iv. **Loeb van Zuilenburg, P.** *Practical Musicianship: UNISA. Series.*

This series is widely used in South Africa. It is compiled for the Practical Musicianship section of UNISA's practical music examination grades. The series consists of different kinds of tests in every grade, varying from four tests in pre-grade 1 to eight in grade 8. For every test several specimen examples are provided. In the nine grades a wide range of tests, and eventually all aspects needed for music literacy, are safely covered except for keyboard harmony where the ultimate requirements are far lower. The theoretical examination, which is a prerequisite for all practical examinations from grade 4 up to grade 8 and beyond, is discussed in 3.4.7.

It was informally determined that many educators use only these specimen examples for ear development of learners. In such cases no programme or specific material is used for the training of these skills. Naturally, the ear and other practical musicianship skills cannot be developed by merely answering specimen examples. This is anyhow not the purpose of the series. For this reason UNISA's series cannot be considered in any of the components of a music literacy programme as learning material. However, it can fruitfully be used for testing purposes in the majority of components in music literacy. On the other hand, an effective music literacy programme can be fruitfully used for developing these skills and thus for preparing learners appropriately before attempting UNISA's tests.

v. **McLachlan, P.** *Fun with Notes / Notepret: Handleiding vir die Lees van Musieknotasie.* Series.

In this sight singing series, consisting of five books, rhythms, pitch and melodies are mixed. Rhythms are presented as note patterns on a single line and immediately provided with text. The kind of text, the fact that the staff is not used for rhythms, that pitch exercises occur without stems and/or without clefs, all contribute to create the impression that learners are underestimated. Although the size of the printing is too small and thus not suitable for the first four grades in the primary school, the text will not interest learners in the higher grades and definitely not in the secondary school. Text in one local language, with only a few exceptions, relates only to one cultural group. This restrains the group from experiencing other languages. It also limits the use and spreading of the series. Changing some of the text and alternating the language in the various rhythm exercises or adding a translated line, all in a slightly enlarged print, can contribute to making the series acceptable, generally, at primary school level. Apart from the translations and enlarged printing, the addition of songs, typical of ethnic cultures, could enrich the material. The rhythms towards the end of the fifth book do not progress to a very advanced level. However, for the purpose of general class music, the series suffices. This can serve as a fine preparation which will speed up the progress when learners begin studying the proposed **Music Literacy** programme.

vi. **Rees, E.** *Pathway to Music Reading: A Sight Reader for Schools / 'n Handleiding vir die Lees van Musiek: Blad lees vir Skole.* Series.

Although not a recent publication, this series is still used in some schools and by some individual teachers. It should therefore be reviewed. The bilingual front pages might have contributed to its circulation. However, its positive qualities, as seen in the tables for evaluation in 3.3, are another reason for investigating and reviewing this series.

The series consists of three books. Book 1 contains only exercises in solfa syllables but with corresponding exercises on the staff, in book 2. In books 2 and 3, exercises in solfa syllables and in staff notation are mixed. Reading of basic rhythms in the various metres is also learnt through the solfa system. Thus all three components of sight singing are treated alternately and/or simultaneously in the three books. Towards the end of book 3, reading skills are applied in some well-known melodies and extracts from classical compositions. This might also have contributed to its relevance and to its common use,



locally. No guidelines or explanations accompany any of the books. The less informed educator might need some assistance. Learners who study on their own, might not be able to work altogether independently when using only this series.

The purpose of the series seems to be to learn to sing from solfa in a few common keys with limited rhythm patterns; not even all basic rhythms are included. In the last part of book 3, keys with three and four sharps and flats are introduced in a few exercises. The series can therefore be regarded as a programme for acquaintance with solfa and very basically with staff notation, but definitely not for becoming music literate.

vii. **Wiseman, H. and Northcote, S.** *Singing at Sight: A Handbook for Soloists and Choir Members.*

As the subtitle indicates, this is 'a handbook for soloists and choir members'. Being a 'handbook' is probably the reason for mainly presenting basic facts in a theoretical way, without progressively compiled exercises for practising rhythms, solfa and the various keys. Apart from lacking this quality, the exercises are not designed as musical phrases and do not offer sufficient repetition for reinforcement and for developing reading skills. However, the authors succeeded, throughout the book, in offering brief explanations and the necessary information in a clear and simple manner. The two groups of 24 exercises each, for combining pitch and rhythm are quite useful, as additional material to the **Melody** exercises of the proposed *Music Literacy* programme. They are fine, musically designed melodies, including a few from existing compositions.

In spite of shortcomings, which make this book not suitable for a music literacy programme, there are several positive qualities, worth taking note of. This thin 'handbook' which might seem outdated, is thus found to be still in use with some educators.

viii. **Wright, C.** *The Step Scheme in Music Exercise. Series.*

This sight singing series consists of three books with a total of 706 exercises. The title, unfortunately, gives no indication of the subject. The three sight singing components, i.e. **Rhythm**, pitch with **Keys** and their combination in **Melodies** are treated simultaneously in the tables in all three books. All aspects are covered, meeting many of the requirements as seen in 3.3.8. Some items are quite advanced and perhaps not essential for the purpose of this programme, such as modulations. Other advanced items, *inter alia*