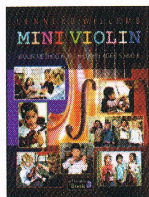


MINI VIOLIN

Lenneke Willems

81PP THIMBLE PUBLISHER £18.30

(TEACHER'S GUIDE £12.90)



Mini Violin by Dutch teacher Lenneke Willems is a teaching method aimed at pupils aged

five and six, intended for use in group lessons. It is the first in a two-part series, and covers 33 lessons (33 more will be covered in the second part). Both a student's book and a teacher's guide are available (produced by Willems's company, Thimble), but unfortunately they have a slightly kitchen-table-production feel. There's a lack of uniformity in the illustrations in the student's book, and a few proofing errors in the teacher's guide that you just wouldn't normally see in an Oxford University Press tutor book, for example. The translation is also idiosyncratic in places: at the end of lesson one in the teacher's guide, tutors are advised, 'Shake hands with each child as it leaves the classroom.' Disconcertingly, students are referred to as 'it' in a quite a few places.

At heart, however, Willems's method is interesting and very instructive. Young children are sure to enjoy learning the bow hold using a magic wand, as she suggests. Each lesson takes up one double-page spread of the pupil's book, with instructions for homework on the left and simple tunes to play on the right, and many also include a song to learn and clap along to (which the teacher plays). The teacher's guide breaks the lessons down into minute detail – certainly of interest for teachers who feel they need some extra support, or useful for getting

a feel for fresh approaches with young children.

An accompanying DVD for the teacher's guide shows excerpts from Willems's lessons – in Dutch, but with English subtitles – and her students seem to be really engaged with her methods. It's not the most professional-looking of books, but Willems's enthusiasm and dedication to her subject are infectious.

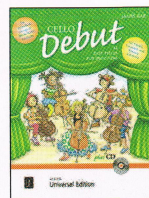
CATHERINE NELSON

CELLO DEBUT

James Rae

28PP ISBN 9783702471163

UNIVERSAL £9.95



Although *Cello Debut* is subtitled '12 Easy Pieces for Beginners', the average young cellist would

probably be in their second year of learning before they could enjoy this book. The pieces, each accompanied by a cartoon illustration, are all in first position and do not include any extensions, but slurring of up to four notes to a bow is commonplace, and there are some syncopated rhythms. The pieces are imaginatively written to appeal to young learners and cover a wide range of musical styles and moods.

Cello Debut comes with the option of a piano accompaniment or a very engaging backing CD. The first four pieces, for solo with accompaniment, include an introduction to hooked bowing in the swinging 6/8 march *Shoes on Parade* (which on the CD has an exciting wind and brass band accompaniment), and the nicely tense A minor *Doctor's Orders* with a 'light rock feel', using staccato notes, accents and syncopation. There's no