



ENSEMBLE METHOD BOOK  
LEVEL 1-4  
STUDENT MANUAL

# GREETINGS GUITAR STUDENTS!

Welcome to GuitarCurriculum.com, a comprehensive resource for classroom guitar ensemble developed by the education team at Austin Classical Guitar. For the past 20 years, ACG has led the way in building and supporting hundreds of classroom guitar programs worldwide.

At GC, our philosophy is simple. We believe in expressive, beautiful music-making from the very first day of class. We are grateful to have this opportunity to accompany you as you begin or continue your musical journey.

A couple of things to keep in mind as you are working through these materials; learning an instrument can be challenging, but always fun and rewarding. Celebrate your successes, persevere through the challenges, and enjoy making beautiful music with your director and classmates!



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# GUITAR ENSEMBLE METHOD BOOK

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SAMPLE

# SAMPLE

LEVEL 1

# LEVEL 1

## Introduction

Welcome to Level 1 of GuitarCurriculum! This is the beginning of your journey with the guitar and there is so much to look forward to. In these first moments with the instrument, you will learn about the parts of the guitar, how to hold it, and most importantly how to play it. You can expect to spend a little time getting set up but know that you will be performing with your classmates very soon (if not today!).

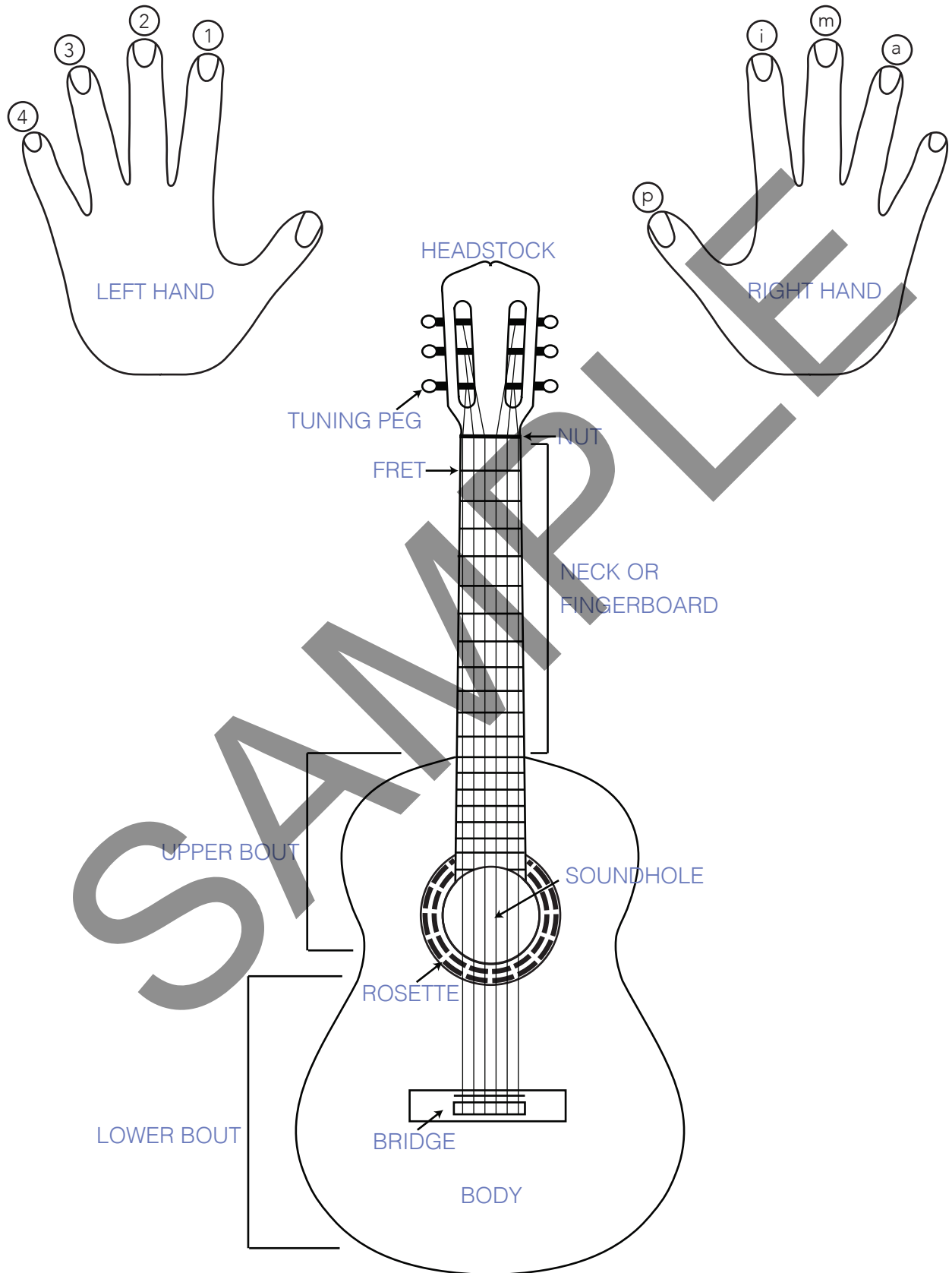
The most important part of playing the guitar is expressive music making. That means we focus on the feeling of the music or the story we want to tell with the sounds we create. In addition to starting your journey as an artist and learning to express through the music, you will learn the following things in Level 1:

1. The parts and anatomy of the guitar
2. How to hold the instrument properly
3. How to play right hand (thumb, middle, and index) strokes with good tone
4. How to play fretted notes in the left hand
5. You will perform music that your teacher shows you in a large ensemble
6. You will also learn to read music notation, specifically the open strings of the guitar and you will perform pieces with your classmates that you read from the page

Anytime that you learn something new, there are challenges to overcome. Making mistakes is an important part of getting better at guitar. So be patient with yourself. Know that every little mistake is an opportunity to improve. Ask lots of questions and enjoy the music that you make!

# INTRODUCTION

## Parts of the Guitar and Right/Left Hands





# LEVEL 1 WARM-UP

## Four, Four & 4

- Follow along as your teacher leads you through a right-hand warm-up.
- The numbers inside the circles are the strings that you will play (4 times each).
- Remember to place your right-hand fingers back on the strings when you move to the next string.

3

p p p p

2

i i i i

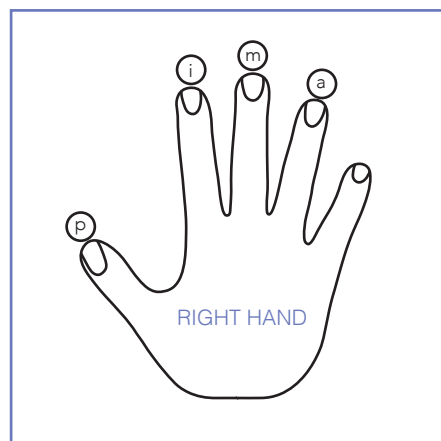
1

m m m m

2

i i i i

REPEAT



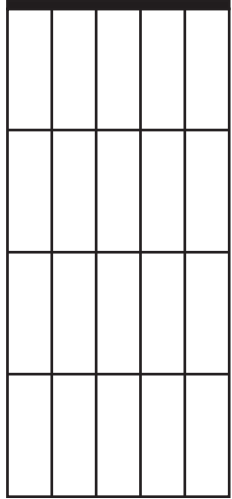
# LEVEL 1 - OPEN NOTES

## Fretboard and Staff Locations

String 1 - Open



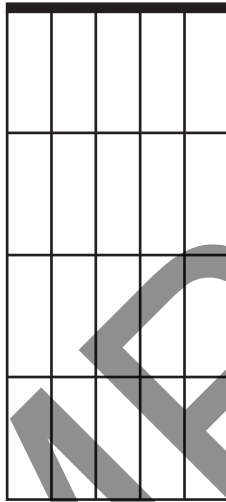
(E)



String 2 - Open



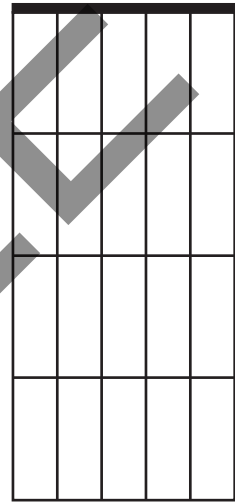
(B)



String 3 - Open



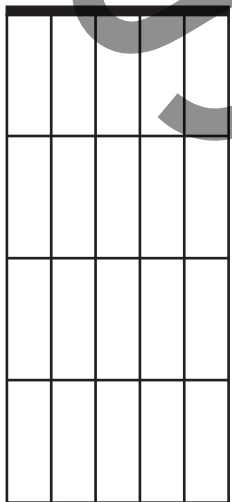
(G)



String 4 - Open



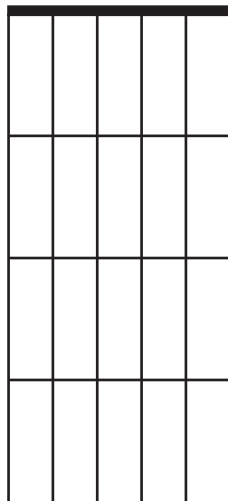
(D)



String 5 - Open



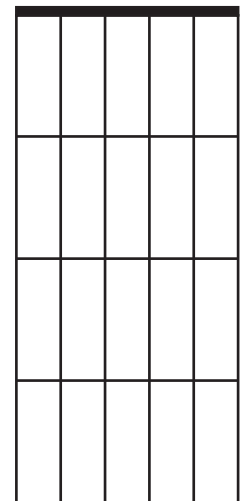
(A)



String 6 - Open



(E)



# MEDITATION NO. 1

## Overview and Activity

*Meditation No. 1* gives us the opportunity to express a calm and peaceful feeling with the music we make together. Meditation is the simple act of reflection or contemplation (relaxed thinking). When we meditate, we can think of a particularly beautiful or calm space... a memory that is soothing or relaxing. Or we may just think about our breathing and pay close attention to the air moving in and out of our body.

Meditation No. 1 also marks one of the first moments we will begin reading music together on the page. **Reading music is a super power!** Reading allows us to learn and play all kinds of music quickly, correctly and with all of the artistry and expression that the composer or songwriter intended. It also allows us to begin writing music in new and fun ways. As you start your journey reading music, know that it's ok to make mistakes. Struggling a little bit is part of the process. When you are confused or wondering if you are playing the right notes, speak up and ask lots of questions.

In this piece, you will be learning how to read the open notes E (string 1), B (string 2), and G (string 3). You will learn how to identify and play rhythmic values: quarter note, eighth note, and whole note. While reading these notes are important, the most important thing is to be expressive and share a feeling of calm with the audience.

### Classroom Activity

Take time to think of a memory or place that is especially calming for you. What is special about this place or experience? What about it feels tranquil or serene? Would you consider sharing your place/memory with the class? How does the guitar itself help us feel calm or peaceful?

# Meditation No. 1

## Literacy Sequence

① 3rd String Open - G

② 2nd String Open - B

Guitar

*p* *i*

③ 1st String Open - E

④ Quarter and Eighth Notes on a Single String

*m* Count: 1 2 + 3 4 + 1 2 3 4

⑤

⑥

1 + 2 3 4 1 + 2 + 3 4 1 + 2 3 + 4 1 + 2 + 3 4

⑦ String Crossing - Quarter Notes

⑧

⑨ String Crossing - Quarter and Eighth Notes

⑩ String Crossing - Quarter, Eighth and Whole Notes

⑪

# Meditation

Guitar 1  
Level 1

No. 1

Travis Marcum

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a tempo of 80 bpm. It consists of three staves of music. The first staff (measures 1-4) features a sequence of chords: m i i, m i, m i i, and m. Dynamics range from mp to pp. The second staff (measures 5-8) contains a continuous eighth-note pattern starting with an i finger, followed by a measure with a half note and a final i finger. Dynamics include f and pp. The third staff (measures 11-14) returns to the m i i, m i, m i i, and m chord sequence. Dynamics range from mp to pp. The piece concludes with a final chord (0 0 0 8) marked 'subito p' and a note: 'Strum down with flesh of p'.

SAMPLE

# Meditation

Guitar 2  
Level 1

No. 1

Travis Marcum

$\text{♩} = 80$

11 *i p p* *i i p* *i p p* *i i p* *subito p*

Strum down with flesh of *p*

SAMPLE

# Meditation

Guitar 3  
Level 1

No. 1

Travis Marcum

♩ = 80

String ⑤ Fret 3

String ⑤ Open

*pp*

5

*p*

*f*

*pp*

11

String ⑤ Fret 3

String ⑤ Open

*pp*

*subito p*

**SAMPLE**

# SIGHT READING

## Level 1

1 3rd String - G (Whole, Half, and Quarter-Notes)

2 2nd String - B

3 1st String - E

4 G and B with Quarter-Rests (Use stroke finger to mute string on the rests)

5 B and E



6 G and E

7 G, B and E

8

9 Half-Rests

10 Eighth-Notes and Counting the Subdivision

11

Musical notation for exercise 11 in 4/4 time. The melody consists of eighth notes and quarter notes. The first measure contains four eighth notes (C4, D4, E4, F4). The second measure contains four eighth notes (G4, A4, B4, C5). The third measure contains a quarter note (C5), a quarter rest, and a quarter note (B4). The fourth measure contains a quarter note (A4), a quarter note (G4), and a quarter rest. The fifth measure contains a quarter note (F4), a quarter note (E4), and a quarter note (D4). The sixth measure contains a quarter note (C4), a quarter note (B3), and a quarter note (A3). The seventh measure contains a quarter note (G3), a quarter note (F3), and a quarter note (E3). The eighth measure contains a quarter note (D3), a quarter note (C3), and a quarter note (B2). The piece ends with a double bar line.

12 3/4 Time Signature and Dotted Half-Notes

Musical notation for exercise 12 in 3/4 time. The melody consists of quarter notes and dotted half notes. The first measure contains a quarter note (C4), a quarter note (D4), and a quarter note (E4). The second measure contains a quarter note (F4), a quarter note (G4), and a quarter note (A4). The third measure contains a quarter note (B4), a quarter note (C5), and a quarter note (B4). The fourth measure contains a quarter note (A4), a quarter note (G4), and a quarter note (F4). The fifth measure contains a quarter note (E4), a quarter note (D4), and a quarter note (C4). The sixth measure contains a quarter note (B3), a quarter note (A3), and a quarter note (G3). The seventh measure contains a quarter note (F3), a quarter note (E3), and a quarter note (D3). The eighth measure contains a quarter note (C3), a quarter note (B2), and a quarter note (A2). The piece ends with a double bar line.

13

Musical notation for exercise 13 in 3/4 time. The melody consists of quarter notes, eighth notes, and dotted half notes. The first measure contains a quarter note (C4), an eighth note (D4), and an eighth note (E4). The second measure contains a quarter note (F4), a quarter note (G4), and a quarter note (A4). The third measure contains a quarter note (B4), a quarter note (C5), and a quarter note (B4). The fourth measure contains a quarter note (A4), a quarter note (G4), and a quarter note (F4). The fifth measure contains a quarter note (E4), a quarter note (D4), and a quarter note (C4). The sixth measure contains a quarter note (B3), a quarter note (A3), and a quarter note (G3). The seventh measure contains a quarter note (F3), a quarter note (E3), and a quarter note (D3). The eighth measure contains a quarter note (C3), a quarter note (B2), and a quarter note (A2). The piece ends with a double bar line.

14 2/4 Time Signature

Musical notation for exercise 14 in 2/4 time. The melody consists of quarter notes and eighth notes. The first measure contains a quarter note (C4) and a quarter note (D4). The second measure contains a quarter note (E4) and a quarter note (F4). The third measure contains a quarter note (G4) and a quarter note (A4). The fourth measure contains a quarter note (B4) and a quarter note (C5). The fifth measure contains a quarter note (B4) and a quarter note (A4). The sixth measure contains a quarter note (G4) and a quarter note (F4). The seventh measure contains a quarter note (E4) and a quarter note (D4). The eighth measure contains a quarter note (C4) and a quarter note (B3). The piece ends with a double bar line.

15

Musical notation for exercise 15 in 2/4 time. The melody consists of quarter notes and eighth notes. The first measure contains a quarter note (C4) and a quarter note (D4). The second measure contains a quarter note (E4) and a quarter note (F4). The third measure contains a quarter note (G4) and a quarter note (A4). The fourth measure contains a quarter note (B4) and a quarter note (C5). The fifth measure contains a quarter note (B4) and a quarter note (A4). The sixth measure contains a quarter note (G4) and a quarter note (F4). The seventh measure contains a quarter note (E4) and a quarter note (D4). The eighth measure contains a quarter note (C4) and a quarter note (B3). The piece ends with a double bar line.

SAMPLE