

Note: These projects assume that all of the Special Programs (as all are part of the required Core Curricula) have been taught.

## I. **Comp & Improv Projects**

### A. Add an improv section to a repertoire piece

LH - play as written, or create your own

RH - Improvise using scale maps

#### 1. TFMM: Play through once, then repeat with RH improv instead of melody

- Sleepless  
(refer Neil's example in BSV)
- Wind
- From Me to You  
Consider broken octaves in LH for improv section

#### 2. Development:

- DL 12: Sky High  
Add 12BB improv (key of G) before measure 17
- DL 14: You Were With Me All Along, measures 7 - 13
- DL 15: Heart to Heart  
Play through once; 2nd time through improvise 1st 8 measures  
(watch for accidentals in LH, mimic in RH)

### B. Improvise with backing tracks on YouTube

- Choose a key, and style of music if you want to narrow it down - e.g. blues, pop, smooth jazz, rock, etc.)
- Search in YouTube "backing track key of [chosen key] (style)"
  - Some videos show the chord names in real time as the video plays
- Find a result you like and improvise RH using scale map as starting point
- LH may play the root, or 1 and 5, or octaves/broken octaves, CP Arr., etc.)

# Upper Level Project Ideas

Laurie Richards

## C. Improvise/Compose using common 4-chord progressions

1. List of some common progressions:

I - V - vi - IV	I - ii - IV - V
I - ii - vi - V	I - vi - IV - V
vi - V - IV - V	I - IV - ii - V
I - IV - vi - V	vi - V - ii - I

2. Project idea:

Student chooses 2 of the above progressions (or create their own)

- Student creates a song structure using AB form

(Examples: The Pipes = A A B A A; Deep River = A A2 B A2)

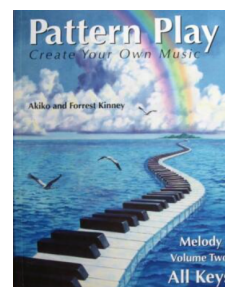
- LH may play the root, or 1 and 5, or octaves/broken octaves, CP Arr., etc.) in the key chosen
- RH may improvise or compose a melody using scale map as starting point
- Consider adding a C section

## D. Use Pattern Play Vol 2 by Forrest Kinney

I use the \*original\* Pattern Play vol. 2 with ALL upper-level students →

Wonderful book providing the following:

- Starting patterns for LH or BH (reading)
- Ideas for improvising/composing using the pattern
- Multiple projects in every single major and minor key
- Different styles of music



## II. **More Scale/Theory**

### A. Learn More About Chord Structure

Dive more deeply into understanding chord symbols and how to interpret them

This is especially helpful in the Jazz Clues program

See my webinar "Understanding Chord Structure" available in Simpedia:

<https://simpedia.info/understanding-chord-structure-laurie-richards/>

### B. Identify Chords by Root Position & Inversions in Repertoire Pieces

FL7: Canon in D

Arr2: Sleeping 2.1

Arr3: Lead Me to Light

# Upper Level Project Ideas

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## C. Transpose Pop Songs Structurally

Beyond I - IV - V

Look for relatively simple chords

A few examples:

- Colors of the Wind (Disney 4th Ed. p. 48)
- A Hard Day's Night (Beatles p. 56)
- When I Was Your Man (Bruno Mars)

## III. Deeper Dive into Special Programs Content

### A. Blues & Improv

1. All projects in all keys can last years!
2. Add the Blues Infusion Program (Supplemental Program) for even more content

### B. Jazz

1. Continue processing Jazz Clues 2, 3 and 4 using jazz standards  
Recommended book: The Real Book (key of C)
2. When processing Jazz Clue 2 (solo project), add harmony notes under the melody for a more sophisticated result

### C. Accompaniment 2 - Embellishments

## IV. Create Arrangements using GarageBand (or other software)

- A. Use the GarageBand guide or look up free tutorials
- B. Record a repertoire song and add other instrumentation
- C. Compose a song and record in GarageBand
- D. Consider adding vocals