

Sight Reading

Music

What to look at before you play, and the rule that governs the whole attempt.

Thirty seconds of looking beats thirty seconds of guessing.

1

Key and time signature

Name the sharps or flats aloud. Name the beat.

2

Scan for the hardest bar

Set your tempo from that bar, not from the first one.

3

Find the patterns

Scales, arpeggios and repeats. Most music is made of shapes you already know.

4

Check accidentals and repeats

Note where the road map jumps.

5

Play, and keep going

Eyes ahead of your hands by a bar. Never look back.

THE RULES

Rhythm before pitch — a wrong note in time is better

Slower than you think

Practise with music you will never perform

Sight reading improves only by reading new things. Re-reading the same piece is memorisation.