

It has been my privilege to have taught cello throughout my career. The one-on-one nature of individual lessons allows the teacher and student to get to know each other. It gives me as a teacher opportunities to problem-solve with the students, meeting the students wherever they are musically and technically, and raising the bar, taking their cello skills to the next level. I once had a student who had trouble with the direction of higher and lower pitches on the fingerboard. When she was first learning a piece she would move her left hand towards the bridge to go lower and towards the scroll to go higher. This, of course, is the exact opposite of the geography of pitch location on the cello fingerboard, and it is common for small children to have this confusion. However, this student was much older, could read music, and was playing advanced cello repertoire. In her lessons, I discovered that she could not distinguish her right from her left, that she knew which was which only because she had a mole on one hand. Even her parents didn't know this, nor did her academic teachers. The student knew she worked hard for her success, but she was motivated and willing to spend long hours at her studies. The hours we had in individual lessons gave me the opportunity to unearth this in a way no one else had. She was able to find therapy and she is doing spectacularly well. For me, teaching is always centered on the student, and it is my calling to be a part of launching him or her into the wider world of music and of life.