Practice is Not Homework!!
Making the most of your practice time.

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Yamaha Performing Artist

1. Basic Concepts
   a. variety and fun are the keys
   b. you must feel successful after each session
   c. the most difficult thing is getting started
   d. practicing with a friend makes it go easier
   e. it doesn’t have to be perfect – it’s a process
   f. a performance deadline adds priority
   g. double the time you think you need
   h. project yourself into a performance situation
   i. it’s not what you know, it’s what the music conveys
   j. what would your teacher/audience say
   k. every session should have technique, reading, style and
      soloing
   l. discovery is the best teacher but it takes time
   m. set goals – short term, long term
      keep a practice log – schedule your sessions
      structured and/or non-structured
   n. you are in control/responsible for what you learn!!!!!!!

Many of the ideas given below can be used in other categories.

2. Tone Quality
   a. record yourself
   b. listen to professional performances
   c. quality is always quality
   d. build exercises that reinforce this basic concept
   e. what other instrument could play your part

3. Rhythmic Accuracy
   a. use a metronome – GROOVE!
   b. metronome on upbeats
   c. play opposite rhythms
   d. play the rhythm by itself – complete values, say rests?
   e. take out the embellishments
   f. play to prerecorded music
   g. add lyrics
4. Note Accuracy, Articulations, Bowing, Sticking
   a. steps – count, sing, finger, play
   b. “post it note” technique
   c. 5 x rule – DRILL
   d. identify the problems measures
   e. make up variations
   f. theory, analysis – scales, sequences, chords
   g. hear/play it as if you were singing it

5. Pitch
   a. use a tuner for every note – mark your tendencies
   b. identify what part of the chord you have
   c. know your alternate fingerings
   d. play on piano
   e. play with other section leaders

6. Style, Dynamics, Phrasing, Tempo
   a. what is the mood/style – how to establish it
   b. add a storyline – cultural, historical
   c. point to what is written on the page while singing it
   d. identify phrases – what makes them different
   e. identify intensity (1 to 10)
   f. accents are explosions, use them wisely
   g. adjust your dynamics to fit the ensemble that is playing
   h. change the style – jazz, rock, waltz

7. Performance Issues
   a. start in different places – recovery
   b. start at the end and work backwards – consistency
   c. know the accompaniment – fitting together
   d. know how to get on & off stage, bowing – etiquette
   e. establish tempo, mood, 1st measure before you play
   f. practice with the clothes that you are going to wear
   g. visualize a perfect performance before going to sleep
   h. memorization – theory, motion, dynamics
   i. your audience is with you
   j. there is no such thing as a perfect performance
   k. over-preparation provides confidence
   l. pre-performances