Congratulations!

Since you have downloaded this “44 Piano Recital Themes” document, I already know that you are a creative teacher who wants to create positive and exciting performance experiences for your students. This list of piano recital themes, many of which were generously suggested and tried by other creative teachers, should be a great jumping off point for you as you find a theme for your studio. After you choose a theme, be sure to check out the free repertoire lists that we have on the ComposeCreate blog including:

- World Music
- Duets and Trios
- Music for 1 hand
- Humorous Music
- Pupil Savers
- Halloween Music
- Easier than it sounds

Find repertoire lists here:  www.ComposeCreate.com/repertoire
Music at the Movies

- Provide popcorn for guests (or ask a local popcorn store to supply the popcorn)
- Have a door prize of popcorn bucket and popcorn
- Used digital keyboards for fun sounds
- Find a red carpet for the students to walk down!
- Make this an “Academy Awards” recital and find oscar like trophies to award

Music Around the World

- Ask each student asked to present a paragraph about their piece
- Students mark where the piece was from on a map
- Make the program look like a passport
- See the long list of world music pieces divided by level on the repertoire page:
  http://www.composecreate.com/repertoire/

Music Around Europe

- Spanish dances
- Polish mazurkas
- Irish music
- Hungarian dances

Sounds of Color

- Show a video of nature shots, first in black and white, then in color
- Programs were on different colors of paper
- Parents make cookies in different colors
- Use student artwork
- Suggested repertoire: Sonatina in Colors, Splash of Color (Dennis Alexander), Sketches in Color (Robert Starer), Vandall has some pieces, Color My World

Happy Birthday ______! [Insert your state name.]

- Serve a birthday cake
- Recital program on birthday paper
- Trivia information about your state between pieces
**Tasty Tunes**

- Think of the food you could have for the reception! It’s pretty open ended.
- Ice Cream on a Sunday Afternoon, Crazy for Lemons, Macaroni Pizza, Pickle Sandwich…all these are in the Tasty Tunes book and I know there are lots of other books out there with pieces about food. Mona Rejino has a Pepperoni Pizza song in her Just for Kids book. (Incidentally, you can get the Tasty Tunes book from Hal Leonard too at this link: Tasty Tunes)

**Wither the Weather**

- Music about snow storms, sunsets, venetian boat songs, Twisters, etc.
- Method books even have great pieces about the weather.
- A Break in the Clouds is a great piece for adult students or older beginners! A Winter Wind (Faber) and many others can be included.

**Hooray for the USA or Patriotic/Hymn Recital**

- These are great for nursing homes. You might find this post helpful: Bless Your Community.
- Instead of having a program, have a “Name That Tune” contest with the residents.
- Use a call bell and after the student has played, ask the residents to name that tune. If they get it right, the student rings the bell (usually several times because its fun!)
- Repertoire can be about states, regions, patriotic
- Even your young students can play artfully composed arrangements of hymns. Check out Easy Hymn Solos (Levels 1, 2, 3)

**Salute to Our Heroes and Heroines**

- Pay tribute to the heroes in our personal life (e.g. by playing our grandfather’s favorite piece or a piece our mother sang to us as a baby).
- Look in the American Portraits book for some great ideas about how to format your program! The American Heroes and Heroines included are: Letters to Abigail (Abigail Adams), Frontier Chorus (Davy Crocket), The Midnight Ride (Sybil Ludington—the 16 year old girl that rode like Paul Revere), Morning at the Falls (Thomas Moran -Yellowstone painter),
Underground Railway (Harriet Tubman), and more.

**Back to the Future**
- Celebrate whatever anniversary of the piano it is
- Any kind of repertoire goes!
- Ask parents to submit pictures of their children/your students when they were babies. Show a picture on the screen of a student and have the audience guess who the student is. That student can be next!

**April Fool’s or Funny Music Recital**
- Have a recital around April fool’s day and ask the parents and students to submit jokes and tell them between the pieces.

**All That Jazz**
- Ask a jazz ensemble to come and play with each student’s piece.
- Ask a drummer to accompany students.
- Use the blues scale on the piano or improvise.

**The Great Outdoors**
- Move your digital keyboard out to your patio.
- Use pre-recorded sounds.
- Attendees can bring blankets, lawn chairs and picnic food
- Ask the audience to do a sing-a-long

**A World of Adventure**
- Repertoire includes: Parade, Train Ride, Circus, Dragon Hunt, Toccata Brilliante, Midnight Choo Choo, State Fair, Nothing like a Circus, Cuban Nights, Jamaica vacation

**Mediaeval pageant/Fantasy**
- Pieces about kings, queens, knights, etc.
- Possible repertoire: Ballroom dance, Greensleeves, Festival in Aragon, Dance of the Persian Princess, The Glass Slipper, Lady Alison's Minuet, The Knights’ Quest (duet)
- For more ideas including ideas for snacks and decorations, visit the Dollarhide Music Center
**Water Music**

- Rainy Afternoon, Wandering Music, At the Bottom of the Sea
- Water represented indifferent forms like “Joplin When Your Hair is Like the Snow” Faber 2B Technique “Winter Wind” and 3A Technique Tropical Aquarium and MFPA book B Gliding Goldfish
- Handel's water music for prelude music

**A Musical Journey Through the Ages**

- Baroque, Classical, Romantic, Contemporary Recital Program
- Group music according to the time periods
- Talk about characteristics of music in those time periods
- Ask audience members to guess which time period a piece is
- You could also do a “Baroque to Rock” theme and include pop music

**Restaurant Theme**

- Make the recital program look like a menu.
- Place songs in several categories: appetizers, main course, sides, and dessert.
- You might have to stretch some of the titles to make them fit the theme
- You could make this into a dinner recital and have ethnic food.
- The Tasty Tunes book will fit right in!

**Fun at the Piano**

- Music that is humorous and silly
- Check out Fairy Tales, Fantasy Recital
- Could include some of the more recent film music like Harry Potter, Lord of the Rings, etc.

**Adventures at the Piano**

- Music based on stories like Harry Potter, Lord of the Rings, movie music

**Music We Wrote**

- Feature student compositions
A Pair of Shus
- Feature music of Schumann and Schubert

Bugs and Butterflies
- You can find all kinds of recipes online for various snacks that look like bugs!
- Repertoire abounds in this category. See Valerie’s post Recital Themes: Bugs and Butterflies for a great list and more ideas on this theme.

Mystery!
- Valerie from Dollarhide Music Center has a post about repertoire, snacks, and other things to do with this theme here.

Marches
- Repertoire ideas: Pomp and circumstance, wedding marches, military/patriotic marches

Music to Scare You Away (Halloween theme)
- Don’t forget to look at the comprehensive list of halloween pieces.
- Ask students to dress up in their costume.

Handel with Care
- You can guess the repertoire. This (and several others here including the Pair of Shus) was suggested by Meri Dolevski-Lewis, a pianist who played such a concert with her husband.

The Beatles

Music Theatre

Stars and Planets
Circus Music

Classics and Folksongs

Creatures Great and Small
(or Carnival of the Animals)

An Afternoon at the Opera

Pirates and Fairies

Disney

The Sea

Outer Space

Bach to Spring

Invitation to the Dance
  • Check out Catherine Rollin’s books of dance music
  • Mazurkas, waltzes, minuets..all kinds of traditional and contemporary music will work

Suites and Treats
  • Gotta have snacks at this one!

Light Music
  • Light sounding pieces or pieces with light in the title
Christmas Themes

Christmas Around the World
- Check out Jennifer Foxx’s Christmas Around the World piano camp for great ideas on what to do at your recital (like greet your audience with other national holiday greetings, talk about unique customs).
  http://fpsresources.com/2014/11/14/christmas-around-the-world/

My Favorite Things – Christmas
- Use this as a Christmas recital theme
- The artwork had to be a drawing of their favorite things at Christmas
- The students share a favorite Christmas memory (or they write it out and the teacher shares it)
- Older students can make their own arrangement of a favorite Christmas piece if it was polished
- You could also have a My Favorite Music theme for times other than Christmas

A Creative Christmas
- Help students create their own arrangement of holiday pieces
- Have an artwork contest and display all entries at the recital
- Encourage students to think of creative ways to present “normal” pieces (such as a choreographic dance by a sibling, extra rhythm instruments, etc.)