**How to Hold a Guitar:** When holding a guitar in a folk style, be sure that you have 3 points of contact. Your guitar should be placed on your right knee (pt. 1), leaning slightly back into your chest (pt. 2) and your right arm should rest on the top of the guitar for stability (pt. 3). See picture. When using a strap, be sure that your guitar is high enough so that you are not reaching down or up. You can also play in a classical style. This will also have the similar points of contact. The only difference will be the knee that your guitar is placed on. Place your guitar on your left knee and place your left foot on a foot stool. Set the stool to a comfortable height that also allows your left hand to reach the upper register. Lean the guitar back into your chest and let your right hand rest on the lower portion of the body. One of the most difficult things for beginning guitarists to do is to develop proper left hand position. Take a look at the videos for an exercise to not only play correctly but to help avoid future repetitive stress injuries as well.

**Four Methods of Music Therapy:**

**Recreative:** In order to recreate a song, a music therapist must first be able to recreate a style. This begins with developing solid right hand technique whether it is strumming or fingerstyle (Meyer, De Villers. & Ebnet, 2010). To develop a solid foundation, begin with steady down up strumming. This will help you keep time as well as begin to groove. Once you have successfully mastered that, try leaving out beats or adding some. Hear what it does for the feel. Practice with the video to gain some more ideas. Additionally certainly styles will require certain right and left hand techniques, such as the “chuck” or palm muting. These techniques will help lend authenticity to your music.
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**Improvisation**: Using a guitar in clinical improvisation leads to music opportunities that are not present with other instrument choices (Sochensky, 2005). The guitar provides both harmonic and melodic opportunities. Unlike a piano, using a guitar may even suggest certainly styles or genres, e.g. Country, Blues, Rock etc. For this portion we will stay away from genre for the most part and begin to use the guitar simultaneous as a melodic and harmonic instrument. Many guitarists begin improvising through the pentatonic scale and is a good place to start your improvisational relationship to the guitar. Check out the pentatonic scales below, each starting on a different note.
Pentatonic Scale

First Mode

Second Mode

Third Mode- Fingering One
Third Mode - Fingering Two

Fourth Mode

Fifth Mode

All of these scales can be used Western music we tend to identify the pentatonic scales as either major or minor. However, any of the five notes can become the tonal center. Take a look at the exercises below. Each provides a different bass note to provide the tonal center. Try experimenting with the various sounds. As you get more comfortable, switch between different tonal centers.
Compositional: In our Western music culture we can expect to hear I, IV, V progressions to imply major tonalities. However, just like the pentatonic scale, the notes of a major scale can imply other tonal centers. Each of those has a chord progression that implies its tonality. All can be used to create different and new sound compositional ideas.

Major or Ionian has I, IV, V. Dorian (or the second note of the major scale) has i, ii or i, IV. Phrygian (or the third note of the major scale) has i, b II, b III. Lydian (or the fourth note of the major scale) has a I, II. Mixolydian (or the fifth note of the major scale) has a I, v or a I, b VII. Aeolian (natural minor or the sixth note of the major scale) has a i, b VII, b VI. Locrian (or the seventh note of the major scale) has a i-7 b 5, b V.
Ionian/Major

E  F#min/E

Dorian

Em  F#min/E

Dorian
Phrygian

Em or E  Fma.7 #11/E  G6/E

Lydian

E  F# ma. 7 #11/E
Mixolydian

E  A  D

Mixolydian

Aeolian/Minor

Em  D  C

Aeolian/Minor
Lorcrian

E half-diminished  B-flat half-diminished

Receptive: As suggested previously, it is important that a music therapist be able to engage a client while playing a musical instrument. I want to thank Paul Nolan for this idea. First look at the two chords presented below. You are probably familiar with how to finger these chords. However you will notice some diamonds as well as some open strings. The diamonds are suggestions of where to add your fingers. Feel free to experiment adding and taking away fingers while arpeggiating the chords. After you are comfortable doing playing the chords adding and taking away finger, play the same pattern but speak above it. This will provide structure and interest for you patient.

C maj. 7  F maj. 7