

SCAFFOLDING FOR SUCCESS

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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.

Scaffolding – a process in which teachers provide support for student learning and then remove the support so that students become self-reliant. The idea behind scaffolding is to provide the necessary structure, guidance, and teaching that students need to learn as well as fostering student independence by removing the support. Ideally, the students will continue to develop skills and acquire knowledge on their own. (*Dictionary of Music Education*, Ely/Rashkin, 391)

Be aware of the distinction between cognitive and physical skills – consider the development of knowing, doing (translative, dexterous, aural), and understanding – as well as the distinction between individual and ensemble concepts (personal practice and rehearsal).

Can you students function in the “landscape” of music in their school and community?

What “systems” need to be established to guarantee sequential growth in our students?

Rhythmic

- Counting system
- Group ensemble pulse
- Pencil marking skills
- Influence of meter on phrasing and interpretation
- Note morphology (entrance, duration, and release)
- Subdivision
- Distinction between “figuring out” and executing rhythms

Harmonic

- Chromatic scale AND a Fingering chart
- Circle of 5ths (theoretical and practical)
- Consonance and dissonance
- Cadential patterns (resolutions/voice leading)
- Chord tones (R, 3, 5, and extensions)

Melodic

- Intervals – melodic intonation (aural)
- Instrument specific knowledge
- Chromatic Scale and transposition
- Scales (with and without notation)
- Digital patterns

Practice Strategies

- Warming up (Why? How? What? How long?)
- Pencil use
- Metronome (free versions on-line) - role of foot tapping and/or conducting
- Non-playing approaches
 1. Clapping rhythm
 2. “Tu” with air stream (articulation)
 3. “S” with air pressure (air flow and dynamics)
 4. Saying note names
 5. Singing pitches (“la, la,” scales degrees, or solfege)
 6. Air Band
- Repetition without predictability or boredom...is it possible?

Listening

- Listening libraries (listening logs)
- Characteristic tone (individual)
- Ensemble concepts (balance, blend, intonation)
- Self assessment
- Peer assessment (sectional and ensemble) – constructive criticism
- Playing by ear (Why? What?)
- Talking about music – employing musical vocabulary (descriptive skills) – answering questions
- Instrument specific language (selecting and maintaining reeds/stopped horn/legato tonguing on trombone/utilizing mutes, etc.)

Resources

- Unison etudes
- Solo literature (etudes and repertoire lists)
- Chamber ensemble literature
- Literature for full band (variety of musical and technical challenges)
- Reference texts (instrument pedagogy, interpretation, music history, music theory)
- Recordings, videos, and music technology
- Assessment resources
- Recording technology
- Metronome and tuner

We are teaching musical concepts, not “tasking” students – rehearse for skills (aural, dexterous, translative), knowledge, and understanding. Make space for constructivism and inquiry-based learning.