



Kjos Band News

NEWS AND INFORMATION FOR BAND EDUCATORS

Kjos Band News Wants To Support You

The Neil A. Kjos Music Company is committed to the support of quality music education. To assist you, the music educator/band director, *Kjos Band News* will be distributed twice each year providing articles, suggestions, and teaching tips from leading educators, composers, and conductors from around the world.

Each issue will contain selected and varied articles regarding woodwind, brass, and percussion pedagogy. Additional topics will include

rehearsal technique, composer interviews, and instrument repair, to mention a few.

Each reader of *Kjos Band News* has, no doubt, a topic or concern they would like to see examined. To that end, we, at Kjos, are requesting that you send your suggestions to:

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

Teaching The Saxophone Embouchure by Bruce Pearson

No doubt you have heard those old saxophone jokes, like — “What’s the difference between the sound of a saxophone and a lawn mower engine? Answer: You can tune the lawn mower.” Pretty bad, eh!

There must be a reason, however, for all those jokes about the poor tone quality and poor intonation of saxophone playing. In the Spring 2000 issue of *Kjos Band News*, I wrote an article entitled “A + E = T.” In other words, A (Air) + E (Embouchure) = T (Tone). But why have saxophones, in particular, taken the brunt of all those jokes regarding poor tone quality and poor intonation? I believe it is because many saxophone players are not playing with *saxophone* embouchures. Specifically, I believe that many saxophone players are playing with *clarinet* embouchures. This can be easily determined by discovering which pitch they are playing with their mouthpiece only. The pitch that is played on the mouthpiece of single reed instruments will determine the tone quality.

Assist students in forming and developing

their embouchure by having each be responsible for providing a small mirror that can be placed on the music stand. This will allow students to see that their embouchure is being formed properly.

Ensure a good formation of the saxophone embouchure by having each saxophone student do the following:

1. Slip a piece of paper between the reed and the mouthpiece and slide the paper down, away from the tip, until it stops.



2. With a pencil, draw a light line on the reed connecting the two sides of the

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paper. This line will indicate where the lower lip should be placed. Remove the paper.

3. Hold the mouthpiece with one hand and place the tip of the thumb just under the line that was drawn on the reed.



4. Shape the mouth as if saying “whee-too.” Hold the mouth in the “whee” position while saying “too.”



5. Cover the bottom teeth with a small amount of the lower lip.
6. Place the mouthpiece in the mouth so that the lower lip touches the thumb that was placed just below the line that was drawn on the reed. The thumb should serve as a

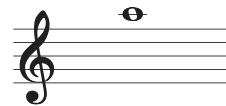


“stop” allowing just the right amount of mouthpiece in the mouth. Too much mouthpiece in the mouth will cause a harsh, raucous tone. Too little mouthpiece in the mouth will cause a constricted or strident tone.

7. Rest the top teeth directly on the mouthpiece. Close the mouth in a drawstring fashion with equal support on all sides of the reed. The chin should be flat and pointed. Using the mirror, check to see that the embouchure is formed properly.
8. Take a deep breath of air (filling the back of the throat) and play a long, steady tone.

If the embouchure is formed properly, the following concert pitches should sound:

Alto Saxophone



Tenor Saxophone



Baritone Saxophone



Many young saxophonists play with a higher pitch resulting in a strident tone. To lower the pitch, have the student relax the embouchure as if saying “O.” To raise the pitch have the student pull the corners of their mouth as if saying “oo.”

To ensure a well-established saxophone embouchure, have the student play long tones daily.

By following these simple steps, students will learn to form a good saxophone embouchure that will be important to the development of a beautiful saxophone tone. It may even put an end to those terrible saxophone jokes.

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 over 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.

BRUCE PEARSON'S STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE COMPREHENSIVE BAND METHOD

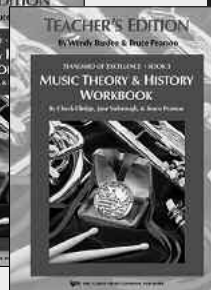
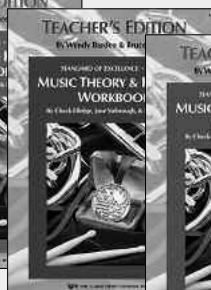
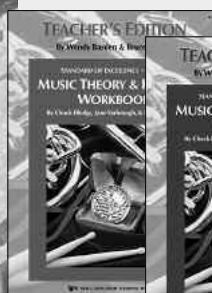
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Back To The Basics

by Dave Hagedorn

While teaching percussion to beginners since 1972, and at the collegiate level since 1979, I have seen percussionists whose basic approach to the instrument has inhibited their progress. Solid and effective percussion concepts can be easily taught by band directors with little or no percussion playing experience. Many of these concepts may seem elementary, but they are the basic building blocks for excellence in percussion performance.

Some concepts which need to be emphasized at all performance levels that I will address in this article are: selecting and setting up the equipment, the proper grip and stroke, and beat subdivision.

Selecting and Setting Up the Equipment

Proper equipment, and adjustment of the equipment, are very important to great percussion playing. It is paramount to have a drum stand that can be adjusted to the proper height. Many snare drum kits come with a snare drum stand that does not allow the drum to be adjusted to the proper height. The rim of the drum should be approximately at the student's belt buckle. I recommend having the drum head flat, parallel to the floor. This ensures that the stick will strike the drum at the proper angle, allowing for rebounding of single strokes, double strokes, and multiple bounces. Since I suggest teaching the matched grip, it is not necessary to slant the drum in the way that was used in the past with the traditional grip. Check the tension of the heads on both sides of the drum. The heads need to be tight enough so that rebounds and bounces are executed easily, and loose enough so that the drum has resonance. Pitches that work well for most 5" to 5½" depth drums are an A on the top or batter head, and a slightly higher pitch on the snare or bottom head. This tuning scheme allows for resonance without the undesired ring. Page 604 of the **Standard of Excellence Conductor's Score, Book 1** provides some very helpful suggestions regarding the tuning of drums.

Many beginners use sticks that are not large enough. Ironically, it is easier to use a stick that has weight and a large diameter (such as a size 2B) for playing soft passages as well as loud passages. Using a small stick (such as a 7A) makes smooth rolling difficult because there is not enough mass to produce a good bounce—either double stroke or multiple bounce. When selecting sticks make certain that both sticks are straight. This can be tested by rolling the sticks across a flat surface. Sticks that are warped should be rejected or discarded.

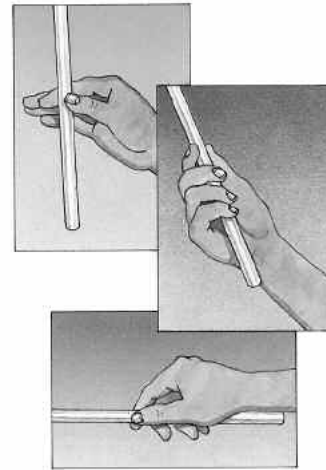
The Proper Grip and Stroke

In my teaching I see many correct and incorrect ways of gripping the sticks. A good grip should allow for the student's hands to be relaxed with fingers and wrists having no stress.

I suggest that you start by teaching the matched grip because both hands do exactly the same thing and it is the basic grip for most percussion instruments. The traditional grip is effective but more difficult to teach and more difficult for a beginning student to master.

Pay close attention to the diagrams on pages 2 and 3 of **Standard of Excellence – Drums & Mallet Percussion, Book 1**. These diagrams are good models of the grip.

Standard of Excellence – Drums & Mallet Percussion, Book 1, p.2 Drums



I teach the grip by having the stick touch the pad of the thumb, the crease of the first joint of the index finger, and the middle pad of the middle finger. Most beginners do not use enough of the middle finger to control the stick. Consequently, they have problems with more advanced techniques. The student should gently squeeze the stick to have control, but hold it lightly enough in order for the stick to have a natural rebound off the head.

To initiate the stroke, have students follow these steps:

Step 1

Stand about eight inches from the drum with the feet comfortably apart and the student's weight equally placed on each foot. Hold the sticks using the correct grip.

Step 2

Hold the sticks one to two inches above, and almost parallel to the batter head. The sticks should form a 60 degree angle.

Step 3

Using the wrist, raise the tip of the stick six to eight inches above the head. Then, drop the tip of the stick to the head and allow it to bounce off. The stick should strike the head slightly off-center, directly above the snares.

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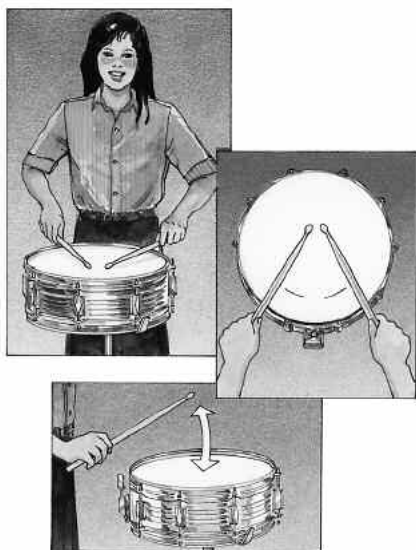
Step 4

To follow immediately with another stroke in the same hand, allow the stick to rebound six to eight inches above the drum head, then play the next stroke. To pause between strokes, allow the stick to rebound to its rest position one to two inches above the drum head (Step 2).

Step 5

When striking the drum, imagine that you are drawing the tone out of the drum.

Standard of Excellence – Drums & Mallet Percussion, Book 1, p.3 Drums



Be certain to initiate the stroke with the wrists and fingers. The elbows and forearms should not be used to initiate the stroke as these are large joints and do not allow for delicate shadings of dynamics and stick control. While **Standard of Excellence** suggests that students “draw the sound out of the drum,” I like to think of hitting up, so that there is a sensation of rebound from the drum head. However you describe it, the student should be discouraged from hitting down into the drum for it creates an unmusical sound and can cause physical problems.

Be sure to emphasize the rebound concept from the very first snare drum lesson, as it will be difficult to correct later. The

stick should have a relaxed but controlled bounce off the head on single strokes, as opposed to a tense stroke into the drum head. Let the stick do the work, not the arms. Make certain that the stroke allows the stick to be “free,” rather than having a feeling that the arms and hands are forcing the stick to make the sounds.

Beat Subdivision

The music of Africa consists of three basic elements: drumming, singing, and dancing. We can use these concepts to make our physical sensation of pulse and groove much stronger. I learned this at a workshop with Ghanaian master drummer Abraham Adzenyah, who teaches at Wesleyan University in New Haven, Connecticut. After the workshop, I realized that these elements can be employed from the very first drum lesson to ensure the development of a strong rhythmic concept.

The drumming element is already being employed as we play the rhythms on the drum. I have found that the second element, singing, is often not stressed enough. The singing consists of counting out loud and subdividing with rhythmic syllables such as 1&2&3&4& or 1e&a2e&a, etc. Any good counting system may be used and will help students to feel and develop the basic parts of the pulse. This also helps students realize where they are having problems with accurate realization of printed rhythms. The third element, dancing, may involve foot-tapping or the hand movements involved in making the stroke. The active body movement helps to coordinate the mind and body to help the student have a physical feeling of the pulse. All three elements should be present for the most effective learning to take place. Drumming, singing, and dance can be incorporated into student studies starting with the quarter note exercises on pages 4, 5, and 6 of **Standard of Excellence**.

Students who follow these suggestions will notice improvement in their performance skills, and will find rehearsals and performances more productive and enjoyable.

Dave Hagedorn is a professional percussionist in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul. He is the percussion instructor at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota.

Twelve Ways To Avoid The Brass Repair Shop

by Robert Baca & John Huth

With ever decreasing budgets and the band director's need to become more efficient, the "I don't know how it happened" avoidable repair can add up to more than a bottle of Tylenol. With a little neglect, or using the wrong method of "band-aid" remedy, small repairs can eat away at the budget, and cause instruments to be missing from rehearsal. To provide some sound advice for students, I asked nationally recognized brass repair expert John Huth to identify the most common problems that eventually guarantee a student's horn a trip to the repair shop. In this issue of *Kjos Band News* we will provide general tips on horn care, and tips for piston instruments. In the next issue we will tackle French horns, rotary valve tubas, and trombones.

GENERAL

Avoid Use Of Super-Glue Or Tapes To Hold A Broken Solder Joint

Glues and tapes only serve to make matters worse and can add cost to a repair. Wrap the broken solder joint generously with dental floss to keep it stable, then take the instrument to the repair shop right away for repair. Generally, the longer you wait to repair a broken solder joint, the more damage the horn sustains and the higher the repair bill.

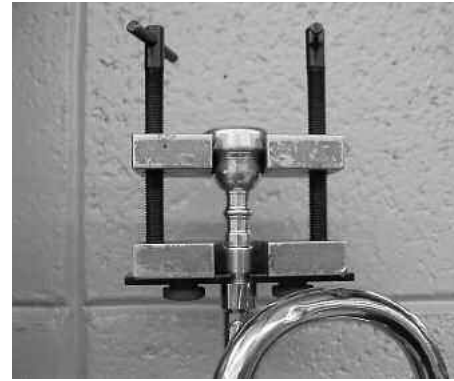


Avoid A Stuck Mouthpiece

Gently twist the mouthpiece into the instrument—avoid bumping it with your palm. If a mouthpiece does get stuck, let the band director or instrument repair shop pull it out. Most shops pull stuck mouthpieces for free. Too often, a well-intentioned parent will grab the stuck mouthpiece with pliers and start twisting, often tearing the entire leadpipe off the instrument. Repair bills for this situation can approach \$100.

Also, be careful to avoid dropping a mouthpiece. After using it always put it back in the mouthpiece holder in the instrument case. A damaged rim and bowl on a mouthpiece will render it useless.

If a mouthpiece cannot fit snug into the receiver, take it to the repair shop—you may need a new receiver or more plating



on the mouthpiece shank. Also, do not put grease or oil on a mouthpiece—it only collects dirt and grime, making it more prone to jamming.

Avoid Using Rubber Bands To Replace Broken Waterkey Springs

Rubber bands contain sulfur—something that will strip both lacquer and silver-plating. Close the waterkey with dental floss and immediately take the instrument to the repair shop for a new spring.

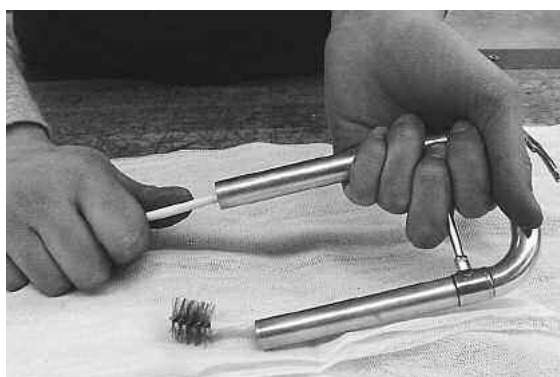
Avoid Using Any Abrasives On Slides, Valves, Or Instrument Finish

This includes sandpaper, scouring pads, cleansers, steel wool or any other abrasive product. All brasswinds need to be as airtight as possible and these abrasives can contribute to leaks that can render an instrument useless. Also, brasswinds are not dishwasher safe — both lacquer and silver plating can be damaged by the scalding hot water and harsh detergents. If the valves, casings and tuning slides are regularly wiped and re-lubricated, you should be fine between chemical cleanings at the repair shop.

Keep The Inside Of The Instrument Clean

At least once a month, using a flexible bore brush (snake), clean out the lead pipe and main tuning slide. Wipe valves and





casings free of debris and re-grease turning slides. Take the horn into the repair shop once a year for chemical cleaning—most quality repair shops have special detergents and acids to remove the lime and scale build-up that cannot be removed at home. It is also a good idea to take care of dent removal and other necessary repairs at that time.

Keep The Instrument Finish Clean

Wipe off the instrument after using it with a soft 100% cotton cloth (T-shirts work well). Perspiration can damage a finish if it's not removed right away. Polishing cloths are okay, but usually contain abrasives that can wear off a finish over time. If you want to use a polishing cloth, use it only once or twice a month.

Carry The Instrument In A Hard Case

Gig bags are okay if you're careful, but hard cases are superior in every way to gig bags. Serious, expensive damage is a common occurrence with gig bags.

PISTON INSTRUMENTS

Oil The Valves Often

Place six drops of valve oil directly on the valves each day the instrument is played.

The following photo shows how to place oil on the valves—this keeps valves clean, prevents corrosion, and fills the space between the piston and casing giving the valve the freedom it needs for those fast passages.



Most valve oils on the market today perform quite well and some of the less expensive oils perform as well as the expensive brands. Synthetic oils, such as Hetman, are also excellent though there is another brand of synthetic oil that causes severe corrosion.

Grease Tuning Slides Once Every Two Weeks

Don't use Vaseline or any other petroleum jelly on tuning slides—they will severely corrode the tubes and contribute to the slide seizing because of the alkaline nature of the product. Use grease supplied by the manufacturers—they are inexpensive, easy to use, and are balanced to avoid corrosion. If a slide does become stuck, it is recommended to take the instrument to the repair shop for pulling (cost between \$10 and \$35). Using rags and mallets to pull stuck slides often results in twisted and bent slides, and much higher repair bills.

In conclusion, simple maintenance tasks like regular lubrication and brushing out the leadpipe and main tuning slide can do wonders for the longevity of an instrument. Always consult the local repair shop if you have questions—repair technicians are your allies in insuring your instrument is playing its best. Also, avoid trying to repair things at home—too often, instruments are damaged well beyond the original problem. Keep this rule in mind when you consider repairing your instrument: If you break it, you pay to fix it; if the repair shop breaks it, they pay to fix it. In the next issue of *Kjos Band News* we will address specific care issues relating to French horns, rotary valve tubas, and trombones.

John Huth has been an instructor in the Band Instrument Repair Program at nationally recognized Minnesota State College-South East Technical (Red Wing) for the past thirteen years. He has presented seminars on brasswind repair and maintenance nationwide and is honored to be a Master Repair Clinician for the National Association of Professional Band Instrument Repair Technicians (NAPBIRT).

Recruiting: The Ongoing Process – Part Three

by Bruce Pearson

Recruiting *and* retaining students in the band program is one of the many, serious concerns for today's band directors. As the name of this article implies, recruiting students for the band program is a continual process where students are encouraged, every year, to continue their music-making. To aid in the retention of band students, the band program should be structured to ensure that students are successful.

The Gemeinhardt Company, Inc. has been actively engaged in research to determine the reasons why band students decide to continue their participation, or alternatively decide to drop out of the band program. The *Gemeinhardt Report 2* specifically addresses why students discontinue their participation in band. While the reasons are many, most can be grouped into four major categories:

1. Public Awareness
2. Program Administration
3. Communication

4. Teaching Strategies

The previous two issues of *Kjos Band News* examined the areas of public awareness and program administration. In this issue, we will consider the third area, communication.

In order for a band program to be strong, there needs to be effective communication with three groups of people: students, parents/guardians, and administrators. Most problems in any given situation can be traced to ineffective communication. Consider every action and every word, written or spoken, as an opportunity to build and strengthen lines of communication. Here are some tips for good communication:

Apply the Basics!

1. Believe that students, parents, and administrators want to know what is happening in your classroom or rehearsal hall.
2. Choose the right time to commu-

nicate. People of differing moods will have a difficult time communicating. Perhaps asking "Is this a good time to talk?" will help.

Focus on the Presentation:

Communication is 90% delivery, 10% Message

1. First impressions are critical. Be sure they are always positive!

2. Be aware of body language; non-verbals usually reflect the true message more accurately than words.

3. Plan and practice presentation, especially any comments to be made at concerts. Be sure to pronounce names correctly.

4. Attend to the details in preparing written information. Proofread carefully, and in particular, spell names correctly.

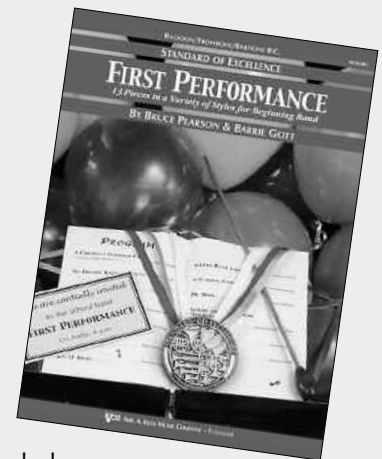
5. Be sure information is timely, accurate, and frequent.

6. Apologize immediately and sincerely when in error.

STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE FIRST PERFORMANCE BY BRUCE PEARSON & BARRIE GOTT

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A Can't-Miss Favorite for First-Year Students!

Be An Active Listener

1. Give the speaker your undivided attention.
2. Maintain good eye contact. React to statements with a nod, a smile, a frown, or some other small movement.
3. Paraphrase the speaker's points and comments to be sure that what is being said is accurate.

It's important when communicating that you know your audience, their needs, and their interests. As stated previously, timing is very important. Students and their parents/guardians should receive much of the following information before the student begins participation in the band program. Let's look at some of the things that should be communicated to students, parents, and administrators:

Students:

1. Students need to know the time commitment that is required, from when they begin until when they graduate.
2. Potential conflicts with other school activities and classes.
3. Stress the importance "that anything worth doing is worth doing well." This, however, requires commitment to time and commitment to excellence.
4. Your expectations regarding practicing, attendance, and classroom procedures.
5. The value of music.
6. Students need encouragement—not ridicule. Try to encourage them in something everyday.
7. Praise them in public but discipline them privately.
8. Get to know each student as an individual and let them know you are interested in their other activities.
9. Students should receive a copy of the band program's yearly schedule.

Parents/Guardians:

1. It is equally important that parents/guardians understand the time commitment required in the band program

from beginning to end. Don't forget that, in most cases, they will be driving the students to special rehearsals and concerts.

2. Their role in their child's music education. Parents should provide encouragement, listen to their child's practicing, and attend their child's concerts.

3. If necessary provide the necessary equipment and materials. This may include "step-up" instruments, special mouthpieces, reeds, valve oil, ligatures, etude and solo repertoire, uniform rental or cleaning, and tour expenses.

4. The value of music. You will probably need to supply this information to the parents/guardians.

5. Parents/guardians should receive a copy of the band program's yearly schedule.

Administrators:

1. Your personal philosophy of music education. Make administrators aware that administrating a music program requires discretionary decisions that carefully balance the educational needs of students, and the public's entertainment needs.

2. Provide a copy of your curriculum. This should demonstrate that music is a curricular discipline with academic integrity. Emphasize the teaching of comprehensive musicianship. This, of course, is the thrust of the National Standards for Arts Education.

3. Share the good news of students' achievements.

4. Administrators should receive a copy of the band program's yearly schedule.

5. The value of music. You may need to supply your administrator with this information.

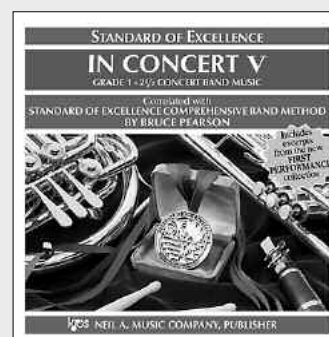
Effective communication is an essential component of a quality band program. Putting these suggestions into practice will break down many of the barriers to student participation in band and will reduce the number of drop-outs. Recruiting is an ongoing process.

STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE IN CONCERT V



12 New Grade 1–2½ Concert Band Pieces by:

- ◆ Bruce Pearson
- ◆ Bob Cotter
- ◆ Chuck Elledge
- ◆ Barrie Gott
- ◆ William Himes
- ◆ Steve Hommel
- ◆ Ralph Hultgren
- ◆ Dean Sorenson



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Building Listening Skills In The Band

Articulation – Part I

by Richard Williams & Jeff King

Why This Is Important

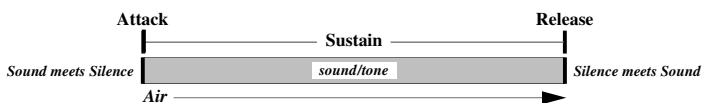
Characteristic tone, articulation, intonation, precision, and balance are fundamental qualities that are evident in all great musical performances. As band directors, our goal is to develop a teaching method that advances our students' understanding, awareness, and performance skills in regards to these five fundamental goals.

Articulation is how musicians speak through their horns. The ability of an ensemble to match articulation allows the performers to communicate each musical thought with clarity. In working on articulation with students, band directors should have several goals in mind:

1. Build a common concept and vocabulary.
2. Enable students to ultimately take responsibility for articulation.
3. Develop daily drills to advance articulation skills.
4. Apply concepts to every aspect of the rehearsal and band literature.

Common Concept and Vocabulary

Even though many people are visual learners, musical concepts must be demonstrated or verbalized to be understood. What does a resonant, beautifully articulated, full-value note really look like? Granted, we can't see it, but we know a good one when we hear it. A descriptive vocabulary that is consistent, simple, and "to the point," combined with the following block-shape graphic may help your students relate to attack-sustain-release principles.



An **attack** is the beginning of the note — it is the point at which air is released into the horn, and the beginning of vibration. The goal is to produce a resonant, vibrant, instant sound. In order to achieve instant sound, students must have a basic understanding of sound and vibration. Brass instruments create tone through lip vibration; double reeds, clarinets, and saxophones through vibrations of the reed(s); and flutes create vibration by splitting the air stream on the outer edge of the blowhole. Students must constantly be reminded that their goal is to maximize the vibration process on their instrument. They must also understand that the enemy of vibration is tension. To eliminate excessive tension in the sound, directors must insist on proper playing position. This position will promote a relaxed, yet full intake of air, and an unobstructed release of the air into the instrument.

Proper inhalation and exhalation is essential in creating "instant sound." One can almost predict the quality of the tone based on the quality of the breath. A deep, relaxed sounding breath will be more likely to produce a resonant sound. Additionally, in order to "line up" the attack, the ensemble should strive to breathe together. A great way to reinforce this concept is to start a note or exercise by having the ensemble watch your breath and attack. Can they breathe with you and start together without being cued by the director's hands or baton?

When starting a note, every student must also be aware of the articulation syllable to be used. Directors have many choices in this regard: TAH, TU, TEE, DU, DEE, DAH, to list just a few. No matter what syllable is chosen, it must be consistent within each section. It's fine to have the trumpets use one syllable and clarinets another; it's not a good idea to have different articulation syllables being used within the trumpet or clarinet section. Students also need to understand the correct placement of the tongue and point of contact within the mouth or on the reed. Keep in mind that physical characteristics vary from student to student and be prepared to adjust the syllable as necessary. It may also be necessary to change the articulation syllable to execute different styles such as legato or marcato, and adjustments may need to be made for articulated passages in extreme ranges.

Students should be aware of the following attack concepts:

1. Set a relaxed playing and hand position with the first note already fingered before the director begins the countoff or gives the downbeat.
2. Visualize the sound of the breath as well as the sound of the note to be played before the attack.
3. Breathe together with all of the other members of the ensemble — keeping the body still and relaxed (no head or shoulder movement).
4. "Air in" to "air out" with no hold in between.
5. Create instant vibration as the tongue releases air into the instrument with the proper articulation syllable.

The **sustain** of a note is all of the sound that happens after the first instant of attack. Once again, vibration is the key. Relating this concept to the "block-shape" encourages students to keep the sound and pitch uniform. This is accomplished by using a smooth, steady, and directed air stream. Students will need to keep the face and instrument still while maintaining a consistent tongue position and vowel sound in the throat. To achieve a stable tone and pitch during sustained notes, focus on these concepts:

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Warm-Ups & Technique for Band

by Richard Williams & Jeff King



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1. Think of the sound (air) going past the embouchure — too many times, air explodes on the attack and then fails to carry through.
2. Students must know and maintain a consistent vowel sound (controlled by the back of the tongue) and maintain a consistent tongue position (this affects the air speed) throughout the note or exercise.
3. To maintain a resonant sound, the lips, or reeds, must be free to vibrate.
4. Keep the embouchure set, the body tension free, and the instrument still.
5. Visualize a target for the air stream and keep it moving forward.
6. Use the same vocabulary to describe the desired tone: resonant, vibrant, centered. Also describe what to avoid: tight, fuzzy/airy, dull.

A clear, coordinated **release** is often the most overlooked part of this process. This is where the students need to concentrate and listen the most. The goal, as illustrated by the block-shape drawing, is to stop the sound without any change in the tone quality or pitch. Here's a check list for releases:

1. Keep still! Any movement of the embouchure, instrument, or body may affect the sound or the pitch.
2. The air should travel "full speed" to the silence. Many times students anticipate the release by slowing down the air.
3. Maintain the tongue position and the vowel sound at the point of release (this will also stabilize the pitch).
4. Keep all of the chambers open on the release. This includes the teeth/oral cavity and the throat. Also keep the rib cage up and the posture elevated.
5. Line up releases! Stress that a note, followed by a rest, is always held until the first beat of silence.

It's important to state at this point that all notes do not have releases. If you are playing a phrase or exercise that requires a series of notes to be played consecutively, you should stress that the air at the end of the note being played must touch and balance the air of the next note.

The mechanics of articulation outlined in this article focus on fundamental attack-sustain-release principles. Whether we're working on long tones, flexibility exercises, or the march for the next concert, our students need to be aware of the concepts that shape articulation on their instruments. It is important to create time in every rehearsal to focus on posture, playing position, breathing, and quality "starts and stops" to notes and phrases. All of these issues are interconnected and will require consistent reinforcement if the ensemble's sound and clarity are going to improve. In the next issue of *Kjos Band News*, we'll explore matching styles of articulation and rehearsal strategies that will promote the application of these articulation principles to all musical settings.

Richard Williams is a band director in the Ducanville Independent School district, one of the premier band programs in the State of Texas. A graduate of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and the University of North Texas, he currently serves as director of the jazz program and teaches concert band and woodwind classes at the middle school and beginning levels.

Jeff King is a band director in the Ducanville Independent School District. A graduate of Baldwin-Wallace College and Southern Methodist University, he currently serves as director of bands at the Ducanville Ninth Grade School and an assistant band director at Ducanville High School.

Connecting Classroom And Instrumental Music Instruction: Teaching Band Music History And Literature

by Bruce Gleason, Ph.D.

While band students substantially outnumber string students in U.S. public and private schools, an examination of a current college music history textbook shows that within the 805 pages, band history is covered in just three paragraphs. The reasons for this shortage have to do with instrument development and current orchestral dominance in the professional performance world, as well as with band history.

The brass family reached its zenith after the 19th century invention of valves in general, and the advent of the tuba in particular, which finally gave a suitable bass sound to the out-of-doors military band (the Serpent, Russian Bassoon, Sarrousaphone, and Ophecleide had never quite cut it). Similarly, proper intonation and facility didn't come to the woodwind family until Boehm's system of ring and covered open-standing keys was applied. These developments, which came mainly through military circles, are a much different history than that of orchestral stringed instruments, which have remained basically unchanged for 400 years.

It is not my point here to lament the dearth of band topics in music history classes. Rather my aim in highlighting this inequity is to encourage instrumental music teachers to join with their colleagues in elementary music to teach students about the contributions of the Masters to band literature, and provide tips on teaching about transcriptions, genre, and form.

As in previous issues of *Kjos Band News*, I stress the need for positive dialogue between classroom music teachers and instrumental music teachers.

Here are some suggestions for connecting the two curricula:

1. Find out which composers are being studied in elementary music classes, and make suggestions for future

topics. Work to balance band and orchestra topics in elementary music history, which, like undergraduate music history, often focuses exclusively on the development of the orchestra.

2. Teach your students about the differences between bands and orchestras, and the rich heritage of each; point out that many composers wrote for band as well as orchestra. In addition to their orchestral and choral works, agree with your elementary music colleagues to study the wind and percussion works of composers like Beethoven, Mozart, Berlioz, Copland, Gossec, Handel, Holst, Rimsky-Korsakov, and Stravinsky. For example, there are good elementary arrangements of some of Beethoven's dances and marches which he originally wrote for military band, as well as transcriptions of his and others' orchestral works.

By the time students begin elementary band instruction, most of them have heard very little band literature—either recordings or live performances. Work with your elementary music classroom colleagues to develop band awareness before students begin instrumental instruction by developing a listening library of band works to accompany lessons about music literature.

1. Use Holst's two suites for band in conjunction with lessons about the suites of the Baroque period; use Gossec's *Military Symphony in F* for an introduction to symphonic form. It is much shorter than orchestral symphonies and therefore more easily grasped within time limits. In addition, these early French military band works have plenty of interesting political and social history accompanying them.

2. Develop lessons based around march form and the different genres of the quick step, double quick, circus march, funeral marches, and cavalry marches.

3. Connect early American composers like William Billings and his work with vocal music with William Schuman's *Chester*.

4. With the widespread interest in folk songs among Kodaly and Orff-based music classrooms, work with your colleagues in developing lessons that connect folk songs with their band arrangement counterparts: "Airirang" and *Variations on a Korean Folk Song* by John Barnes Chance; many of the works by Percy Grainger and Gustav Holst.

5. Discuss with your students the definition of a transcription and an arrangement. Talk with them about the great military and civilian bands that developed around the turn of the century, and of the shortage of original band music, which necessitated borrowing from the orchestral tradition. The key to basic history instruction is for students to understand that music development came with social development.

A major component of music literature instruction is to call attention to composers during rehearsals. While this sounds basic, it is often overlooked in performance ensemble instruction.

1. Rather than listing pieces by title on the board at the beginning of rehearsals, list the composer, and refer to pieces by the composer during the rehearsal: "The first piece up will be the Sousa." Encourage your elementary music classroom colleagues to do the same. Students learn the composition titles automatically because of the centrality of the larger type. By calling attention to the composer, students will get used to the idea that band and orchestral music doesn't just appear in their folders, and isn't written by the director or the music store or music publishers. They'll learn that humans are creating music for other humans. With your

instruction they'll learn that instruction, preparation, and performance are comprised of tasks to be performed by composers, performers, and audiences alike (you may wish to extend this to include jobs by publishers, music stores, etc.).

2. Give brief synopses (one or two minutes) of composers each day during rehearsals. You may want to plan a regular "Composer's Interlude" to take place in each rehearsal, so students know that a couple of minutes are going to be set aside to learn further about a particular person. Take a look at the **Standard of Excellence Conductor's Scores**, which contain hundreds of brief music history items. Look especially at **Book 3**, which is arranged chronologically according to historical period. This instruction will be most beneficial to students if you're able to add to the instruction they've had in elementary classroom music.

3. Have the band write a collective letter to the composer of a favorite piece. Tell the composer that you like the work and ask him/her how they composed it, what they were thinking about, etc. The key for this is to have students write the letter after the piece has become a favorite, after the piece has attracted the band's collective attention, and after they have claimed some kind of ownership. This approach can be better than a commission for generating enthusiasm among your students because, as in other areas of music education, students learn sound first, and they aren't being "required" to like a piece of music just because they've connected with the composer first. Most composers will be eager to communicate, and a brief note from you may encourage even the busiest of composers to respond to their young fans. This activity will do wonders in generating enthusiasm for music and the composition process.

Another area of literature concerns genre, form, and analysis. Discover together the form and style involved in a march, overture, or air.

1. Teach listening, form, and analysis skills through the rehearsed literature. While some eye training will be inevitable, try to focus on road map kinds of things that students can hear. Train students' ears rather than their eyes. Don't be afraid to quiz certain sections or individuals by having them sit out while they listen to the rest of the ensemble, either with their eyes closed, or following along by watching their individual notation. Begin at a specified point, and ask them about changes and developments in dynamics, tempi, phrases, harmony, unison, etc.

2. Refer to sections of the piece by: transition, bridge, exposition, etc. Instead of measure numbers, tell them that you're starting at the trio, or the legato section. Do your best to not tell them where certain sections are—have them tell you the things that they discover through listening.

3. Have students explain to you the definitions of "songs" and "pieces," and work to remind them of the difference. Students and teachers alike often overlook the concept that songs have texts, and consequently are rarely performed by instrumental ensembles. Referring to these genres interchangeably however is the same as referring to a poem as a play, or a novel as a limerick. Work to correct and develop students' terminology.

A wealth of rich literature and history exists in our band heritage that can easily bring enrichment to our students' lives. An examination of your current curriculum will probably reveal several places where you can insert some of the aforementioned areas in conjunction with your elementary music colleagues, who will probably be delighted to receive your input.

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.



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To Conduct Or Not To Conduct ...That Is The Question

by Dean Sorenson

The role of the conductor in a jazz ensemble is often quite misunderstood. On one side there are those who say that conducting a jazz ensemble is completely different from conducting a concert band, and attempts to find any similarities are a waste of time. There are others that approach conducting the jazz ensemble exactly as they would a concert band. The most effective technique is a blending of these two viewpoints. How much to draw from each, however, depends on many factors. Let's examine some of these and attempt to answer this question.

In a concert band, the conductor conducts most everything. There is no rhythm section to listen to and the sheer size of a concert band makes it essential that someone be responsible for holding everything together. The motions and gestures of the conductor will vary in look and purpose, however, according to a variety of factors. In a younger and less experienced band, and especially when playing music that has not been rehearsed, the conductor serves as a timekeeper and traffic cop more than anything else. As the maturity level of a group rises, and as the band becomes more comfortable with the music, the conductor's role gradually becomes less "metronomic" and more musical. Instead of beating endless patterns the conductor can cue dynamics or shape phrases. He or she can concentrate on music making rather than train wreck prevention.

The jazz ensemble, by contrast, is a smaller group and has something that the concert band does not have: a rhythm section. Players in a jazz ensemble need to be taught to listen to the rhythm section for tempo. This is a difficult transition for both players and director. Students coming up through the concert band become used to seeing a conductor beat time. Teaching them to listen to the rhythm section is essential. Directors who have more experience in the concert band are apt to continue doing things the way

they are used to in the large ensemble. Thus they conduct everything, thereby providing the students with a tempo and eliminating the need (at least in the minds of the students) for listening. Young rhythm players, in particular, have a large responsibility thrust upon them when they are probably already struggling with basic technique on their instruments. Consequently, they may not be providing as solid a tempo as a conductor is able, which can be frustrating for everyone.

The decision about when and how much to conduct, then, really depends upon how well two things happen: 1) how well the rhythm section can play with solid time and, 2) how well the rest of the band listens to the rhythm section. A band with a solid rhythm section, and wind players that know how to listen, does not need a timekeeper out front. By contrast, a band with a struggling rhythm section is going to need a steady tempo from the conductor if it is going to stay together. If your rhythm section is struggling, it is imperative that they reach the point where they can at least play steady time. Give the rhythm section plenty of time to play on their own, and give them attention in sectional rehearsals. Have them work on sections that have few hits or band figures so they can concentrate on playing time and listening to each other. Open solo sections are terrific for this kind of practice.

When professional big bands perform, the only time anything approaching "conducting" takes place is the count off to start the tune, and the cut off of the final chord. Many directors use this as a model and as a result do little or no conducting with their jazz ensembles. This is an excellent approach, provided you have the previously mentioned strengths in your band. In most situations, though, it is necessary to nurture these skills in a young ensemble. Completely cutting off conductor

support is not as effective as a gradual cut back. As the band gets more comfortable with certain charts, be on the lookout for areas where you are not needed. Solo sections are rarely conducted in any but the very youngest bands. Also look for a section where you can "get them started" and then bow out. An example would be a melody of a blues. Conduct for the first couple bars, then stop conducting and let the band play the rest of the chorus on their own.

Do not be afraid to let the band struggle a bit as they are weaning themselves from conductor to rhythm section. There will more than likely be growing pains like tempo variations and ensemble playing that is not as tight at first. While the short term solution is to just conduct through everything, there will be a growth ceiling that will be reached. Be patient and allow these skills time to develop. The benefit to the ensemble as well as to the individual players will be much greater in the long run.

The amount of conducting that ultimately takes place in performance varies widely from piece to piece. A ballad may be completely conducted, while a jam blues tune may have only a count off at the beginning and a cut off at the end. Most charts will fall someplace in the middle. Resist the temptation to conduct everything. Players in a jazz ensemble must learn to listen to the rhythm section. At the same time do not be afraid to offer some help when it is needed. Where that line is drawn is different for every group. Finding the line, and moving it, is the challenge to the director.

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.

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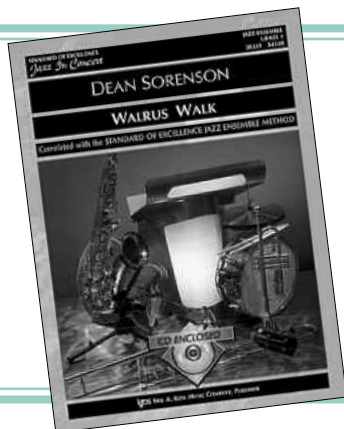
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