

WAYS OF KNOWING: Beginner and Intermediate Rehearsal Techniques

Wendy McCallum, DMA
 Brandon University School of Music
 mccallumw@brandonu.ca
 (204) 727-7368

This clinic will examine techniques of teaching fundamental skills to musicians and examine the relationship between listening, speaking, reading, and writing a language as it relates to the stages of musical performance. How can you support beginning efforts in music making so that students truly enjoy playing by themselves and with others?

When musicians begin to play an instrument in an ensemble setting they want to play as much as they can and as soon as they can. We know that their experiences should be designed to develop a strong foundation. WAYS OF KNOWING will demonstrate the importance of sequencing instruction, encouraging aural recognition (“playing by ear”), and of challenging players to learn passages at multiple pitch levels. In turn, we will examine why considering not only what we want students to know but also how we want them to know it will affect the way we select and rehearse repertoire with our students.

**What do students need to know/be able to do in order to translate this simple passage?
 Activity 1 - Example A:**

Bass Clarinet in B \flat

Marching Grenadiers

Arranged by Clark Tyler

March Moderato

The musical score is written for Bass Clarinet in B \flat and is titled "Marching Grenadiers" by Clark Tyler. It is in 4/4 time and marked "March Moderato". The score consists of three staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is a simple march pattern. The second staff starts with a measure rest labeled "6". The third staff starts with a measure rest labeled "11". The piece concludes with a double bar line.

WAYS OF KNOWING - Students need to:

- *have an aural representation of symbols on the page in their mind's ear*
- *be able to sing the pitches in tune*
- *know the fingering/slide position to get the sound they want*
- *be able to look at the symbol and get to the right "place" on their instrument in time*
- *be able to "name" notes as they appear on the page*
- *be able to manipulate sounds to create their own patterns*

How do we reinforce these skills on a daily basis?

Stage One:

Without notation, students sing (with solfège, note names, or lyrics) and demonstrate fingerings/slide positions.

Stage Two – Following the introduction of notation:

Clap the rhythm

Sing with one syllable ("la" or "lu")

Sing with solfège (challenge stronger students with Curwen hand signs)

Say note names, even in mixed instrument groups

POP the fingerings/slide positions

Create combinations of these skills to challenge student knowledge – layer skills. Knowledge and understanding will increase as skills are "layered" in the presentation of new material. (The benefit is that students are learning how to practice independently.)

Our priority is TONE, TONE, TONE.

What are the benefits of creating unison melodies or études for your students?

Activity 2 - Example B:

Trumpet in B♭

Ahrirang

Robert Garofalo and Garwood Whaley

Gently ♩ = 88

mp

8

f

13

What are the substitutes for a good set up (posture), correct hand position, relaxed full breathing, and strong air support...?

Encourage aural recognition and “playing by ear” at one or more pitch levels or tonalities. Challenge your players to learn passages (melodies and accompaniments) at multiple pitch levels.

Activity 3 - Example C:

The image shows two systems of musical notation. Each system consists of two staves. The top staff is labeled 'Clarinet in Bb' and the bottom staff is labeled 'Cl.'. The music is written in 4/4 time and consists of a series of eighth and quarter notes. The first system starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (Bb). The second system also starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (Bb). The notation includes a '5' above the first note of the bottom staff in both systems, indicating a fifth finger position. The music is a simple melodic line with some rests and ties.

How does this change the way you construct lesson plans and rehearse repertoire with your students?

Students develop knowledge, skills, and understanding based on formal and informal educational experiences. If we consistently present fundamental skills in listening and performance and encourage reflection about our routines, our students will develop habits that result in a beautiful tone, a strong sense of intonation, and consistent technical growth.

“If a child enjoys listening to the instrument that they are playing, they will play more.”

Excellent tone in an individual player or large ensemble is a reflection of well-established routines and thoughtful daily preparation.

Recommended Reading:

Duhigg, Charles. *The Power of Habit*. New York: The Random House Publishing Company, 2012.

Selected Resource List

Dust, Thomas and Laura Jane Dust. *Band Aids: A Program Guide for the New Band Director*. Boca Raton, FL: Universal Publishers, 2012.

Duke, Robert. *Intelligent Music Teaching: Essays on the Core Principles of Effective Instruction*. Austin, TX: Learning and Behavior Resources, 2009.

Garofalo, Robert. *Blueprint for Band: A Guide to Teaching Comprehensive Musicianship Through School Band Performance*. Galesville, MD: Meredith Music, 1976.
In addition to *Blueprint for Band*, Meredith Music publishes instructional units (based on the text’s model) for a variety of beginner to advanced compositions.

Schleuter, Stanley L. *A Sound Approach to Teaching Instrumentalists: An Application of Content and Learning Sequence*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning, 1997.

*Lisk, Edward S. *The Creative Director: Conductor, Teacher, Leader*. Galesville, MD: Meredith Music, 2006.

Lisk, Edward S. *The Creative Director: Beginning and Intermediate Levels*. Galesville, MD: Meredith Music, 2001.

O’Toole, Patricia. *Shaping Sound Musicians: An Innovative Approach to Teaching Comprehensive Musicianship Through Performance*. Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, 2004.
Text develops ideas established by the Wisconsin Comprehensive Musicianship Project (CMP). Encourages teachers to make lesson plans based on the following five points: Analysis, Outcomes, Strategies, Assessment, and Music Selection. Text is an excellent source of ideas for programming and establishing effective teaching strategies and assessment activities.

Pilfian, Sam and Sheridan, Patrick. *The Breathing Gym*. Springfield, IL: Focus on Excellence, 2002. (DVD and Text)

Check out *Basics in Rhythm* and *More Basics in Rhythm* by Garwood Whaley (Meredith Music), a collection of short graduated studies for teaching rhythms and the *Rhythm Vocabulary Charts (Book One and Book Two)* by Ed Sueta (Macie Publishing Company, 1986).

Teaching Music through Performance in Band (Volumes I-XI), Richard Miles, editor
Each volume is broken into two sections, chapters on topics relevant to instrumental music education and analysis of quality literature (100 works at each level). There are two supplementary disc sets for each volume, Grade 2-3 Repertoire, and Grade 4 Repertoire.

Teaching Music through Performance in Beginning Band, Richard Miles and Tom Dvorak, editors Volume I and Richard Miles and Marguerite Wilder, editors Volume II
These volumes contain excellent essays on a variety of beginner band topics including curriculum, recruitment, lesson design, rehearsal and warm-up procedures, and repertoire selection as well as analysis of literature for beginning band. (entry, intermediate, and advanced level 1 rep.) Supplementary disc sets includes recordings of all 100 works.

Teaching Music through Performance Series

<i>...in Beginning Band (Volume 1 & Volume 2)</i>	<i>...in Orchestra (Volumes 1-3)</i>
<i>...in Middle School Band</i>	<i>...in Middle School Choir</i>
<i>...in Band (Volumes 1-11)</i>	<i>...in Choir (Volumes 1-4)</i>
<i>...in Jazz in Beginning Ensembles</i>	<i>...in Jazz Ensemble (Volume 1 & Volume 2)</i>

