

**Developing independent musicians in middle school band through
the components of playing and chamber music**

by

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A REPORT

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Abstract

The goal of this project was to guide middle school band students to understand then utilize the components of playing in order to create realistic goals that met them at their level of musicianship. Students were introduced to five components of playing: time, tone, playing in tune, with good technique, and with blend and balance. Students were given the opportunity to then form their own chamber groups where they would set goals derived from the components. Before students participated in activities to focus on each component, they were asked to independently define either one or more of the components using their own words and musical experiences in writing. Activities took place at the start of a rehearsal and that focused on one component per activity. For time, I provided students with a sight-reading rhythm excerpt for them to perform on one note. With this same excerpt they then completed a written activity breaking down time signatures and utilizing a counting system. Students also participated in a phrase-based rhythmic audiation activity. I created a tuning rotation activity for our flute and saxophone players where they started tuning from mouthpiece, to neck/headjoint to horn. To learn about tone, we had a variety of discussions in class about what the sound quality or character would look or feel like within a given musical work we were rehearsing. Students were also asked to independently explore and describe the tone of two different professional musicians performing on their instrument of study using their own words. I created sight-singing and audiation activities to engage students' in first internalizing pitch through their singing voice then through their instruments. Technique was reinforced throughout full ensemble rehearsals with intentional questions to remind students to observe and correct within their sections. Students took an active role in blend and balance by listening back to recordings of themselves

and commenting on who they heard more or less of and what strategy they might use to adjust accordingly.

I have been motivated to try strategies that allow for a focused balance towards the multitude of tasks demanded of an instrumental music teacher. The informative yet practical delivery and guidance of instrumental music education text, examples, organized lectures, feedback, and assistance from Dr. Wimmer, Dr. Gardner, and Dr. Tracz's coursework helped me gain new tools and a new perspective on how to approach an instrumental music program. I was highly motivated to start to explore and maintain practical strategies to balance the work of research, application, reflection, and modification of activities that challenged both myself and my students. Through the inspirational and at times brutally honest reflection processes in Dr. Tracz's and Dr. Payne's classes, I have experienced that successful leadership is an ongoing process that is not necessarily about being in control. It involves consistency, thoughtful planning, taking risks, failing, succeeding, engaging in a variety of research, applying research in a manner that is realistic and motivational, and being transparent about the importance of all goals that our music programs set out to achieve.

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Dedication

This report is dedicated to my mother for showing me throughout life that focus, patience, positivity, and faith can get you through challenging circumstances if you consistently take the time to reflect and realize all that you are blessed with. I would also like to dedicate this report to my fiancé Ryan for being patient, supportive, understanding, and encouraging me to stay healthy since I started my journey at Kansas State University. I would like to dedicate this project to all of my elementary music, elementary band, and middle school band students throughout my career, you all continue to approach our music classes with open hearts and minds, help me laugh along the way even on the roughest days, consistently remind me of what it means to be an awkward, wild band child again, consistently remind me that patience is indeed a virtue I will always have to work on, and have become a huge part in inspiring me to further my education in the field of music education at a time when I thought it was impossible and where I was having doubts in myself. I look forward to seeing you all continue to grow in the future; you are all loved and appreciated dearly, I dedicate this to all of you, thank you.

Chapter 1 - Teaching Philosophy

For me, education was my journey towards becoming a better person, finding who I was, while leading a more fulfilling life. I wanted more in life outside of the small community I was raised in, I wanted to seek knowledge from a larger place with multiple sources and perspectives. The journey of my education is something that I value deeply regardless of my grasp of understanding the full operation of the systems set in place today. Music is important to me because it has saved my life in giving me an appropriate source of expression to share my terrible losses, immense rewards, and a multitude of other things when words, discussion, and even writing were not satisfying enough. My philosophy on Music Education connects directly to the struggles and lessons I have learned in life, through work, friendships, encounters with some of the worst people, and time spent learning within and outside of an educational institution. I find my philosophy established in my daily activities as a person, musician, and teacher.

Education is a valuable lifetime investment that no one can take from you. Its' purpose exceeds that of career preparation. Its often-forgotten purpose is in improving our understanding of self and the world around us through the experiences and opportunities it provides. Many institutions value Education through the principle of life-long learning. Knowing this, the purpose of education is to then achieve a balanced 'holistic' approach rather than just reaching the content standards required for state and national assessments. The Four C's of twenty-first century learning skills; critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity (National Education Association), are utilized to reach this multifaceted approach to learning for a lifetime.

Music education is valued because it creates community among a unique population of students, as well as enjoyment for the members involved and the school culture it serves to bring

together. The purpose of music education is to create a positive musical experience for those involved in it and to connect that experience to other areas of life and learning. As music educators there is a valued 'balance' in understanding students' specific social, emotional, and content-specific needs in order to then create an approach to best fit their music curriculum goals. Therefore, the purpose behind music education differentiates based on the population served alongside their specific socioemotional needs.

My values are related to the Pastalozzian influence on the Common School Movement mentioned in the Mark and Gary text (p. 127). My value of music education is directly aligned with education in that it has the potential to create significant cross curricular connections to other academic areas such as literature, reading, mathematics, science, history, and health to create connections on how all these subjects are equally connected, important, and impactful to our quality of living. To successfully achieve this impact, we (music educators), are responsible for including quality musical examples for students to experience, perform, listen, be inspired by, and further create to have a memorable, profound experience made. Finding quality musical examples is based off knowing and building a relationship with students and their school culture alongside the tools and strategies we have been introduced to through lecture, discussion, research, interpretation, and application. I used to separate my values of music education to that of general education and well-being. When I first taught in the public-school system, I recognized a huge disparity of students' lack of cultural awareness, literacy, social skills, organization, structure, and healthy habits. Unfortunately, their home lives directly reflected this. I saw an opportunity to teach music while touching on these essential areas to further inspire and connect them to a better quality of life and perception. I realized that if I kept the two separated, students would not value and see the benefits of music as I do. I included those basic yet crucial

societal needs in my courses to have a successful learning environment for them that promoted learning as well as application on multiple levels. Elliot (2015) further expands on this with his connections of the arts and education. Music can provide social change, not necessarily by being a culprit for change in society as a whole- but more importantly, assisting in helping students perceive the world around them through a variety of musical experiences, critical thinking, and discussion that can give them different perspectives they may have not seen before in other content areas.

According to Jorgensen (2008), “The answers to the questions “What place will teaching have in my life?” and “What will be my approach to teaching?” are first found in discovering who we are” (p. 2). This quote touches on knowing yourself first to best prepare for the profession. Although I strongly value and respect education, higher education is still becoming an area with a lack of focus on the holistic properties of people becoming teachers. Within the teacher-education practicum I have felt more of an initial demand of high-quality service and understanding that we provide to students and our communities rather than first on an emphasis of understanding and knowing the self and how it influences our approach to the profession.

Another thing I do believe is that there is more open to the field of music education outside of the school systems set in place for music teachers- and that having this viewpoint we forget how we started music in the first place, as musicians. We have other opportunities of musical enjoyment and livelihood outside of this somewhat irregular system of education in public schools. Jorgensen’s vision and ideals-although inspiring-are disguised to focus on the individual but really promote an image of the practical career-mindset rather than the initial musician who remembers the joy that drew them to music in the first place. I myself do not see public education as an ideal, permanent workplace-I would rather make a larger impact as a

quasi-musician and educator rather than be forced to keep my work life and musicianship somewhat separated. I want to pursue a different approach in which to create this ideal position- this is something that most philosophers I see failing to further explore yet is a practical, real-world application and demonstration of music performance and education when involving other music students. Instead, our gift in guidance rather than as initial participants is most valued, then where does the time and significance in feeding our initial musicianship lie? Why is our first initial connection to performance then separated from our teaching practice almost overnight?

My philosophy also differs from Eisner's (2015) philosophy because I think that there are substantial ways to make cross-curricular connections with arts and other academic subjects, simply defending and finding validation in how the arts enforce intellectual skillsets-is not the solution to our continued success in music education today. Whether we like to admit it or not, those skillsets are being taught for students' survival in society. If we do not find ways to connect music to these other important academic criteria, we will produce students with narrow mindsets that fail to grow and contribute successfully towards their well-being and society overall. In being passive towards this we then create passive students who value nothing other than music, however the issue there is then in them having a true positive, holistic educational experience.

I have three principles to my philosophy of why music education is important. It creates open minds through new experiences that can promote different perspectives of understanding. Music creates opportunities for cross-curricular learning. It can connect to math, language, science, history, and social science to further promote student learning all-around. Social change is promoted in the lives of students when they develop their personal perspectives and sense of expression upon experiencing, describing, and further creating music. My final statement is one

for further exploration into the livelihood of the people that teach music, does this career pathway have to be reduced to the services of others, always within a given community? Where then does the time lead for feeding the inner creativity and musical aspirations to work alongside their practicum without substantial time given towards exploring further opportunities? Are the contracts that bind us truly allowing us to explore and expand on our practice? I think that creating a residency program across educational systems throughout the world can be an asset and opportunity. If music is such a global phenomenon, then we should utilize residency opportunities that involve performance and education tasks for music educators to better understand and gain exposure within a larger network. These networking opportunities that connect these quasi-musician educators across the globe can help to expand and connect our understanding of the source material in what we teach. I see a huge opportunity in this design and want to further explore an innovative strategy to create this model.

How My Philosophy Informs My Teaching

I believe about music education is important because it can promote open minds. Music education invites a wide variety of perspectives in the areas of music making, understanding music fundamentals, implementation of strategies to strengthen music fundamentals, and creative musical interpretation. In the first lesson session students experience and reflect on their concept of time through pulse audiation, rhythm sight reading, and the introduction of time signature fundamentals to organize a rhythm counting system. Students are asked reflective questions in which to further understand fundamentals of time during this lesson on how they think they performed and what they might do differently to improve this area. In the second lesson flute and saxophone students are provided with a strategy to fine tune their instruments as recommended from the Rush text (2014). In the second lesson the full ensemble also participates experiences a

tuning strategy by ascending to and descending from concert F to try this strategy to adjust their technique and instruments to play in tune. In the final lesson students are engaged in the task of creating goals based on the various components of playing presented before the start of the unit. Students are invited to ask questions and/or contribute additional examples about the act of setting a goal, what strategies they might use to achieve a specific goal based on the variety of strategies presented in the lessons throughout this unit, other tools or resources students use in their individual practice sessions, and other prior knowledge or research students can connect to their musical understanding. With these set of lessons, I believe music education promotes cross-curricular connections in speech and language since students are asked to articulate their musical understanding both individually and with others. Music education provides social change with students by connecting them in the cyclical process of successes, failures, and reflections about their musical experiences.

Chapter 2 - Lesson Plan(s)

Lesson Plan 1 Pulse audiation and Counting Systems

2014 Music National Standards

MU:Pr5.1.7a: Identify and apply collaboratively-developed criteria (such as demonstrating correct interpretation of notation, technical skill of performer, originality, emotional impact, and interest) to rehearse, refine, and determine when the music is ready to perform.

MU:Pr5.1: Rehearse, Evaluate and Refine - Evaluate and refine personal and ensemble performances, individually or in collaboration with others (NAfME, 2014).

Prior Knowledge/Skills

- Students were pre-assessed on the components of playing before the start of these lessons. They were asked to write their own definition of one or more of the components of playing using their own words without any outside help.
- Students were given a brief list of the components of playing.
- Students can slowly sight-read eight to sixteen measure excerpts, with a range of five different pitches, rhythmic values of whole, dotted half, half, dotted quarter, quarter, and eighth notes and rests at about eighty percent accuracy in the key areas of Concert B-flat and E-flat.

Time - I think the definition of staying in time means staying at the same rhythm as the group. Also, I think it means to stay on beat. Lastly, to maintain your pulse.

Tune - I think the definition of staying in tune means to be able to play the right sound and note that your supposed to. fix it by adjusting mouth piece.

Figure 1 Pre-assessment of student defining two components of playing

<u>Playing in...</u>	<u>Criteria</u>
Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steady Beat • Rhythm • Appropriate time feel • Development of Inner Pulse
Tune	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measure with a Tuner • Instrument Adjustment • Knowing instrument tendency tones and alternative fingerings • Quality of Air (Warm/cold, steady, strong, controlled/inconsistent, frail, erratic)
(with good) Tone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embouchure Development • Having great examples to model your tone after • Articulation (tongue placement, accented/unaccented, staccato, legato)
(with good) Technique	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Posture • Embouchure Development • Air Support
(with) Blend and Balance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearing across the ensemble and across sections • Knowing your role (melody vs. harmony vs. countermelody) • Individuals combine their sounds seamlessly

Figure 2 Components of playing first draft

Activity Objectives

- As an ensemble, students will alternate between verbally reciting out loud and audiating an eight-count pulse.
- Students will be able to reflect on how well they performed their rhythm sight-reading exercises and why or why they did or did not do as well as they had hoped.
- Students will be able to break down two contrasting time signatures and relate this to a basic counting system.
- Students will be able to use a basic counting system to implement when breaking down rhythm in music they rehearse.

Assessment of Activities

- Students will give a quick thumbs up or down feedback on how well they thought they performed the rhythm sight reading.
- Students will provide verbal feedback on how consistently they kept time during the Ed Lisk pulse audiation activity.
- Students will be asked to write in the counts for the last three measures of each rhythm sight reading excerpt to be assessed on their understanding of a basic counting system for rhythmic practice.

Relevant Contextual Factors and Modifications/Accommodations Needed

- Students were solely asked to focus on rhythm for sight reading
- Despite this being a seventh and eighth grade middle school band ensemble the ability of most students are closer to a late elementary level band ensemble. Most of them are in their first year of band or have missed three years of band due to changes made in the schedule of the previous director having them for elementary band in the afternoons and

Middle School band in the morning. For the past three years there has been no elementary band at this school site. For the past two years there has been no elementary band at the neighboring feeder elementary.

- We did not have time to go into our written and verbal activity for counting systems on the same day. We passed back the same sight-reading worksheet two days later to work on counting systems.

Instructional Materials, Resources and Technologies

- Habits of a Middle School Band Director by Scott Rush, Jeff Scott Emily Wilkinson
- Standard of Excellence Book 1: Scales Studies page (copied for students to reference for at home use since we only have class sets of books)
- Better conversations, coaching ourselves and each other to be more credible, caring , and connected by Jim Knight
- Drone Tone Link from youtube: E Flat Concert and F Concert
- Transposition charts for students to reference for tuning purposes
- Sight Reading Rhythm Sheets
- Speakers
- Computer
- Paper handout (Figure 5)
- Pen

Lesson Sequence

1. Greeting/Handout/Attendance(5 min.): Welcome students and provide students with the rhythm sight reading sheet we will use for today so that they are ready to dive into the activity after warm up time. Take attendance as students set up.

Purpose: Students feel welcomed and are more willing to participate when you are with them at the start greeting them and showing that you have faith in them to start newer and stronger even when presented with a challenge. They are just as excited as you to improve even when they may not always show it externally. Taking attendance at the beginning during set up saves more time for rehearsal rather than taking rehearsal time to do this.

2. Drone Tone Independent Warm Up (4 min.) : After attendance is done, turn on Concert F drone tone video for students to independently warm themselves up descending from and ascending towards Concert F chromatically utilizing their fingering charts. This was previously explained to them the day before.

Purpose: Encouraging students to independently tune before class starts.

3. Ensemble Warm Up-Concert E-flat Scale and Interval Studies (5 min.)

We perform this as written from start to finish, no stopping unless necessary. There may be a need to run through each section separately (for example arpeggio section, thirds ascending, thirds descending)

Purpose: Warm up together as an ensemble, students tune and adjust accordingly since this is a unison exercise for all winds.

4. Sight Reading Rhythm Activity (8 min.) :

Students will have two minutes to look over the first excerpt of the sight-reading page handed out to them at the start of class. Students are welcome to ask questions.

After answering questions students perform the first excerpt on instruments using the tone concert E flat. We repeat the process for the second excerpt.

Assessment/Class Discussion (4 min.):

Questions after performing: Did you miss any rhythms?

Did you skip over any rhythms? If so, why?

Did you perform rhythms with their full value why or why not?

Allow students to respond with thumbs up or down or verbal responses. Ensure that all students listen to one another as they share so that they might be able to elaborate on an answer from their peers if they find themselves having the same thought process or issue that their classmate had during this activity.

After doing so we clap the excerpt together as an ensemble with the director verbally counting out loud. Pause in between in each excerpt.

5. Ed Lisk Audiation Activity (6 min.) :

Inform students that we are trying a new activity where they will need to alternate between chanting and audiating an eight-count pulse. Our hope is that we can maintain a consistent steady pulse throughout even when we are unable to hear each other chanting out loud.

Assessment Questions/Class Discussion (2 min.):

Do you think we tended to rush or drag our pulse?

Why do you think we tended to do so?

Students provide verbal responses in an open class discussion.

Purpose: Provide students with an opportunity to practice and utilize audiation in the simplest form in the hopes to then continue this practice further with counting systems, solfege, and in their own independent rehearsal sessions. The hope is that having them thinking musically to truly internalize and focus on a variety of what they set out to perform.

6. Counting Systems Introduction (8 min.)

On the same rhythm sight reading worksheet students will write their name and the date at the top of the page. Project your copy of this worksheet to follow and write along in the activity with students.

Break down the top and bottom number meaning within each given time signature. Top number representing the number of counts within a given measure. Bottom number representing the type of rhythmic value that takes place of one beat. Write these down on the paper with students. Start to number in the counts for the first measure, ask various students individually which count is next. If students answer incorrectly remind them kindly about the time signature set in place to structure our counting order. Another example that might connect to students is by representing each measure as a 'ruler' (Feldman etc. all p. 40-41) where we have the weak beats of eighth notes as the halfway marks like that for the $\frac{1}{2}$ or 0.5 measurement marks between each number on a ruler they would normally use to measure in mathematics or for building projects.

Have students independently complete the last three to four measures of each exercise individually to assess for individual student understanding of counting system implementation.

Purpose: To provide students with a tool to implement when rehearsing rhythms on their own.

7. Collect completed worksheets from students, ensure that their names and dates are at the top of their worksheet.

Purpose: For assessment purposes and to adjust future activities for further practice as needed.

Sight Reading Phase 1: Rhythm
Tuesday 3.8.22

Time signature 18

Percussion

6

Perc.

11

Perc.

3 → Max # of beats per measure
4 → what type of rhythm

4 → Max # of beats per measure
4 → what type of rhythm gets the beat.

Great work!

Figure 3 Rhythm worksheet used for rhythm sight reading and counting systems fill out

Lesson Reflection

I liked this activity sequence because it was a fun, simple and different activity than what students were used to when focusing on time. It wasn't a formal test setting, but it got students very focused on maintaining the same pulse across the ensemble. I think a lot of students felt more empowered when they understood the numerical representation in each time signature and started to apply this knowledge to a basic numerical counting system. A lot of students enjoy math in this class and I think that seeing that connection excited them about this. I think providing the visual image of a ruler for each measure really helped students to easily navigate through this too. There were still some students who struggled with filling in the correct counts

for the last measures of each excerpt however I was more interested in them getting practice with utilizing this new system and assessing where they were rather than getting it completely correct. This also gives me insight on how to structure future activities for rhythm. To expand on further practice we can implement a counting systems challenge activity where students can win prizes for filling in the correct counts or performing rhythmic excerpts correctly that will translate well on students quizzes and the musical works they rehearse and refine.

Lesson Plan 2: Tuning Rotation Stations with Saxophone and Flutes

2014 Music Standards Addressed

MU:Pr5.1.7a: Identify and apply collaboratively-developed criteria (such as demonstrating correct interpretation of notation, technical skill of performer, originality, emotional impact, and interest) to rehearse, refine, and determine when the music is ready to perform.

MU:Pr5.1: Rehearse, Evaluate and Refine - Evaluate and refine personal and ensemble performances, individually or in collaboration with others. (NAfME, 2014).

Prior Knowledge/Skills

- Students can utilize a tuner to measure their pitch however they still need some reminders of how to adjust their instrument if they are sharp or flat (pulling out or in).
- Students can focus better on instrument adjustments during tuning when instructor is close with adjusting tool and other ensemble members are quiet and courteous during this process.

Activity Objective(s)

- Students will utilize basic instrument transcriptions to reference when tuning with an instrument different from theirs.

- Students will utilize a tuner to track the tuning of their instrument during tuning rotations process.
- Students will fine tune their instrument piece by piece starting with the top portion of the instrument (head joint for flutes, mouthpiece and neck for saxophones) then connecting to the body of the instrument.

Assessment of the Activities

- Students will be asked if they are sharp, flat, or centered in pitch as they tune to check for awareness.
- Students will be asked about basic transpositions about their instrument tuning.
- Students will adjust their instrument accordingly to centralize to their target pitch.

Relevant Contextual Factors and Needed Modifications/Accommodations

- A lot of students still have this issue of maintaining quiet and focus when it is not their turn to tune therefore, I wanted to try small groups.
- Students were given a brief list of the components of playing to focus on for this unit to reference as needed.
- There are only two students in this group that have had previous experience on their instrument of study through online instruction only. These students have no issues with consistency in sound but are at the same level of remembering and reinforcing the habit of adjusting their instrument to tune before playing or rehearsing with others.

Instructional Resources, Materials and Technologies

- Habits of a Middle School Band Director by Scott Rush Jeff Scott Emily Wilkinson
- Better conversations, coaching ourselves and each other to be more credible, caring, and connected by Jim Knight

- Transposition charts for students to reference for tuning purposes (Figure 1)
- Student Chromebook
- Website: theonlinemetronome.com
- iPad for recording
- Sight Reading Rhythm Sheets
- Speakers
- Student Chromebook
- (optional) Pen/pencil and paper for additional notes and reflection

Transposition Chart

Concert Pitch: Violin, Flute, Oboe	C	C# Db	D	D# Eb	E	F	F# Gb	G	G# Ab	A	A# Bb	B
Bb Instruments: Clarinet, Tenor Sax, Trumpet, Baritone T.C., Bass Clarinet	D	D# Eb	E	F	F# Gb	G	G# Ab	A	A# Bb	B	C	C# Db
Eb Instruments: Alto Sax, Alto Clarinet, Baritone Sax	A	A# Bb	B	C	C# Db	D	D# Eb	E	F	F# Gb	G	G# Ab
F Instruments: French Horn	G	G# Ab	A	A# Bb	B	C	C# Db	D	D# Eb	E	F	F# Gb
Bass Clef Instruments: Trombone, Baritone B.C., Tuba	C	C# Db	D	D# Eb	E	F	F# Gb	G	G# Ab	A	A# Bb	B

Figure 4 Transposition chart provided to all students for reference

Lesson Sequence

1. Full group attendance and Tuning Station set up

As students enter allow them to set up their instruments. Inform saxophone and flute students that they will be working in tuning rotation stations today in the neighboring room after warm up.

Purpose: All students set up and get ready to start the day simultaneously while attendance is being taken. There is a duet with saxophone and flutes that I wanted to try this new tuning strategy with them for them to utilize at the start of their independent rehearsal sessions when they break into their sectionals for chamber ensembles. I thought that this activity would benefit all flutes and saxophone players experience since it is something they can do with each other or independently during their practice sessions.

Ensemble Tune and Warm-Up-Concert E-flat Scale and Interval Studies (12 min.)

The full ensemble does an initial tuning and warm up before breaking into sectionals. We tune to concert E flat then perform the full scale in whole notes ascending and descending. Saxophones and flutes break off to the neighboring room to work in tuning stations with one chrome book for all students to set up and share when tuning. As saxophone and flute players leave with their supplies to set up for their tuning activity, the rest of the ensemble prepares to work with the director for the first ten minutes on their most recent piece Trumpet Voluntary. When instructor breaks away to assist in tuning rotation stations students are to continue focusing on Trumpet Voluntary and other musical works within their sections to rehearse and refine independently.

Purpose: All students are simultaneously warmed up in preparation for sectional work so there is more time focusing on objectives within the sectionals rather than warm up or set up.

2. Tuning Rotation Stations: First adjusting with the top of the instrument. (10 min.):

Saxophone and Flute students individually tune to concert A on their mouthpieces (mouthpiece and neck for saxophones) first. If alto saxophones are flat, they need to push the mouthpiece in if they are sharp they need to pull the mouthpiece out. Flute player will tune with just the head joint. If they are sharp they will need to pull their jaw in, if they are flat they will push their jaw out (roll in or roll out would be an alternative instruction).

Student Assessment and Essential Discussion Questions during the tuning activity:

Are you sharp or flat? How can we adjust that on your horn?

Was there an adjustment made that did not solve tuning issues?

Concert A is what written pitch for alto saxophones?

Purpose: As referenced by Rush p. 98 and 100, Concert A is the recommended tuning notes for both instruments involved in this activity. Since both instruments had the same tuning note, we had six total flute and saxophone students, and we had a flute and saxophone duet for chamber ensembles organized; I thought this would be an effective way to organize this activity to reach the maximum number of students from two different instrument sections rather than separating them.

3. Full Ensemble Rehearsal:

- Early One Morning Chorale as written legato then conducting and playing each note ‘bopped’.
- Trumpet Voluntary, full run through to the best of our ability.

Purpose: Assess intonation of ensemble to reinforce listening across and adjusting previously covered with small section. To assess the air support of ensemble that may or may not resolve intonation issues.

Running through Trumpet Voluntary without stopping.

4. Pack up and Dismissal

Lesson Reflection

I regret not connecting this activity to a specific excerpt of music that both students could then perform and tune and adjust as they see fit. I regret also not doing this activity in a master class type setting where all other students could observe and then volunteer in pairs with contrasting instruments. I would expand upon this type of activity in the future by using Rush's three note excerpts to have the horns play the full excerpt in unison, then as a duet with the top line being one section and bottom line for another instrument section. After both the unison and duet performance all horn players would then highlight which note sounded either flat or sharp to them and we would then work through the process of tuning and adjusting at those specific moments with a tuner to assess if our ears and pitch were or were not in tune. Unfortunately I'm not sure that this lesson was as effective since I did not provide students with a handout guiding them through these specific tuning practices. I also think that for a middle school ensemble I do not think that this activity was age-appropriate and could have benefitted more students if presented in more of a master class type setting with specific adjustments listed on a handout or some sort of step-by-step video guide students could refer to when rehearsing independently away from the school setting.

Lesson Plan 3: Setting goals based on the components of playing

2014 Music Standards Addressed

MU:Cn11.0 Connect 11-Relate musical ideas and works with varied context to deepen understanding (NAfME, 2014).

Prior Knowledge/Skills

- Students are more comfortable with describing strategies to improve their sense of time, technique, and tone quality but need more assistance with improving their understanding and confidence within the other components of balance and blend, and tuning.
- Students are creative in envisioning and describing the tone or mood of music that they set out to perform. Students have had several class discussions in rehearsals prior to this lesson.

Activity Objective(s)

- Overview of goal setting connected to the components of playing
- To provide examples of specific performance goals.
- To provide examples of strategies used to meet specific performance goals.

Assessment of the Activity

- Students will fill out their goal setting sheet to summarize their specific performance goal, the component it is associated with, and what they did to rehearse this as a chamber group.
- Students were asked to focus on a different component for each session.
- Students were asked to turn in these sheets once they joined back in for full ensemble rehearsal.
- A master class was conducted after this lesson to demonstrate where students were at to assess their readiness to perform.

Relevant Contextual Factors and Needed Modifications/Accommodations

- Students were given a brief list of the components of playing to focus on for this unit.

- They were asked to provide their own interpretation of one or more of the components of focus using their own words.
- Students organized themselves in chamber groups, chose the music they were going to play using online resources with some assistance. Students sent in their list alongside links to music notation or videos with music notation of the songs they wanted to perform.
- Students were provided with an independent assignment to research and reflect on the tone quality of their instrument. They were provided with a list of professional musicians, were asked to listen to two different musicians, and use words that described the tone quality of each musician.
- During rehearsal sessions I made a point to ask questions in relation to the components of playing.
 - Example Questions: I asked students to verbally identify what blend and balance meant to them when performing. I had two students give their own examples of a “smooth shake”. Our class tended to use a lot of vivid metaphors with food when describing blend, balance, and tone.
 - I made a point to deliver this general check-in question, “is everyone in your section playing with good technique?”, to remind and encourage accountability across the ensemble in technique.

Harold Wright ~

1. Good tone, Perfect sound, Good articulation, and no squeaks.

|

2.

- A. The reason why I picked Harold Wright's tone is because he plays the same instrument that I do and he just plays so well. He has no squeaks and just plays with so much confidence
- B. Because he just plays in such an amazing tone. He plays so fast and he doesn't even squeak.
- C. This helps my tone over time by listening to him over and over again and then finally getting the same tone as him.

[Harold Wright's Recording.](#)

Figure 5 Tone exploration assignment completed by a clarinet student

Instructional Resources, Materials and Technologies

- Habits of a Middle School Band Director by Scott Rush Jeff Scott Emily Wilkinson
- Better conversations, coaching ourselves and each other to be more credible, caring , and connected by Jim Knight
- Transposition charts for students to reference for tuning purposes (Figure 1)
- Computer
- Projector
- iPad for recording
- Chamber ensemble reflection form (Figure 9 and 10)
- Performance evaluation form tied (Figure 11 and 12)
- (optional) Pen/pencil and paper for additional notes and reflection

Lesson Sequence

1. Welcome students at the door, collect practice logs, set up (4 min.)
 - Provide percussionists with correctly printed Scenes of Russia percussion parts
 - Have the Blank Goal Grid projected on the screen to work with them as a class.
 - Set-up (4 min.)

Purpose: Have students prepared for the activities of the day.

2. Components of Playing independent review (4 min.)
 - Students read each component silently to themselves first to review the components discussed during previous rehearsals. (2 min.)
 - allow students some time to discuss within their section while you walk around to also speak with them about what each component means to them and assist them with additional questions or thoughts they may have. (2 min.)

Purpose: Students independently review and prepare for class discussion.

3. Chamber Ensemble reflection form overview and class session examples. Talk through filling out at least two to four examples as a class. (8-10 min.)
 - Essential questions to ask when starting the formation of a broad versus narrow performance goal:
 - Can someone provide me with an example of a specific goal tied to the component of time?
 - Remember for each rehearsal session you have with your chamber group you only have twenty minutes, so goals have to be concise to achieve within this given time frame.
 - Can someone give me an example of a goal that is too large and unrealistic?

- Now that you have your specific example goal can you tie this to one component of playing?
- What strategy might you use to achieve this goal? You are welcome to look at the list of strategies provided in our grid or one that you have utilized in your independent practice sessions at home that have helped you.
- Methods to encourage students creative thinking
 - If there are not many students wanting to volunteer provide them time to speak their ideas out loud with their peers for a minute or to before presenting their thoughts and ideas to a class example.

Purpose: To walk students through goal setting so that they are prepared to do this in their chamber group rehearsal sessions.

5. Answer any additional questions from students about the chamber ensemble reflection form.

Chamber Ensemble Rehearsal Reflection Form

Goal(s) of Rehearsal Today (maximum of two goals per session)	Component of Focus connected to that goal
1. <u>Rhythm</u>	1. <u>Time</u>
2. <u>Time</u>	2. <u>Tone</u>
Strategies used to meet this goal	
1. <u>metronome</u>	
2. <u>timer</u>	
Final Reflective Questions	

1. Did you meet your goal today? (yes/no)	<u>no</u>
2. Are you close to meeting your goal? Why or why not?	<u>yes we are close just have to practice rhythm or notes more</u>
3. If you did NOT meet your performance goal today will you need to modify your goal or change your strategy?	<u>we will practice more</u>
4. Would you like more support from Ms. Postlewaite during a rehearsal session? Please explain what specific type of support you need from her.	<u>no thanks</u>

Figure 6 Goal reflection worksheet completed by a student led chamber group

Chamber Ensemble Rehearsal Reflection Form

Goal(s) of Rehearsal Today (maximum of two goals per session)	Component of Focus connected to that goal
1. <u>having technique</u>	1. <u>Trying to have good tone</u>
2. <u>having good Blend and balance</u>	2. <u>Playing a tune together</u>
Strategies used to meet this goal	
1. <u>Try to play at time so the sound can blend all together</u>	
2. <u>Trying to balance our sound into one sound</u>	
Final Reflective Questions	

<p>1. Did you meet your goal today? (yes/no) <u>kinda</u></p> <p>2. Are you close to meeting your goal? Why or why not? <u>We are close to our goal because we almost blend our sound into one.</u></p> <p>3. If you did NOT meet your performance goal today will you need to modify your goal or change your strategy? <u>We'll try to have good technique</u></p> <p>4. Would you like more support from Ms. Postlewaite during a rehearsal session? Please explain what specific type of support you need from her. <u>No thank you we are fine.</u></p>

Figure 7 Goal reflection worksheet completed by another student led chamber group

Name: _____ **Grade Level:** 7th **Date:** 3/28/22

<u>Playing in...</u>	<u>Terms</u>	<u>Focus Goals/Strategies</u>
Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beats per minute (bpm) use with Metronome • Steady Beat • <u>Inner pulse</u> • Rhythmic Values • Meter (Duple, Triple, Odd) • Time Signatures (4/4, 2/4, 3/4 etc.) 	
Tune	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuner to measure pitch (Sharp/Flat) • Adjusting instrument (pull out/push in) • Pitch-Instrument specific tuning (open tones for each instrument) • Chord Tone Tuning (adjusting for just intonation) • Instrument Transpositions (utilizing our grid) 	Early American in measure 20-31 reach the high note B ^b . I could use a tuner at home and more air.

Figure 8 Student performance evaluation form focusing on one piece and component

Name: _____ **Grade Level:** 7th **Date:** 3/28/22

<u>Playing in...</u>	<u>Terms</u>	<u>Focus Goals/Strategies</u>
Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beats per minute (bpm) use with Metronome • Steady Beat • <u>Inner pulse</u> • Rhythmic Values • Meter (Duple, Triple, Odd) • Time Signatures (4/4, 2/4, 3/4 etc.) 	Playing the same time as everyone else. Because I really had to work on Trumpet Voluntary cause I fall behind in there.

Figure 9 Student performance evaluation focusing on one piece and component

Lesson Reflection

I think as a class we came up with great goals and strategies with confidence however I was concerned about how students might do in their small groups. Overall, I think we had great discussions as a class, but I did have to utilize a lot of scaffold questions to get most students confident to discuss goal setting tied to the components of playing. It is something very new for them and I think it will just take some time for them to get used to implementing when they set their goals for performance. After this lesson I decided to have a master class as another means of informal assessment to see how ready students were to perform in front of others. I found that although most students chose pieces that were familiar to them, these works were too difficult to perform or did not translate well on their instrument of study. I also found that some students either did not utilize their rehearsal time wisely or did not consistently practice their individual parts outside of class. Out of the six groups we had organized one was successful in finding a piece to perform for our spring concert.

Chapter 3 - Reflections

The Master's program at K-State has been a positive addition to my education and career that I never thought would be possible. At the start of my career, I had three years of teaching experience with general music grades 2-5, band grades 5-8, and choir grades 6-8. I decided to take a step back from public education to focus on my mental health and wellbeing for one year after that. When I first started the summer program at Kansas State, I had just finished my first year of teaching in the Apple Valley Unified School District. I only taught grades K-8 general music, grades 4-6 elementary band, and middle school band for eight months before the pandemic restricted us to online learning. I always desired to pursue a master's in music but wanted the ability to continue my career alongside furthering my education. Before applying to Kansas state, I was starting to get skeptical about the possibility of furthering my education with a music degree. I was very concerned about the longevity of my career with the decline in student motivation and wellbeing in our music programs during the pandemic. I needed support, inspiration, and encouragement to stay in the profession as an educator and musician. When I started the program at Kansas State, I was encouraged and supported with a wealth of resources and challenges provided by all my professors and peers. In all my summer sessions at K-State I could sense the passion, kindness, and structure all my professors brought to every single class session, assignment, office hour, grading comment, and more. I appreciated the revisitation of technique, resources, and strategies from Dr. Gartener's jazz and marching percussion class. The jazz and marching percussion coursework was a positive and refreshing experience that gave me a wealth of resources to explore that would service students within my ensembles, private lesson students I hope to have the opportunity of serving in the future, and myself as a percussionist. Arranging for bands was something that I initially found difficult and overwhelming. Yet I

decided to tackle a smaller project this year for elementary and middle school bands. I made a point to give up some control to allow students to provide suggestions of what they wanted to play. I decided that even if I had to simplify the arrangements of what they requested, buy the source material I was going to commit to making it happen for their enjoyment. Both arrangements were short, sweet, simple, repetitious, enhanced students' musical enjoyment, and highlighted student musicians' strengths. That experience this year reminded me that simplifying a task makes a difference in how often you choose to continue to grow in a new skill. I do not think I would have the confidence to do that skill were it not for the challenges I was provided to pursue in the arrangement class.

Work with Dr. Tracz in Music 685 reminded me that relationships are a large part of how we build and maintain successful music programs. The Snyder readings helped me to see that every person involved in any program is a leader through the goals they set out to achieve each day. During our elementary band concert and Q and A session for third through fifth graders this past May student musicians confidently answered audience questions and demonstrated sounds on their instruments. Select Middle School Band members led when they made the choice to perform in their chamber group during our recruitment and evening concert. Both elementary and middle school band members grew in confidence and musicianship and spread that excitement for what they did through their performance and engagement with the audience.

Soon after finishing last summer's coursework, I started to maintain an organized planner, time blocking, and even got myself a voice recorder to record reflections as I travelled to and from the two sites I taught at each day. I tried strategies suggested in the Snyder text and from Dr. Tracz and found the desire within to be better through the implementation of simple

organizational tasks. These strategies has helped me find more balance in all that I do and I find that I have a much more positive outlook on my career.

This year I worked on improving relationships by seeking out academic coaching at Jim Knight training sessions organized by my school district. I gained a lot of perspective to formulate ideas on how I might structure musicianship activities where ensemble classes would have activities structured in the form of conversations to map out the thought processes involved in instrumental transpositions, what each component of playing meant to them, how and why they might describe music a certain way, among many other musical things they related to students' creative thinking and prior knowledge to link to course work. I felt that by letting go of control, listening more, and providing a simple structure within each activity throughout this project, I was able to see and hear students provide their unique perspectives on what they were or weren't engaged in learning. Gaining that insight from students helped me to reflect and modify my instruction accordingly.

Dr. Payne's curriculum and theories of music teaching alongside Music 680 (Advanced Rehearsal Techniques) inspired me to frame my entire masters report towards the development of independent musicianship in the middle school band. Although I would say that this project was not as successful as I would have hoped I am still grateful that it pushed me out of my comfort zone to continue to be creative with making music fundamentals fun, approachable, inspiring, and memorable for student musicians. Kansas State has been a great experience that has reinvigorated my creative passion towards the profession, towards music, desire for growth, and work life balance. I am sad to be so close to concluding my journey with the Kansas State Music Education Master's program but am excited to continue to grow with the resources and positive relationships I have gained in this valuable educational opportunity.

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