

Alfred's Premier Piano Express

Dennis Alexander, Gayle Kowalchyk, E. L. Lancaster, Victoria McArthur & Martha Mier

FOREWORD

Alfred's Premier Piano Express Christmas Book 1 includes familiar Christmas pieces that reinforce concepts included in the All-In-One Accelerated Course, Book 1 of Premier Piano Express. The music continues the strong pedagogical focus of the course while providing the enjoyment of playing familiar music during the Christmas season.

Christmas Book 1 is not correlated page by page with Premier Piano Express, Book 1. The Christmas pieces in this book can be studied after the student has begun reading on the staff (pp. 18–42). They are arranged in progressive order of difficulty with the easiest pieces first, though it is not necessary to progress straight through the book.

Allowing students to study music they enjoy during the Christmas season is highly motivating. Consequently, reading and rhythm skills often improve greatly when studying holiday music. The authors hope that the music in Christmas Book 1 brings hours of enjoyment to this festive season. Merry Christmas!

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Alfred Music
P.O. Box 10003
Van Nuys, CA 91410-0003
alfred.com



Good King Wenceslas

Good King Wenceslas tells the story of a Duke of Bohemia who always visited poor people on Christmas day. Even in the worst weather, he knocked on doors with gifts of food, clothing, and firewood. John Mason Neale, an Englishman, wrote the lyrics in 1853 to fit a melody whose original words were about Spring.

Traditional
Words by John Mason Neale

Moderately fast

1

mf Good King Wen - ces - las looked out on the feast of Ste - phen,

3

5

1

When the snow lay 'round a - bout, deep and crisp and e - ven.

3

Duet: Student plays one octave higher.

Moderately fast

RH 1

LH *mp* 5 1/5

3

5

3

Away in a Manger

The lullaby **Away in a Manger** was written by James R. Murray of Pennsylvania around 1885. Murray worked as a music editor and hymn writer throughout his life. When it was first published, Murray suggested that the words were written by Martin Luther, and entitled it Luther's Cradle Hymn. Researchers now know that this is not true, but the myth about the piece still exists.

James R. Murray

Slowly

p A - way in a man - ger, no crib for a bed, the

1

5

lit - tle Lord Je - sus lay down His sweet head. The

2

* **Note to Teacher:** In measures 1, 5, 9, and 13, students may substitute the following rhythm for the quarter notes: ♩ ♪♪

Duet: Student plays one octave higher.

Slowly

RH

LH

pp

5

5

5

1/2

5

1

1