

WEEK 5 PRACTICE PLAN

Repertoire:	Movement:
Bach Sonata No. 1 in g minor	Siciliana (III): complete
Vieuxtemps Violin Concerto No. 5	Allegro non troppo (I): mm. 156 - 192
Beach <i>Romance and Three Pieces</i>	Mazurka: mm. 1 - 52

[Click here for marked parts](#)

[Click here for this week's videos](#)

BACH:

- Embracing the rhythm:** The first thing to get to grips with in the siciliana is how to play the distinctive rhythm of this dance form.
 -  The dotted rhythm that falls on the downbeat generally makes sense on a hooked down-bow.
 -  The next thing to consider is how much weight to give the short note in the dotted figure, and how much space comes between the two notes.
 - > It's easy to end up accenting the third note in an attempt to make up some bow on the up-bow, or to end up crescendoing into the next beat.
- This week, spend some time working out how you'd like to play that siciliana rhythm on an open string, eventually chaining several of them together.
- (Don't) do the creep:** Play through the first half of the movement a few times up to measure 9. Notice your left hand relative to the open strings – in the course of all the double-stops and chords, is your hand creeping up or down (more likely up) the fingerboard?
 - One way to keep an ear on this tendency is to finger both notes in a series of double-stops, but only play the lower one.
- Where are you vibrating?:** Spend some time deciding **where in this movement you're going to use vibrato**, and to what extent. You could, of course, choose not to vibrate anything, but that comes with its own set of intonation-related problems.

- In general, the choice not to vibrate a note could be based on there simply not being enough time (for instance, a series of sixteenth notes), or whether the note is not expressively important enough in the melodic line to warrant any.
 - In the second case, a **note without vibrato should be preceded by a few notes of successively less vibrato**, to avoid too noticeable and sudden a contrast.
-  Take care to avoid the all-too-common tendency not to use vibrato on an appoggiatura, only to add vibrato on its resolution.

for more...

[Vibrato](#)

VIEUXTEMPS:

- Up-bow chords:** When playing a three- or four-note chord on an up-bow (such as at measure 162 et. seq.), **the bow moves in the opposite direction of its natural tendency** in crossing strings.
- Try this on open strings first—make sure you're not just on the level of the D string when you start the up-bow.
 -  Ideally, the bow will move from the level of the A and D strings to that of the A and E strings.
 -  For four-note chords, it's the level of the bottom two strings moving to the level of the top two.
- Use as little pressure as you can in this movement** – just enough to ensure the notes sound.
 -  For the sequence of these starting in measure 166, use your discretion to decide how much articulation you use to start the up-bows.
 -  It's important with this type of passage to **constantly monitor the tension in both hands**. Try to find some ease and lightness wherever you can.

- We might as well look at up-bow staccato:** Though up-bow staccato (as occurs in measure 176) may not be the most important technique, it does come up often enough to warrant a discussion here. There are a few ways to begin to tackle up-bow staccato. The first is to review the video on [Kreutzer #4](#).
 - An important thing to consider with this technique is that the bow arm moves smoothly and relentlessly. Depending on your own physiology, you'll use either the fingers or a stiffening of the muscles of the forearm and bicep to create the individual impulses of the staccato.
 - If you're new to up-bow staccato, start with just one open string, perhaps one of the middle strings. Then add some left-hand fingers and see how far you can get.

for more...

[Kreutzer #4, Impulses](#) (WO6)

- Chain of trills:** To string trills together smoothly, as in the passage at measure 178, practice the end of one trill into the beginning of the next. For instance, practice the last trill of measure 182 into measure 183 – just two or three “ups” per note.
 - After you've practiced chaining a few individual pairs together, see if you can expand to chains of three or four. You'll eventually get a much more impressive effect than if you left gaps between each trilled note.

for more...

[Trills](#)

BEACH:

- Middle string theory:** Play through about the first half of the first page of the Mazurka. Pay particular attention to the middle two strings – there's not much room to maneuver on either side of these strings without choking the sound or hitting other strings.
 - Less is more with these strings – bow speed is a much more effective way to bring out a line on these strings than pressure.

- Get used to using your bow speed particularly in measures like 14 and 52, where you're moving from the G string through the middle strings, so you don't crunch by using G-string pressure.

for more...

[The Three Bow Variables, Simon Fischer Tone](#) (WO12)

- Those accents:** Accents like the one in measure 6 occur throughout the piece. Play this measure repeatedly, lifting after the first note and setting the bow on the second with a little bit of weight, releasing immediately with a very fast bow.
 - Then put the measure in context, making any adjustments that need to be made. It's better to exaggerate first and then pull back as necessary!
 - Practice measure 8, where the bowing is reversed, the same way. Take more time with this one if you need to!
 - The accents starting in measure 20 are of a slightly different character, so you can use a little more weight.

for more...

[Martelé](#)

- Springy grace notes and ornaments:** To get the grace note in measure 6 as quick and springy as possible, you don't need to hammer the finger down – **it just needs to drop immediately after the bow change.** Practice this finger-drop repeatedly, and make sure the fourth finger drops **calmly and with articulation.** Do the same with the grace note in measure 8.
 - For the sixteenth note in measure 10, imagine a little accent with the finger, but a diminuendo with the bow.
 - The sixteenth notes in measure 12 are the opposite of the gesture in measure 6: a lift rather than a drop.
 - The grace notes in measure 23 will require that you choose where to steal the time from. Steal it from the preceding note, starting them a little earlier than you might think.

- The grace notes in measure 23 come on a bow change. Emphasize the grace notes, as opposed to the following note, so they don't get lost.
- Play the scale run in measure 35 with great finger articulation and a smooth bow – which is, of course, also applicable to the other grace notes in the piece.

for more...

[Pinky Power](#) (YouTube)