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An Instrumental Music Method For Teaching Band Instruments In Classes In The Fourth And Fifth Grades

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AN INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC METHOD
FOR TEACHING BAND INSTRUMENTS IN
CLASSES IN THE FOURTH AND FIFTH GRADES

being

A thesis presented to the Graduate Faculty
of the Fort Hays Kansas State College in
partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the Degree of Master of Science

by

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INTRODUCTION

The Basic Instrumental Method is an attempt to provide music materials suitable for the teaching of instrumental music to children in the grade schools using the class method.

Four approaches have been used in developing this method. They are the following: (1) The selection of six basic instruments suitable for small children, (2) arrangement of the material in such a manner as to allow for individual advancement, (3) a well graded presentation of rhythmic problems, and (4) a recognition of the psychological value of motivation.

THE BASIC INSTRUMENTS

Any method which strives to combine instruments into a heterogeneous grouping is forced to compromise constantly, first in favor of one instrument and then in favor of another.

Four criteria formed the basis for selecting these instruments. They were as follows: (1) Ease of manipulation, (2) the efficiency with which instruction could be given to all players simultaneously, (3) their original cost and upkeep, and (4) their value in affording transfer to other instruments.

On this basis the following instruments were selected as being fundamental: (1) flute, (2) clarinet, (3) saxophone, (4) cornet or trumpet, (5) trombone, and (6) snare drum.

Ease of Manipulation

Only those instruments which do not require great strength or a large hand to manipulate have been considered as practical for small

children. This eliminates such instruments as the tuba, sousaphone, bassoon, and the large members of the saxophone family, all of which require long fingers of considerable strength to manipulate. Other instruments such as the oboe and English horn have not been considered because of their extreme delicacy and difficulty to keep in proper adjustment. The reed instruments selected require only a simple mechanical device to keep the reed in place and are therefore relatively easy to keep in adjustment.

Efficiency of Teaching

All instruments which, because of their range, would require special treatment at the expense of other members of the class have been eliminated but are provided for by means of the inclusion of related instruments whose technique is either identical or similar. Instruments such as the French horn, baritone, euphonium, and the various basses of the brass family; and the piccolo, oboe, bassoon, alto and bass clarinet, and the larger saxophones from the wood-wind group all fall into this category. Because of the key in which their natural scale falls, their inclusion would defeat one of the primary aims of the writer, namely, that of providing a method which would not necessitate a compromise. By eliminating these instruments it is possible to teach the remaining instruments simultaneously without incurring a hardship on any particular one.

Cost and Upkeep

Since many parents hesitate to start their children in music because of the expense and the possibility that the child will lose interest and drop out before learning to play, it was felt that

everything possible should be done to reduce both the initial cost and the upkeep.

The six instruments selected for this course are, therefore, the sturdiest and least expensive of their type, and all those requiring expensive needs have been omitted.

The material making up this course is complete and demands no supplementary books.

Transfer Value

When limiting instruction to only six instruments it is recognized that they must be capable of furnishing a background for all of the others. The theory that transfer from one instrument to another will be in proportion to the degree of similarity existing between the two instruments in question has been given prime importance.

Four types of technique are recognized as being indispensable. These are (1) the formation of a correct embouchure, (2) the development of accurate fingering patterns, (3) skill in manipulation of a sliding device such as that employed by the trombone, and (4) beating, which pertains to the members of the percussion family.

Three types of embouchure are developed to meet the needs of both the basic and the related instruments.

The position of the lips being the same for both the flute and the piccolo, the only adjustment necessary when changing from one to the other of these instruments is an adjustment to the difference in size.

The same may be said of all of the brass instruments and of certain of the wood-winds. Thus, the position of the lips for playing the cornet is the same as that required when playing the baritone or

or melphone; and the embouchure developed for the B-flat clarinet is identical with that required for the alto and bass clarinet.

The embouchure for the double reeds is not provided for in this method; for while it is different from that used by the clarinet or saxophone player, it is never-the-less closely related to them and can easily be acquired while the new fingering patterns are being learned.

Fingering sequence as learned for the cornet is identical to that employed by the baritone, euphonium, melophone, and bass and can therefore be transferred to any of these instruments with very little loss. When transferring to the euphonium or the bass some loss results from the larger stretch between fingers and the added strength required by these instruments, but if the change is not made too soon this loss is negligible.

The French horn, while not identical in fingering to the cornet, is however, so closely related as to assure a high degree of transfer. The fact that this instrument is played with the left hand while the right hand has been trained on the cornet causes almost no loss. The technique demanded of this instrument is so little as compared with that developed while playing the cornet that two years of cornet experience furnishes an adequate background for the demands made on French horn players in the junior high school.

The fingering of the flute and piccolo may be considered as identical. The fact that the flute has two more keys than the piccolo in no way changes the position of the hand or the sequence of the fingering pattern. The accomodation of the hand to the smaller instrument is accomplished with a few hours practice.

The clarinet forms the ideal background for the alto and bass clarinet. Since the relative position of all the holes and keys is

identical, the only adjustment necessary is to differences in size, weight, and distance between the fingers.

The saxophone furnishes an adequate background for the more complicated oboe and basoon. The fingerings are not identical but the patterns developed are so fundamental as to provide an excellent foundation for these instruments.

The trombone is unique in that it is the only instrument using a sliding device. Its technique is necessarily different from that of all of the other instruments but it causes no particular problem in the elementary class. Teaching a smooth legato and the use of the substitute positions, which do constitute real problems in trombone teaching, belong to more advanced work and are ignored in this beginning method.

The snare drum is used as the representative instrument of the percussion family. The ability to produce both the single-stroke and the double-stroke roll is fundamental to this class of instruments and is especially well adapted to the snare drum. Transfer to other members of the percussion family is high, both from the standpoint of technique acquired and from the feeling of rhythm established.

Another type of transfer is afforded by the material itself. Skills acquired in the first lessons must be carried over to future lessons where they furnish the basis for further development.

These skills consist of (1) acquiring strength of embouchure, (2) developing control of the breath, and (3) mastering new finger combinations.

Acquiring Strength of Embouchure. To strengthen the muscles of the lips and cheeks regular exercise is necessary. The demands on these muscles should be increased gradually and ample time allowed for

development to take place. By starting with four quarter notes followed by four beats of rest and repeating this pattern many times in the first lesson their strength is gradually developed. The second lesson contains half notes of two beats duration separated by measures of rest; and the third lesson makes use of the whole note which is held four beats. In lesson four, slightly greater strength is required to make the crescendo which is called for in the score. In lesson six another device, that of increasing the upward range of each instrument, is used. Since it requires greater strength to produce high tones than low tones, and to play loud than to play soft, all subsequent lessons serve to build the embouchure by gradually increasing the demands on the player in these two respects.

Developing Control of the Breath. Closely related to building strength of embouchure is the matter of developing control of the diaphragm and other breathing muscles. As longer notes are employed, added control becomes necessary. Likewise, when louder tones are attempted greater lung capacity and strength of diaphragm are imperative. In the first few lessons phrases are short and rests are frequent, but as the lessons advance the phrases become longer and the pupil is forced to play as many as sixteen counts without stopping for breath. In the beginning, the tempo is quick and the phrases, even though four measures in length, occupy but a short interval of time. However, in lesson twelve, the slow tempo more than doubles the actual length of time taken to play phrases in some of the earlier lessons. The crescendo toward the end of the phrase in lessons thirteen and fourteen calls for still greater endurance on the part of the player.

Development in breath control progresses along with the development of the embouchure, and both are provided for by means of

carefully graded material.

Mastery of Finger Combinations. All new finger combinations are first introduced in relatively slow tempo and all are approached in scalewise progressions. They are then used in melodies in various rhythmic patterns which require greater dexterity. Many students are able to master these new combinations without formal drill. However, exercises in which the new fingering is repeated many times are included whenever a new note is introduced. These drill exercises may then be used to serve two different purposes. They help the slow student acquire a minimum working use of the new notes and they offer the bright student an opportunity to improve his technique by practicing them as rapidly as possible.

Careful presentation of each new combination followed by its use in a musical setting, together with adequate drill material insures master as the lessons progress.

ADJUSTMENT TO INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

In preparing teaching materials for class instruction one of the most important considerations should be that of providing for the individual advancement of members within the class.

The Child as an Individual

The idea of building a course of study or a method to fit the "average child" held a prominent place in education for many years and only in comparatively recent times has the right of the individual been given serious consideration.

There is probably no branch of education in which differences in abilities and attitudes are more pronounced than in the music

class. It behooves the teacher to recognize not only the wide range of capacity represented by a class of normal boys and girls, but to consider also their various likes and dislikes.

Norms of the Kwalwasser-Dykema Music Tests show that the upper 5 percent of sixth-grade pupils earn a score of 200 or better, while the lowest 5 percent earn a score of 150 or less. A difference of 50 points separating the upper 5 percent from the lower 5 percent represents quite a wide range of ability and must be given consideration if maximum efficiency is to be attained in teaching.

Occasionally a child will state quite openly that he dislikes music and has no desire to play in a band or orchestra or to sing. While this attitude on the part of young children is not often encountered, it never-the-less presents a challenge to the conscientious teacher; and if he is skillful, he may succeed in changing this attitude to one of enthusiasm. The child who is totally indifferent to music is rare.

It is generally not hard to arouse the interest of grade-school children in an instrumental program. A much more common difficulty arises because of the differences in ability found in almost all music classes.

Large school systems are able to improve this situation by the ability grouping method of organizing the music classes, but in the average school this plan is not practical since adequate time for instruction is not available.

The effects of different abilities can be somewhat reduced by selecting the most suitable instrument for each child.

Selection of Instruments

Observation of physical traits such as length of arm, length and thickness of fingers, formation of teeth and thickness of lips all give important cues to the ease with which the student will be able to adapt himself to a certain type of instrument.

However, even when all of the outward signs physical qualities are satisfactory, success cannot be assured. Motility plays an important part in musical performance and since instruments such as the flute and clarinet require great speed of manipulation, it is useless to select for these instruments a student whose muscular response is slow. Motility can be measured but equipment is expensive and special training required before satisfactory results can be obtained. It is therefore impractical to attempt to measure motility of grade-school children in the public schools.

Fortunately, most children have sufficiently fast reaction time to allow for normal development. It is only the extreme cases which should influence judgement in selecting an instrument. Here again, keen observation on the part of the teacher may be useful in discovering those students who are naturally quick and those who are abnormally slow.

Pitch and rhythm tests should always be given to prospective music students and, if equipment is available, it is highly desirable that the entire student body be tested and their scores recorded as a part of their permanent record.

If no standard tests are available, satisfactory results can be obtained through individual tests, which can be run in from one to two minutes per pupil.

The pitch test requires that the pupil respond to a pair of tones played on a stringed instrument by the instructor, telling

whether the second tone of the pair is higher, lower, or the same as the first. Only a few trials are necessary to discover superior ability or tone deafness. These are the measures with which the elementary teacher is most concerned.

A simple rhythm test can be administered merely by having the pupil clap a rhythm pattern after hearing it clapped by the teacher. This test is, of course, not strictly a test of rhythm since memory for the pattern, and to a certain extent, muscular coordination are included. However, it affords a rough measure which may be used profitably to eliminate poor students from instruments that require a keen sense of rhythm. Students who cannot imitate simple rhythmic patterns in this manner seldom make good drummers or bass players.

A teacher who has information from all of these sources is pretty well qualified to advise pupils with regard to the choice of an instrument.

Where school-owned instruments are to be used children may be permitted to try several types of instruments before making a final selection, but where the instrument is to be purchased it is doubly important that good judgement be used in advance. Most small children have no pre-conceived idea of which instrument they prefer to play. The instructor using a good psychological approach can usually influence the choice so as to eliminate obvious misfits.

When a child does exhibit a definite preference for some particular instrument his choice should be respected unless there is some good reason for advising him differently.

Too much attention cannot be given to this aspect of class organization. If each child has the instrument for which he is best suited the first step in providing for individual differences has been

taken.

Selection of Material

Just as no two pupils read with equal speed and accuracy, so, in music, a vast difference exists in the quantity and quality of material which different pupils can assimilate in a given amount of time. To provide for this difference without penalizing the bright student or frustrating the slow one is a problem which can only be solved by providing adequate material for both extremes.

In the Basic Instrumental Method the author has endeavored to meet this problem by grouping certain exercises in each lesson so as to form a minimum assignment, and adding others of progressive difficulty to hold the interest and improve the mastery of the more talented student.

Each lesson throughout the course consists of ten melodies and exercises. The first four or five lines of each lesson serve as a link connecting it with the preceding lesson and also as an introduction to the new problems of the current lesson. These exercises are known as Basic Exercises and represent the minimum assignment which must be met before proceeding to the next lesson. In the basic exercises only the simplest combinations of new material are used, and while they may include notes and rhythms of former lessons the progressions have been kept at an easy level.

Following the basic exercises are five or six supplementary studies and folk tunes. These supplementary pieces involve no new material but re-combine what has already been learned in slightly more complicated form. The supplementary exercises in each lesson become increasingly more difficult so that the last furnishes a challenge to

the brighter students in the class.

It is not necessary for all members of the class to complete the entire lesson. The completion of the basic exercises provides for all the problems of the next lesson. It is therefore possible for the class to proceed on several different levels of achievement.

RHYTHMIC APPROACH

Rhythm is perceived through the muscles of the body rather than by means of auditory stimuli. Good teaching procedure therefore recognizes the value of response in the nature of bodily movement. For this reason all new rhythms are introduced by rote rather than by musical symbols.

Introducing Rhythmic Patterns

The first step in presenting a new rhythmic pattern is a performance of the rhythm in a musical setting by the teacher. This may be accomplished by the playing of any or all of the pieces at the end of the new lesson by the instructor while the children listen. After one or two hearings of the melody the class may be asked to hum or sing (words are provided for some pieces) as the melody is played again.

The second step should encourage muscular response in the form of clapping the rhythm. If a sufficient number in the class can remember the rhythm they may try clapping alone with only a minimum of help from the teacher. However, if the pattern is complicated it is recommended that the teacher or a student, who has marked ability and leadership, stand before the class and lead in the clapping. Or, a pupil may be selected as leader while the teacher plays, thus keeping

the melody and rhythm together.

It is an easy step to proceed from clapping to tonguing the rhythm, using the syllable "ta" spoken or sung aloud in time with the music. During this phase the drummers may reinforce the rhythm by beating the basic pattern using only one stick. If right-handed drummers make use of their left hand and left-handed drummers make use of their right hand in these drills there will be a marked tendency to equalize the proficiency of the two hands.

Only after the rhythm is genuinely felt by each player are the musical symbols introduced. In presenting the symbols the teacher plays the exercise once again, this time the class pointing to the notes as they are played. Up to this point they have experienced the new combination no less than four times. It should be thoroughly familiar before attempting the final stage, that of playing the pattern on their instruments.

Throughout the entire procedure the tempo should be brisk and the accent well marked.

The Quarter Note as the Unit

The quarter note receiving one beat is first to be introduced. This is in keeping with the theory that rhythm is primarily muscular. The articulation of each note in the first lesson is accompanied by muscular activity. In the case of the wind-instrument players this motion is produced by the tongue, while the drummers make use of a fore-arm stroke. Finger changes are not used in the first exercises and the drummers are not required to make fine coordinations of fingers, wrist, and fore-arm. No sustained notes are attempted in the first lesson and, although there are entire measures of rest, a

separate symbol is used to indicate each beat. Rests of corresponding value are therefore introduced with their respective notes.

After the takt, or beat, has been well established by means of the quarter note rhythm, the tie is introduced as a symbol meaning "to add." The half note is then presented as the sum of two quarter notes and the whole note as the sum of two half notes. This method is, therefore, analogous to that used in teaching the fundamental processes in arithmetic where addition is recognized as an easier process than division.

Mental counting is encouraged at all times and tapping of the toe is recommended, particularly for those students who find rhythm difficult.

Sustained notes in themselves have no rhythm but the use of notes of different duration is required to build a phrase-rhythm. It is therefore doubly important that the takt or regulating beat be preserved.

Time Rhythm Relationship

Many wrong ideas exist with regard to the relationship between time and rhythm in music. Duration, or time, may be considered as one element of rhythm, but, strictly speaking, rhythm results from the more subtle recurrence of accents arising out of the melodic line.

Throughout the first three lessons the beat should be metronomic in character. In the first six exercises rests provide adequate time to take the breath. However, beginning with line seven, breath must be taken between notes where no rest occurs. Breathing in such places should be accomplished without disturbing the regularity of the beat. An almost imperceptible shortening of the last note before the

breath is taken will suffice.

Rhythm should be conceived as motion and should always move smoothly rather than abruptly. In the exercises and pieces of the first few lessons any attempt to regulate the beat to accommodate the breathing is imperceptible. However, in later lessons, flexibility of the takt is imperative.

A slight retarding of the beat as a cadence is approached is desirable. As the phrases become longer and the cadences more pronounced the regulative beat becomes more and more flexible. The failure to allow an appropriate amount of time between phrases results in a feeling of discomfort on the part of the performer and gives rise to a feeling that the music is hurried.

Building More Complex Rhythms

The simplest form of rhythm results when the phrase rhythm coincides with the takt. The author has taken every precaution to achieve this reinforcement of the phrase rhythm throughout the first eight lessons; but, beginning with the ninth lesson, the phrase rhythm gradually departs momentarily from the takt and becomes increasingly more independent.

The learning process is composed of a hierarchy of habit formations which might be termed single-note habits, figure habits, and phrase habits. These may be likened to the hierarchy found in the experiments of Bryan and Harter in their study of telegraphic learning.

At first the student is confronted with the necessity of reading and producing one note at a time. However, he soon learns to combine two or more notes into a rhythmic figure, and to both read and execute this group with a single highly coordinated movement. The

professional musician goes a step farther and not only reads the entire phrase at a glance but executes several figures with a single discharge of energy. It is not likely that the beginning student will reach this latter stage but he may be expected to acquire some skill in the figure stage.

To add to the difficulty of the learner, three different types of movement within the phrase are possible. In order of difficulty, beginning with the easiest, they may be considered as follows: (1) Repeated notes, (2) passages following a scalewise progression, and (3) passages using intervals larger than a major second. This latter type may be further subdivided into passages built on chord intervals and those built on intervals not found in chord relationship.

Throughout this method all quarter and eighth note rhythms are first introduced by means of repeated notes. They are then used in scale passages and finally in intervals.

The divided beat is first introduced in lesson nine, appearing on the first count of the measure. In lesson ten, it is found on the second beat, in lessons eleven and twelve on the third and fourth beats respectively, and in future lessons on any or all beats. Thus, the same plan of adding figures has been adhered to that was followed in presenting half and whole notes in earlier lessons. This gradual approach has been found advantageous in learning to recognize more quickly those beats which are played as single tones and those which require two strokes of the tongue. Reading is therefore facilitated, and the ability to grasp larger units quickly, and to execute them with a single impulse of energy is developed. Since these patterns have already been experienced by clapping, tonguing, pointing, and playing, the final step in learning to sight read them is one of

recognition only.

Quick recognition depends on familiarity, and familiarity is acquired by repetition of the same pattern in various settings. Each time a new pattern is introduced, it therefore appears in several different keys and not only as repeated notes, but also in scale and interval form.

The rhythm of the dotted quarter followed by an eighth note is presented by means of the rote song, "Mary Had a Little Lamb." The tune is so familiar and the rhythm so well adapted to the words that it furnishes an excellent example for introducing this new rhythmic figure. After several repetitions, the symbols are then introduced as a "picture" of the phrase. The author has had better success when the song is introduced in its entirety. However, a drill exercise in which the mathematical relation of the notes can be perceived is included for pupils who may require more drill than that already provided.

MOTIVATION

It has been said that in the strictest sense it is impossible to teach anyone anything. What the teacher actually does is to so arrange conditions that obstacles will be removed from the path of the learner in order that accomplishment of a desired task may be made as easy as possible.

Learning is efficient only when there is an urge to learn, and the skillful music teacher will therefore seek to arouse enthusiasm on the part of his pupils and create in them a desire to learn to play. There are a number of motives on which the teacher may capitalize. The following types are used: (1) The mastery, or success motive, (2)

group activity, (3) self advancement, and (4) public performance.

The Mastery Motive

If music is to be accompanied by enthusiasm and the class hour is to provide a happy experience, the activity engaged in must afford satisfaction, and a feeling of worthwhileness must be experienced not only by the instructor, but also by the pupils themselves. The class period must not drag and, at the close of the hour, there should be a definite feeling of accomplishment on the part of each individual in the class.

Throughout the Basic Instrumental Method the author has endeavored to assure this feeling by deliberately keeping the exercises short in order that they may be completed with a minimum amount of formal drill. In many exercises where the same or inverted pattern is continued for two or more lines, a cadence and double bar have been inserted at the end of four or eight measures. The exercise is thereby divided into two shorter studies to achieve this end.

In like manner, the minimum assignment affords opportunity for the less musical child to experience the feeling of accomplishment when he has completed the basic exercises, and is prepared to go on with the class. The first and second lines following the basic exercises are easy enough that he may even bolster his ego by doing more than the required assignment.

Plateaus in learning are detrimental in that interest lags and is apt to be lost entirely if the plateau is of long duration. This is especially true with young children and must be guarded against through careful grading of the material.

In the method here presented special care has been taken to

avoid the introduction of new problems before an adequate amount of time has been allowed for mastery of the current technique. The basic exercises in each lesson are considerably easier than the more advanced exercises of the preceding lesson, permitting exceedingly slow development of difficult finger patterns and complicated rhythms. New notes are introduced in their easiest setting and are usually approached scalewise. They are then repeated and sustained before being used in patterns demanding a difficult approach.

In writing the basic exercises it was not taken for-granted that the student had completed all of the preceding lesson, but only the minimum assignment of that lesson. It is therefore possible for the student possessing low musicality to complete the semester's work by mastering less than half of the available material.

Rhythms are introduced in actual musical settings. The experience of hearing and playing a real melody precedes any attempt at formal drill. Indeed, it is recommended that where drill is not needed it be dispensed with entirely.

Mastery is furthermore guaranteed by carefully selecting instruments for which the pupils are best suited, and by elimination of instruments, which, because of their size or delicacy of operation, might tend to discourage small children. Whenever it is possible children are permitted to select their own instruments, and private ownership of these instruments is encouraged. Children enjoy the aesthetic experience of playing a melody. In order that this experience may be had by all of the children, accompanying instruments such as the bass horn and melophone have been eliminated from consideration when preparing this method.

Group Activity

Children like to be with children. They are happiest when in groups of their own age, even though the activity in which they are engaged is work. Most boys would rather help their playmates do the household chores than to do the same chores at home, and almost any girl prefers to dry dishes with her chum rather than with her mother. So, in the instrumental music class, what is lost in efficiency of instruction is more than offset by the gain in attitude resulting from the companionship on one another.

All children desire social attention or even distinction, and any situation which affords an opportunity to acquire recognition is pleasurable. The music class can be made to serve this need admirably. Friendly rivalry can be stimulated through competition, and many devices can be used to keep interest at a high peak.

The arrangement of material in the Basic Instrumental Method is well suited to class motivation. After the minimum assignment has been mastered, each individual may learn as many additional exercises as his talent and industry permit. Competition is encouraged by seating the pupils in the order of the number of exercises completed by each one.

Competition may also be used to improve the quality of the work. Occasionally seats should be assigned on the basis of how well the student plays, instead of how much material he has covered. Drill such as practice in sustaining long tones is undertaken with enthusiasm when the person holding a tone the greatest number of seconds is placed at the head of his section. Quite often the child who is far down in the section may come up to the first chair when this procedure

is followed. His confidence being restored, he puts forth extra effort to hold his position.

Activities which take on the nature of play are always strongly motivated. Children enjoy games involving physical movement and almost all children like rhythmic music. Marching provides excellent recreation and relief from sitting, and at the same time, improves rhythmic feeling and response. Drummers provide the basic rhythm, and begin to see the importance of maintaining a strict cadence when they play for the class to march. The best soldier may be chosen as the captain of his regiment, and may assume the leadership in issuing the commands of "march" and "halt." When the class is made up of small children, a few minutes spent in such activity pays good dividends.

Self Advancement

The desire to succeed is a strong motive. The child who enters the music class wants to make good. Inwardly, he is anxious to please. A listless or indifferent attitude is more often a ruse to cover timidity or a feeling of inferiority than a sign of dislike for music. The teacher who looks for the good in such a pupil is likely to get a better response than one who directs attention to his apparent lack of interest. This does not mean that he should indulge in insincere praise, but that he should assume a positive attitude in recognizing even a mediocre degree of accomplishment. This type of pupil may not excel in music but may receive real value from participation in the class.

The most valuable type of competition from the standpoint of individual development is competition with one's self. When a child is working to better his own record he is working at his own natural

level. He is not handicapped by inferior ability, nor is he likely to be satisfied with just getting by. Like the golf enthusiast, he puts forth effort to beat his own record, and is not satisfied with a lower score than he has made before.

The organization of material in the Basic Instrumental Method encourages this type of competition. Children who only complete half of the assignment in a week's practice may proceed to the next lesson but are urged to better their record in the coming week.

Some children who do not excel in athletics or other school subjects may find music a new source of expression and are proud to have an accomplishment in which they can assume leadership. For this group, the music class furnishes many opportunities to develop poise and confidence.

A large number of exercises have been disguised as solos and may be named after the student who stands before the class and plays them. The first person to complete the piece writes his name in the blank provided at the top of the page. Children love this work.

Many children want to learn to play an instrument in order that they may some day play in the high school band. Some want to play in a jazz orchestra like the one they hear on the radio. A few, perhaps, have loftier ideas, but whatever the motive, it is good psychology for the teacher to play up to these desires. No greater mistake can be made than to dampen the ardor of a ten-year old whose ambition is to play in a dance band. Whatever the motive, whether it be high and lofty or trivial, it may furnish a drive which will produce good results.

Public Performance

Of all the devices that have been invented by music teachers to raise the standards of their pupils, none can compare with the public performance. Three types of public performance are recognized by the writer as being practical for grade school children. They are (1) the informal class recital, (2) the assembly program, and (3) the grade-school contest.

The Informal Class Recital. The informal class recital, where parents and friends are invited to a demonstration of the class work, is an excellent means of motivating beginning pupils. Progress in the first few months of instrumental study is rapid. An informal program at the end of six or eight weeks not only insures the teacher's backing in the community, but also creates favorable attitudes on the part of the parents in the homes. It is therefore invaluable to the student who finds the novelty of his new instrument waning.

If the class is large it may not be possible to allow time for each child to play alone, but every child, no matter how poor, should at least perform in a group together with two or three other children. In a program such as this, very simple music should be used and as high a standard of performance maintained as is possible without causing self-consciousness on the part of the children. Included in this method are twenty-seven melodies and folktunes which can be learned in the first two months, and which are suitable to play on such occasions. Following the demonstration, a social hour at which the children serve refreshments to their parents, adds to the pleasure of the evening.

The Assembly Program. A second type of performance in which grade-school pupils may participate is the assembly program. Children of this age are not so self-conscious or critical of one another as

are junior and senior high school pupils. It is well to give them the opportunity of more formal appearances before they reach the age of self-consciousness. Music should be shared, and the assembly is the place where this important concept may be taught.

The successful teacher will take every precaution to insure a satisfying performance whenever his pupils are called on to make a public appearance, for here is an opportunity for the pupil to distinguish himself in the presence of his classmates.

Such programs not only serve to motivate the students who are performing but also create a desire in those who have not as yet attained sufficient skill or poise to make an appearance. If the lower grades are present many more children will be inspired to join the class when they become old enough.

The Grade-School Music Contest. Another type of public performance is open to grade pupils in many schools where contests are held. Sometimes these contests are for pupils within the same school, sometimes they are between pupils of different schools in the same community, and often they include schools from surrounding towns. A much greater incentive is present in these than in either of the other programs mentioned; for, coupled with the desire to do well, is the spirit of competition. Enthusiasm is high, and is intensified by a determination to win. The child, the parent, and the teacher call forth all of their resources. Regardless of the outcome of the contest, the period of preparation is marked by rapid progress. Such an incentive provides meaning and direction during the hours of preparation. In spite of some attending evils accompanying such a program the fact remains that it is the most powerful driving force at the command of the teacher.

In using these artificial means of stimulation, one should not lose sight of the fact that music has a direct appeal of its own, and if properly taught, becomes its own motivation.

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