

Pandemic band: Musicking and growth in unprecedented times

by

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Abstract

The lessons discussed in this report will demonstrate my application, adaptation, and reflections on the philosophies and methods I have cultivated during my graduate studies at Kansas State University. Based on the Remote Beginning Band Curriculum I developed in Summer 2020, both lessons demonstrate the impact my Master's studies had in preparing me for one of the most unique and challenging teaching settings I may ever face: remote beginning band. The two lessons reviewed in this report pull directly from concepts outlined in my curriculum, with a focus on the time-honored traditions of learning how to perform lines from the method book and introducing eighth note rhythms for the first time. With an emphasis on maintaining the integrity of content and adaptation of content delivery and modes of student response in a remote setting, these lessons give a glimpse into the daily life of beginning instrumental musicking in the virtual realm.

My studies have had a substantial impact on my teaching, reflection, and growth as an educator. I have learned a slew of techniques, methods, and tricks to implement in the classroom and have also developed a larger perspective and philosophy regarding the profession and the role I wish to play in it. I am better able to prioritize and organize my teaching to help maximize student learning in meaningful and lasting ways. By better understanding my own beliefs of what music education means to me in immediate and global contexts, I have learned to consciously align my day-to-day lessons and teaching with bigger goals and objectives for myself, my students, and my program. This has proven invaluable to my pandemic teaching style and has allowed me to focus my energy on the power of instrumental musicking and cultivating the joy and positive human interactions that come with it. By weaving the power of musicking into my curriculum and teaching, my students and I have all been gifted with a safe place to learn and

grow as musicians despite distance and the challenges of learning (and teaching!) instrumental music in cyberspace. As I look into the future and past my final summer of coursework, I am excited for the continued evolution of my philosophy and the ways in which it will guide myself and my students in enjoying the lifelong journey of musical creation, performance, and response.

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Chapter 1 - Teaching Philosophy

The purpose of the formal education system is simple in theory: to prepare students for life and living. In all areas of education policy and reform, the goal of preparing students for “success” – defined by whichever entity (teacher, student, administrator, politician, community, etc.) is making decisions at any given moment – guides all involved, every step of the way. The differences in what “success” means for countless cultural and economic communities in twenty-first century society, lack of continuity as to how to achieve success, an overabundance of theories for effectively measuring it, and the addition of technological, budgetary, and other concerns is where, as Chinua Achebe (1959) so poignantly summarizes it, “*Things Fall Apart*”. In some ways, this is a good thing. In the midst of so much disagreement and passionate argument as to the current and future state of education in the United States, one thing becomes clear: our country (at all levels) values education, and actively seeks to create the best version of it for its students.

As the tool of implementation (a gross over-simplification), teachers must have a guiding philosophy that allows a bridging between information, policies, and expectations of the profession and the very real students they work with. Students are the crucial component to the education system, and while education can – and does – happen without the institution, the institution cannot function without students. No matter the content or the class, educators must develop a philosophy that guides them in their endeavor to prepare students for the ever-elusive concept of “success”.

Philosophy of Education

The question of whether the chicken or egg came first has long haunted science, logisticians, and a significant portion of the general population. Answering this question is cyclical, mostly theoretical, and likely not the first that comes to mind when discussing philosophy of education. However, a similar issue of causality exists in education: Does *educating* cause *education*, or does *education* cause *educating*? As it is with chickens, it is an unanswerable question. Causality is something education professionals live with, however, and a philosophy of education must address the complex nature of both education and educating.

The first step for this intent and purpose is defining “educating.” Assuming the noun and gerund of “education” are worth distinction, the gerund typically explains the “how” of the process – the experiences, methods, pedagogical concerns, and more “active” factors in place for teachers, students, and stakeholders. While Jorgensen (1997) uses the definition “to draw out, elicit, or develop,” for the noun “education,” it might be a more appropriate definition for its gerund (p. 13). Jorgensen’s definition applied to “educating” maintains the dynamic nature of the endeavor, and puts a focus on active student learning, process, and experience. Falling in line with more progressive and pragmatic veins of educational philosophy, Jorgensen’s definition applied to “educating” provides a framework in which other constructs of social, cognitive, and cultural natures can effectively combine while the focus remains on students’ growth and development.

The subsequent issue, and a crucial focal point of the American education system, then becomes defining the noun of “education.” Standards (local, state, and federal), legislative acts, textbook and publishing companies, and countless professional articles and analyses have tried to tell us what it is students should learn and what form education should take. As Vinicius da

Cunha (2008) argues, “The school’s knowledge must be transmitted so as to respect the characteristics of each pupil, so that the development of autonomy is assured, but they should also make the student’s journey towards adulthood feasible” (p. 98). If preparation for “success” is the function and value of the education system, students must be prepared to utilize content (herein referring to the knowledge, skills, processes, and applications of a given subject) in their lives long after they leave the classroom. This necessitates that processes and experience receive more weight than skills and knowledge. This is not to argue that skills and knowledge are not important – quite the contrary. Skills and knowledge are the foundational tools for successful processing, application, and experience (Airasian et al., 2001). However, skill and knowledge are of little use in a vacuum; students must utilize and translate content skills and knowledge to their interactions with world around them. This requires careful attention and planning in sequencing, building complexity, and providing experiences that allow students to practice applying content in “controlled” settings so that they can successfully do so once immersed in the “uncontrolled” setting of life. It also demands educational curriculum contain a holistic and balanced approach to the many ways in which human interactions with the world occur.

Traditionally, education has included instruction in the modes of mathematics, language arts, and science – and more recently, social studies (Mark & Gary, 2007). The arts, however, have largely been left to their own devices – deemed too esoteric for definition, and thus denied a rationale of inclusion other than a suspicion they provide something other contents cannot (Eisner, 1991). Non-inclusion is a mistake born of historic misunderstanding founded in the highly personal nature of the arts, their aesthetic component, the misconception of “talent” as a prerequisite, and a structure in which the arts are a choice (elective) rather than an inherent form of human understanding (Kratz, 2014; Williams, 2011). Taking one branch of the arts,

specifically music, can demonstrate why these assumptions about the “undefinable” nature of the arts are unfounded and why the arts are critical in education and preparing students for success in life.

Philosophy of Music

Music as a curricular subject lacks authoritative definition. Even at a national level, legislation refers to music as part of “the arts,” like in the 2002 No Child Left Behind Act, or as “music and the arts” in the 2015 Every Student Succeeds Act. Neither document spends time outlining the finer details of what these contents are or their independent relationship to more global ideals of well-roundedness and life preparedness. This points to a national breakdown of authority that leaves the burden on educators to advocate for the importance of music and where it fits in the modern curriculum. While a daunting task, a simple argument can be made in this effort: if the inclusion of content in the curriculum is based on preparing students to successfully interact with and understand the world, Music must be included.

Music, as a proper noun, herein serves as the formal content in which objects, experience, and process combine in ways that are both scientific (measurable) and aesthetic (a dangerous word, here referring strictly to variable responses related to emotion, value, and judgement). The very criteria by which Math, Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies have become tenants of the education system apply to Music. As individuals and collectively, we use contents as modes of interaction and response. Music most assuredly provides a mode of interaction and response, independent of and complimentary to more traditional contents, and Bloom’s Taxonomy gives us a premise to build this argument. Bloom posits that basic mastery of the objects of content must occur before combining them in more advanced application (Airasian et al., 2001). The noun form of “music” refers to these objects of content, and include sound, patterns, instruments,

notated music, and many other “items” that when manipulated, create dynamic and intricate relationships between experiential components (human, aural, physical, spatial, etc.). It is similar to the content objects of numbers in Math or words in Language Arts, why counting comes before addition or subtraction, letters come before sentences, and knowing the fingering for concert Bb comes before performing a Sousa march. These relationships between Musical concepts and performer and audience create a complex dynamic of interaction and response imbedded in local and global culture and society (Small, 1998). If the validity of curricular inclusion requires a unique way in which objects of content exist and interact in the world, Music must be included as it contains distinct sets of content objects with complex inner- and inter-relationships.

The process and experience of Music is, admittedly, trickier to define. A brief look at the philosophies of Christopher Small and David Elliott is helpful in this endeavor. In explaining Music as relational and experiential, Small (1998) defines “musicking” as “[taking] part, in any capacity, in a musical performance, whether by performing, by listening, by rehearsing or practicing, by providing material for performance [...] actively or passively, whether we like the way it happens or whether we do not” (p. 9). Meanwhile, David Elliot (2017) suggests a more practical term “musicing,” meaning “all five forms of music making: performing, improvising, composing, arranging and conducting” in tandem to the act of listening, and “interdependent from a social, artistic, ethical, and educational point of view” (paras. 2, 5). Thus, the clumsily spelled “musik-c” refers to a process emphasizing the relational and active/passive components of Small’s philosophy (thus the “k” first), with the practical application of Elliott’s “musicing”. Musik-c, while ridiculous in spelling, fully accounts for the upper levels of Bloom’s taxonomy: Apply, Analyzing, Evaluating, Creating (Airasian et. Al., 2001). It maintains the importance of

objects of content and structured learning within the Music mode of response, while maintaining an emphasis on the Musical experiences and perspectives students (individually and collectively) bring to the classroom. The Musik-c definition also tackles the misconception of pre-requisite talent to achieve success; Music is not confined to those who “can” do it, but rather is an integral mode by which people naturally communicate, express, interpret, and listen to the world around them. It is in the Musik-cing classroom that those innate forms of response are enriched and developed through the processes of Music literacy, creation, performance, and response.

In the American education system, Music has been left much to its own devices. While the American population “musik-cs” on a daily basis (the radio at the grocery store, a jingle on TV, the table tapping of bored meeting members – the list goes on!), myths of talent, prodigy, and some indefinable aesthetic elusiveness prevents the education system from embracing Music as content worth whole-heartedly cultivating in students to prepare for life outside the institution. Music requires consideration of the individual, society, and culture, and if education seeks to prepare students for “success”, their ability to Musically interact with the world plays a crucial part in the education system.

How My Philosophy Informs My Teaching

The lessons I will present in the next chapter show the fruits of my focus on philosophy in tandem with the curriculum I developed last summer for virtual beginning band. One of the most important parts of that curriculum proved to be the course goals that were deeply rooted in my teaching philosophy:

Students will...

1. Develop fundamental skills, techniques, and literacy in instrumental music performance to successfully create, perform, and respond to musical experiences
2. Develop and apply the inter- and intra- personal skills (preparedness, engagement, performance, evaluation) to effectively engage in instrumental rehearsal and performance

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">3. Integrate aural, theoretical, and performance knowledge to evaluate and analyze musical experiences in classroom and everyday music contexts4. Apply instrumental performance skills and concepts to develop lifelong practices of engaging in music5. Come to see themselves as competent, unique, and positively contributing musicians in the local, regional, and global music community |
|---|

Table 1-1 Course Objectives from 6th Grade Virtual Band Curriculum

These goals helped framed the ultimate targets of student learning, while Small’s “musicking” and Elliot’s “musicing” gave me a means to achieve those goals. The key became to balance the practical aspects of my philosophy (reflected in Goals 1, 2, and 3) with the more interactive and global elements (reflected in Goals 4 and 5). The lessons in the next chapter demonstrate a snapshot of this process as content/skill mastery are balanced with student responses, reflections, and interactions in virtual assessments. The first lesson will focus on learning a new warm up and *Essential Elements for Band #33* “Deep Pockets” (Lautzenheiser et al., 2004). The second lesson marks the beginning of an eighth note from my beginning band rhythm curriculum I adapted for virtual instruction. These lessons demonstrate the daily life of my philosophy in action, and provide an example of some of the content, techniques, and methods that guided myself and my students through an unprecedented year of pandemic band.

Chapter 2 - Lesson Plan(s)

Lesson Plan 1: “Deep Pockets”

2014 Kansas Music Standards – Ensembles

This lesson addresses the following standards from the Kansas Music Educators Association [KMEA] (2005) standards for secondary ensembles:

Pr.1.N Select varied repertoire to study based on interest, music reading skills (where appropriate), an understanding of the structure of music, context, and the technical skill of the individual or ensemble.

Pr.4.N Use self-reflection and peer feedback to refine individual and ensemble performances of a varied repertoire of music.

Pr.5.N.a Demonstrate attention to technical accuracy and expressive qualities in prepared and improvised performances of a varied repertoire of music.

USD 259 6th Grade Band Standards

WPS.MS.6Band.Lit1 Students will read, identify, and perform written music notation and symbols associated with beginning band skills.

WPS.MS.6Band.Tech Students will differentiate and demonstrate characteristic tone production including proper instrument carriage, posture, hand position, articulation, and intonation.

WPS.MS.6Band.Reh Students will attend rehearsals with necessary supplies and will exhibit respectful and focused etiquette throughout rehearsal.

Prior Knowledge/Skills

In the previous lesson, students learned the fingering and notation for Concert A. To demonstrate their understanding, students submitted a “Show & Tell” FlipGrid where they taught

me the fingering of their new note, as well as a demonstration of them playing it. Assessment indicates students are ready to perform Concert A in a literature context.

Literacy	Rhythm	Technique
Read & perform Concert Bb, C, D, Eb, and F Identify, define, and perform fermatas & breath marks	Read & perform ♩, ♪, and ♫ rhythms/rest combinations in 4/4 time	Demonstrate proper posture, hand position, articulation, breath support, and embouchure

Table 2-1 Lesson 1 Prior Knowledge & Skills

Rehearsal Objective

Students will...

1. Perform Warm Up #6 measures 1-4 with 2.0+ level of proficiency in note accuracy (emphasis on low Concert A and Concert G), rhythmic accuracy (emphasis on full note value), technique, and expression (see rubric below).
2. Perform Book 1 #33 (“Deep Pockets”) with 2.5+ proficiency in the criteria of note accuracy (emphasis on low Concert A), rhythmic accuracy, technique, and expression (see rubric below).

Assessment of the Rehearsal

Informal assessments on student progress will be based on student responses to questions in various formats (thumbs up/down, hands on head/shoulders, answers in chat, unmuting, etc.) highlighting key content knowledge and observations from what I see on student cameras as they rehearse.

Students will submit a FlipGrid playing test of #33 (goal tempo = 80 bpm) later in the week. As we practice this line, criteria from the rubric will shape feedback based on what I see from students on camera.

	4.0 Advanced	3.0 Proficient	2.5	2.0 Developing	1.0 Emerging	0.0
Note Accuracy	Student accurately performs above target tempo	Isolated/rare error in note accuracy	Minor errors in note accuracy	Moderate errors in note accuracy	Major errors in note accuracy	Student does not submit playing test
Rhythmic Accuracy		Isolated/rare error in rhythmic accuracy	Minor errors in rhythmic accuracy	Moderate errors in rhythmic accuracy	Major errors in rhythmic accuracy	
Technique posture, tone, articulation, etc.	Student demonstrates advanced technique(s)	Student uses proper technique	Minor errors in technique	Moderate errors in technique	Major errors in technique	
Expression tempo, dynamics, phrasing, etc.	Student demonstrates advanced expressive elements	Student demonstrates expressive elements	Minor errors in expressive elements	Moderate errors in expressive elements	Lack of expressive elements	

Table 2-2 6th Grade SRG Rubric - #33 Playing Test

Relevant Contextual Factors and Modifications/Accommodations Needed

This is a fully remote Beginning Band class (first year players), who have had instruments for approximately 10 weeks. The class has 14 students enrolled (five females and nine males) and 12 were present for this lesson. Six of the students are English Language Learners, and two have IEP’s for Giftedness with no relevant modifications/accommodations listed in their IEP. The instrumentation for this class is one flute, three clarinets, one alto sax, five trumpets, two trombones, one tuba, and one percussionist.

Instructional Materials, Resources and Technologies

Hardware for this lesson includes a SurfacePro, iPad, external microphone/speakers, second monitor, and metronome. Required software for this lesson includes Microsoft TEAMS, Synergy (attendance/gradebook), Microsoft Class Notebook, and Blooket. Other materials for

this lesson are Beginning Band Warm Ups, *Essential Elements for Band Book 1*, and instruments for demonstration and modeling (Lautzenheiser et al., 2004).

33. DEEP POCKETS – New Note



Figure 2-1 Trumpet Part for “Deep Pockets” (Lautzenheiser et al., 2004)

Rehearsal Plan

This class took place during a normal class period (40 minutes).

Activity (Time)	Description
Set-Up (2 Minutes)	<p><i>Purpose:</i> Give students time to prepare for class.</p> <p><i>Sequence:</i> Students get 2 minutes to set up instruments and prepare materials (instrument, warm ups in Class Notebook, Book 1, pencil) for class.</p> <p><i>Assessment:</i> When music stops, students turn on cameras for attendance and to show they are ready.</p>
Warm-Ups #1-5 (4-5 minutes)	<p><i>Purpose:</i> Review prior knowledge, make sure instruments are setup, reinforcing technical skills.</p> <p><i>Sequence:</i> Perform each warm-up with reminders/feedback as appropriate.</p> <p><i>Assessment:</i> Visually assess (via student cameras) as students perform warm-ups (feedback as needed/appropriate).</p>
Warm Up #6 (5 minutes)	<p><i>Purpose:</i> Introduce first 4 measures of Warm Up #6 to include in warm up sequence. Review Concert A and incorporate into familiar patterns (stepwise motion).</p> <p><i>Sequence:</i> Chunk first 4 measures with modeling. Include review of new note, feedback from previous assignment, and reinforcing established patterns of step vs. skip.</p> <p><i>Teacher Assessment:</i> Visually assess student performance (student cameras). Use as starting point for refined instruction and pacing towards proficiency scale.</p> <p><i>Student Assessment:</i> Self-Assess scale of 1 to 5 after first 4 measures (use info to plan review of first 4 measures in next lesson).</p>
Announcements & Attendance (3 minutes)	<p><i>Purpose:</i> Preview day and transition into main activity.</p> <p><i>Sequence:</i> Show “Meme of the day”, preview of daily lesson and goals, missing work reminder, general feedback from last assignment, and enter attendance while students get Books ready for #33.</p> <p><i>Assessment:</i> N/A</p>

<p>Book #33 (15-20 minutes)</p>	<p><i>Purpose:</i> Transfer new note (Concert A) into unfamiliar context/patterns to reinforce notational and technical skills required to perform new note. <i>Sequence:</i> Review where new note occurs/what it looks like. Breakdown by measure: 1, 2, 1-2, 3, 3-4, 1-4, 5-6, 7, 7-8, 5-8, whole line. <i>Teacher Assessment:</i> Visually assess student performance (student cameras). <i>Student Assessment:</i> Use chat & visual response questions to self-assess progress.</p>
<p>Blooket (5 minutes)</p>	<p><i>Purpose/Sequence:</i> This teambuilding/ “reward” activity is an online game where students answer questions about a topic and correct answers allow them to make different moves in the game. This Blooket was voted on as a “Wellness Wednesday” activity (Name That Disney Movie from the Screenshot). <i>Assessment:</i> N/A</p>
<p>Pack Up & Closing (2-3 minutes)</p>	<p><i>Purpose/Sequence:</i> Students clean/pack up their instruments and have time to ask questions about the day’s lesson and reminders for tomorrow.</p>

Table 2-3 Rehearsal Plan 1

Lesson Plan 1 Reflections

The goals of this lesson were to establish a 2.0+ level of proficiency on Warm Up #6 (measures 1-4), and a 2.5+ proficiency on Book #33. Given the evidence from later formal assessments (playing test FlipGrids), the students did meet these goals. The average cumulative score on the Warm Up #6 playing test the following week was 2.8, while the average score for Book #33 was 2.6. I assessed both playing tests using the playing test rubric shown in the Assessment section. Students also assessed themselves using the rubric and used that information to write a short “glow or grow” reflection.

In this lesson, my personal goal was to refine my process for teaching one-part songs so I had a solid method in place when we began working on multiple-part songs. While this is a familiar transition in a normal year, I was not sure how it would translate to a remote setting and was worried about how to measure student’s progress during class when we were working on multiple parts/rhythms/transpositions. One of the quirks of remote learning was that while students were very diligent about keeping cameras on, this also meant their chat and/or mics did not work well for technological reasons (meeting program glitches, wifi devices, computer

model, etc.). This lesson was one of a few “guinea pig” lessons in which I tried to gauge the effectiveness of student modes of response and how to balance what I gathered from those interactions with the time it took to engage in that mode. I experimented with visual checks (thumbs up/down, scale of 1-5 on hands, students writing down questions to show the camera, nodding, and lip reading), chat/typed responses, and unmuted responses. I had hoped to find some “magic” consistent method, but that quickly proved futile and the best approach became to simply ask them, “type, show, or unmute,” and jot down their responses using a good, old-fashioned pencil and paper. This lesson helped me develop that strategy, though (which I used for the rest of the year to track informal assessment data!) and was a reminder that keeping it simple applies to pandemic teaching, too.

Lesson Plan 2: Eighth Note Unit Introduction

2014 Kansas Music Standards – Ensembles

This lesson addresses the following standards from the KMEA (2005) standards for secondary ensembles:

Pr.1.N Select varied repertoire to study based on interest, music reading skills (where appropriate), an understanding of the structure of music, context, and the technical skill of the individual or ensemble.

Pr.4.N Use self-reflection and peer feedback to refine individual and ensemble performances of a varied repertoire of music.

USD 259 6th Grade Band Standards

WPS.MS.6Band.Lit3: Count and perform simple and complex rhythm patterns with steady pulse/beat, correct sense of meter and organization, in a variety of meters.

WPS.MS.6Band.Tech: Students will differentiate and demonstrate characteristic tone production including proper instrument carriage, posture, hand position, articulation, and intonation.

WPS.MS.6Band.Reh: Students will attend rehearsals with necessary supplies and will exhibit respectful and focused etiquette throughout rehearsal.

Prior Knowledge/Skills

Students can identify, define, count, notate, and perform whole, half, and quarter rhythms/rest combinations in 4/4 time. Students have performed eighth notes in call/response activities, and are now ready to have the concept formally introduced.

Lesson Objective(s)

Students will...

1. Identify and define eighth note notation as including a note head, stem, and beam, with each note head being worth $\frac{1}{2}$ a beat for a total of 1 beat (per 2 eighth notes).
2. Accurately identify the correct counting for eighth note rhythms when given the notation.
3. Accurately count (verbally and written) simple eighth note rhythms in 4/4 time.

Assessment of the Lesson

Data from Eighth Note Blooket will reveal students' ability to recognize correct written counting when given rhythmic notation. I created the Blooket to specifically provide wrong answers that are common when first learning how to count these rhythms.

Students will submit a FlipGrid of themselves performing Line 19 from Rhythm Sheet 4 on a Concert Bb (goal tempo = 75 bpm) later in the week. As we practice this line, criteria from the rubric will shape feedback based on what I see from students on camera and in their responses to questions.

	4.0 Advanced	3.0 Proficient	2.5	2.0 Developing	1.0 Emerging	0.0
Note Accuracy	N/A	Student performs on Concert Bb	N/A	Minor errors in note accuracy	Student performs on incorrect pitch.	Student does not submit playing test
Rhythmic Accuracy	Student performs accurately above target tempo.	Isolated/rare error in rhythmic accuracy	Minor errors in rhythmic accuracy	Moderate errors in rhythmic accuracy	Major errors in rhythmic accuracy	
Technique posture, tone, articulation, etc.	Student demonstrates advanced technique(s)	Student uses proper technique.	Minor errors in technique.	Moderate errors in technique.	Major errors in technique.	
Expression tempo, dynamics, phrasing, etc.	Student demonstrates advanced expressive elements	Student demonstrates expressive elements	Minor errors in expressive elements	Moderate errors in expressive elements	Lack of expressive elements	

Table 2-4 6th Grade SRG Rubric - Rhythm Studies

Relevant Contextual Factors and Needed Modifications/Accommodations

This is a fully remote Beginning Band class (first year players). The class has 14 students enrolled (five females and nine males) and 11 were present for this lesson. Six of the students are English Language Learners, and two have IEP’s for Giftedness with no relevant modifications/accommodations listed in their IEP. The instrumentation for this class is one flute, three clarinets, one alto sax, five trumpets, two trombones, one tuba, and one percussionist. The week after this lesson the district is allowing a staggered return of remaining middle school students who wish to opt into face-to-face learning.

Instructional Resources, Materials and Technologies

Hardware for this lesson includes a SurfacePro, iPad, external microphone/speakers, second monitor, and metronome. Required software for this lesson includes Microsoft TEAMS, Synergy (attendance/gradebook), Microsoft Class Notebook, and Blooket. I also utilized an

altered version of my eighth note introduction materials from previous years of teaching this unit (see below).



$\frac{1}{2}$ Beat Each Note Head \rightarrow 1 Beat Total
 1 Pulse Each Note Head 2 Pulses Total

Figure 2-2 Eighth Note Presentation Slide 1

How do we get eighth notes?

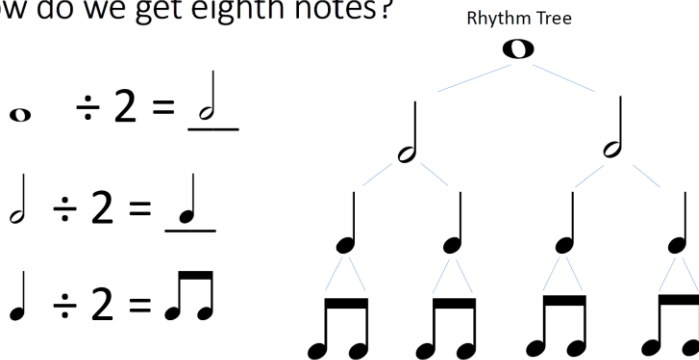


Figure 2-3 Eighth Note Presentation Slide 2

How do we count eighth notes?

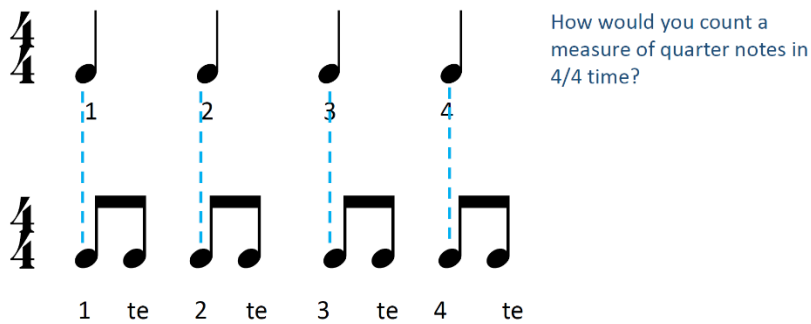


Figure 2-4 Eighth Note Presentation Slide 3

Examples

1. $\frac{4}{4}$ 1 te 2 te 3 4

2. $\frac{4}{4}$ 1 - 3 te 4

3. $\frac{4}{4}$ (1) 2 te 3 te 4

Two sets of eighth notes can be combined to cover 2 beats!

Figure 2-5 Eighth Note Presentation Slide 4

Rehearsal Plan

This class period was 30 minutes long due to our “Wellness Wednesday” schedule where students only attend a half day.

Activity (Time)	Description
Set-Up (2 Minutes)	<p><i>Purpose:</i> Give students time to prepare for class.</p> <p><i>Sequence:</i> Students get 2 minutes to set up instruments and prepare materials (instrument, pencil, paper or Word document for notes) for class.</p> <p><i>Assessment:</i> When music stops, students turn on cameras to show they are ready.</p>
Announcements & Attendance (2 minutes)	<p><i>Purpose:</i> Preview day and transition into main activity</p> <p><i>Sequence:</i> Show “Bitmoji of the day”, preview of daily lesson, missing work reminder.</p> <p><i>Assessment:</i> N/A</p>
Eighth Notes Presentation (15 minutes)	<p><i>Purpose:</i> Introduce notation, define eighth notes/where they come from, demonstrate counting eighth note rhythms, practice counting eighth notes in 4/4 time.</p> <p><i>Sequence:</i> Introduce the notation of eighth notes including parts of note (note head/stem/beam), how we get eighth notes (fraction method & rhythm tree), explain counting eighth notes, practice counting eighth note rhythms together.</p> <p><i>Assessment:</i> Informally assess based on students’ responses to knowledge-check questions.</p>

<p>Eighth Note Blooket (2 rounds – 10 minutes total)</p>	<p><i>Purpose:</i> Students select the correct counting for eighth note rhythms when shown the notation and given 4 options to choose from. The goal is to increase familiarity/comfort with the format of written notation for eighth note rhythms. <i>Assessment:</i> Blooket data on correct answers selected will inform readiness to independently count rhythms or if further review is needed before moving forward.</p>
<p>Pack Up & Closing (2 minutes)</p>	<p><i>Purpose/Sequence:</i> Students clean/pack up their instruments and have time to ask questions about the day’s lesson.</p>

Table 2-5 Rehearsal Plan 2

Lesson Plan 2 Reflections

Beginning band rhythm units hold a special place in my percussionist’s heart, and this first lesson on eighth notes typically serves as a giant informal pre-test. Over time, I have learned this unit typically goes one of two ways: some classes have an innate understanding of eighth notes and we can skip some steps in supplemental instruction, or the class needs a little nurturing before we can continue on in the method book. By treating this lesson as a pre-test, I am able to determine where in the eighth note unit the class is ready to start.

In a normal year, I close this lesson with a team counting activity (to measure how well they count eighth note rhythms), and check the technical side (articulation, tempo, and performing eighth notes on a single pitch) with an eighth-note rendition of Poison Rhythm (a call/response tournament-style game that middle schoolers claim is, and I quote, “actually really fun”). To adapt for this year, I was more intentional on who I had answer certain questions as we went through new content and closed the lesson with a custom-made Blooket instead of Poison Rhythm. When creating the Blooket, I used some of the most common errors I see when we first count eighths (labelling 2 eighth notes as 1, using a dash instead of “te,” forgetting that half notes still get two beats, a measure still has 4 beats total, etc.) to see if students fell for any of the common “traps” (spoiler: they did not!). I used that information as data indicating we could

move on in the rhythm curriculum, and we used the next lesson to pre-test the technical aspect of eighth notes (articulation, embouchure, etc.).

This lesson marked the start of my eighth note unit, and as I continued this unit and others from my rhythm curriculum, I realized I was following it just like I would any other year. Naturally there were some changes in instructional methods and assessments, but the scope & sequence felt just like old times! This was exciting for me since I have been working on my beginning band rhythm curriculum since my first year of teaching and made edits after my curriculum course this past summer. Teaching it remotely really put it to the test! It was fun to experiment with different activities and assessments between my remote, in-person, and hybrid classes, and to have the luxury of comparing the results the same day instead of waiting until this unit came around next year. Seizing this opportunity helped me try things I may not have in a normal year and helped me greatly increase my go-to teacher toolbox, making it a definite pro of pandemic teaching. The eighth note Blooket will definitely make an appearance in later years, and I am excited to see how the results of my workshopping this year translates to a “normal” school year.

Chapter 3 - Reflections

Pursuing my Master's and developing my teaching philosophy could not have come at a better time in my career. Teaching band in a pandemic seemed like an impossible task in August: my beginning band students were not allowed to have instruments until December, and the additional challenges of remote teaching created quite the conundrum in how to have a Music classroom in a virtual space. My philosophy and the knowledge and skills I have gained in my coursework became critical components navigating these challenges. When designing my lessons and adapting my goals and objectives, my philosophy was one of the most important developments in my studies so far, and it guided my perspective and decision-making the entire year. Within the confines of my teaching situation, my goal became finding the best way to prepare my students to Musically interact and respond with the world around them – and I knew if I could do it this year, I could do it any year. What and how I taught definitely looked different, but I knew if I could keep my focus on the relationships between Music, musik-cing, and the inter- and intra- personal relationships that go with that process, we would make it and perhaps even learn “how to band” along the way.

I sincerely believe the skills and methods I gained during my studies were fundamental to the ways I was able to find success this year. I do not think I would have survived nearly as well if I had chosen to put off my Master's degree, and that is a lesson I am so thankful to not have learned the hard way. In my curriculum studies, I was able to take the time to create a plan for teaching remote band – even if the reality of the virtual classroom was very different than what I guessed. The skills I picked up in my rehearsal technique, literature selection, and conducting courses helped me refine the ways I presented content, gave me a better system for selecting quality music to fit our needs, and provided me with a wealth of resources to help me organize

and troubleshoot my teaching. Studying arrangement gave me the tools to create my own warm ups, arrangements, and other resources that I ended up needing due to some of the stranger instrumentations I have taught in beginning band (one brass class, one woodwind class, and one class with almost everything). Studying the history of the profession gave me the perspective that the journey is still ongoing and this year might just end up being a special chapter in the next music history book. It also helped me keep “the other side” in mind, and to focus on the ways I could navigate this moment in history and perhaps even have a small but positive effect in the profession. Finally, my teaching philosophy worked exactly as advertised in that it provided the guiding light for student learning experiences, program goals, and my own effectiveness as a teacher.

The methods and approaches I used to teach changed in countless ways given our remote context, and it continued to evolve as the demands of the school year did. Some methods stood the test of time, others I quickly abandoned after catastrophic failure. My reliance on my philosophy stayed steady, though, and I noticed a big shift in what I felt “mattered most” in beginning band. We of course worked on things like musical literacy and instrumental technique, but the larger emphasis became the human element – how students (individually and collectively) interacted and responded to Musical concepts, and the many forms that could take. It was a different approach for me, and I will admit we did not make it through the district Scope & Sequence for sixth grade. However – and I never thought I would say this – being behind does not bother me. Can my students play in the key of Eb? Not just yet – but they can create a video on how to perform a half octave chromatic scale and include at least one lame musical joke in their production. Can my students perform single eighth notes and rests? Goodness no – but they can improvise two measures of rhythm and have a lot of fun trying to create something that will

trick one of their friends into notating the wrong thing (middle school affection at its finest). Ironically, it was the removal of performance demands (multiple concerts, festivals, contest, assemblies, etc.) that gave us more time to dive deeper, and that time helped my students become more informed performers with greater understanding of the content we did cover. Maintaining this depth as performance demands rev back up will be an exciting challenge for next year to be sure.

The area I would say was the biggest success of my philosophy in the pandemic band experience was meeting Goal 5 from my curriculum: Students will come to see themselves as competent, unique, and positively contributing musicians in the local, regional, and global music community. This usually comes naturally during the school year, but I knew if my program was going to survive past remote learning, I would need to rely on community building and utilize music's power to bring diverse group of strangers together. My goal became making remote band a part of day when each student felt important, seen, and like a member of the band. We had more informal conversations, we debated silly topics ("Does a straw have one hole or two?"), and the chat became a hilarious live-action documentary of student interaction and embarrassingly animated screenshots of my face. Our games of Blooket and Kahoot soon became "family fun time," we started "pet band" (student-made videos of pets "playing" an instrument), and we even had a class-made family tree with alarmingly few branches. This was a challenging year to connect with students, but I think focusing so much on community was the reason a year that students started with pool noodles and paint sticks ended with a volunteer concert with near-perfect attendance. With the uncertainty of pandemic school, it was hugely comforting to know that the band room, even the virtual ones, could become a learning home for my students.

My development as a teacher is by no means complete, but I think I have grown immensely over the course of my studies. The list of things I do not know continues to grow, but I think my focus has become more on depth and less on breadth. My coursework helped improve my ability to critically reflect on my teaching, better design and implement learning experiences, and create longer term goals for myself, my program, and my students. Additionally, my work helped me develop a more sustainable approach to my personal and professional goals and forced me (in a good way) to spend more time workshoping and less time reinventing. I have become better at saying more with less and focusing on what “matters most” – and I look forward to how this process will evolve after I complete my studies. Pandemic band could be described in many ways, but coming out the other side feeling like a better teacher than before is an empowering way to close the era of pandemic band.

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