

Unlocking Creativity in Beginning Band



NYSBDA Symposium 2022

Gregory Clark
Whitesboro Central School District

About Me

Vernon-Verona-Sherrill High School

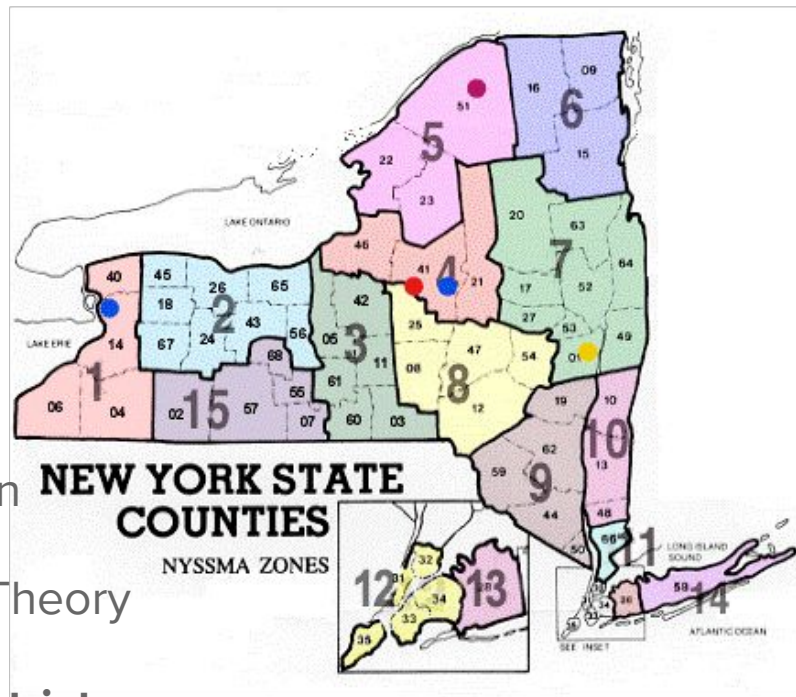
B.S. **The College of Saint Rose**, Music Education

M.M. **The Crane School of Music**, Music Education

A.G.C. **The University at Buffalo**, Music Learning Theory

Now teaching the **Whitesboro Central School District** -
elementary band in 3 of our 4 elementary schools. Also tuba
instructor at Le Moyne College (Syracuse).

My programs feed into Parkway Middle School, where my wife is
the band and orchestra director.



Setting the Stage - 1

Thought exercise - were you a musical child?

- **Noticing** patterns? **Playing** by ear?
- **Adding** syncopation? **Adding** passing tones?
Adding (intentional) harmonies?
- **Figuring out** another instrument's part?

Could you hear what the music was trying to say?

Did you ever wonder if those skills mattered?

Did your teachers **celebrate** those skills? Use them in any way?



Setting the Stage - 2

What am I hoping you take away?

- Reassess how you approach beginners, with an eye on **musicianship**.
- Engage **creativity** as an essential piece of the beginning band experience
- How a shift in **vocabulary** can make the creative process more approachable
- A few new **strategies** for connecting more children to authentic music-making



Defining Creativity

New musical ideas are created every day.

creativity

noun [U]

US  / ,kriː.ɪrˈtɪv.ə.t̪i/ UK  / ,kriː.ɪrˈtɪv.ə.t̪i/

(also **creativity**, US  /kriˈeɪ.tɪv.nəs/ UK  /kriˈeɪ.tɪv.nəs/)

B2

the ability to produce or use original and unusual ideas:

- *Too many rules might deaden creativity.*
- *Creativity, ingenuity, and flair are the songwriter's real talents.*

Unusual is a terrific word for this definition, but I would be careful using it with student work.

3 Prerequisites for Creativity

- **Vocabulary.** Just like in language, frequently used words and ideas become natural.
- **Context.** Nothing is more intimidating than a blank Finale document.
- **A collaborative (failure-friendly) environment.** With the right approach, this is fun and collaborative, mistakes and risk-taking are encouraged!

Nurture those 3 things intentionally and watch your students flourish.

**“Audiation is to
music what thought
is to language.”**

Edwin Gordon,

“Learning Sequences in Music”,

2012

<https://cdn.f1connect.net/photo/tributes/t/8/r/207x207/3532818/Edwin-Gordon-1449243603.jpg>



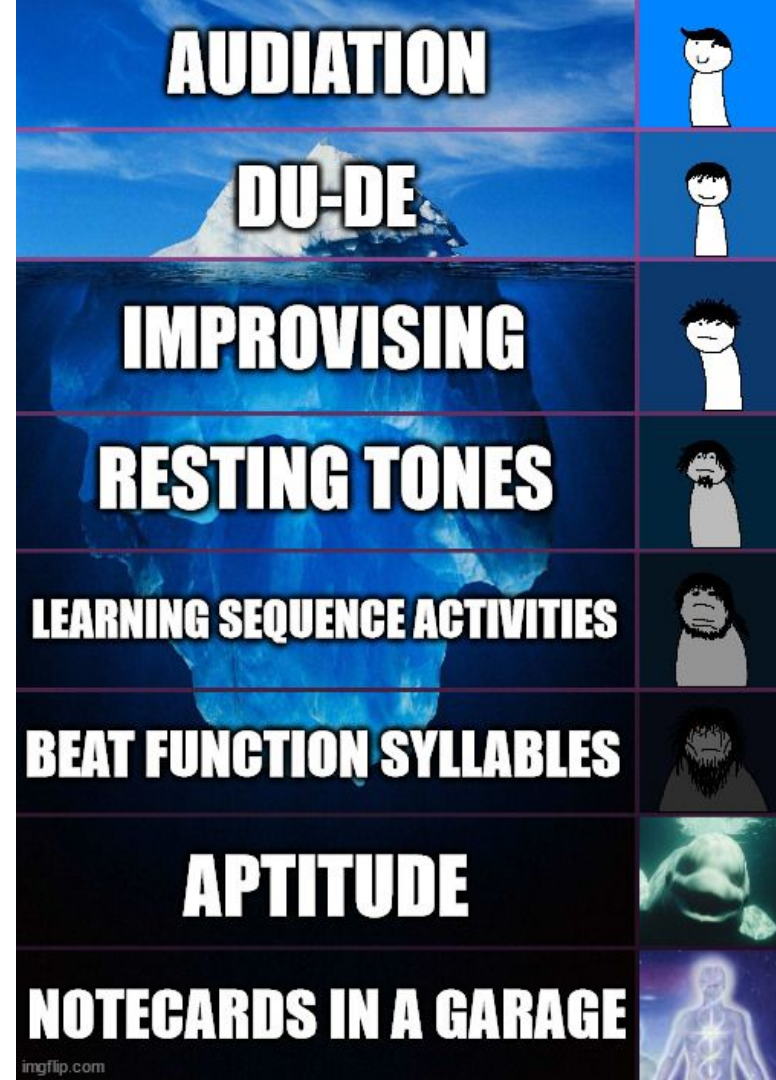
But wait, Gordon?

In Band!?!?

"Everybody's a little bit Gordon"

- Christopher Neubert, Niskayuna Central Schools

Take what you can use. The more you look, the more you'll find.



Vocabulary - Part 1/4

Music is not a language, but we learn it like one.
The similarities don't stop there.



Please do not ask students to read a language they cannot speak or understand.

I opened the books for the first time around the beginning of November this year. Our district uses Essential Elements, but *most* of the the books are very similar.

For beginners, reading is reasonable when kids are only focusing on notation. Not holding the instrument, forming an embouchure, creating a characteristic tone, articulating, feeling the pulse, dividing the beat, hearing the musical content around them, keeping appropriate hand position... all things that should become habit prior to reading.

Vocabulary - Part 2/4

1. Continue to **teach excellent pedagogy**. In as much as this audition-based approach is not "traditional", hand position is non-negotiable. Same goes for articulation, stick grip, striking the glockenspiel correctly, etc.
2. **Start small**. Students are coming to you at a given age, but you might not know their musical age. My first lesson I teach a song made of **two notes**. We improvise with that. They're a whole step apart.

(Brief digression into what I mean by "[musical age](#)")

3. "**Patterns**" are everything. Until you really dig into the MLT pedagogy, just be cautious to scaffold and keep things simple for a long time. Kids do not outgrow **I-play-you-play**. Model excellent pedagogy every step of the way.

Vocabulary - Part 3/4

- 4. Use Solfege constantly.** Even if they aren't 100% sure, use the same specific wording frequently to drive home big ideas. Example: "We are in major tonality where the resting tone is Do." Moveable Do, La-based minor.
- 5. Use kid-friendly language and games.** If you get too content-heavy, they check out. "Is this major or minor?" <crickets> **"Does this sound like rainbows and bubbles and unicorns and puppies and cupcakes?"** Or is it spooky?" Once they're good at something, tell them that was "easy mode". Take the next scaffolded step with "hard mode". **No trick questions.** They aren't funny and they inhibit learning.
- 6. "I-play-you-play"** takes its next step: once kids understand a pattern in context, give them 30 seconds to make up and practice their own. Let them play it and have the class play it back. This is composing, improvising, practicing, and performing!

Vocabulary - Part 4/4

7. **Get the pencils out.** Simple written musical activities give kids the confidence to create their own music. It also draws their attention to the relationship between lines and spaces, which is a really big deal for kids who haven't read before.

8. **TUNES.** The bulk of our lesson content, especially at the beginning, is short songs. We learn the melodies first (oral/aural), then eventually the bass lines, or "root melodies". Understanding bass lines unlocks harmony. This is a simple and powerful sentence.

Context - Part 1/3

Music is not meant to stand alone. Learning how your sound "fits" is just as important as making that sound.

1. **Model frequently.** This is just good teaching. How can a student develop a good trombone sound if they never hear a good trombone sound?

2. **Scaffold your modeling.** As you move from first introducing a song to independent student performance, gradually show less and respond more.

3. **Accompany as much as possible.** I use the piano constantly. This goes a long way in differentiating, too.

- What if I have limited piano skills?

- What if I can embellish a little?

Context - Part 2/3

4. **Improvise as quickly as possible.** Kids will have all kinds of responses to improvising, but most will be more anxious about playing alone than making something up. My only rule is "try to make it musical, not just sounds."
5. **Build the lexicon.** Start using music words to define what *has been* experienced. Luckily, kids already have some understanding from the general music classroom. **Major vs. minor and duple vs. triple are enough.** Use a mix of tonalities and meters.
6. **Clarify your methods** when it might be helpful. When we're focusing on note-reading, make it clear that it's okay to go slow. When we're focusing on meter, make sure a steady pulse is the priority. ****We discuss audiating on purpose****

Context - Part 3/3

7. **Introductions** are SO helpful. Establish tonality, meter, and tempo prior to students playing. They're beginners! Give their music a place to fit in, not a guess.
8. **Teach bass lines**. In this context, bass lines are the root of the underlying chord and nothing else. After some time with bass lines, connect them to the terms "tonic" and "dominant", as well as affiliated patterns. This is best done in a large-group context (in my opinion). Use ear-training games and easy mode / hard mode in a group context.
9. Exploration and experimenting are huge, but **always be considerate** of students that are hesitant. Playing in front of the group will turn some students off to band all together if you push the issue too much.

Context - Extra Credit



Dr. Mark Robin Campbell (SUNY Potsdam): "**Vibrant. Generative. Relevant.**"

Vibrant might be the most difficult of the 3 to quantify. How can you make content **glow**? What makes your class the one that is most **inviting**? Most **electrifying**?

Use every tool in your arsenal. Use **your musicianship** to support your students'. Use your **lights**. Use the **timbres** available to you when appropriate (like harpsichord and organ patches, or accompanying on guiro). Use the part of **your personality** that loved being in school. Use examples from **their generation**.

Biggest of all- **show your excitement for everything they can do.** Kids will define their success by your response to their playing.

1. Sofa Samba

Trumpet in B \flat

Piano

The image shows a musical score for 'Sofa Samba'. It consists of three staves. The top staff is for the Trumpet in B \flat , written in treble clef with a 4/4 time signature. The melody starts with a quarter note G \flat , followed by quarter notes A \flat , B \flat , and C \flat , then a quarter rest, and finally a quarter note D \flat . The second measure of the trumpet part is a whole rest. The middle and bottom staves are for the Piano, written in grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with a 4/4 time signature and a key signature of two flats (B \flat and E \flat). The piano accompaniment features chords in the right hand and single notes in the left hand. The first measure contains a chord of G \flat 2, A \flat 2, B \flat 2, and C \flat 2 in the right hand, and a dotted quarter note G \flat 1 in the left hand. The second measure contains a chord of A \flat 2, B \flat 2, and C \flat 2 in the right hand, and a quarter note A \flat 1 in the left hand. The third measure contains a chord of B \flat 2, C \flat 2, and D \flat 2 in the right hand, and a quarter note B \flat 1 in the left hand. The fourth measure contains a chord of C \flat 2, D \flat 2, and E \flat 2 in the right hand, and a quarter note C \flat 1 in the left hand. The fifth measure contains a chord of D \flat 2, E \flat 2, and F \flat 2 in the right hand, and a quarter note D \flat 1 in the left hand. The sixth measure contains a chord of E \flat 2, F \flat 2, and G \flat 2 in the right hand, and a quarter note E \flat 1 in the left hand. The seventh measure contains a quarter rest in the right hand and a quarter note F \flat 1 in the left hand. The eighth measure contains a quarter rest in the right hand and a quarter note G \flat 1 in the left hand. The ninth measure contains a quarter rest in the right hand and a quarter note A \flat 1 in the left hand. The tenth measure contains a quarter rest in the right hand and a quarter note B \flat 1 in the left hand. The score ends with a double bar line.

This is the song I teach in the first lesson. All students need **two pitches a whole step apart** to play it in whatever key. They never see this notation, this is just to share a sample between teachers.

Have the experience, *then* talk about it and tweak it. "Did you notice how I made stuff up during your silent parts? Do you think you could fill in the silence instead?"

Reminders

- Teach your pedagogy **through the tunes**.
- The goal is not to read the tunes, the goal is the musicianship. In your mind, try to **detangle executive skills from musicianship**.
- "**The second time is always better**". Even if something is right, build comfort and familiarity with repetition and small changes. "This time, let's try it really quiet". "What happens if we go faster?" "Here, copy my style". **These tunes might be an inch wide, but you can learn them a mile deep**.
- Involve the whole group. Take turns playing. **Games become arrangements**. How will kids learn to organize music if they never practice organizing music?

TUNES!

There are hundreds of appropriate tunes to teach.

With beginners, I teach almost explicitly tonic-dominant tunes.



My Top Resources

[Jump Right In](#) - Gordon, Grunow, Azzara, and Martin. A band method for audiation.

[Otero Horn Method](#) - A Masters Thesis applying MLT to beginning instruction

*Be cautious of songs with histories in minstrelsy. [It's more than you might think.](#)

[Owens Saxophone Method](#) - A thesis similar to the Otero, but for saxophone.

Beginning Band Concert

February 12, 2020 - Marcy Elementary School

Mr. Clark, Conductor

Sample Concert Program

We have our first beginners concert in February. Only elementary band and orchestra.

After the orchestra has done their portion, this is what I would do with the band.

I accompany on piano for the “section features”, which are all audiated and not notated.

Then, I conduct the parts from the Essential Elements book.

Selections - Section Features

Major Duple	Trumpet Section
Major Duple Melody and Bass Line	Saxophone Section
Hot Cross Buns in F and G Do.....	Flute Section
Hot Cross Buns Melody and Bass Line	Clarinet Section
Minor Duple	Trombone and Baritone Sections
Hop Old Squirrel.....	Flute Section with percussion
Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star	Percussion Section
Pierrot.....	Small Ensemble

Selections from “Essential Elements for Band Book 1”- Full Ensemble

Composers: Tim Lautzenbeiser, John Higgins, Charles Menghini, Paul Lavender, Tom C. Rhodes, Don Bierschenk

Count and Play
Two's a Team
Moving on Up
Four by Four
The Fab Five
First Flight
Rolling Along
The Half Counts

Minor Duple - Full Ensemble

1- Melody
2- Bass Line
3- Combined Melody and Bass Line

A Failure-Friendly Environment - 1

Beginning band students have never experienced anything like band. Making music? Getting pull-outs for lessons? Carrying a saxophone to school?

They have NO expectation, except the one you communicate to them, consciously or unconsciously.

1. **No snark or sarcasm at any time.** Sarcasm is passive-aggressive, and the damage done to students far outweighs. Model support, even in your humor.

We are asking students to be vulnerable in class. Jokes must never be at their expense, and similar jokes from classmates must similarly be nipped immediately.

Students feel valued when you are direct and sincere. Find the jokes there.

Environment - 2

2. Make sure every student knows they matter to you.

The teacher's attitude sets the tone. If you want students to be bold enough to take risks, they need to know they're **supported, wanted, and noticed**.

When a student is late, "Kayla, I'm glad you're here! Get your clarinet out so we can play" will **build a better relationship** than "What took you so long?"

Celebrate accomplishments (more on this later). When you hear something done well, notice publicly.

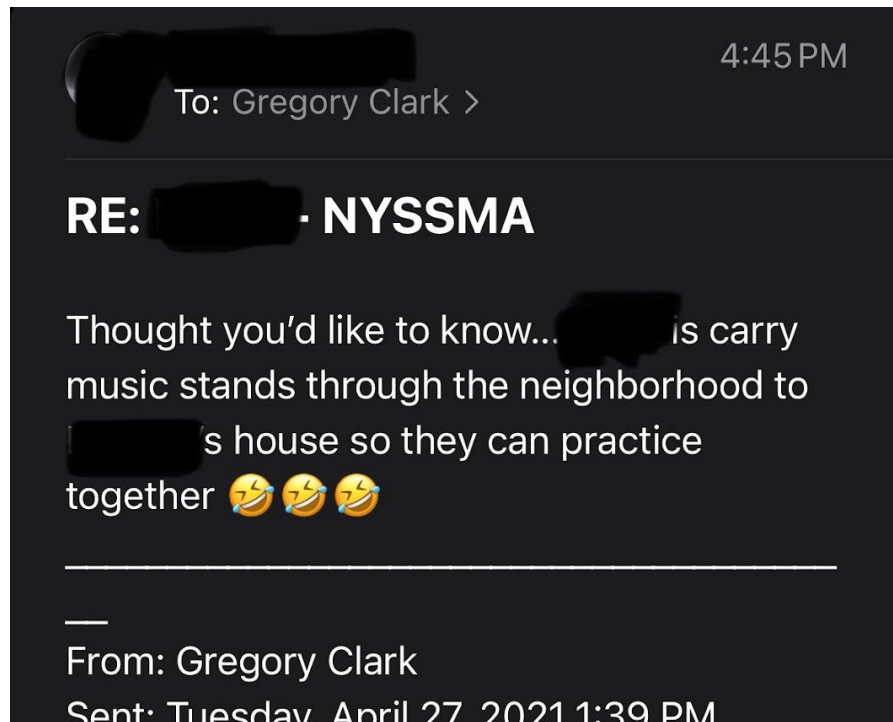
Environment - 3/4

3. Ownership.

We know that respect is earned, not given. Ownership over the band as a whole works the same way.

"Show me, don't tell me."

I use pictures of my students all over. Remember, check with your office in case some students aren't allowed to appear in photos.



Ownership and Representation

Using pictures of students in school with their instrument builds a connection. They see their instrument as a part of who they are.

"I can play the trombone, and in this whole school only 4 kids can play the trombone!"

Also, large photos are great for recruitment and culture-building.

Our district has a “teacher center” where I can send pictures to be printed and laminated. You may have this service through your district or BOCES. If not, your boosters might help cover the cost at a local print shop.

Photos: Example 1

I hang a poster like this in a high-visibility spot in school every year.

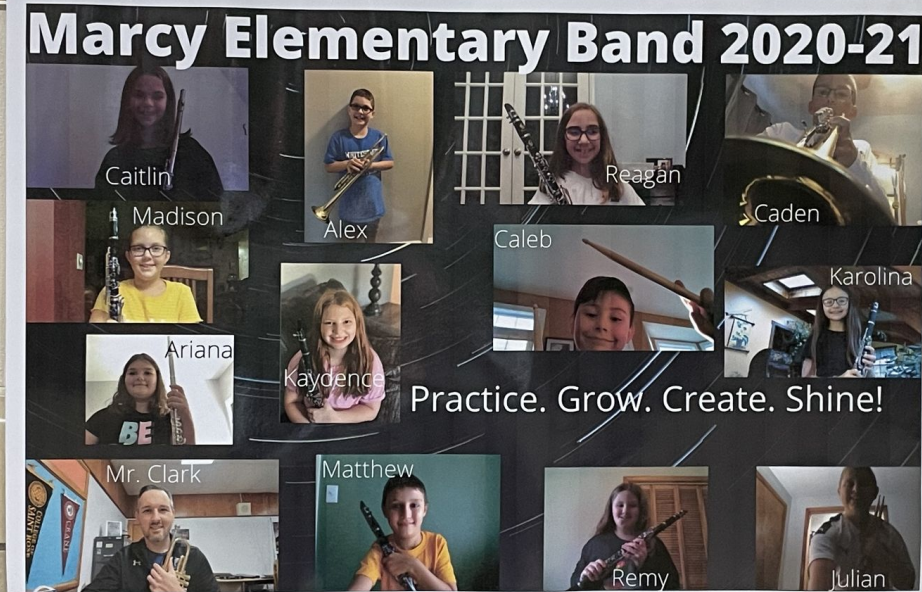
It's only my 5th grade group, my most senior group.

Their last act as elementary school band members is to sign the poster.



Photos: Example 2

This is the poster from the COVID era.



Photos: Example 3

The photos hang in the band room for years to come. This creates a legacy of sorts, a sense of tradition.



Photos: Example 3

These are individual students.

The stickers represent their "achievements".

They are the most motivating thing I've ever found.

For the 5 minutes of each lesson, nothing has paid off like this.



Achievement Unlocked

Stickers all represent different things.

Most of them are **musicianship**-related.

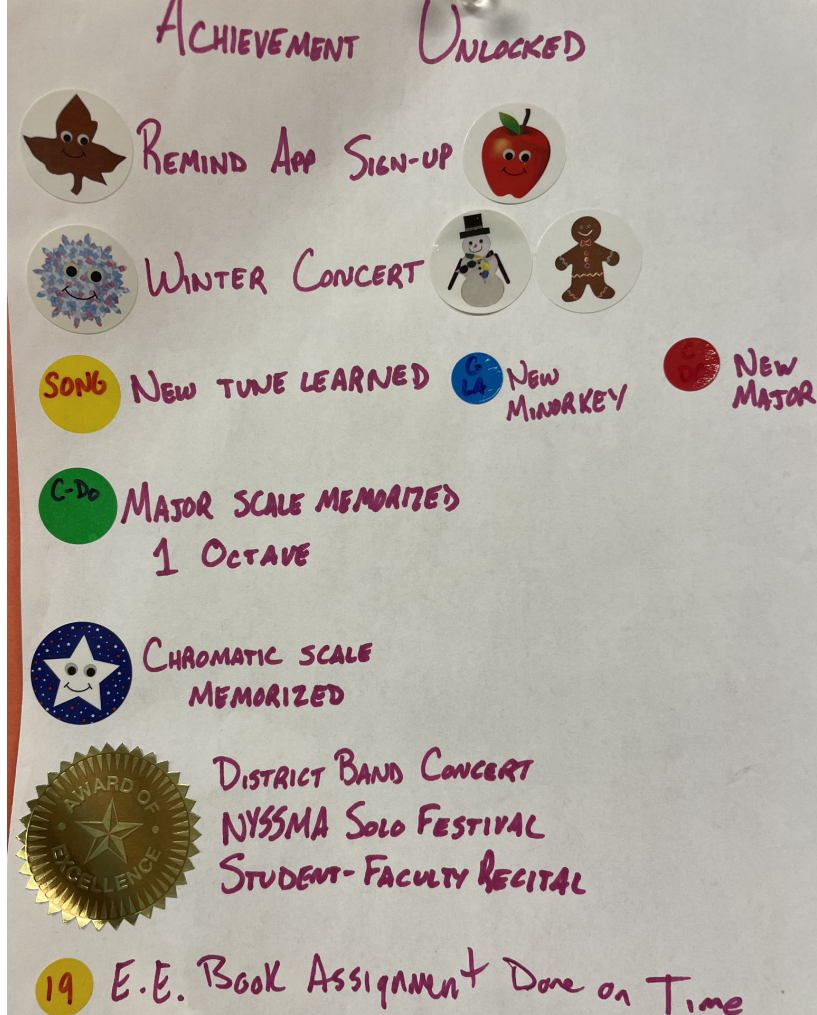
Some of **responsibility**-related.

Some are just a **celebration**.

Each student gets 3 "starts" per lesson.

Takes about 5 minutes to administer each lesson.

I've also set up activities in google classroom for students to turn in their "achievements".



Environment - 4/4

4. Eliminate friction. [\(link for life-altering podcast episode\)](#)

Are there places in your program that might **hold students back** from doing more? From growing?

Are you **self-aware** enough to find them?

What do you do to make **individual practice** more likely to occur?

Communicate regularly with families and make sure you're a step ahead.



Source:

<https://pattern.health/articles/practical-framework-engaging-patients>

Ways I Reduce Friction

- Every paper to go home goes through the **homeroom teacher's** mailbox.
- New schedules are always new colors.
- Goal sheets to organize practice.
- Video tutorials whenever possible (under 2 min)
- Google classroom copies of everything
- Monthly emails to parents, with bold/underlined subjects and 1-2 sentence explanations. Use bcc feature to keep parent email addresses private.
- Everything printed has a QR. Everything digital has links.



Nuts and Bolts

From here, everything is about strategies that have worked in my classroom.

Also, pictures of my kids.



Penelope, 5, cornet embouchure demonstration.

Zayda, 3, tickling the ivories.



Pedagogy and Musicianship through Warm-Ups

The ritual of the warm-up is sacred in band.

In small groups, I like to do idiomatic warm-ups. Brass warm-ups and clarinet warm-ups are not necessarily created equal.

Warm-ups should accomplish something each time. They are more than ritual in that way.

"Let's play 5 sounds in a row." Simple instructions, dozens of opportunities.

(pretty soon, they stop counting to 5)

Pedagogical Ideas Covered

- Embouchure and hand position check-in
- Fingering check-in
- Posture check-in
- Choose one at a time for focus: tone production / air support / posture / articulation / blend*
- Sometimes, keep the pulse physically. Always recommend physical flow.
- More music, less talking (particularly from the podium).

*My definition of blend for beginners is to "match what you hear". It gets kids listening to accompaniment, classmates, pulse, and pitch with one short sentence.

Musical ideas explored

- Connected vs. Separated style
- Major vs. Minor tonality (other tonalities eventually, too)
- Duple vs. Triple meter (other meters eventually, too)
- Dynamics and shaping of a phrase
- Straight vs. swung divisions of the beat (how hard to swing?)
- Introducing harmonic vocabulary through accompaniment.

Learning Sequence Activities



THE GORDON INSTITUTE
for MUSIC LEARNING

LSA's are worthy of their own PD session.

LSA's could be poorly described as ear training exercises. They are best described as **musicianship exercises**.

[Link to GIML's information on LSA's](#)

These work out best in full ensemble rehearsals. If tonal, move all percussion to mallets. If rhythmic, drums can work. Do not spend more than 5 minutes on this.

I like to blend skill / tonal / rhythmic sequences to fit my group and situation.

Strategies in Rehearsal - Major Tonic/Dominant

1. Review context. "In major tonality, tonic is any combination of (what again?)

"And dominant is any combination of...?"

2. And what is that on your instrument?

3. Guessing game. Easy mode, use syllables.

Hard mode, use instrument.

Ultimate mode, use neutral syllables.

Correct answers are responding with the bass note, Do for Tonic and So for Dominant.

1. "Everyone think of a three-note tonic pattern. Practice it for the next 10 seconds"

2. "One person will play their pattern. I will then repeat it. Then, everyone repeat it."

Give the option to pass for students who are not up to performing solo.

None of this needs to (or should) be written out.



"Practice for 10 seconds",
they said.

"It will be fun", they said.

Kids appreciate when you give them a chance to do their best. **Tiny practice moments** might be new to your group, but they're super valuable and kids appreciate them.

Composition - Where to begin?

To start, [this presentation](#) about getting started composing with young instrumental students.

Composition for Instrumentalists: Where to Start and How to Finish

...

Greg Clark
Whitesboro Central School District
March 2020

Good ideas are everywhere.

We need to let ourselves notice them.

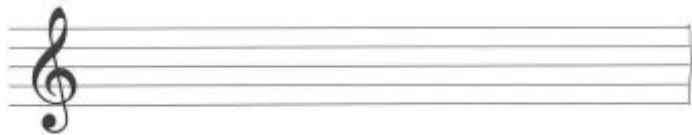
When we see the world as storytellers, we start to notice stories everywhere.

Artists notice art.

Designers notice design.

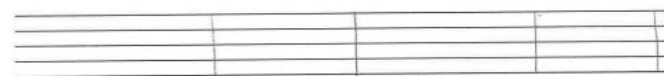
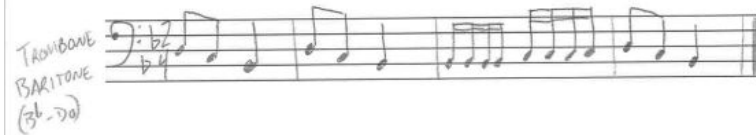
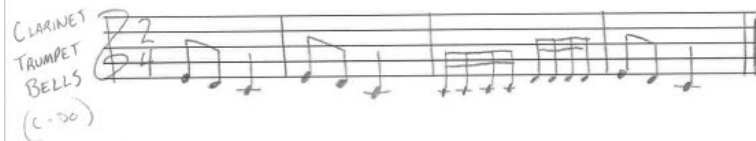
By starting to write music, students will start to notice and imagine music.

Because of you, students have the vocabulary, context, and environment to find their own voice.



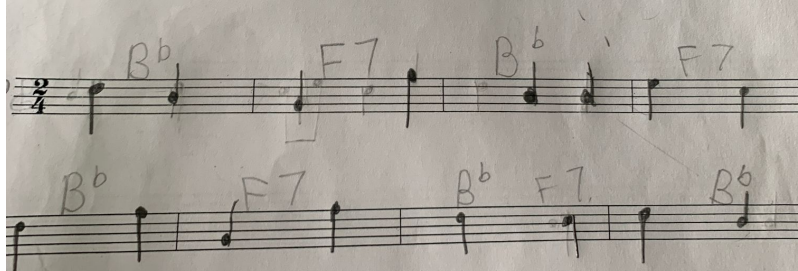
In between these assignments, I sent home blank staff paper labeled "just for fun". A handful of students wrote songs on their own.

This is "building vocabulary" meeting composition.



Context in action

- Make your goals clear and easily attainable.
- "We are going to write using only the following rhythms on the following notes."
- Do an example on the board along with students, and talk through your process as you go.
- A 4-measure piece of music is still a brand-new piece of music.



Composition Activity 2

Major Tonality, Duple Meter

Use the following directions to compose a short song using Tonic and Dominant patterns.

1. Draw the appropriate clef for your music. Baritone, bassoon, trombone, and tuba will use bass clef. All other instruments will use treble clef. Copy from the example on your "five minute warm-ups" sheet.
2. Start on Do; end on Do.
3. Use only tonic and dominant patterns. Do not use passing tones (other notes).
4. This song is in Concert B \flat Do. What does that mean?
 - a. Clarinet, Trumpet, Baritone TC: C is Do. C stands for tonic chord (C, E, G), G7 stands for dominant chord (G, F, D, B)
 - b. Alto Saxophone: G is Do. G stands for tonic chord (G, B, D), D7 stands for dominant chord (D, C, A, F#)
 - c. French Horn: F is Do. F stands for tonic chord (F, A, C), C7 stands for dominant chord (C, B-flat, G, E)
 - d. Percussion, Flute, Tuba, Trombone, Baritone BC, Bassoon: B \flat is Do. B \flat stands for tonic chord (B \flat , D, F), F7 stands for dominant chord (F, E \flat , C, A)
5. Use the indicated chord progression. In this song, YOU choose the chords. Start and end with Tonic.
6. Use only the notes that you know how to play.
7. Use only macrobeats (J) and microbeats (♩)
8. If you aren't sure about something try your best and send it in to Mr. Clark. He will clarify.

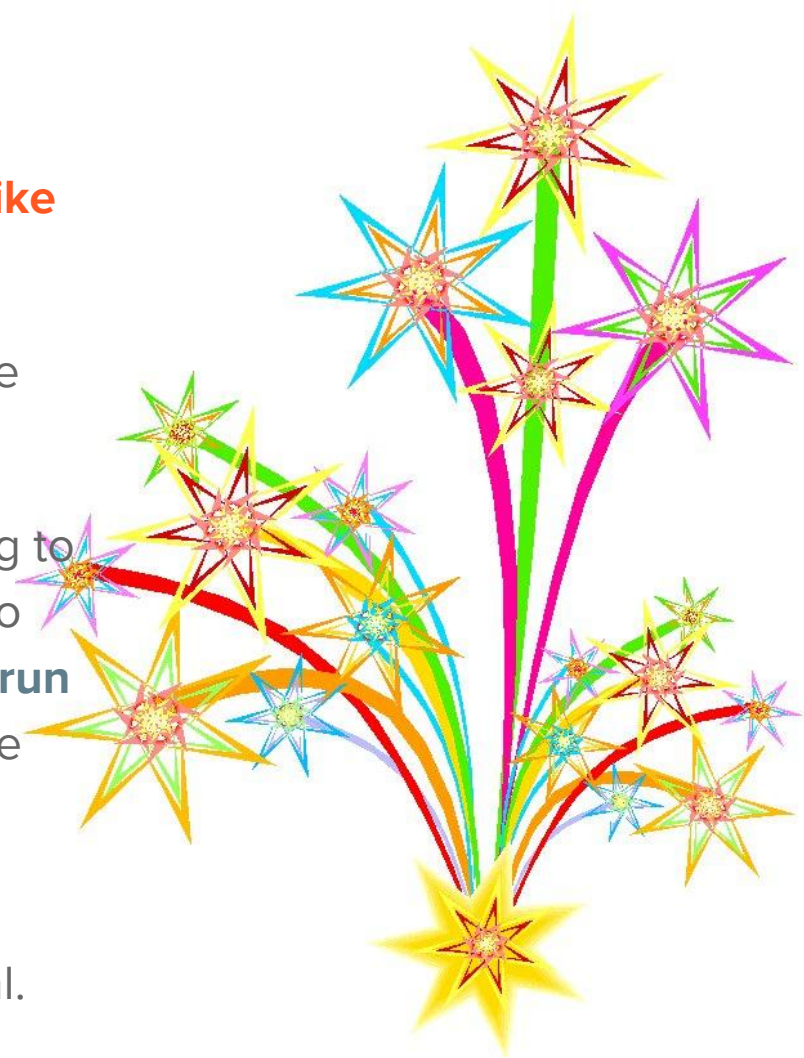
Environment

CELEBRATE! Students have never done anything like this.

Where else in school can they bring a project they've just made up?

My typical process, when a student brings something to me, is I ask them to play it. After hearing it one or two times, I can take their notes and connect enough to **run it through Finale**. The student usually has their piece "published" in about 3 minutes.

Share in school! **Post student compositions in the hallway**. Maybe even **play one in a concert** or recital.



Make a habit of it.

Having ready-to-go compositional activities can be a great way to spend half a lesson.

"Today we are going to check in on everything you've practiced, then write a song and finish by the end of the lesson".

Set parameters, model, and coach.

This is also a great strategy for when a kid forgets their instrument on a lesson day.

"Today's song will only use quarter notes, quarter rests, and pairs of 8th notes. You can write as many E's, F's, or G's as will fit." In 10 minutes, you have composers.

But **WHEN!?!?**

If it's a priority, something else gets set aside.

For me, it's the "challenge piece" for the band.

This engages more kids at an appropriate level, and with elementary kids, there is plenty of music to be made without catering to my strongest players. Instead, we learn another piece more deeply.

Will concerts still be memorable? **Absolutely.**

Will your curriculum be more vibrant, generative, and relevant? **Definitely.**

Composition Activities 1-3

Video Lessons:

Composition Activity 1- Major Tonality, Duple Meter, Tonic/Dominant prearranged

[Video Tutorials](#) // Materials

Composition Activity 2- Major Tonality, Duple Meter, T/D, Students choose chords

[Video Tutorials](#) // Materials

Composition Activity 3- Maj., Dup., T/D/Subdominant prearranged

[Video Tutorials](#) // Materials

- chord (C, B-flat, G, E)
- d. Percussion, Flute, Tuba, Trombone, Baritone BC, Bassoon: B \flat is Do. B \flat stands for tonic chord (B \flat , D, F), F7 stands for dominant chord (F, E \flat , C, A)
5. Use the indicated chord progression. In this song, Mr. Clark has chosen the chords.
 6. Use only the notes that you know how to play.
 7. Use only macrobeats (♩) and microbeats (♪)
 8. If you aren't sure about something try your best and send it in to Mr. Clark. He will clarify.

The image shows two staves of handwritten musical notation. The first staff is in G major (one sharp, F#) and 4/4 time. It contains a sequence of notes and rests corresponding to the chords G, D7, G, G/B, and D7. The second staff is in D major (two sharps, F# and C#) and 4/4 time. It also contains a sequence of notes and rests corresponding to the chords G, D7, G, D7, and G. The notation is simple and appears to be a student's work.

Composition Activity 1, by Sean R. 4th Grade Saxophone

Sean copied my chord progression and elements of the example from our video.

He finished this in March 2020, about 6 months after starting to play the saxophone.

Perform everything for someone.

Music is a performing art.

Sharing our music with others is a **crucial** part of the process.

Our school concerts are great, but should be somewhat limited in scope.

Sometimes my assignment is "play this for any human person". Pets are only acceptable with permission.



"Living Room Concerts" and "Driveway Recitals"



- Student-planned, student-led, teacher-free projects for sharing music **outside of school**.
- Teacher's job: organize how time is spent and coach musical performances.
- Student's job: every other conceivable task.

[Link to complete resources for "Living Room Concerts"](#)

Small Weekly Tasks Leading to Performance

As student begin to understand the moving pieces behind putting on a concert, they take ownership.

Week 1: Watch [Introductory Video](#)

Week 2: Choose a date and time. Start thinking about songs.

Week 3: Choose your music and submit your choices. Not set in stone.

Week 4: Advertising. Make invitations for your family ([with tutorial](#)).

Week 5: Concert Program. Make program, [with tutorial](#).

THE [REDACTED] AUDITORIUM

Christmas Concert

DECEMBER 22 6:30 PM

CONTACT [REDACTED]@YAHOO.COM



This invitation was made by a **5th grade bassoon student**, following my Canva tutorial.

She has chosen her date and time, theme, and contact information.

Her mother shared it with family and friends.

This family chose to share their recital on zoom, and shared the performance between among them.

Living Room Concert

12/ 25/20 // approximately 3: 00 PM // Living Room

Program

William Tell by Gioacchio Rossini

Let's Go Band! By Anderw Balent

Jingle Bells by J.S. Pierpont

O Come All Ye Faithful by John Francis Wade

Jolly Old St. Nicholas by James R. Murray

Performers

[REDACTED] / Trumpet

Special Thank-You's

Thanks to my mom for encouraging me to practice the trumpet and to help bake the snacks for the concert. Thanks to my Dad and Grandpa for helping me to practice for this concert. Thanks to [REDACTED] for supporting me. A special thanks to Aunts, Uncles and cousins for watching this concert. |



This concert program was created by a **5th grade trumpet student**.

I created the template for them, and they filled in all the details. **Google Docs is great for this.**

I included our Music Department logo at the bottom to make it feel a little more official.

By the way, I strongly recommend getting a music-specific logo.

Support local artists while you're at it.

Getting the Work In

Week 6: Progress check-in. Meet with teacher, share how it's going, make a plan for remaining practice time.

Week 7: "To the woodshed". This week's job is music and only music.

Week 8: Dress Rehearsal and Details. [Families receive an email](#) about how the project works.

Week 9: Performance. I made it recording-optional, because an authentic performance doesn't necessarily need the pressure of a recording.

Week 10: Reflection.

Benefits - Mu and Beyond

[Website Write-Up -
Living Room Concerts](#)



In the words of 5th Graders...

“Thank you for this opportunity. It was a very fun thing to do. **I loved it! It was so fun!**” said Remy G.

“We felt prepared,” said Christopher L., who also performed with his sister. **“We were both practicing and we were confident** that we were going to do this well.”

“I loved this living room concert and **I would absolutely do it again!**” said Olivia M.

“After the concert I kept on playing songs, I was just so happy for myself. I’m still playing songs!” said Caitlin W. “I really love flute right now. **Before, I doubted myself for everything, but now it’s just like, ‘I can do it.’**”



...and parents

Never underestimate the value of involving families in beginning band.

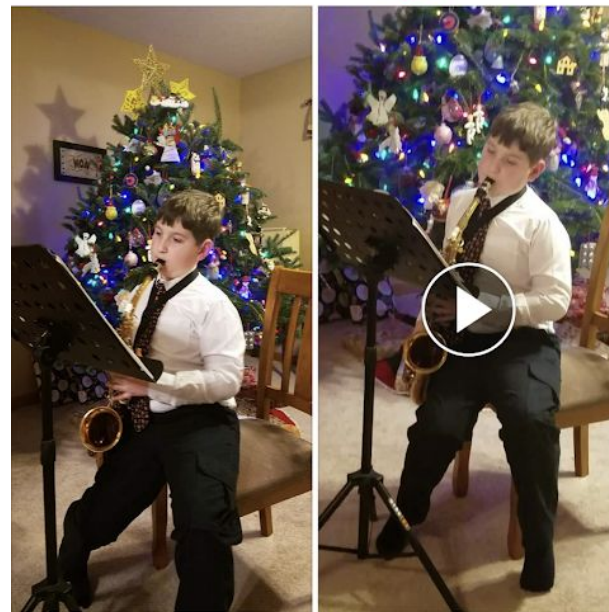
Building special connections like this makes music extra meaningful to the whole family- that support at home is the key to retention and individual growth.



Jill M Bauernfeind is with Carl Bauernfeind and Greg Clark.

18 mins · 🧑

Tonight would have been concert night for Hart's Hill so we had a living room concert instead! Will introduced each song and began the concert by telling us where the emergency exits were....I love my sax playing safety guy! Thank you Greg Clark for this wonderful assignment and for keeping music alive for our Whitesboro kids! 🎄❤️🎶🎵



Love



Comment



Share



You, Karen Farr and 9 others

Moving Beyond the Beginning Band Experience

Long-Term Connections

After beginning band ends, audiation-based learning can continue. It should!

- Extending rhythmic audiation to more meters, division and elongation patterns, mixed meters
- Extending tonal audiation to more tonalities and their functional chords
- Transcription activities and patterns; connecting popular musics to classroom (find resting tone and extrapolate from there).
- Mimic styles through form and rhythm/tonality in composition activities.
- If you teach the same students at higher levels, scale up and do what works for you. If not, consider starting an after school or community club.

Connect to Technology



Modern tools like [MuseScore](#) and [Noteflight](#) allow students to transcribe and share music digitally for free (to an extent).

[YourScore](#) is a small publisher that creates music for young groups and sells it digitally, rights-inclusive, as both a .pdf and .xml. That means you can upload it into your favorite music software and edit to your liking.

Have students upload a piece into MuseScore and move lines around. Did you like that saxophone part? Copy, paste, and try it yourself!

YourScore's catalog is also on SmartMusic and MusicFirst, including music for combined band/orchestra groups.

For Your Consideration

Traditional concerts are an outstanding celebration of music in our schools. Can you fit in something **intentionally creative?**

Nontraditional performances- collaborative recitals, collage concerts, in-school performances for small audiences, community performances, collaborative cross-school performances, digital work shares... the more ways we learn to share our music, the better.

This is how we can **use our music to advocate for our music**. Use whatever PR tools you have to get this out there! School PR personnel, school websites, local TV and news stations... share with your local politicians (seriously).

Good PR Examples - Celebrating Accomplishments

Each of these stories uses the devices we have to share our work. With creative student projects, you'll have plenty to share!

[Summer Band Write-Up](#)

[NYSBDA Honor Band Write-Up](#)

[Local Story: Musical Instrument Drive](#)

[Local Story: Music Teachers Adjust to COVID](#)

Questions and Discussions

What did you notice?

What did you wonder?

What are you curious about?

What caught your attention?

What would you like to discuss more?



Contact information:

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(scroll to the bottom to connect on social media)

Resource, Level 1 NYSSMA solo prep and scale videos to share.

Use this QR code to view this presentation

