More on Practicing Sight Reading

To get good at anything requires practice. The practice of sight reading is no exception! Becoming a better sight reader requires sitting down with new material on a regular basis. For this to occur, other materials in addition to this text are necessary. A good place to start would be classical etude books. Since pedegogy for the classical bass has had a longer history than for the electric, more materials are readily available. Try to choose material which will challenge but not overwhelm. A good instructor can suggest some excellent supplementary material!

Although there is a wealth of classical etudes, it is important to acquire sight reading material in the style you plan to be reading. Besides helping you to learn to read notes, each different style has its own unique idiosyncrasies with respect to musical markings such as repeats, codas, chord symbols, expressive markings, etc. If you are having problems locating these materials, a teacher who is associated with a particular style is a good source of information.

Also, as stated before, it is important to get exposure to the style of music you want to sight read whether through listening to recordings or viewing live performances. This will help with the phrasing and general feel of the music.

Dynamics

Dynamics are a very important element in music. Dynamics are the measured changes in intensity or loudness in music. Music played without dynamics is like a class lecture given by a teacher who has a monotonous delivery. Both will put the listener to sleep! Dynamics are marked with the letters $f$ and $p$. The $f$ indicates degrees of loudness while the $p$ indicates degrees of softness. The following chart maps out dynamic markings from loudest to softest:

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{fff} & & & & \text{fff} & & \text{ff} & & \text{f} & & \text{mf} & & \text{mp} & & \text{p} & & \text{pp} & & \text{ppp} & & \text{pppp} \\
&\text{Loudest} & & & & \text{------------------------------} & & \text{Softest}
\end{align*}
\]

Dynamics are an important part of musical phrasing!
Etude #5

Up Tempo Funk

*This symbol denotes a double flat. The E double flat is played as a D note.
Notice the time signature!

Etude #6

*This symbol is an accent. The note which it is attached to will be stressed more than usual.