

PIANO LESSONS FOR LITTLE MOZART

By Carole L. Cooney

In the music salon of the Mozart home, Leopold, the father, is giving Marianna, his daughter he piano music lesson. Mozart, five years younger than his sister, nicknamed Nannerl, is trying to sit and listen.

Leopold: Watch your fingers, dear Marianna. That's better.

Marianna: (Playing more carefully) Yes, Father.

Mozart: (Sits very still listening then leans forward.)

Leopold: Try that phrase again. This time a little more smoothly and watch the tempo.

Mozart: (Anxious) Father, may I try it?

Leopold: Certainly Wolfgang, when I start your piano lessons. For now, you must listen.

Mozart: (Looks downcast at the floor)

Marianna: (Sweetly) Father, could you let Wolfie just try a little bit?

Leopold: (Approving with a smile) Yes, Marianna. Come, Wolfgang. Kneel on this seat so that you can touch the keys and play.

Mozart: (Plays Marianna's piece perfectly)

Marianna: Wolfie! That was perfect! How did you do it?

Leopold: Yes, it was very good. You *are* ready for lessons, Wolfgang.

Mozart: (Excited) Yes, yes, yes, Father!

Leopold: But there are two things you must do.

Mozart: (Playful) One, two, buckle my shoe!

Leopold: (Stern) Wolfgang! *If* you want lessons, you must be still and listen.

Mozart: (Silences his mouth with his finger and nods his head rapidly, "Yes".)

Leopold: First, you must practice every day and learn each lesson perfectly before we go on to the next one.

Mozart: (Nods "Yes" frantically)

Leopold: Second, you must let Marianna have her lessons. She is not to disturb you and you are not to disturb her. Do you agree?

Mozart: (Huge, bright smile and wide open eyes) Yes, Father, I agree. Oh my, lucky me!