



Music Teaching Matters

January 27, 2026 - No. 85

Music teaching strategies to inspire our students as lifelong music makers.



For music teachers, I think it's safe to say that **repetition** plays a huge role in how we guide our students' practicing. What's fascinating about repetition is how neuroscience researchers agree that everyone needs a certain amount of isolated repetition to become familiar with any new skill or material. But neuroscience researchers also point out there's a problem with repetition that may not be obvious at first glance. Read more [HERE...](#) Wishing you moments of insight for yourself and your students,

Merlin Thompson

Creator & Founder of Teach Music 21C

Podcast Recommendation



#76 Lifelong Music Making

In Podcast #75 we explored Where Are We Headed. Now it's time to take a look at what we'll do to get there. Join Lorrie Merrell and Merlin Thompson in an exploration of the tools music teachers can use to help our students develop as lifelong music makers. [Listen HERE.](#)

FREE Music Teacher Mentorship

Attention university music students currently teaching private

music lessons!

Did you know Dr. Merlin Thompson is available to guide your music teaching process? So there's no need for you to go it alone! Click [HERE](#) to contact Dr. Thompson today and start your FREE Teacher Mentorship. You'll find out how to -

- Nail your first lessons.
- Handle tricky situations with students/parents.
- Build confidence fast in your teaching.
- Get the results you're looking for.

Behind every confident music teacher is an experienced mentor.

This Week - Meet With Merlin

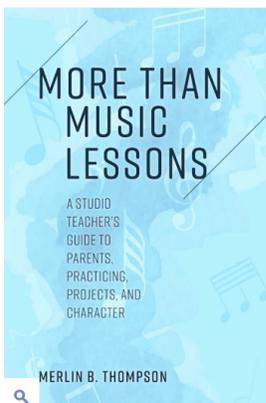


10 a.m. MST, Thurs., Jan. 29

Do you have questions that never seem to go away? Would you like to think out loud with someone who understands the highs and lows of music teaching? Then please join **Meet with Merlin** for a focused, generous conversation that helps you slow down, clarify what matters most, and leave with your next thoughtful step.

[Click to Register and Reserve Your Spot Now!](#)

More than Music Lessons



From the Chapter on Practicing -

Music students naturally develop fluency similar to the way they achieve fluency elsewhere - by deliberately immersing themselves in the activity itself - mostly by playing through entire pieces or favourite sections thereof. They cannot resist because every time they play through a favourite piece is like getting a pat on the back - a well-deserved emotional reinforcement. Order your copy [HERE](#) or spend a few moments of refreshment if you already have a copy.

Thought for Today

Music teachers have many options when it comes to guiding our students' musical development. There's ear-before-eye. Improvisation and composition. Exam-based programs. The influence of popular music. With so many options available, how can teachers decide which direction to take?

The answer to that question isn't found in WHICH METHOD we use, but in WHO we are teaching. When we're intentional about what musical development means for a particular student, decisions about repertoire, sequencing, and learning pathways become far more clear. What works best is paying attention to the student in front of us and aligning our teaching with THEIR needs, motivations, and musical identity.

Upcoming Dates

January 29: Meet With Merlin. 10-11 a.m. Calgary time. Register and submit your questions [HERE.](#)

January 30: Presentation for Trail/Castlegar BCRMTA.

February 14: Presentation for Texas Music Educator's Association Conference.

February 26 & 27: Presentations for Suzuki Association of the Americas Conference.

Thank You Music Teachers

Thanks so much to all the music teachers who have attended, supported, and continued to reflect following my presentations. It's an honour to share ideas with a community interested in changing the tone of music lessons.

If you've got a moment, [CLICK HERE](#) to drop me a line about your changes as we continue this amazing journey. It would be great to hear from you.



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