

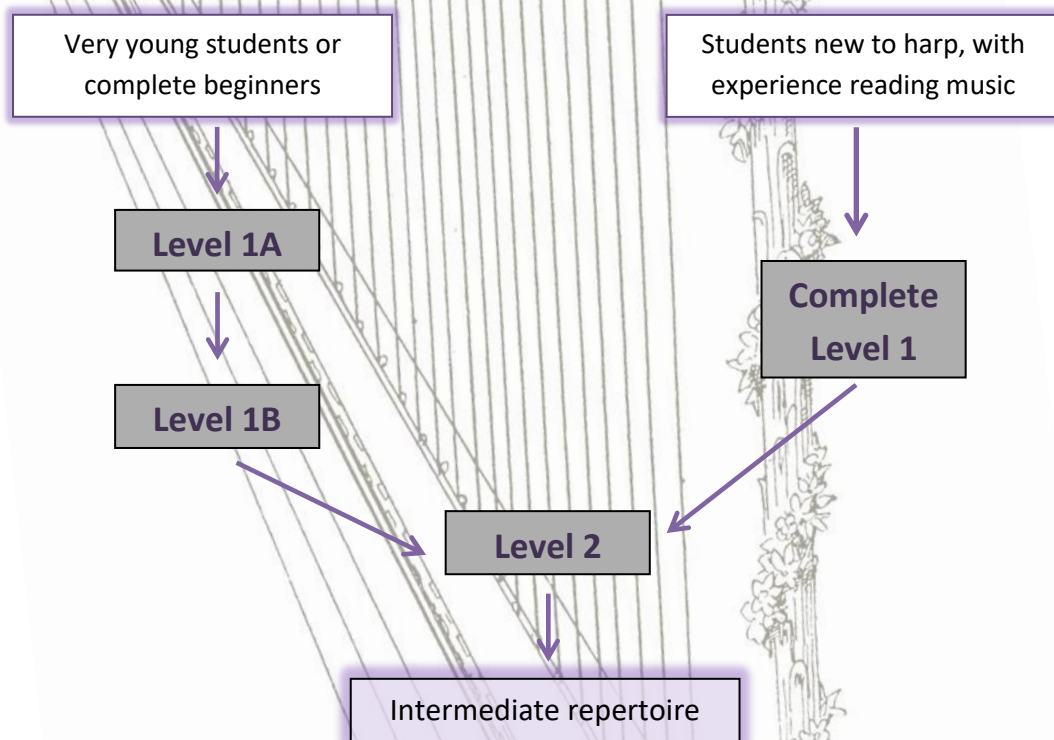
# Happy Harps

level 1A

by Zoe Coppola

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*The Happy Harps curriculum is organized as follows:*



More information about the author can be found at her website, [www.zoecoppola.com](http://www.zoecoppola.com)

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### ***Introduction:***

Welcome to the happy world of harp playing! This curriculum is designed to be a step-by-step approach that provides satisfying repertoire as well as a solid foundation in technique and theory/note reading. The basic pedagogical approach is that taught by Ruth Inglefield at the Peabody Conservatory; the student begins by using fingers one and two (thumb and pointer) in order to develop secure hand position, placing, and closing. In my experience, other methods such as “plunking” out notes with only finger two, or putting all four fingers on the harp from the beginning, are a recipe for frustration and hand position disaster no matter the capabilities of the student! Concepts covered in Level 1A include note values, brackets and placing, finger numbers, glissando, the music alphabet, measures, time signatures, dynamic markings, replacing, intervals, the staff, and landmark notes on the grand staff.

This curriculum also encourages the student to work toward being a self-sufficient learner, not dependent on the teacher to teach by rote or to mark up the music. There are numerous piano methods that do a wonderful job with these aspects of beginning music instruction, and I believe that the harp – if studied with a similarly well-designed method – should be considered equally viable as a first instrument for young students or complete beginners.

### ***This book is for:***

- ♪ Very young students (4-6 years) regardless of musical background
- ♪ Older students (including adults) with little or no experience on another instrument

### ***Notes for teachers and parents:***

This book is for use by a student and knowledgeable teacher, rather than for self-instruction. Before opening the book, the teacher should work with the student on a few basics like: how to sit at the harp, different parts of the harp and their functions, up/higher versus down/lower, how to number the fingers, how to form a good hand position, how the fingers will close, etc. Therefore, it is reasonable that this book would only be opened at the second lesson. If this is the case, I would suggest teaching the "hop down" exercise by rote during a first lesson, in order to get the student playing.

Theory information listed on the section pages may be learned before looking at the first exercise/piece of each section, or as needed while working through the material. New information for the section will be highlighted in purple. Additional materials such as a staff paper notebook, a theory workbook, or flash cards may be beneficial. Each section contains a lot of information, and all skills and knowledge within a section are necessary for success during the next section. Therefore each section may take a few weeks to complete. One or more exercise and one or more piece may be assigned each week.

This entire Level 1A can be completed using an unlevered harp; the only levers used are B# and E#, for “color”, and this is optional. If the student’s harp does have levers, I recommend tuning it in C major, as no flats will be needed and it is less confusing for a new student if levers can be kept down at all times. A 26 string harp (like a harpsicle) is sufficient for this level, as no piece will call for strings outside that range. When the student is ready to learn to tune his/her own harp, make sure to include ear training in this practice.

*Happy harping!*

*Zoe Coppola*





# Section 1



## Exercises

Hop Down  
Together  
Glissando!

## Pieces

The Fountain

## Theory

Quarter, half, and  
whole notes  
Stem direction  
Brackets and finger  
numbers  
Glissando

Quarter notes



get one beat.

Half notes



get two beats. They are longer than quarter notes.

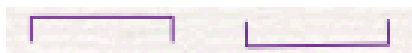
Whole notes



are longer than half notes. Let these notes ring for four beats.

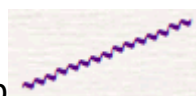
Some *stems* go up and some go down. For now, "up stems" tell you to play that note with your right hand. Play notes with "down stems" with your left hand.

Brackets



tell you to *place* those notes together. Right now you only need to use finger 1 (thumb) and finger 2 (pointer).

A *glissando* can go up



or down!

