Taking the leap:
Migrating to the **MFun** eText

Electronic textbooks can have many advantages over their print predecessors: at their best, they are customizable, cross-platform, and portable. A truly interactive eText such as my **MFun: Music Fundamentals** gives your students immediate feedback and the opportunity to develop fluency in vital skills. In an era when many colleges and universities (not to mention students!) are concerned about affordability, the MFun eText offers a low-cost alternative to a traditional music fundamentals package of printed textbook and workbook with accompanying audio CD of musical excerpts. Best of all, perhaps, MFun minimizes instructor grading. But if you've never used an eText, it can be daunting to make the switch from a traditional print textbook.

In some ways, using the MFun eText is no different than using a traditional textbook. You can assign students "pages" to read and give them homework assignments with due dates. You can decide which drills and quizzes are required, how many questions each will include, how many times a student can take each quiz, and—for quizzes that focus on fluency (like note reading)—you can decide if they are timed and how much time is allowed for each. More details and decisions than you want to fuss with? Take the easy route and choose one of the two ready-made settings files provided to instructors, one for music majors and the other for non-majors.

Some things are different with MFun: rather than turning in paper assignments for you to grade, your students submit "transcript" files which contain comprehensive data for each computer-graded drill and quiz you assigned (including scores, time spent, highest score, and average score). You can easily export all the data for your entire class to a single spreadsheet

Taking the leap. . . *(Continued)*

using the instructor program provided. You may never have to grade homework assignments again! The grading time you save can be re-directed to hands-on analysis or composition projects that lead students to even more in-depth learning. If you're accustomed to using workbook assignments as class materials, MFun provides a comprehensive set of printable worksheets to provide your students valuable practice writing music notation on paper.
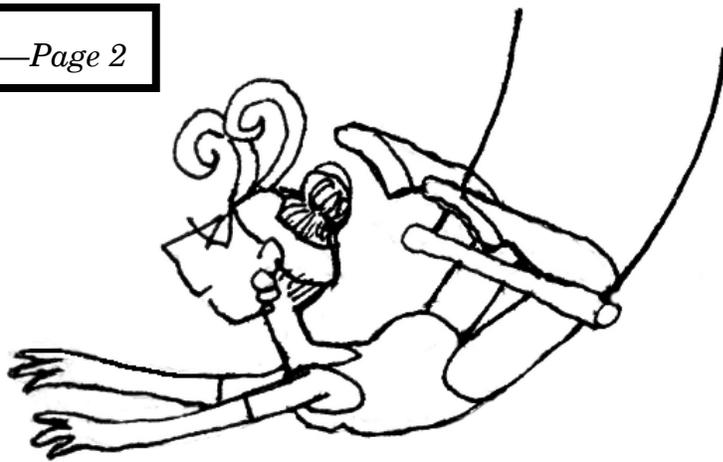
But the most important difference is that MFun changes the environment in which students learn music fundamentals. I wanted MFun to be much more than a passive PDF of a traditional print textbook, so I designed it to engage your students actively in learning by focusing on the connection between sound and musical symbols and concepts. There is a real immediacy to the hundreds of musical examples and excerpts from repertoire that illustrate the content because it takes only a single mouse-click to play each: no fumbling about looking for the right track on an audio CD. The on-screen notation and keyboard examples are playable, inviting students to explore both keyboard and staff. For instance, in the introduction to clefs, every pitch on the staff can be clicked and heard. Similarly, the keyboard illustrations of whole and half steps are presented on playable keyboards.

The rich learning environment of MFun includes dozens of interactive, computer-evaluated self-tests, drills, and quizzes, each presented in a format suited to the specific subject matter. No one-size-fits-all cookie cutter template here! This matching of content to drill/quiz format insures that your students learn efficiently and without boredom as a variety of intriguing exercises holds their interest. The drills and quizzes require your students to use newly-learned concepts immediately, insuring that they understand before moving on to more advanced topics.

MFun goes beyond a traditional textbook in so many ways, constantly engaging your students in learning while minimizing the drudgery of grading for you. It's well worth taking the leap and giving my **MFun: Music Fundamentals** eText a try!

Elizabeth Sayrs

"I really love the MFun e-textbook. I wanted my 15-week online course to be the kind of course that empowers amateur music-makers to have a better grasp of how music works. I think the MFun e-textbook is very well-designed to achieve that. The drills and quizzes are challenging in reasonable ways, while not overwhelming students with theory in too dry or abstract terms that they can't relate to music they know. The popular music listening examples in the early chapters are wisely chosen, supplementing classical music examples. All of this enabled me to effectively meet the needs of elective and music minor students.

"The music department I teach at is small: we don't offer graduate music degrees, so there are no music grad assistants, and I'm on my own. It was absolutely crucial to have a well-designed e-textbook, one that serves both average students and above-average students very well.

"Huge thanks to you, and to Elizabeth Sayrs and her MFun for providing such a valuable teaching resource. I plan on teaching Music Fundamentals online for music minors and elective students in Spring semesters regularly in future years. MFun has made this a very satisfying teaching experience."

Linda Holzer, University of Arkansas at Little Rock

Do your students need **MFun**?

Does your department offer a general musicianship course for non-majors?

Without doubt, music is a significant part of most students' worlds, and many of them are eager to know more about how music works. An introductory course in music fundamentals permits students to satisfy both their curiosity and an elective requirement. For *only $40*, **MFun: Music Fundamentals** provides a complete package of "textbook," interactive drills and quizzes, and printable workbook pages, ideally suited to a one-term course in the basics of music.

Are your incoming music majors poorly prepared for college-level theory?

If your school offers a remedial music theory course for students arriving with inadequate preparation, **MFun: Music Fundamentals** is the perfect "textbook," easily adapted to any course-delivery paradigm and to any degree of instructor supervision. All of MFun's interactive Drills and Quizzes are computer-scored, so they require no instructor grading. Each student's Transcript file maintains a complete record of his/her work, so you can easily assess individual effort and accomplishment.

If your school's pre-entry placement exams identify at-risk students, advise those individuals that they should work through the **MFun: Music Fundamentals** eText in the weeks before classes begin to get up to speed before starting your theory sequence. When these students arrive on campus, their MFun Transcripts will tell you at a glance if they are now ready to tackle college-level theory. A few weeks of independent work with MFun all but insures success for these at-risk students.

If your school routinely mails out welcome letters to incoming music majors, summarize the level of theory knowledge expected of entering freshmen starting your music theory sequence. Encourage them to self-diagnose their own weaknesses: suggest that—if the listed concepts are unfamiliar to them or if they are not sure of their competence—they can bring their theory skills up to speed by working through the **MFun: Music Fundamentals** eText before classes begin. When students start college-level theory with a solid foundation in music fundamentals, they have a much better chance of success.

Are you a high school teacher with seniors planning to major in music at university?

Even if your high school doesn't offer a formal course in music fundamentals, you can give your prospective music majors the head-start they need by encouraging them to work with **MFun: Music Fundamentals** to fill gaps in their knowledge. Every overworked instrumental and choral director can be sure students will do well on entrance/placement exams.
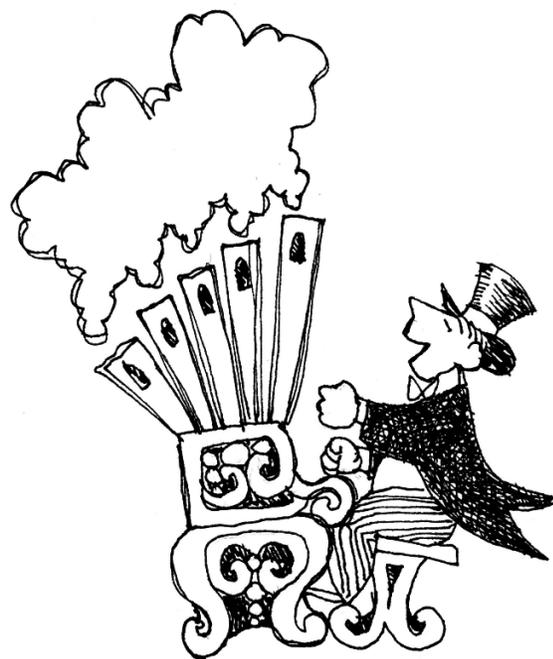
Praise for MFun: Music Fundamentals

"MFun was a total success, and the students really like the program."

KH, West Virginia

"Students are really enjoying MFun. They can move at their own pace. I can spend much more time drilling reading and singing in class and making sure their reading and singing is getting better!"

SB, Ohio

"I have been using MFun as my textbook this semester, and I like it VERY much."

LNB, California

"I finished up our semester of Fundamentals of Music using the MFun eText. It went very well. We have seen vast improvement, and it is obvious that MFun content, sequence, and drills were very beneficial to our students. In ten weeks, we made it through 10 chapters. The comprehensive final exam yielded all A's, B's and one C, and more than a few students started the class not knowing how to read notation!"

NM, Florida

"Love your products and appreciate your support very much."

LH, Arkansas

"MFun has been a fun addition to our course. Students seemed to enjoy it last year because it was more economical and concise than other conventional texts. We are using it again this year as the main text along with supplementary solfege, aural-training, and keyboard material. So far it's working well!"

GN, Ohio

"You all are wonderful to deal with and I appreciate your quick response."

KH, Florida

"In my remedial classes, I now have a reversed classroom with MFun as the source of information and drilling and MacGAMUT for more theory drills and the aural drills. In class, we work on sight-singing and aural drills as well as working on strategies for dictation. This is the first full year with MFun, and my Theory I students are working on simple four-part writing in root position. I am hoping that they will have a very high pass rate in Theory I."

SB, Ohio

"Thanks for your wonderful product!"

SS, North Dakota