Instructional units and multi-media: tools for concert band rehearsals.

Frederick Burrack

How to cite this presentation

If you make reference to this version of the manuscript, use the following information:


Citation of Unpublished Symposium

Citation: Burrack, F. (2007, September). Instructional units and multi-media: tools for concert band rehearsals. Paper presented at the Kansas Music Educators Association 2007 Annual Convention and In-Service Workshop, Wichita, KS.
Welcome, my name is Frederick Burrack, Assistant Professor of Music Education at Kansas State University. Today, with the assistance of the Goddard 7th grade School Band, we would like to share with you some ideas that you might be able to take with you to enhance your rehearsals.

As I have visited schools across the mid-west, one thing that I have noticed was band rooms with either screens and overhead projection units or television monitors suspended from the ceiling.

There have been many initiatives encouraging teachers to incorporate technology involved in classrooms. Many band directors first response is, “how can we do this in a rehearsal?” As a result we lose out on funds particularly ear-marked for technology and, in some ways, appear to be close-minded to these initiatives. But there are ways to enhance rehearsal using technology. Let us share some ways.
Technology Possibilities

- Posting announcements.
  - Scrolling during warm-up

  Jazzband rehearses after school until 4:30
  Pep Band Friday night, arrive at 6:15
  Fundraising money is due tomorrow
  Playing tests begin next week

- Electronic blackboard for rehearsal order.
  Warm-up: Bb Concert Scale, F Concert Scale
  Overture in Bb: begin at C
  Fairest of the Fair: begin at the break strain

I have seen some directors using these tools wisely to save rehearsal time by posting announcements instead of reading them.

* Often a computer scrolls through the announcements using Powerpoint or another slide show program. These often scroll during the warm-up period of the rehearsal.

* As part of these announcements, the rehearsal order could be posted with the expectation that students will have music out and ready, again saving valuable minutes in rehearsal.
Another way to use this technology is in combination with instructional units. We will share some ideas that you might find useful.

*As directors we study the score to understand the compositional elements within the piece. If these elements help us to interpret and perform the piece, then they are equally important for our students to know and understand so they can perform with understanding.

*Technology can offer unique opportunities to develop student understand that contributes to independent musicianship. It is only when our students have their own understanding that they can make appropriate musical decisions.

*Connections to historical, cultural and other disciplines can enhance both the
*understanding and performance outcomes including dynamic and expressive possibilities.

*One of the most important contributions that technology can make in the comprehensive teaching of music, as we know from learning theory, in addressing various learning styles of students.
A unique way of exposing the musical form is through cross curricular interaction between visual art and music. Both art forms use similar conceptual elements to portray feeling and expressive meaning. Elements such as: Form, Line, Color, Texture, Shape, Context, Referential meaning, etc.

By exploring similar compositional elements, a deeper understanding can be attained by students.
Sometimes it is useful to allow every member of the ensemble to play the melody together. Another useful technique is to transpose the melody for all the students to play providing a tactile as well as aural experience for recognition of the melody.

Full band plays the melody

This student hand-out provides a visual reference for students who do not have it written in their parts to recognize the melody, Kinesthetic reference through performance developing a unified technical proficiency across the ensemble, and aural reference of the melodies to help student to knowledgeably balance harmonies under the melody. Notation programs offer an accommodating method to print melodic phrases into all instrument transpositions.

Another important use for this strategy would be to eliminate waiting of those who don’t have this particular melody while those who have it learn to play it. It is particularly challenging because of the intervallic jumps.
A way to expose students to melodic material is leading then ensemble through the melody. Understanding melodic continuity helps reinforce compositional form and provides an opportunity for all students to learn the melody and who plays it while eliminating the down time during rehearsal for those who don’t have the part. (this could be turned into a listening game by leaving the instruments who play the melody blank and have the students identify the instruments who have the melody)

Experiences like this can provide a visual reference for instruction while bringing the important elements from the composition to enhance the students’ understanding.

In addition to exposing the melodic material, dynamic shapes, and recognizing instrumental timbre, students should learn how a composer puts these elements together. Let’s explore some strategies that can encourage band students to discover the connections between musical components.

Let’s hear the primary theme from Portrait of a Clown by Frank Tichelli

(play 17-24) A to B

As directors, we understand that the ‘A’ theme is very playful and the accompaniment light and rhythmic. All these short staccato notes are put together to form a cohesive melody. The question is how can we get our students to discover the same understanding?
You also could teach the students about the tonality of Bb Lydian by having the students compare the melody to the Bb Lydian scale.

You could create warm-ups and other exercises build off of the students’ new understanding of the tonality. Go to Lydian in Wycopedia and you will find a list of easily accessible songs written in the Lydian mode for further study.
Art/Music Connections

The A section can be portrayed through Emil Nolde’s *Wildly Dancing Children* (1909)

Paintings can be used to describe these elements and the overall rounded binary form used in this piece. As you have heard, the initial theme is light and staccato.

(ask students) How are brush strokes in this painting similar to staccato notes in the melody A?

Reinforce:

- The A theme is very light and staccato. This is shown by the short strokes used on this painting. Just as all the short strokes are put together to form a cohesive design, all the short staccato notes are put together to form a very cohesive melody.
- This painting illustrates playfulness. The melody is light and playful, and the accompaniment very light and rhythmic. The painting can portray a feeling that would also be intended to be portrayed in sound.
- The children appear to be jumping around in constant motion, like the notes in the A section.

Similar to the painting strokes of Emil Nolde’s art piece “Wildly Dancing Children” as in most impressionistic art, these independent strokes of color blend together in one cohesive idea similar to how the short motifs work together to express the theme.
Art connections also encourages student to consider aesthetic consideration.

(ask students)

• Look at the color used in the painting of girls dancing, “What feelings does it evoke?” ___________________

• You see how the artist used many different colors combined to portray these girls dancing. How does this compare to the different instrument timbres used by the composer, Frank Ticheli? __________________

By asking the students to consider the compositional texture and instrument timbre, students discover a connection to feeling by comparing the painting’s use of multiple colors with Ticheli’s use of tone colors.
Melody B appears several times in the second section:
mm. 34-41 ~ flutes and oboes
mm. 42-49 ~ flutes, oboes, alto saxophone, and cornet 1
mm. 58-67 ~ variation in the flutes, oboes, and alto saxophone

The middle or B section of the piece slows down and changes tonal center. Again a projection will provide an opportunity for you to lead students in the understanding of tonality. The new melody is presented in the contrasting key of f harmonic minor has contrasting textures and articulations from the A section. The texture and melodic flow are also altered.

(Play 34-41) D to E

(ask student)

What is different about the below excerpt, than from the first excerpt? (Look at the articulations) _______________________

The music, through way of slurs and ties, also presents a visual image of flowing lines, very legato and expressive.
This painting gives a visual image of flowing lines similar to the new melody of the B section of the piece. Flowing lines and lack of sharp points depict this smooth, expressive style.

Visually the flowing melodic lines of the painting are similar to the slurs and ties of the printed music appearing very legato and expressive.
It is obvious that the B section of the piece sharply contrasts the A section. We use the painting to encourage the students to consider what makes the music sound different in the B section of the piece.

(ask students) What are some of the differences of this painting from the girls dancing?
[compare to the sound of the piece]

•______________________ **Limited use of color:** Rothko’s chose to use shades of black in order to portray his feelings. Ticheli used minor chords to evoke a darker color from the band.

•______________________ **Thinner lines used in the painting:** compared to the thinner texture of the composition. Ticheli used fewer instruments.

When students become aware of the melody and expressive elements, they learn to make musical decisions based on their own understanding. Aesthetic response is considered through change in feeling elicited by the compositional elements. **Consider how this B section makes you feel different than the music in the A section**

(ask a student) How do the shades of black and white in the painting elicit different feelings than the first painting? _____________________ How is this similar to the minor chords and dark color in the band in the music?
Return of the ‘A’ theme

A section.
*Cows Released in Spring* (1918)
by
Ernst Ludwig Kirchner

The A theme returns in the original key, but is presented slightly altered.

This painting has many of the same characteristics as the first painting, but presents them in a slightly different way similar to the altering of the melody.

The playfulness of this section is portrayed through the playfulness of the cows in the pasture. The cows are jumping around just as the melody/accompaniment jumps around.

We will listen to the Goddard 7th Grade band play “Portrait of a Clown” by Frank Ticheli, Grade 2, published by Manhattan Beach as you watch another example of how technology can reinforce instruction.
by Frank Ticheli
A Section

Short Strokes = Short Notes
  Very Light and Staccato

Children Jumping =
  Playful Music

Bright Colours = Loud Dynamics
Dark Colours = Soft Dynamics

*Wildly Dancing Children* - Emil Nolde (1909)
B Section

Lack of Colour = Minor Key
Smooth Lines = Slurred Notes
Smooth, Connected
Very Different from A Section
Automatic Writing

*Untitled* - Marc Rothko (1944/1945)
A Section

Repeat of First A, Slightly Different
Jumping Cows, Still Staccato
Smooth Lines, Occasional Tenuto
Bigger and Better than First A Section

Cows Released in Spring- Ernst Ludwig Kirchner (1918)
In the Shining of the Stars
By Robert Sheldon
To share just a few more ideas with which technology can be used:

Rhythms can be extracted from compositions, such as the rhythm on top from “In the Shining of the Stars” and used as a basis for warm-up exercises. Or have the ensemble count and clap the rhythms of the melodies from the piece.

• Rhythms taught to the entire band can also be used in assessments by handing out a short test with all of the rhythms that were taught to the ensemble and the students write the counts under the rhythms.

Another useful technique helps the students understand the relationship of the melody to the harmonic background. Typically young students play their parts as if all of them have equal importance. (play this example)

• Again you can reinforce the melody and instrument timbre while involving all of the students through a listening exercise that also includes the visual context.

Have the students watch and listen to the melody as the clarinet and sax play. (melody play)

What makes this piece a challenge is maintaining a balance between the melody and the long tone background. When the students recognize the clarinet and 1st alto sax melody, the other instruments can make a conscious decision to support behind the melody with their whole and half notes to give the piece a rich, full harmony. (all play)
The melody is then passed from the clarinet and alto saxes to the flutes, oboe and trumpets at measure 18 where they enter. Clarinets and saxes then join other voices in the long tone harmony. *(play this section at 18)*

This gives you the opportunity to discuss changes in tone color created by shifting the melody/harmony between the instrument sections.
Textural awareness

After this, the harmony becomes more active building in emotion building in dynamics and tempo until a change of key. It is not difficult for students to perceive a change of key due to the new key signature, but understanding the modulation prior to the new key signature is not as easy for students to recognize. Showing the students the additions of accidentals in the score may be all that is needed for students to see that the modulation begins before the key change is marked in their music.

This key change is also accompanied by a crescendo swell into the first fortissimo of the piece. Typically a section such as this sounds like this. (play with little or not cresc)

•By projecting the image of the notation and adding a graphic example of the dynamic change often is the stimulus needed for students to make an obvious difference. (play again with noticeable cresc)

The piece calms down to a mezzo-piano for the next four bars with the melody in the clarinets and a counter-melody in the also saxes before the saxes, trumpets, horns, and trombone come in with a rich, accented line building to the Maestoso climax.
The trombones and baritones share in the melody in an upward motif handing off the melody to the trumpets, and then the sax and horns and finally to the clarinets, slowing down through a *meno mosso*, then to a *molto rallentando* as the flute carries the melodic two-bar theme as the piece ends into nothingness. (listen to the end of the piece)
Robert Sheldon:
clinician, conductor, composer
Band editor for Alfred Publishing Co.

Historical Information

“In the Shining of the Stars” by Robert Sheldon
Inspired by “Idylls of the King-The passing of Arthur”
by Alfred Lord Tennyson

I found him in the shining of the stars. I marked him in the flowering of the fields, but in his ways with men I find him not. I waged wars, and now I pass and die...

To help the students develop a deeper relation with the music, we should make them more familiar with composers, historical periods, and relevant information about music and musician by offering pictures, web-sites, facts, and even referential information such as poetry. I know that we all share bits of information with our students, but when we present this information both verbally and visually, it is reinforced in the students’ memory. I even suggest to provide this information in paper form for study at home in preparation for a future test on the material.

By making a connection to other arts, you can enhance the learning of music. You see the opening line of a poem by Alfred Lord Tennyson titled “Idylls of the King–The passing of Arthur”. The ending of the piece could easily symbolize King Arthur’s death, as he passes “but does not die in the memory of his people.”
In the Shining of the Star

By Robert Sheldon
GIA Publications
Grade 2

Let's listen to the Goddard 7th Grade Band perform the entire piece. Here is “In the Shining of the Star” by Robert Sheldon
**Musical Terminology**

**Maestoso** *(Italian)*
In a majestic and stately manner.

**Meno mosso** *(Italian)*
Less motion, little slower

**Rallantando** *(Italian)*
Gradually slowing of tempo

Projecting musical terminology and the definitions while rehearsing visually reinforces meaning while experiencing the performance skill as see on this slide from a teaching unit for “In the Shining of the Stars”.
http://www.k-state.edu/musiceducation/teachingunits/

Teaching Units for Music Educators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Band Literature</th>
<th>Choral Literature</th>
<th>Orchestral Literature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alphabetical</td>
<td>Alphabetical</td>
<td>Alphabetical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade Level</td>
<td>Grade Level</td>
<td>Grade Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composer</td>
<td>Composer</td>
<td>Composer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## What does this site offer music teachers?

Each unit includes:

- **Full Score Analysis**: used for developing the teaching strategies. (Melodic, Harmonic, Rhythmic, Formal, Historical, & Cultural analysis)
- **Teacher’s Guide** that provides strategies and activities:
  - Musical descriptions of all aspects in this unit guide.
  - **Warm-up strategies** that reflect the elements from the musical piece.
  - Resources: Recordings, books, articles, related compositions, web sites that would aid in teaching this piece.
  - Assessment of student learning with answers guides and/or grading rubrics and rubrics, rating scales, or check lists for assessing proficiency achievement.
  - Additional information on the piece that would be useful to the teacher-conductor.
- **Student Guide**: providing your students with:
  - Learning goals
  - Instructional guidance and activities for:
    - Historical background and cultural context on the piece, composer, genre, style, making connections common with visual art.
    - Rhythmic concepts involved in the composition.
    - Melodic movement and the relationship to other elements.
    - harmonic foundation and relationship in other elements.
    - Form Analysis: providing examples of overall form in graphic representation.
    - Practice Guide: Rhythm, scale patterns, etc. extracted from the score that the student is to practice at home and that can be utilized in ensemble warm-ups.
    - Visual examples of interdisciplinary connections.
    - Assessments for student understanding of the concepts and skill development.
    - Glossary of necessary and useful terminology to understand the composition.
- **Webquests** offering your students extended instruction of literature and musical concepts

## News

These units have been developed by students from various universities across the country. We hope you will use these units in your teaching and encourage you to share this site with colleagues, future music students, and university music education programs.

**Names of contributors**

If you wish to contribute to this site: contact Dr. Frederick Burnack at the email address below. Note the background information link above that describes the expectations (assignment) that supports the development of teaching units.

You can find these unit ideas and many more at a web-site developed for your reference. Please visit it when preparing to teach pieces to your band. The address is in your hand-out.
# Teaching Units

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Score Analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2. | Teachers Guide (instructional ideas for:)
|     | a) Rhythmic components |
|     | b) Melodic content |
|     | c) Harmonic movement |
|     | d) Expressive elements |
|     | e) Compositional form |
|     | f) Musical terminology |
|     | g) Warm-up material |
|     | h) Interdisciplinary connections |
|     | i) Assessment strategies with grading rubrics |
| 3. | Student Guide (printable handouts for students) |
| 4. | Web-quests for further student learning |

In each unit you will find

- A full score analysis
- A teachers guide that had instructional strategies for
  - the musical elements
  - Warm-ups tied to the strategies
  - Interdisciplinary connections
  - Assessments for each strategy
- A student guide of handouts to reinforce the instructional strategies
- Web-quest for enrichments activities at home related to the piece.
The pieces are sorted by title, difficulty and by composer. Each year we add more compositions to the web-site.

My goal is to involve universities across the country to submit their students’ best work and offer it to teachers across the county making your job a bit easier and music education more comprehensive.
Dear Student,

We are from the small town of Fairmount, IN where we hold a festival in honor of James Dean's life and career. As you may know, James Dean grew up here and then left for the big world of fame and fortune as he became an actor. We have just found out some horrible news! Due to the extremely stormy weather, our town library has flooded destroying most of the materials and information we have on James Dean! His house still stands here in Fairmount, IN, but we are now lacking in our information and works that we provide for all the people that come to learn about James Dean. Help us continue to celebrate the life and times of James Dean by compiling all the information you can find!

Also included with each teaching unit is a web-quest for enrichment associated with the musical and historical concepts of the piece. This is an example of a web-quest from the piece “As Summer Was Just Beginning”.

Teach web-quest begins with a description of a project, sort of a web-based role playing.
The Task

* Find information on James Dean
* Write a 3 page paper on the life and career of James Dean
* Include information on the following:
  o Where and when he grew up
  o His films
  o Quotes
* Include at least 2 pictures in your paper
* Include how you feel Larry Daehn expresses James Dean's life through the music
* Finally, there will be an artwork connection that you need to reflect on as well.

The task is specifically described for the students.
Helpful Sources

These sources will help you in your quest to find as much information about James Dean for the James Dean Committee.

http://www.jamesdean.com/index.php
http://www.jamesdeangallery.com/
http://www.americanlegends.com/james
http://www.jamesdeanartifacts.com/

All the web-sources are provided where the students can find the necessary information to accomplish the task.
The Process

1. Look through the sources that have been supplied, you may also go to the library or use any other source you find on James Dean. You are not limited to just what has bee supplied for you.
2. After gathering your information, compile it and put your paper together in an orderly fashion (intro-body-conclusion)
3. You may include your picture either within the paper or separate and attached at the end.
4. Included in the body of your paper you should answer the question concerning Larry Daehn’s As Summer Was Just Beginning.
5. An additional paragraph for the artwork connection should be included in the body of your paper as well.

Even the process is provided, step by step so the students know exactly what to do.
Each web-quest includes the rubric upon which they will be graded.
There are many web-quests on the net that you can find to enhance your teaching with technology such as this web-quest for Cajun Folk Songs.
Lets explore a few more instructional ideas that can enhance student learning and expand the students’ experience with the musical pieces. On the site shown earlier you will find this teaching unit for Kentucky 1800.
All of the units provide warm-up activities such as this example.
Instructional Ideas

"The Promised Land"

Some have compositional activities as seen above.
Or ideas to incorporate improvisation.
Aspen Overture
This picture reminds me of the fast rushing part of the song. The people in the raft are fighting a fierce river, and in the song, we are fighting a fierce, rushing tempo. This portion of the song takes place at the 1 - 58.

This picture also reminds me of Mr. Edelman when his arms are about to fall off!
This picture is supposed to portray measures 1-59, because the skier is going down the mountain really fast, just like the music in those measures, and it’s awesome. WOOOO-HOO!!!
This represents the huge explosion of music and sound at 35-51 and later at the climax
This picture symbolizes the slow beautiful part of the song. The picture has a warm inviting feeling and reminds me of measure 50-104. The bad part of this is that the inviting feeling takes place in the middle of the song. That won’t invite the listeners very well, unless the inviting portion is in the beginning of the song.
I think this is the perfect picture for the Trumpet solo. It shows how beautiful the scenery is. At measure 59 where there is a beautiful and peaceful change in the mood.
This picture portrays measures 59-104 and that this is really calm that is kind of what happens in those measures. Aaaaaahhhh calmness.
This picture reminds me of measures 59-104. Out of the whole song, I believe that this picture captures the calmness and peace of this song.
“This picture captures the excitement and height of the mountains in Aspen. It gives an image to every measure except for measures 59-104. “

Other students suggested that “This picture reminds us of measures 59-69 in the clarinet part because it’s slow and relaxing, and riding in a lift can be slow and relaxing as well. Then you get the exciting thrill of going down the slope!”
This picture represents basically the entire song especially the peaceful trumpet solo
This picture would tie in with the trumpet solo at measure 59
This is a picture to show the busy life of the city. It is fun and exciting just like the fast, fun, and exciting part in Aspen on measure 104.
This picture depicts the fast moving parts of Aspen from bar 104 to the end because it shows a skier going really fast down a mountain like a person in a really fast movie.
This picture represents measures 104 to 165 in Aspen Overture. We chose this picture because it captures the excitement in the song.
We are going to hear one more piece played by the Goddard 7th Grade Band. Enjoy their performance of Aspen Overture by Christian Earl.