TEACHING TECHNIQUES FOR ELEMENTARY BAND

Clinician:
Todd Livingston and members of the Edison Eagle Band

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

• Arizona State University (2009, 2012)
• Coolidge Unified School District (2009-2012)
  • 2 elementary schools, 1 middle school
• Mesa Public Schools (2012-present)
  • 4 different elementary schools, 1 junior high

BAND DELIVERY SYSTEM

• Band starts in 5th grade, pullout classes.
• Twice per week, 30 minutes per class.
• Students come to band by classroom.
• Two short concerts/performances/informances per year.
PHILOSOPHY

• There is an instrument for every single student. They just have to find it.
• Every student can learn to play. Music is a skill.
• Every student wants to be successful. It’s our job to get them there.
• Connect band concepts to concepts introduced in general music.
• Slow progress is completely fine. Slow progress is still progress!

5TH GRADE BAND

• Day 1 – Instrument demonstration
• Day 2 - 5 – Instrument tryouts and signup forms
• Day 6 - 7 – Instrument Assembly and Care

5TH GRADE BAND

• 1st week in September – first sounds on mouthpieces and rhythmic echoes
• 2nd-3rd weeks in September – first three notes
• Demonstration of daily class warm-up (5th AND 6th)
  • “Warm-up sections” - rhythm
  • Singing in solfege echoes
  • Instrumental echoes
5TH GRADE BAND

• 4th week in September – first song
  Old man there,
  Sitting on a log,
  Wastin' his time,
  Wastin' his time!

• Singing... solfege... wind-pattern... play!

5TH GRADE BAND

• Hot Cross Buns – long tones
• Frog in the Meadow – rests
• Mary Had a Little Lamb – add “Sol”
• Jingle Bells – add “Fa”
• Review concepts until concert

5TH GRADE BAND

Fifth Grade Band
Curriculum Guide

5TH GRADE BAND

• Students need time to process new information.
• Slow progress and attention to detail in the beginning can lead to increased confidence later on.
• Keeping students engaged with simple activities in 1st quarter can be challenging. Some students are ready to jump ahead a little, let them!
5TH GRADE BAND

• Musical notation – January
• Continue singing!
• Demonstrate – “Scale” #1
• Flash cards for learning note names

5TH GRADE

• Link new knowledge to previous knowledge/experience.
• Twinkle Twinkle Little Star – scalar patterns (demonstration)
• Continuous questions keep students thinking:
  • When are we skipping notes, and when are we stepping between them?
  • What does this pattern of notes look like?
  • How is this similar to what we just did?

6TH GRADE

• I typically have to handle a more jumbled instrumentation, due to classroom assignments.
• Allow 6th students to start band for the first time.
• Prioritize 6th grade school instruments over 5th grade. They are the ones moving on to the junior high first.
• Get them reviewing material and playing as soon as possible.
6th Grade

- Switching instruments... potentially annoying but necessary!
- 6th grade needs to move faster, if at all possible.
- Additional concerts (feeder events, school events, etc.)

6th Grade

- Use the simple songs in new ways.
- Duets, trios, partner songs, and rounds are your best friends.
- Itty Bitty Spider (demonstration by 6th grade)

6th Grade

- Introduction of minor keys
- Hey Ho, Nobody's Home [round] (demonstration)
  - Discussion about orchestrations... which sounds better to you?
- Introduction of first Major Scale
  - B-flat major
- Liza Jane [demonstration]
  - Study in articulation speed
6TH GRADE

• Full ensemble music
  • If I choose to use any over the course of the year, it does not exceed grade ½
  • Typically stick with unison songs, rounds, partner songs.
  • Occasionally I will arrange something, but my arranging “experiments” max out at two independent parts plus percussion.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

• Thank you to our chaperones!
  • Mrs. McElhaney and Mrs. Andrews

• Alex MacDonald, principal Edison Elementary
• Ruth Argabright, Music Education Coordinator, Mesa Public Schools

SESSION PLUG 😊

• Saturday, 8:30AM – Yuma Room

• “Tricks of the Trade: Teaching Instrumental Music in Title I Schools”
  • Ann Horenfler, Michele Kais, Todd Livingston
QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS

• Feel free to contact me at any time.
  • JTLivingston@mpsaz.org
  • www.mpsaz.org/arts/music/staff/JTLivingston
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5TH GRADE BAND

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LETTER OF INTENT

By signing this page, both the student and the parent understands that joining the band is a FULL YEAR commitment. Commitment is one of the first steps to success.

Please detach, sign, and return this page to Mr. Livingston as going through the whole packet. Please keep the handbook as a resource for any questions you may have. If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact me.

I have read through and understand these sections of the handbook:
Checklist________ Attendance________ Instruments/Materials________
Practice________ Performances/Dates________ Classroom Rules________

Student Name
________________________________________
Instrument
________________________________________
Parent Name(s)
________________________________________
Parent Signature
________________________________________

At least one form of contact is REQUIRED!

Phone Number
________________________________________
E-mail
________________________________________

*Only practice on days that you eat.* – Dr. Shinichi Suzuki ☺
5th Grade Band

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Demonstration of daily class warm-up (5th AND 6th)

• “Warm-up sections” - rhythm
• Singing in solfege echoes
• Instrumental echoes
4th week in September – first song

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5TH GRADE BAND

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Mary Had a Little Lamb – add “sol”
Jingle Bells – add “fa”

Review concepts until concert

Fifth Grade Band Curriculum Guide

Fifth grade students attend two thirty-minute band classes per week. Students are actively engaged in learning to play one of the following instruments: flute, clarinet, bass clarinet, alto saxophone, tenor saxophone, trumpet, French horn, trombone, baritone horn, tuba, percussion.

Music concepts are taught and reviewed throughout the year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quarter 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fundamentals: Posture/playing position, proper embouchure/tone production, instrument care/maintenance, staff, treble/bass clef, lines/spaces, bar lines, measures, double bar lines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhythm: Whole, half, quarter, eighth notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concert Pitches: 3 concert pitches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articulation: Correct tonguing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5th Grade Band

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Link new knowledge to previous knowledge/experience.

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Itsy Bitsy Spider (demonstration by 6th grade)
6th Grade

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