

Get **SMART** with your music

Part of the fun of music is expressing your own style and creativity. One of the easiest ways to do this is by tweaking elements of a piece you already know. Once you master a piece of music as it is written, you may experiment and make changes to express your own musical personality. I call this getting "SMART" with your music. This page lists some ideas to get you started.

S

S is for STYLE If your existing piece is in a major key, do you know how to switch it to minor? How would it sound if you move your hands up higher or lower? Play chords as single notes, like an arpeggio OR play arpeggios as blocked chords.

M

M is for MELODY Find a few measures where you can adjust the melody. If the notes skip up, how would they sound skipping down? Can you turn the melody upside down? Can you play the notes in reverse order?

A

A is for ARTICULATION If your existing piece is legato, you might experiment with staccato; or vice versa. How would the forte section sound if you played it pianissimo? Can you add any accents or sfz?

R

R is for RHYTHM Is there a place where you can change a whole note into four quarter notes? How about changing four quarter notes into dotted quarters with eighth notes? Try swinging the eighth notes instead of playing them evenly.

T

T is for TEMPO This is the easiest change of all! If the piece is marked fast, play it slow like a turtle. Play it slow and lower on the piano like a giant turtle! If there is a ritardando at the end, try racing to the double bar line.

The possibilities are endless!