

Remote learning for the beginning band trumpet student.

by

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Abstract

In this report, I will use video recordings as teaching demonstrations to assist beginning band trumpet students with the basic skills required to begin their journey in band. Through examples and demonstration, students will be afforded the opportunity to have a one-on-one lesson that will mold them in the areas of instrument care, proper posture and breathing techniques, and creating and developing their first sounds. The access to these video demonstrations affords the student the ability to repeat lessons and reference back to them as needed for mastery.

Through this program, I have developed in self-evaluation as well as flexibility of an ever-changing learning environment. Remote learning is becoming more of necessity in education. Creating a video library with video demonstrations is not only something that will function in a remote learning environment; it will also allow students to begin development as they transition from elementary school to middle school. I have learned that developing a comprehensive approach to teaching partnered with a hands-on approach will have the most success for students. Videos can be re-evaluated and designed to accommodate what a “one size fits all” approach will not handle. Assessment for these videos can be utilized through video recordings of students demonstrating the tasks each video teaches as well as using zoom in a live time evaluation of the student. These methods of instruction have shown me that students do not always have to be directly in front of you to learn. Having remote access can still benefit the student’s ability to learn.

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Chapter 1 - Teaching Philosophy

Education in American society has many firm place holders. The primary focus of our education system and schooling is to simply educate our children so that one day, they can grow up and be contributing members of society. Individuals that hold a job, pay taxes, potentially make donations to non-profit organizations, hold community volunteer positions, and just like their time spent involved in schooling, their children will hopefully follow the same path. Education is critical in the development of knowledge and skills.

There is discipline fostered in education. Work ethic, problem solving, and creative thinking are just a few of the items that are additional skill components offered through education. Education creates both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational concepts. These two work hand in hand. Students that experience extrinsic motivation can begin to cultivate that into intrinsic motivation. Those that exemplify stronger intrinsic traits are able to extrinsically motivate others. The two motivational qualities can exist both independently and dependently with one another.

Social development is a major byproduct of education as well. Children are able to learn way to interact with others from a very early age. One can think of learning to share in kindergarten or how to do a group project in high school as means of enhancing social development. Upon entering the work force, having a strong social development strengthens a person's value to their employer.

Everything mentioned thus far involving education is important. Knowledge is what we always come back to. Learning to read, write, and do math are really the most fundamental approaches in education as these are skill sets, we as people should and need to possess to carry out everyday life.

So, who decides how education functions one might ask? There are decision makers at the federal, state, and local areas who play a huge role in the facilitation of education and how it functions from kindergarten all the way through University level programs. These decision makers have a lot to think about in their choices for schooling. Ideally, these decision makers need to take into account that there isn't a "one size fits all" approach in curriculum. We want students to be life-long learners that are well-rounded. A variety of subjects or disciplines is what intrinsically motivates students to become those life-long learners. They also begin to figure out who they are as an individual during this process. To be well-rounded, students must be exposed to subjects like the arts, math, science, literature and history.

The Army educates their soldiers through two concepts of learning. The two are training to time and training to standard. Relating this to the public education system brings on the largest flaw that we as educators experience. The assessment of most students falls into benchmark testing. This relates to the training to time concept. We want our students to learn and they have to show growth however when taking a test, they can answer every question correct, it does not necessarily mean they know the application of those answers in life. This is why training to standard is crucial in public education. The standard is that students not only know the answers, but they understand their application.

As previously stated, decision makers must take into account that education does not adhere well to a "one size fits all" curriculum. In order to intrinsically motivate a student, they have to have a common interest in what they are being exposed to. I have witnessed first-hand that when a student is not stimulated by the curriculum they are exposed to, there can be negative outcomes to their schooling. The idea behind this is that you do not need to go to school in order to be educated while one can attend school and not learn anything (Wade 2018).

My closest friend from my childhood was a very accomplished musician at a young age. He excelled in arts programs whereas found difficulties in more traditional courses. He eventually dropped out of high school at sixteen and at a later age received his GED. He is now a premiere guitarist in Orlando, Florida and owns his own recording studio. He did not take a traditional route for his music education. This is why we should find common ground in curriculum that encompasses all the interests of a student so that they can achieve knowledge at a fair rate. The traditional model of schooling simply does not accommodate the interests of all students that go beyond that model. Some students excel in subjects that are not within the traditional educational model and simply slip through cracks where their potential and desires are not stimulated. If we want to avoid a closed-minded mentality, curriculum has to evolve to encompass a relationship between all courses. This example validates the notion that school may not be everyone if it is not designed to accommodate their interests in curriculum. The philosopher Christopher Small believed that students obtain knowledge thus making them smart however are robbed from experiencing the knowledge they possess (Small 1998). In the case of my childhood friend, he was had knowledge that was left untouched and unnoticed which ultimately pushed him away from school.

The arts, more specifically, music education, is an integral component in a well-balanced curriculum. While core classes such as math, science, English, and history harbor their own respective forms of knowledge, it is the participation of a music program that truly encompasses all in the form of a “one-stop shop” praxis. Music enhances other subjects in the traditional model of education through its abilities to naturally expose students to all subjects at once. When a student is learning notation, they are essentially learning another language. With performing through music, the break-down of rhythms are fractions which covers math. Playing an

instrument with dynamics and articulations where air control and buzzing/vibrations must be focused to achieve a desirable result is physics, a branch of science. Every piece of music played can and should be related to some place in history as there are cultural and historical references that certainly accompany a composer's work. If the ultimate goal is to produce people that possess knowledge all while creating humanness among them, music education is critical. Even in Greek times, the quadrivium included music as a foundation to its educational model, that all individuals should have music in addition to arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy.

Music education also appeals greatly to the training to standard concept. In my classroom, I can see first-hand how my students make the application of skills in my class to everyday situations. When a student works on music outside of class and goes beyond the requirements, it does not mean that they necessarily deserve more recognition or an additional grade, it means that they understand the practice of discipline in their craft. This transfers to how serious a person will be about the work they are expected to do in their job. The quality of their product is based on the attention to detail of the time spent in their work. In addition, student leaders develop intrapersonal and social skills that build confidence. How a student leader may assist another student on their instrument or with reading music is a communication skill that embodies patience, understanding, knowledge, and expertise. All of these traits are what grows the student both musically and as a human being.

Participation in music gives students the opportunity to express one quality of life that all human beings should possess creativity. Growth in creativity strengthens an individual's problem-solving skills, discipline and attention to detail. By enhancing these three areas, we are enhancing humanness. If the end goal of education is to have contributing members of society, I think it is important that those people be diverse. I believe the arts are a way to achieve this.

Music does so much for everyone. I find value in the many views of the two philosophers David Elliott and Christopher Small. Everyone should be exposed and thus learn music. Music stimulates the mind, it creates and evokes thoughts and feelings, it is the ultimate act of expression. Every human being should know how these function for them on a personal level, but it is only through the experience of music that they can come close to achieving this.

Elliott (1995) believes that musicianship is the key knowledge goal, which includes listening skills. In order to receive the full extent that music has to offer, one must immerse themselves in becoming a competent musician. This also goes for music teachers themselves. A music teacher must possess many skill identifiers in order to educate their students. While Small (1998) states that music teachers are just failed musician therefore, they teach the methods they do based on learning experience, I see this more often than not. The old saying, those who can't teach, teach gym also relates to this. Too many teachers who are capable musicians have not mastered their craft in such a way that can transfer to their classroom. This deprives students of what they can and should learn. Teachers must be musicians or else students will not fully grow to know the "what" involved in their education or how to grow beyond what is on the page. A musician must be capable of playing their instrument, at a high-level mind you, before they can be able to find the emotional values music offers.

Music lies within all humans, it is an activity, which is something Small (Wade 2018) claims. Based on this belief, I couldn't agree more with that at a young age, music is something that surrounds ever individual. Exposure to all styles, genres, or idioms of music is where we find difference. The music culturally based in Africa is widely different than Scotland. All musicians should be exposed to a variety of music to better equip them with the tools needed to be great musicians. Not everyone will like the same music however knowing a variety of music

affords musicians a wider range of creative expression. What makes amazing musicians are those that can incorporate so many ideas into a refined and purposeful product.

I am firm believer that music is a very critical form of art. We as musicians are our biggest critics, however, so is the general public and fellow peers. It is important to remember that the end result is not what the focus should be. In the Western education model, much like small, I have major issues with the precedence placed on what we call “success.” What determines success? In the eyes of critics, success is determined by how well a piece of music is played in terms of accuracy. I disagree that this should be our goal. Of course, music should be played well but by focusing on the journey in the learning of music, the success rate will naturally come rather than be a focus. Too often we are more concerned with achieving the technical demands of a piece to promote success. By doing this, we are sacrificing musical quality.

To create a society full of contributing members that possess creativity and discipline that fines our cultures and traditions, we music first and foremost take students on a journey where they can be exposed to developing discipline and strong values as well as creativity. Music is about the journey as it affords subject matter that encompass all of these goals. Without music education, we can still achieve this however it comes at a much different rate. Creativity in a subject that relies on the empirical does not truly offer creative learning. Maybe in its methods, but not in its product. Discipline and strong values are generated through the process of learning music, which again, is something we all can and should learn. The art of honing a craft fosters discipline and when properly executed, it is apparent in the end result.

How My Philosophy Informs My Teaching

It is important to understand that while having an end goal is important, the journey is what makes it achievable. Backwards planning is a must in knowing how to progress the classroom to the goals set. While that is all important, I am deeply rooted in how the quality of life my students are shown with their participation in the band enhances their lives. Music is the medium used to make better, well-rounded human beings in my class. Assessments are more for developing the love of music for my students and not to make place holders or benchmarks on the success of individuals. Music is something to be experienced especially as the creators. Quality over quantity will always be at the forefront of my methods, pedagogy, and approach in giving my students the very best I have to offer.

Chapter 2 - Lesson Plan

2014 Music Standards Addressed

MU: Cr3.1.6a - Evaluate their own work, applying teacher-provided criteria such as application of selected elements of music, and use of sound sources (2014).

MU: Pr5.1.6a Identify and apply teacher-provided criteria (such as correct interpretation of notation, technical accuracy, originality, and interest) to rehearse, refine, and determine when a piece is ready to perform (2014).

MU: Pr6.1.6b Demonstrate performance decorum (such as stage presence, attire, and behavior) and audience etiquette appropriate for venue and purpose (2014).

Prior Knowledge/Skills

Students will have very little to no prior knowledge or skills.

Lesson Objective(s)

To create a buzz on a trumpet mouthpiece with a steady sound.

Assessment of the Lesson

I will view students in the areas of posture, breathing, embouchure, and pitch production. Feedback will be provided to the student through response videos or zoom conferencing.

Relevant Contextual Factors and Needed Modifications/Accommodations

Students will need to display proper posture, breathing and buzzing so they are able to create a steady long tone on the trumpet.

Instructional Resources, Materials and Technologies

Metronome, Mouthpiece, Coffee Straw

Lesson Sequence

Entry Activity/Warm-Up: Sitting properly with good posture while staying relaxed and free of tension.

Activity #1 Objective: Metered Breathing

1. Step 1 – Deep Breaths
 - a. Student will take a deep breath in through the mouth while saying the word “HOW”
 - b. Student will exhale as if they are attempting to “Fog a window”
 - i. This opens the oral cavity and allows for maximum inhalation
 - ii. If done correctly student will feel the sensation of a yawn
 1. Refer to video for example
2. Step 2 – Setting the Tempo
 - a. Student will set metronome to quarter note equals 80
3. Step 3 – Metered Breathing
 - a. While tapping the toe student will breathe in and out using four counts for each
 - b. This will be done while using the inhale word “HOW” and exhaling imitating the concept of “Fogging up a window”

Assessment: Student will be instructed self-reflect and describe how their breathing felt. If the student recognizes that there is tension, review methods of relaxing while breathing. If student is unaware, provide feedback of where the tension begins to take place and begin correcting to achieve relaxed breathing.

Activity #2: Creating an embouchure

1. Step 1 – Finding the embouchure
 - a. Student will make the sound of the letter M
 - i. Student can also think of the idea of saying “Mmmm” which reflects the sound they would make if something tastes good.
 - b. Lips should be together and slightly rolled in and feel natural
 - c. Teeth should not be touching
2. Step 2 – Using the coffee straw to find the aperture
 - a. Student will insert a portion of the coffee stirrer in their mouth
 - b. Inhale using “HOW”
 - c. Sound the letter M closing the lips around the coffee stirrer
 - d. Exhale through the stirrer

Assessment: Monitor how the student pronounces the letter M to ensure that it is not exaggerated in that the lips are rolled to far in. Continue to reinforce the use of the word “HOW” on the inhale.

Activity #3: - The buzz

1. Step 1 – Student will form their embouchure using the appropriate syllable “M”
2. Step 2 – Student will hold their mouthpiece with their non-dominant hand using their thumb and index finger at the in of the mouthpiece shank.
 - a. This is to avoid using too much pressure.
3. Step 4 – Insert the coffee stirrer into the mouthpiece
4. Step 5 – Student will take a proper inhalation
5. Step 6 – Student will lick their lips
6. Step 7 – Student will now form embouchure around coffee stirrer using the “M” syllable pressing their lips firmly against the mouthpiece rim

7. Step 8 – Student will begin blowing air through stirrer and then pull the stirrer through the mouthpiece with their available hand.
 - a. The buzz should be engaged instantly as the coffee stirrer dictates the aperture for the buzz to occur
8. Step 9 – Repeat Steps 4 through 8 as needed to ensure student can create a buzz
9. Step 10 – Have student try to buzz without the aid of the coffee stirrer.

Assessment: Ensure the student is making the appropriate sounds for the form of the embouchure. When the buzz is initiated, monitor if the student is using too much pressure or not enough. Too much pressure results in a lack of buzz whereas not enough will generate an unfocused buzz. Students will reflect on what they feel they do and do not understand as well as if they are achieving an appropriate embouchure and buzz. Probe students to find the answers themselves when they are not fully understanding before just giving them the solution. Feedback will be conducted through zoom meetings and video responses until face-to-face instruction can be provided.

This lesson is designed to accomplish two goals. The first is to have a virtual learning opportunity for students when classroom participation is not possible and to afford students a chance to get a head start as they transition into their first year of band. We have recently seen the importance of remote learning due to the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic in the United States and around the world. Virtual classrooms have begun to become a norm due to this pandemic. While teachers have been forced to create virtual classrooms where teaching has occurred through remote access, there is still a benefit that can come to students as they transition to beginning band. The student can get a head

start and come to the first day of class with a general knowledge and foundation of skills for their instrument. This in turn reduces the amount of beginning fundamental teaching as students will be able to go through review phases. This will not eliminate the need for teaching fundamentals from the start as not all students will come to the first day prepared. It will again reduce the amount of instruction spent on these basic skills.

The student will learn the basics in the approach to making their first sounds. This includes proper posture, breathing techniques, and creating a sound. Videos will allow the student to review the standards being established until mastery is achieved. My primary strategy was to create a detailed video of instruction that would allow the student maximum opportunity to understand the basic skills for beginning the trumpet, more specifically the buzz. I used real-time examples in the video through demonstration to accurately show the process for getting prepared to create an embouchure and then ultimately begin making a buzz. Assessments were informally focused where I would either view the student through a zoom meeting recreating what they learned in the instructional video and giving immediate feedback or viewing a recorded video the student sent me and giving feedback. Probing the student was also a focus to gain knowledge of what the student did and did not understand.

This type of instruction opened my eyes to how teaching in a virtual environment with beginners can still be achieved. It is also a huge benefit to have a video library that students can reflect upon when honing these basic skills in the beginning process. The videos can be re-recorded and adapted to all learning styles. As new ideas and concepts come up, I can make new videos to reflect those ideas I have learned to better my students. Each student will be afforded the opportunity to begin learning prior to entering

the classroom. This will enhance motivation as well among my students as they will be excited to show up the first day of classes be it in person or through video conferencing and show off what they have achieved.

Chapter 3 - Reflections

As an active-duty soldier in the US Army, I did not know that it would be achievable to work towards a master's degree. Through the summer online graduate program I was able to achieve this. I have learned a great deal about myself as well as better ways to enhance learning for my students once my time in the Army ends and I can return to the classroom. The style and format of the classes as well as the faculty allowed for gainful improvement in many areas for me such as planning, organizing, pedagogy, and research.

Since beginning at Kansas State, the growth of the aforementioned areas has been superior. Each class has served a purpose in those enhancements. From the beginning, I found that my prior knowledge was sufficient, but there was more to what my overall thought process and facilitation of methods lacked.

Organization is something I have always taken pride in myself as displaying. The ability to plan and facilitate instruction was not necessarily my strong suite however was not a weakness. A weakness I do however have, is score study. The Literature Analysis and Advanced Instrumental Conducting course really lessened the intimidation and anxiety I experience in score study. The approach Dr. Tracz uses in diagrams made this process much less daunting and actually enjoyable. Creating a road map that would allow a quick reference guide through a rehearsal affords more teaching opportunities for my students. Studying more works of music that would generally intimidate me to consider for my students was reversed through these classes. I developed the, "it is too hard for them," or "this is over my head" mentality, which was a disservice to myself and most importantly, my students. Intimidation is still imminent; however, I am less likely to shy away from harder grade levels of music, now that I have more tools to work with.

Advanced instrumental rehearsal techniques encouraged me to think more outside of the box as well as being more concise to my approach to teaching. The Macro-Micro-Macro concept showed me how to look at the big picture first, break it down into smaller areas of study, and then bringing it all back together in the end. Effective classroom management should not be a reactive approach to the classroom but more proactive. My knowledge and work on how I give students the lesson, my ability to prepare, and my overall strength in conducting are areas I have improved upon. During this class, what really resonated for me was the “K.I.S.S.” and “Communication is the Key” lessons Dr. Tracz taught. Keeping things simple and understandable in addition to communicating your points in as few words as possible was something I had to build on. I talk too much at times and explain more than is needed. The Army likes to use the acronym B.L.U.F which stands for “Bottom Line Up Front.” This method in my daily work life was easily transferable to the K.I.S.S communication style. I am able to understand more in-depth the preparation and execution of instruction in my classroom to get more accomplished with faster results.

The research focused classes along with philosophy and curriculum improved my way of shaping my outlook of how I want to teach along with locating information in multiple forms to assist me in my classroom. When I am not able to find a solution to a problem in my class, I am now more knowledgeable in finding potential solutions in scholarly, peer-reviewed research. Creating my own philosophy gave me the opportunity to reflect on the expectations I want to set for my students, the purpose behind those expectations, and what I them to take away from their participation in a music program. Becoming well-rounded individuals is at the forefront of my classroom. Not all students will continue in music however music will always be a part of them.

Dr. Payne's Curriculum Development and Learning Assessment course drastically improved my way of thinking and preparing my students with a comprehensive approach to the musical expectations of my classroom and how to properly assess students meeting those expectations. Prior to the taking this course, I would write a lesson plan that I felt was substantial in accomplishing weekly goals. While this approach proved effective, it was only sufficient in reaching goals on a day-by-day and/or week-by-week basis. I began to see my band program beginning to stall out. By familiarizing myself more with the National Standards as well as incorporating state standards, I can still write those lessons plans, only now they can be more comprehensive to how I want my students to progress from week to week. This will allow transparency in my program so that my students will have a better understanding of where we currently are, and where we want to be at various points of the school year.

Taking a music arranging course was not something I expected to take as a graduate student as I took a similar course in my undergraduate. I arranged stands tunes for my marching band in addition to purchasing music from year to year. I am now able to take a piece that does not match the instrumentation of my ensemble and arrange it to better suite them. I was challenged to incorporate modern techniques such as tritone substitution, polytonal motives, and parallel motion. This enhanced my arranging and made my interpretations of my arrangement much more interesting. The use of these techniques in may arranging will afford my students to grow in ear training and enhancing their tuning on an individual basis.

I have developed a stronger understanding of what being a better teacher after attending the master's program at Kansas State University. The tools that I have placed in my toolbox have enhanced my way of thinking as well as prepare me to bring a better musical experience to my students. I will be a more effective band director in my planning and facilitation of instruction.

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