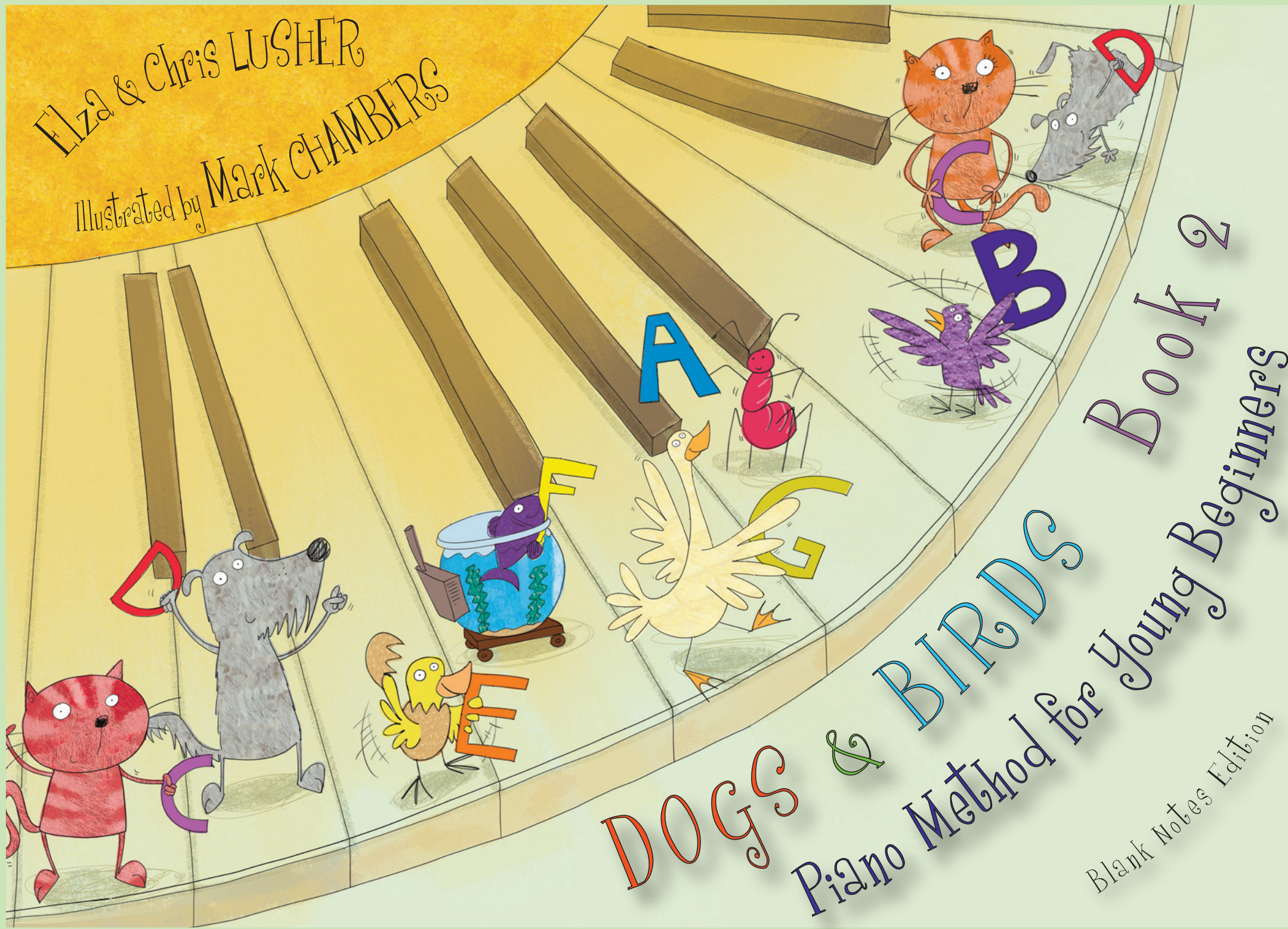


Elza & Chris LUSHER
Illustrated by Mark CHAMBERS



DOGS & BIRDS

Piano Method for Young Beginners

Book 2

Blank Notes Edition

Dogs and Birds Book 2 (Blank Notes Edition)

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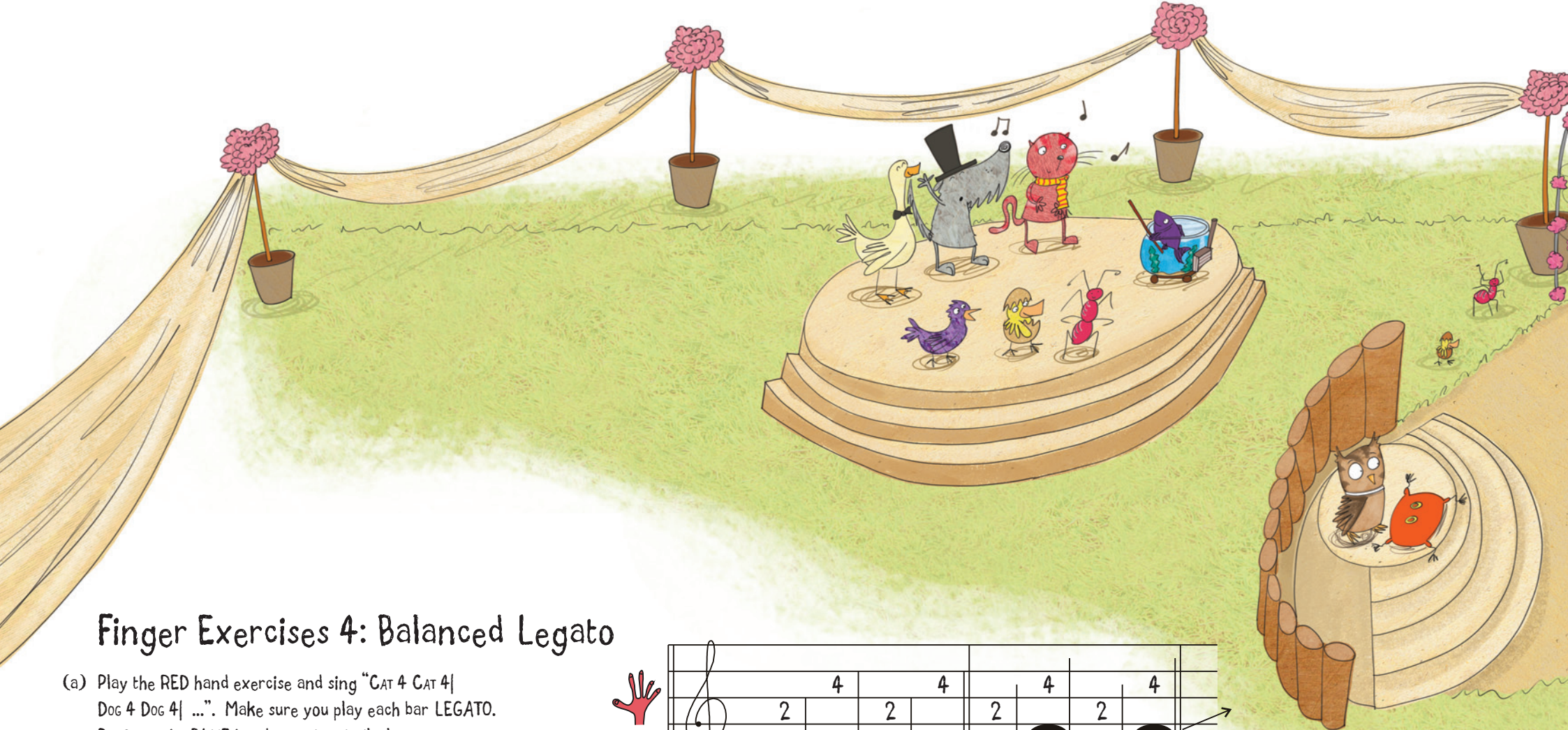
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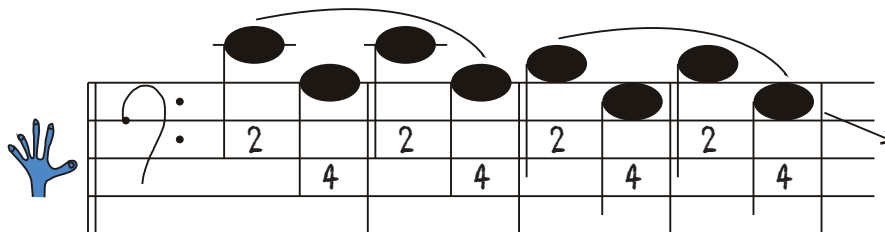
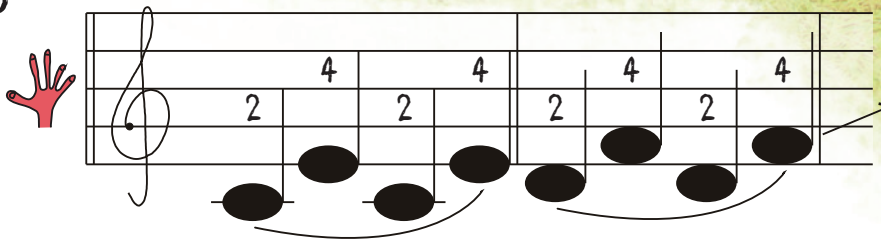
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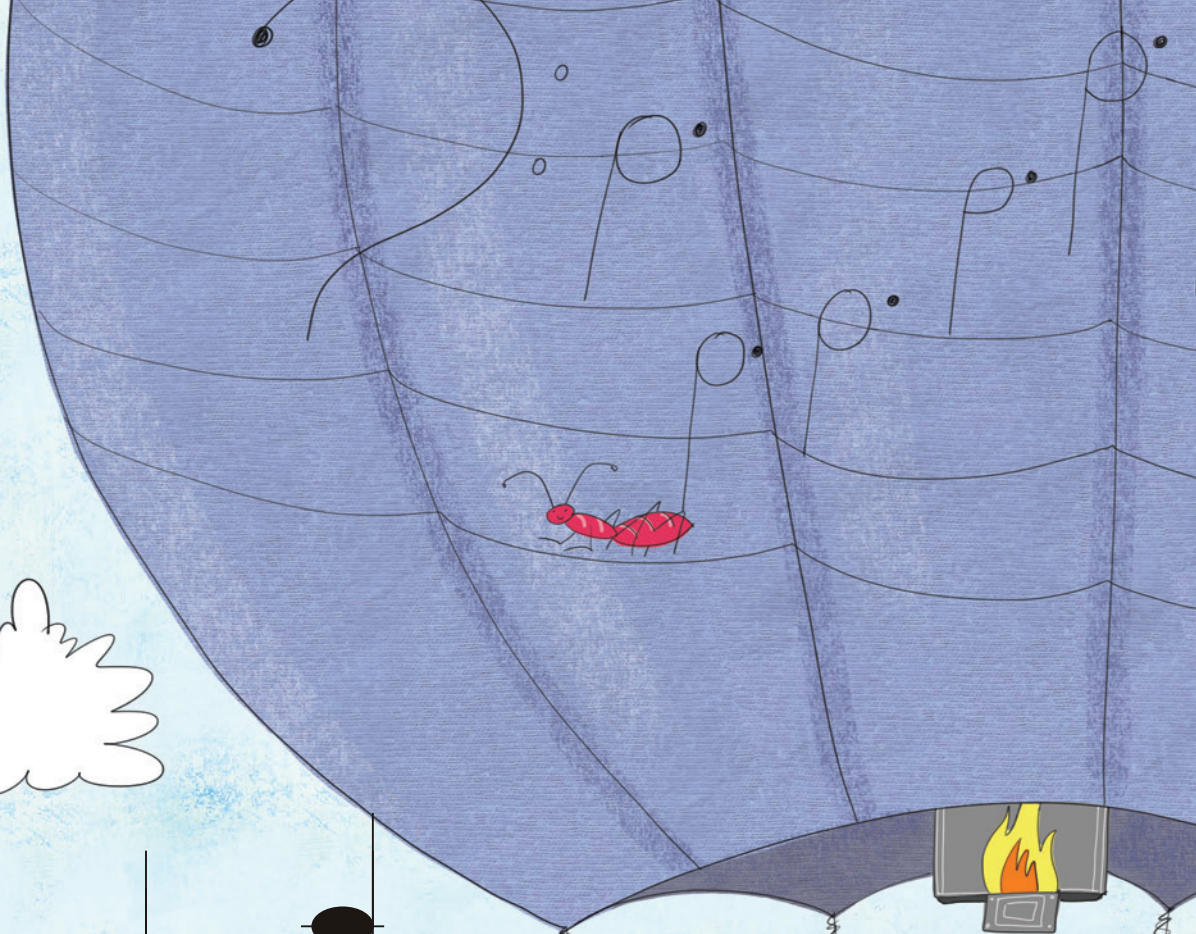
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Finger Exercises 4: Balanced Legato

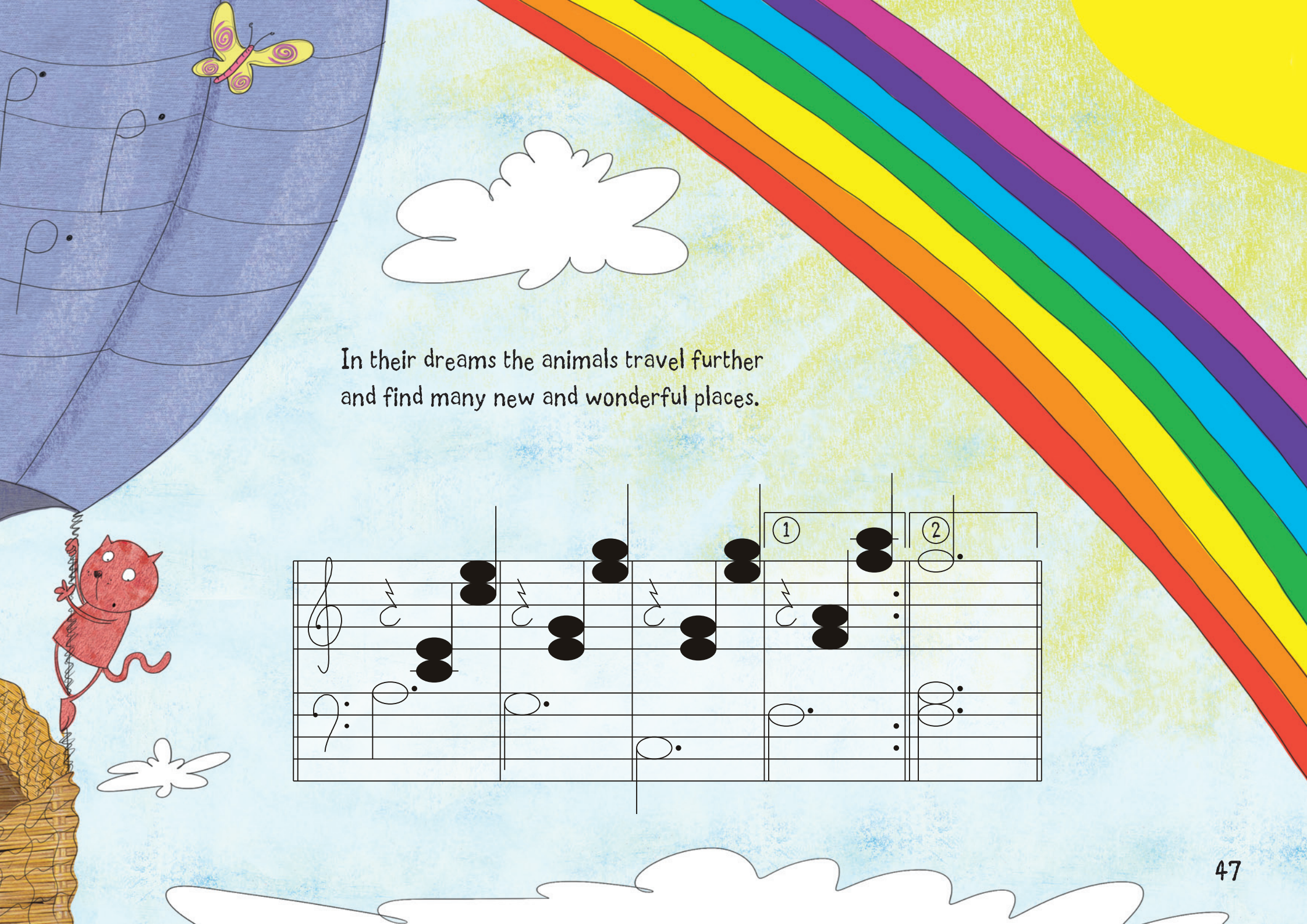
- Play the RED hand exercise and sing "CAT 4 CAT 4| DOG 4 DOG 4| ...". Make sure you play each bar LEGATO. Perform the BLUE hand exercise similarly.
- Play the 2nd and 4th fingers together as minims. Go UP with the RED hand, singing "CAT & SKIP, CAT & SKIP| DOG & SKIP, DOG & SKIP ...". Always use CURVED fingers. Play with the BLUE hand similarly going DOWN.
- Sing "CAT 4 CAT 4| ..." as you play with hands together going UP. Both hands start on CAT using the 2nd fingers an octave apart and then play the 4th fingers in contrary motion. You can go DOWN similarly.



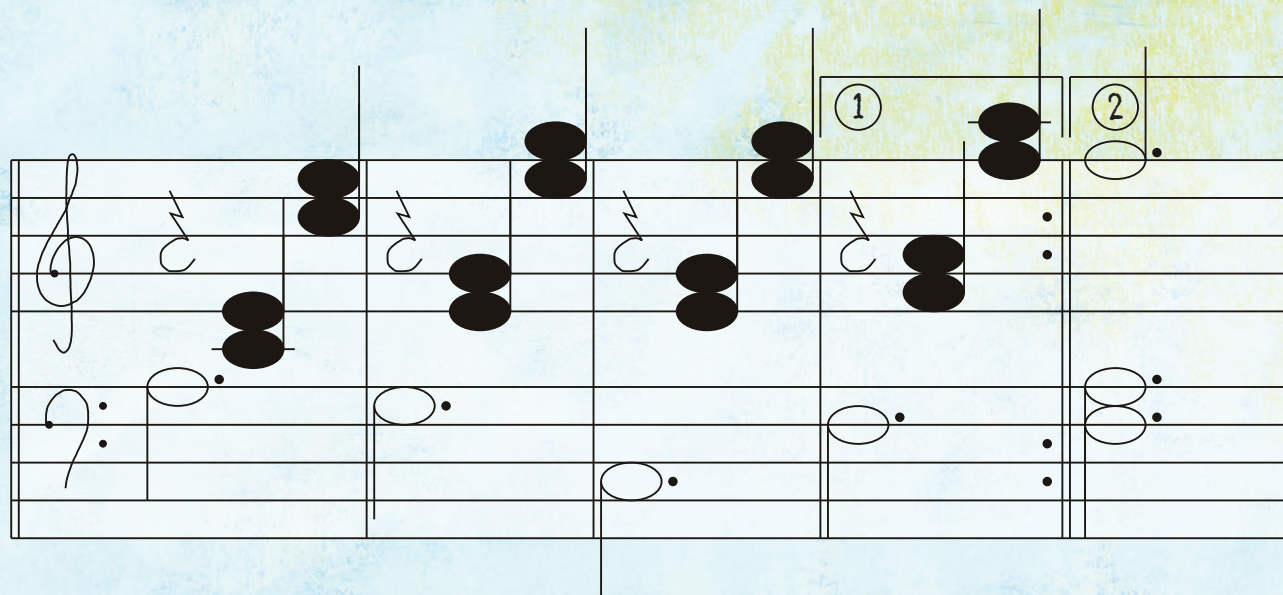


Rise into the Air





In their dreams the animals travel further
and find many new and wonderful places.



Notes for Teachers

A Note on Singing – Singing is a vitally important part of the Dogs and Birds approach. In the pieces children should sing the monosyllabic names of the animals (CAT, DOG, EGG, FISH, GOOSE, ANT, BIRD) or sing aloud the beat. In the finger exercises they should sing as suggested. Singing helps to reinforce many musical concepts.

Notes on Finger Exercises – The finger exercises dispersed throughout this book are a good preparation for playing the pieces and help to strengthen the fingers. They use simple repetitive patterns that children can remember by heart. In this way they can focus on technique rather than reading. The range will be determined both by the size of the instrument and the inclination and capability of the student. In most cases moving up or down by one octave is the recommended minimum. This book gives three variations for each exercise (labelled (a), (b) and (c)). Sometimes only the right hand variation is written out explicitly, but you should do a left hand variation also. If you wish, you can use these variations as a guide and make up similar ones as appropriate for a particular student. You should try to challenge the child somewhat, but not too much. Make sure he or she can master the challenge and feel successful. All children should do exercise (a), but exercises (b) and (c) are optional. The finger exercises are written out going in one direction only, but it is recommended that you play them in both directions. For example in the right hand exercise on page 28 you can go up playing “1 3 5| 1 3 5| ...” then come down playing “5 3 1| 5 3 1| ...”. The children should sing as explained in each variation. Here the larger letters correspond to words sung as the note is played. On page 6, for example sing “CAT 2 SKIPS” as you play C and “Up” as you play G. Always sing at the most comfortable pitch for the child. This will usually be around middle C. If students have difficulty with the finger exercises then they can try out the fingering on top of the keyboard cover or on a table.

Playing the Musical Pieces – Ideally you should sing the melody with the students before they attempt to play a piece. You can do this by singing the animal names, steps or skips as appropriate, or hum through the melody before playing it. If students are confident with a piece then they should be able to sing the melody whilst accompanying themselves with the other part on the keyboard. It is recommended that in general students use the animal notes and blank notes editions in parallel, with the more advanced students just using the blank book. You should never force children to use the finger numbers written in the pieces, especially very young children who are not yet ready to use the correct fingering and hand position. Fingerings are suggested for the pieces, but are not compulsory. However it is strongly advisable to keep to the written fingering in the finger exercises. The pieces have

been ordered in increasing level of technical difficulty. However if a child wishes to learn a particular piece then the order can be changed at the teacher’s discretion. Also the teacher might wish to teach sharps and flats at an earlier stage, for example, to help with pieces in Dogs and Birds: Nursery Rhymes and Famous Melodies.

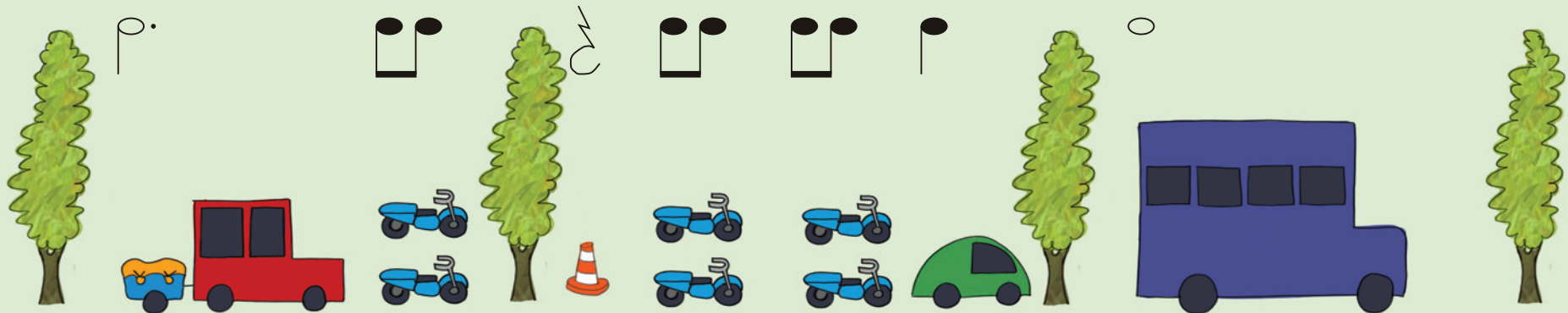
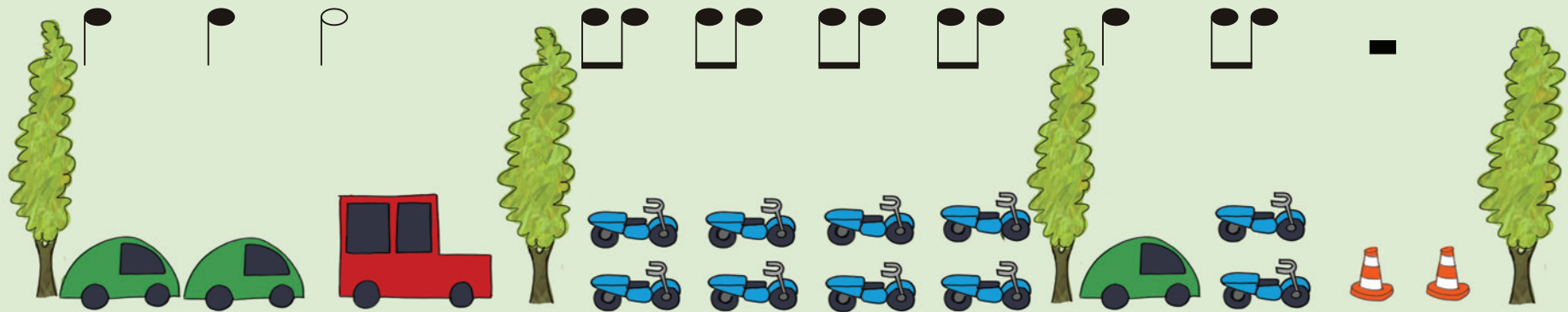
Comments on Notation – Throughout this book the note stems are always written going up for the right hand and going down for the left hand. This is unconventional yet much simpler for young children to follow. The use of quavers has been avoided in this book. This allows the child to retain an even pulse and helps with technique, because children often tend to rush quavers. In the Nursery Rhymes and Famous Melodies Book quavers are introduced, in both the pieces and rhythm exercises, since most of the melodies and rhythms are already familiar to the child.

Use of the Nursery Rhymes and Famous Melodies Book – Children can start using Dogs and Birds: Nursery Rhymes and Famous Melodies towards the end of Dogs and Birds Book 1. They can continue working through the book in parallel with Book 2.

Small Animal Tiles and Coloured Staves – Use of the tiles and staves is particularly important when using Dogs and Birds Book 2. Many more notes are introduced, in addition to the 9 used in Book 1, and the tiles and staves can help to reinforce their positions in the child’s mind. The children have learnt in Book 1 that the EGGS dance on the bottom red rope and the ANTS march on the top blue rope. They should now learn that the FISH live on the FIFTH red rope and the GEESE live on the GROUND level blue rope. This will give them four strong fixed points to help using steps and skips to find the positions of the rest of the notes on the staves and keyboard. All the other notes are at most two skips away from these fixed positions. Once children have carried out Finger Exercises 3 they will be able to cover the whole set of coloured staves. They can use the animals printed on the front and back covers of the coloured staves as a guide. There are many musical games and exercises that can be carried out using the tiles and staves, following on from the suggestions given in the Notes to Book 1 for Parents and Teachers. The tiles and staves can help the switch between the animal and the blank book. Once children have reached the end of Book 2 they should be competent enough to play everything from the blank book. The small animal tiles and coloured staves can also be used to display simple compositions. Ask the child to compose a new piece based on the piece he or she is presently playing. Write it out using the tiles and staves and put it on the piano or keyboard in place of a musical score.

The Use of Sol-fa – It is recommended to use “Simply Sol-fa” in parallel with this book. This is written from the point of view of a pianist and it helps with the transition from singing the animal names to singing sol-fa. It is available from www.dogsandbirds.co.uk.

Dogs and Birds: Book 2 (Blank Notes Edition)



Also Available:

Dogs and Birds: Book 1 (Animal Notes and Blank Notes Editions)

Dogs and Birds: Book 2 (Animal Notes Edition)

Notes to Book 1 for Parents and Teachers, Including CD

Dogs and Birds: Nursery Rhymes and Famous Melodies (Animal and Blank Notes Editions)

Complete Music Set for Beginners, Small Animal Tiles and Coloured Staves

Toy Wooden Animals and a Large Set of Staves, Sheet of Animal Stickers

Music Manuscript Book (4 Staves per Page and 6 Staves per Page), Simply Sol-fa

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