



Kjos Band News

NEWS AND INFORMATION FOR BAND EDUCATORS

Welcome to Kjos Band News

Greetings! Welcome to the first edition of *Kjos Band News*. *Kjos Band News* will be distributed twice each year, once in the Spring and the other in the Autumn. Because the Neil A. Kjos Music Company is committed to the support of quality music education, *Kjos Band News* will provide articles, suggestions, and teaching tips from leading educators, composers, and conductors from around the world. Each issue will contain selected and varied articles regarding wood-

wind, brass, and percussion pedagogy and performance. Additionally, composers will be spotlighted and suggestions will be given to strengthen and support your band program. If you have specific topics you would like discussed, please contact:

Kjos Band News
Neil A. Kjos Music Company
4380 Jutland Drive
San Diego, CA 92117

Teaching the Flute Embouchure

by Bruce Pearson

When I began playing flute as a woodwind “doubler,” I assumed that making and teaching the flute embouchure would be easy. It came easily for me so it should come easily for everyone. Right?

Wrong! After observing literally thousands of young flutists, producing a good flute embouchure and consequently a good tone and intonation can be a challenge for some students and teachers.

To assist the students in forming and developing their flute embouchure, have each flute student be responsible for providing a small mirror that is to be placed on the students music stand. This will help the students to see that their embouchure is being formed properly.

To ensure a good formation of the embouchure have the students do the following:

Without the flute head joint

1. To aid in the development of jaw flexibility, bend your arm at the elbow. Hold the arm so that the arm from shoulder to elbow is parallel to the floor and elbow to hand is

perpendicular to the floor. Take a full breath and expel the air up and down the arm, without moving your head. By projecting the jaw slightly outward, the air stream will rise.



2. With the lips in a natural closed position have the students draw the corners of their mouth into a gentle smile. The lips should remain closed.

3. Place the index finger horizontally on

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the lip as if it were a flute.

4. Take a full inhale and expel the air, whispering “tu”.



With the flute head joint

5. Place the inner edge of the “blow hole” on the lower lip where the wet and dry part of the lip meet. The lower lip should remain soft and should cover approximately $\frac{1}{3}$ of the blow hole. Check it with the mirror.



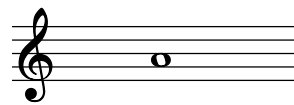
6. Using the mirror, check to see that, when expelling air, the opening in the lips (aperture) is centered in on the blow hole. Adjust, if necessary. Another way of checking to see if the embouchure is centered is to look to see that there is a compact “triangle of condensation” centered on the opposite side of the embouchure plate as your lips.

7. Roll the head joint in or out to create the best tone. The tone is created by splitting the air stream with the opposite side of the blow hole.

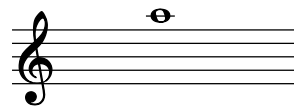
If the embouchure is formed properly and the end plug is



adjusted properly, you should play the following with a closed head:



You should play the following note on an open head joint:



To aid in the development of the embouchure, have the students learn to play *Merrily, We Roll Along* and other three-note songs by inserting their right index finger in the end of the head joint.



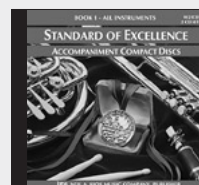
By following these simple steps, students will learn to form a good flute embouchure that will be important in the development of a beautiful flute tone.

Bruce Pearson is an internationally known author, composer, clinician, and conductor. He has taught at the elementary, junior high, high school, and college levels for thirty years. In December of 1998 Bruce was awarded the prestigious Midwest Clinic Medal of Honor in recognition of his outstanding contribution to music education.

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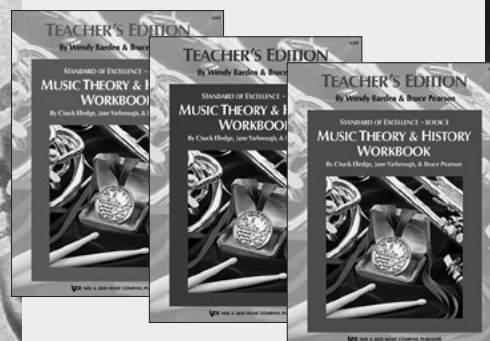
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Connecting Classroom and Instrumental Music Instruction: an Unbridgeable Schism?

by Bruce Gleason, Ph.D.

My first job in rural Kennedy, Minnesota in public school music consisted of teaching classroom music K-7, elementary band, junior high band, junior high choir, high school band, high school choir and jazz ensemble (I was also a substitute bus driver and the assistant speech coach).

The best part of this situation resulted in departmental faculty meetings—I was the only one there! While the work in this capacity was considerable, the experience was invaluable. Rather than guessing what my beginning instrumentalists knew about pitch, rhythm, dynamics, etc. (or being upset with their lack of knowledge and the training they had received), I knew what they had been taught in their classroom music experiences because I had been the teacher. If I wanted students to understand 1) a counting system before fifth-grade band, 2) that note placement on a staff indicates the pitch of the sound, and 3) that pitch has to do with what is in the mind and the audible sound rather than the placement of fingers on an instrument, it was up to me to teach them before they got to me!

I use this example to introduce this column, “Connecting Classroom and Instrumental Music Instruction.” Each issue will bring suggestions on how to connect the various aspects of what a student may have received from several different sources. With increased interest in the music teaching approaches of Orff, Kodaly, and Dalcroze an increasing number of instrumental teachers are hopeful that their beginning students will

have some kind of grounding in music literacy before they begin instrumental instruction.

Ann Kay, veteran classroom music teacher and director of the graduate Kodaly program at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota says: “Zoltan Kodaly suggested that the ear, eye, heart and hand should develop in equilibrium, not one before the other. Unfortunately, for decades most students have been pushed to place most emphasis on the eye, resulting in what Bobby McFerrin refers to as ‘paper trained’ musicians. Suzuki instruction often over-emphasizes the ear which causes many students to struggle with notation. Other students are so over-trained technically (the hand), that they seem not to be able to attend to, nor hear the subtleties of shading and nuance of tone that create artistry, (the heart). It appears that balance is the key.”

Balance is indeed the key, and perhaps the best way of achieving this is for instrumental teachers to communicate and effectively connect with classroom music teachers.

Talk about mutual goals for students. What should students know and be able to do by the time they are of band/orchestra age? Guiding the dialogue should be ideas of what is best for all students—not just the select ones.

Students will be faced with plenty of new information when they get an instrument in their hands. Don’t start from ground zero if you don’t have to. Review and reinforce the musical con-

cepts students have learned in classroom music. Transfer what students know to what is being taught in elementary band and orchestra.

If you have a counting system that you prefer, show students how it relates to the one they already know (or use the one they know!). Does the elementary classroom music teacher know what counting system her/his students will use in your class? She/he may be able to prepare students better if you’ve effectively shared this information. Students can say both “tah, tee-tee” and count “one, two and,” in both classroom and instrumental lessons. Build on what students know, and encourage the classroom music teacher to prepare students for the next chapter of their musical journey.

Many of you have plenty of experiences in connecting classroom music with instrumental instruction. In addition to my comments and ideas, we would like to gather information from you for future issues of the *Kjos Band News*.

Send your comments to:

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Neil A. Kjos Music Company
4380 Jutland Drive
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Dr. Bruce Gleason is an assistant professor of graduate music education at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota where he teaches courses in music education and advises graduate research. His current research areas include comprehensive musicianship and band history.

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Yes, He Really Can Carry a Tune

by Dean Sorenson

Since the release of the **Standard of Excellence Jazz Ensemble Method**, I have taken a healthy amount of good-natured ribbing over the quality, or lack thereof, of my singing. Many directors and students have expressed confusion to me that the examples I sing in the rhythm studies are “non-pitched”, despite the exercises being notated at specific pitches in the books. I would like to clarify the situation, and attempt to convince everyone that I really can sing a tune if I want to!

There are different goals that we hope to achieve by using singing or vocalization as an instrumental rehearsal technique. One goal involves training students’ ears to hear the harmonies or melodies they will be playing. If this is the goal it is obvious that students must adhere strictly to correct pitches. A different goal is to teach rhythmic accuracy and consistent articulation. Since pitch is not a part of this second goal, it is not necessary to worry about it when singing exercises like the rhythm studies. It is better for the students to concentrate on getting the rhythms and articulations correct, without worrying about the pitch at all. Singing the rhythm is a great help in internalizing the “feel” of the rhythm, and singing actual pitches

can hinder this process. In rehearsing a piece I will have students sing their parts for 8 or 16 bars at a time. These parts are, more often than not, out of the students vocal range. Another potential problem is that jazz ensemble parts, especially inner parts, can be very difficult to sing from a melodic perspective. By omitting the worry about singing correct pitches students concentrate on rhythm and articulation and can get comfortable with those aspects before they even put the horn to their face. Training students to “feel” rhythms in this way improves their ensemble playing as well as their sight reading.

Early on in the process of creating the method, we decided that we would notate the rhythms using pitches rather than other common forms of non-pitched notation, such as “X” noteheads or parenthesized noteheads. The reason is clarity on the page. We thought these alternative forms of articulation were difficult to read and hard on the eyes. We thought we would do better by writing it in the easiest way possible to read, and demonstrate on the CD how the exercise was supposed to sound. While there is nothing wrong with singing the exercises at their written pitches (they are all in unison after all), students will be more comfortable rhythmically if they concentrate solely on the rhythms and articulations.

ically if they concentrate solely on the rhythms and articulations.

In recording the exercises I wanted to provide as accurate an example as I could on the CD, thus the “non-pitched” wonder. Students who are self conscious about it can rely on the safety of the herd. They should be reminded that they will never be heard individually, only as a group, and they should always strive to emulate the RHYTHMIC feel of the singing when the time comes to play their instruments.

Which brings us to the final sentence in the opening paragraph: Can I really sing a tune? Put it this way, I have been a professional trombonist all my adult life and have been hired by countless bandleaders and contractors. The only person who ever hired me as a singer was Bruce Pearson.

Dean Sorenson
School of Music
University of Minnesota

Dean Sorenson is a prolific and highly sought after composer, trombonist, and clinician. He holds degrees from the University of Minnesota and the Eastman School of Music and was recently appointed Interim Director of Jazz Studies and Performance at the University of Minnesota-Minneapolis.

Users of the **Standard of Excellence Jazz Ensemble Method** have asked for additional “licks” that can be used with the charts in the method. In this column, we will, from time to time, provide more “licks” that can be used with the charts. Of course, the licks will need to be transposed for each instrument. This, incidentally, is a skill the students should learn. The following are some of those additional licks:

Kjos Band News – Supplemental Licks

CONCERT B \flat BLUES - JAMMIN WITH CHARLIE



CONCERT F MIXOLYDIAN - RIVER RAT SHUFFLE

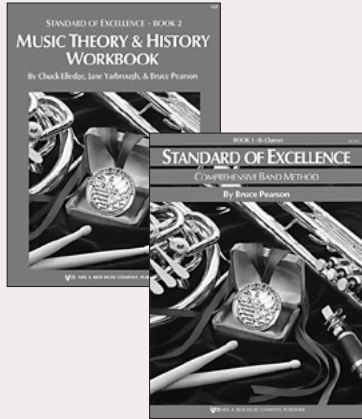


CONCERT F BLUES - MY DINNER WITH RONALD



CONCERT D DORIAN - UNCLE MILO'S SIDE SHOW





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Recruiting: The Ongoing Process – Part One

by Bruce Pearson

Each year band directors are faced with the challenge of recruiting students into their ensembles. This recruiting should not be only for new members, but wise directors understand the importance of “recruiting” existing members into their ensembles for the following school year. The Gemeinhardt, Inc. Company has researched why or why not students participate, stay in, or drop out of the band programs. While there are many reasons, those that can be affected by the band director can be grouped into four categories:

1. Public Awareness
2. Program Administration
3. Communication
4. Teaching Strategies

In this issue of *Kjos Band News*, public awareness will be examined.

A vital band program must have high visibility. Students will want to participate in a group where they are noticed and their efforts acknowledged. The following are proven activities that will help in “Recruiting: The Ongoing Process”:

1. Prepare a video of your “satisfied customers” (band students) and play the video to the new students that are being recruited.
2. Organize a “Super Recruiter” contest to see who can recruit the most new students for next year’s band.
3. Display pictures of “celebrities” with music testimonials.
4. Have high school band members speak to the “recruits” to express the value of participating in band.

5. Have the beginning band play a concert for the entire school and talk about each instrument.
6. Play a demonstration concert for the Parent Teacher Association at the start of the school year (**First Concert: A Demonstration Concert** by Bruce Pearson will be published for this purpose by the Neil A. Kjos Music Company).
7. Develop a Band Booster Newsletter.
8. Write articles, including pictures, for your local newspaper about band activities.
9. Produce a “Band-O-Rama” Concert where all band members in your community participate first in their separate bands. Conclude with a massed band selection. **Ode to Joy** arranged by Robert Longfield and published by the Neil A. Kjos Music Company was written for this purpose. It is an arrangement of the famous Beethoven theme written at three difficulty levels, Grade 1, 2, and 3. Using this piece allows all the band students the opportunity to play at the same time while at their appropriate level of difficulty.
10. Be mindful of recruiting balanced instrumentation: Recruit “leaders” on every instrument.

Using these ideas will increase the public awareness of the band program in your community. If you have additional ideas that you want to share with your colleagues, send those ideas to *Kjos Band News*.

*For a complete listing of Kjos band publications please visit our website:
www.kjos.com*

A Global Perspective

by Ralph Hultgren

“It doesn't sound American!”

Thus began a most interesting discussion with a band director at the Midwest Clinic a few years ago. He had picked up a CD of Australian band music and he had come back to give me his evaluation.

“It doesn't sound American!” I was pleased. The last thing a composer wants is to be stereotyped and to be culturally stereotyped could be even worse on our growing global environment.

“Thank you,” I said with a satisfied smile.

“I said,” he replied more gruffly. “It doesn't sound American!”

It was obvious Mr. Band Director was not pleased with the results of his investigation of Australian repertoire and had decided to let me know of its shortcomings. As always I am interested to know how to improve my work. I asked him to tell me what he meant. How had the works fallen short of, what I thought was, his artistic benchmark.

“It just doesn't sound American. It doesn't sound like an American band should sound”.

Ahh. I had it! The band on the CD didn't sound American! That was good too. It was my university group doing one of those “read it and weep” publisher recording sessions.

Sadly, I was wrong. After a few more minutes I ascertained that Mr. Band Director was really annoyed that I could expect him to play music that didn't sound like he expected it to sound. That's interesting! I have often heard my band play music that didn't sound like I expected it to sound! He obviously had in his mind what band music would sound like and that was what he had become used to in school, college, and now as a teacher.

Are we all in that situation? Do we all have the opportunity to look into “that” mirror of our own professional development and ask ourselves what we expect of ourselves as conductors/teach-

ers before we consider what the score should sound like?

Maybe I am approaching the Mr. Band Directors the wrong way? Maybe I should try to write American music? Maybe I should ensure the level of my understanding of the medium is at least that of an American band director before I attempt to have my work accepted in the USA?

Maybe, but what is most important is that we must acquaint ourselves with the background to composers' works before we attempt to ‘hear’ them and rehearse them. Battisti and Garofalo, in **A Guide to Score Study for the Wind Band Conductor**, suggest that there are four principal areas of score study that must be undertaken to be effective on the podium, in rehearsal. They are:

Orientation — An overview of the physical score and its background.

Reading — A general perusal of the score.

Analysis — What we have all done in our tertiary study!

Interpretation — The nexus of the other three areas where we have the decisions on how we will bring the score back to life.

I would like to present some subjective ideas to those four areas over the next few editions of this newsletter, but here I would like to consider the first component, **Interpretation**.

As we have seen above, we can have quite a subjective idea of what the best works are for our group and we can be constrained in that by not having a more informed perspective. In considering a global perspective I am not suggesting that this article covers how to select repertoire from around the world but that, when we have chosen the works that engage us, how to become more intimate with them before we put them in front of those in our charge. What we give them to play becomes their benchmark and it is beholden on us to ensure that

we place the selection and utilization of that performance material at the top of our priority list.

So, global perspective. What can that mean in respect to a band score. Well, to follow the model of orientation mentioned above, it would seem that a general understanding of the score structure, the composer, the intent of the work (a program, etc.) may well inform us in respect of its interpretation. I would boldly suggest that that is only the beginning!

Let's revisit Mr. Band Director and see if he can help us.

It doesn't sound American is telling us that he has a sound in his inner ear that is his benchmark. So, we expect that the composer does too! He might, for example, listen to a march and find something in it, like the trio of my march, **Majestic Matilda**, that sounds ‘English’. He hears sounds that resemble something familiar and says to his ensemble that they must play it this way or that. If he interprets a Sousa march he would approach things differently. What is important though is that these distinctions are also obvious at easier levels of music. If the composer has in their ear the sound of the bands they work with or write for, then the sound they write will be influenced by that.

Generally Australians, because of their brass band background, have strong lower brass in our younger bands. I hear separate trombone and baritone lines in my elementary scores. When I write for an Australian publisher I write what I know can be done 8 times out of 10. When I write for an American publication, I have to shift my aural image. It's not only the aural image of orchestration but also the sounds of color and balance and inflection. For example, when I write “>” I mean an accent that is strong and focused but on a note that isn't separated from those around it. When I write “^” I want a note that is not short! We



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think it is because it's used that way in jazz and rock scores that most directors play it short but Bruckner wrote it over whole notes! It is martellato to me: 'to hammer'.

I also haven't developed as a composer with a 'constructed' understanding of what students can 'do' at certain levels of development and so, some of what I ask them to play in my elementary and young band compositions must sound 'different' in the American context because of that lack of 'constructed' knowledge. The sounds I write are also different because the influences are different. I have had colleagues from the USA and Britain say how they can hear Copland and Holst in my work, different opinions of the influence on the same work! When I suggested

that there was Shostakovich and Vaughn-Williams evident as well, they concurred. Therefore, what we (composers) 'hear' in our mind's ear is what the conductor has to work with. It is imperative that the conductor then spends time at the desk and asks themselves what the composer's intent was before they begin work on the podium!

Our ability to analyze and find the 'answers' often detracts from the demand on us to find the 'music'. I believe the compositional process for me is autobiographical and therefore my works are a snapshot of me, or my situation, at a specific time. If that is a valid premise, then the conductor has to become biographer and therefore has to investigate beyond the obvious in the score.

I can understand that the conductor of the 5th grade band has given up on this article already because it's talking about 'major' works. Well, they are correct but the major work is the one you have selected whether it's for 5th grade or the top college band around. My **Symphony for Wind Orchestra** is no more important to me in communicating my message than a Level 1 work like **Grand March, The Australian Land**. They just speak to different audiences. They are as equally well crafted and as equally full of my melodic, harmonic and rhythmic language. The counterpoint that riddles works, like the "Moto Perpetuo" from the Symphony, is also evident in the less demanding repertoire, such as **Beyond the Frontier**.

Given the above, what I am trying to say through my works needs to be understood by the 'biographer' at whatever level they are working. We could well ask ourselves questions like:

Does this melody portray something?

Is this counterpoint a dialogue or an argument?

Does this harmonic clash come from harmonic construction of the consequence of contrapuntal activity? How do I then balance and interpret it?

Is this rhythmic fragment more than just an ostinato? Is it part of the musical narrative?

Do the harmonies represent something other than our understanding allows us to 'know'?

Why doesn't it sound American?

There are more questions than we could possibly answer here. I am hoping we could go on to other parts of the preparation of the score next time. Maybe there are more areas to be considered here. I do know that what we are considering here are global perspectives in score study in theoretical, musical, and geographical ways. We must approach what we prepare for the youngest players with the same commitment to understanding our behalf as we do at the highest levels we work at.

Ralph Hultgren is Director of the Wind Symphony at Queensland University of Technology in Brisbane, Australia, and lectures there in Conducting, Arranging and Instrumental Music Curriculum.

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A + E = T

by Bruce Pearson

No, this article will not rival Einstein's Theory of Relativity ($E=MC^2$). For the wind instrument player, however, $A + E = T$ may be more relevant. Simply stated, A (Air) + E (Embouchure) = T (Tone). Tone quality on a musical wind instrument is determined by two major factors: air (speed and direction),

Posture

1. Sit on the edge of their chair so that they feel as though they are standing. This will require the students to have some of their weight on their feet. Their body should feel relaxed.
2. Have chin parallel to the floor.

as if making a low-pitched "ah".

- B. Inhale (silently) the word "how".
- C. While making an embouchure, hold your index finger under your nose.



and embouchure. In this issue of *Kjos Band News*, we've examined the flute embouchure (and will address other wind instrument embouchures in subsequent issues). Now let's examine air.

In addition to tone quality, air support dramatically affects intonation, articulation, range, and endurance. If there is a deficiency in any one of these areas, the first place to look for the source of the problem is air support. Air speed and direction is controlled by:

1. posture
2. inhale
3. exhale

To ensure that good air support is achieved, have the students do the following:

3. Elbows should be at a 45° angle to the body.

Inhale

1. Throat should be relaxed with a large oral cavity. This can best be achieved by duplicating a yawn.
2. Place left hand on stomach and the right hand (with thumb forward) over the kidney area. Tell the students that this is the area of their body that should expand if they are breathing correctly.
3. All inhale techniques should be in the context of playing their instrument. Here are three different ways to teach correct breathing:

- A. Without making a sound, inhale through the mouth

Exhale

Most inexperienced wind instrument players play their instruments with insufficient air speed that is poorly focused. To correct this problem, have the students draw a target on a small piece of paper ($4 \frac{1}{4}'' \times 5 \frac{1}{2}''$) and after inhaling have them blow at the paper and hit the center of the target.

To motivate students and to discover which students are using their air (inhale and exhale) properly have a contest where students blow at the target to move the paper from a vertical position to a horizontal position and hold it in that position the longest time. The winner(s) is usually the student who is inhaling and exhaling properly.

STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE

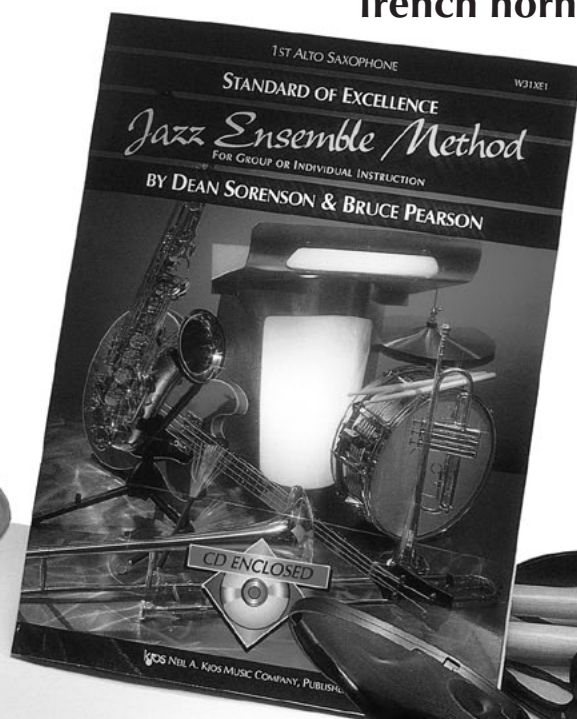
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