

WEEK 8 PRACTICE PLAN

Repertoire:	Movement:
Ysaÿe Sonata No. 3 in D Minor, "Ballade"	Line 47 - end
Bruch Scottish Fantasy	Andante sostenuto (III): m. 41 - end
Kreisler Recitative and Scherzo-Caprice, Op. 6	Recitative: Complete

[Click here for marked parts](#)

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

YSAÿE:

- ☐ **Those four-note chords again:** Last week's focus for line 47 was primarily the left hand. This week, still setting the chords with the left hand as much as possible, it's time to get the bow onto the right strings.
 - ☐ Feel free to spend a fair amount of time on this passage practicing slowly – as long as you're connecting the bows. This means that the arm will always be anticipating the level of the next string. Even a little bit of blurring between the strings is preferable to waiting to move the arm until the moment of the next note.
 - ☐ Smoothness in the bow arm is paramount, but remember to move the fingers of the left hand in advance as much as you can, especially at this slow practice speed.
 - ☐ Make sure you only play the accents where they're printed – it's much easier to build in the correct accents with slow practice than try to remove them at tempo after baking them in.

for more...

[3- and 4-Note Chords](#) (2025Q3 Welcome Call)

- ☐ **Time for tenths:** The middle of line 51 begins two measures of tenths. Practice these tenths slowly at first, and without the open strings.
 - ☐ First, to get from the sixth at the end of the first measure on line 51 to the following tenth, it's a question of reaching back slightly with the first finger and up a larger distance with the fourth. This means you'll have to bring the left arm around to the right to create enough space to drop the fingers into position. It's worth alternating between the sixth and the tenth to find the right arm position.
 - ☐ Take note of the last two tenths on line 51: the first finger moves, but the fourth does not.
 - ☐ Once the left fingers are familiar with the distance each has to move from one tenth to the next, adding the open strings introduces another wrinkle: the first finger will have to lift to reveal one of the open strings. Keep the fourth finger down as a frame of reference.
 - ☐ You can ease off on the tempo a bit at the end of the sequence of tenths – the end will be plenty fast.

for more...

[Building Tenths from the Ground Up](#) (WO11)

- ☐ **Vivo variety:** For the chords at the end, the key is to recognize when the patterns in the left hand change and when they stay the same.
 - ☐ The finger spacing for the tritone stays the same for the first four chords, so start with those. The first finger, though, will move farther than the third does from the first chord to the second.
 - ☐ From the second note of the penultimate measure, the patterns are the same as in the previous measure until the last chord, where the tritone moves up by a whole step.
 - ☐ Take this section in small, manageable pieces so that your left hand really gets acclimated to the patterns.

BRUCH:

- ☐ **Simplify:** In a piece like this, it's easy for playing to become overwrought, both physically (extra effort) and mentally (playing without thought for the line). This means deciding what's most important in any given phrase.
 - ☐ At measure 41, for example, the first note is accented and long. Then the next gestures (arpeggiated figures culminating in trills) build sequentially. These builds will need momentum, so it's a good idea to practice these in isolation to make sure your bow use is intentional.
 - ☐ The section beginning at measure 47 continues unabated until measure 69, so it's important to identify some points of repose in the phrasing. Play a simplified version of the material (removing differences in register) to identify the basic musical material, and how the variations in register enhance it.
 - ☐ Use the repetitive nature of your simplified version to determine where to build and where to relax, getting a sense of the bigger picture in this section. Then transfer that to the full version. Note that in measure 48, for instance, you don't need to work hard to make that a high point in the phrase – the register does most of the work for you.

for more...

[Simplifying](#) (WO19)

- ☐ **Eschew unnecessary accents:** As you're working on simplifying and phrasing this week's material, you may find it's difficult to make a coherent phrase with all the bow changes involved. To this end, be on the lookout for any unnecessary accents or "bumps" made by the bow.
 - ☐ For example, it's easy to "bump" the D# in measure 51, since it's a short up-bow. Avoid this by maintaining the sound through the preceding E.
 - ☐ Once you get in the habit of listening for these unnecessary accents, you'll also start to recognize the physical sensation of the extra bow speed at the beginning of the bow that accompanies them. It's easy to avoid once you're aware of it – you just have to keep the awareness up!

- ☐ Keep in mind that the lower the dynamic, the more these “bumps” will stand out.
- ☐ **Eschew unnecessary vibrato:** Speaking of the unnecessary and the extra, it’s also easy to over-vibrate in this movement. This is particularly true with the kind of “soaring” theme that happens at the pickup to measure 51.
 - ☐ If you find you’re working too hard with your vibrato, try practicing without vibrato. This will give you an idea of how much you’re able to accomplish with the bow alone, and how little vibrato you may actually need.
 - ☐ Also, not every note needs vibrato! For example, trying to vibrate every eighth note in measure 54 et. seq. can just add tension in the left hand, while not adding anything musically.

for more...

[Purity Practice](#) (YouTube)

KREISLER:

- ☐ **Double-stops: the left arm:** To facilitate singing double-stops, it’s sometimes necessary to bring the left arm around to the right to create room for left-hand freedom. One good indicator that the arm is in the right place is to place all four fingers on the same string and see if the hand can vibrate freely.
 - ☐ This arm position will require the left arm to be able to swing freely from the shoulder. Remember that there’s no one set left arm position, but also that if the arm is too far over to the left, the finger angles won’t allow for the vibrato you need for singing double-stops.
 - ☐ To practice, try the four-fingers-on-the-same-string vibrato test in various positions and on different strings.
 - ☐ Also practice glissandi with all four fingers down on the same string, sliding up and down by an octave. Note how the arm swings from left to right and back as you slide.
- ☐ **Double-stops: sixths, fourths, and fifths:** It’s worthwhile to refresh yourself on the various types of double-stops present in this Recitative, and how you can maximize the free vibrato of all of them.

- ☐ Sixths tend to be the easiest, since the higher finger is on the higher string. Practice moving between the various pairs of sixths on this page; e.g. in measure 4, measure 5 (skipping the fifth and the grace note), the corresponding ones in measures 13 and 14, and those in measures 17 and 18.
- ☐ Do the same with the fourths and fifths in the Recitativo. With fourths, although the lower finger is on the higher string, there's a whole step's worth of space between the fingers, so vibrato is not too difficult.
- ☐ With the fifths, if the left arm is in the right position as discussed above, you'll probably be able to just place the finger relatively flatly across both strings to get some vibrato. If the arm is too far to the left, the finger won't sit properly across the strings and vibrato will be difficult.
- ☐ While you're practicing these double-stops, don't separate the practice of intonation and vibrato. If you're going to get them in tune with vibrato, you'll need the arm and hand position that will facilitate it.

for more...

[Sixths](#); [Fifths](#)

- ☐ **Double-stops: don't slow the bow:** With your double-stop practice this week, take care that you keep the bow moving. If you allow the bow to slow down too much and exert too much pressure, it can actually change the pitch of the double-stops you're working on.
- ☐ While it's true that you'll need a bit more bow pressure for double-stops than single notes, it's not dramatically greater. Use a moderate bow pressure and change bows as needed when you're doing this kind of work. Listen to your sound quality and make sure the bow keeps moving naturally.