Intro

So many composers act as our teachers both pianistically and musically. The one that I’d like to specifically focus on today is Chopin. Not only is he one of my favorite composers, but I truly think that he teaches through his repertoire. My favorite of his collections of works are his nocturnes. I think these pieces are particularly important to learn because they teach the student so much about touch, melody, phrasing, and overall musicality. Today I would like to discuss how one might go about preparing a student to play one of these nocturnes. I know this is an expansive topic, so this presentation will encompass just a few steps in a student’s development before learning a nocturne.

Body

“Nocturne”

- play parts that will need developing...give examples of:
  ~ left hand smoothness and leaping
  ~ melodic line
  ~ balance between hands/ “acrobatics”
  ~ phrase shape in right hand melody
  ~ touch = VERY IMPORTANT

“Kitty Kat Meow” (Catherine Rollin)

- play

- beginner

- arm movement & its relation to phrase shape

- how left and right hand trade off melody & phrase is shared between hands = also
connected to balance
-simply but specific dynamics

“Notturno” (David Kraehenbuehl)
-play
- **late beginner**
- voicing top part in both hands
- balance (octaves in high/low registers)
- phrasing, avoiding 2-measure phrases

“Chansonette” (Franz Lachner)
-play
- **intermediate**
- leaping left hand = very challenging
- harmonic progressions = “interesting”
- phrasing of right hand = multi-tasking between left hand jumping and right hand singing

“Daydreams” (Cornelius Gurlitt)
-play
- **intermediate**
- leaping left hand with differing rhythmic and articulation patterns
- shorter phrases add up to one long phrase even with breaks in between

“Calm Sea” (David Karp)
-play
- **late intermediate**
- “crawling” left hand = crossing fingers
- long melodic line that must be sustained
- more “interesting” harmonies

“Romance” (Isidor Seiss)
- play
- \textbf{late intermediate, approaching advanced}
- combo of many things = leaping LH, harmonies to keep track of, melody
- also, NEW = thematic development

Back to Nocturne
- wrap up by playing specific parts of nocturne to exemplify:
  ~ left hand
  ~ melodic gesture
  ~ touch
  ~ balance
  ~ phrase shape

\textbf{Conclusion}

When helping a student work toward a piece of a higher level, there must always be multiple steps in a plan that spans across a longer period of time. There are many ways to go about preparing a student to play any more advanced work or collection of works, and this process is only one way to go about doing so.