

Recruiting Young String Players and What To Do Next!?!?!

NSMEA 2015- Building solid programs on shifting sand
Katelyn Gillis

Start before the students- Recruiting a musician, mathematician, or athlete all starts long before the students arrive. It begins with YOU and how you are seen, or not, in the school community. Whether it's May or September these four values can make you life and your program run smoother.



What I LOVE about Violin!

Soon we will be doing a **presentation for the grade 3 classes** in hopes that some students will play the violin next year! It is our job as good musicians to show these students why playing the violin is so **AMAZING!** Complete this sheet to begin thinking about what **YOU** could present to the grade 3 students!

I like violin and/or violin class because


- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Circle one thing about playing the violin you would like to teach to another person:

| | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Holding the bow | Statue of Liberty | The Elevator |
| Making a sound on the violin | Rest position | The Windshield |
| Wiper | | |
| Open String Names | Part of the Violin | |

List the steps you would use to teach this. Be as detailed as possible! If you need more room use the back of this page ☺

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____



~~~~~

**Don't forget about the other grades!**

For grade 5 and up recruitment becomes retention. Does retention = popularity or interest?

**Now you're all set and ready right!?**

- Set up and start ASAP.
- **INSIST** students do NOT bring their instruments until the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> week of September. You decide when is right.
- Save the tears and start with smiles. Musical activities that reinforce string concepts without the instrument & introduce them when EVERYONE is comfortable. Try some of these! They will train student's minds, bodies, and memory.

**Action Syllables**

Skills this concept addresses: Reinforces pulse and using multiple parts of the body at once while helping the teacher learn student's names. This introduces the concept of associating words with beat for later use with lunch bunch rhythms etc.

Procedure:

- With the group standing in a circle, have the participants each choose an action for every syllable of their name. Example: Elvis has 2 syllables, so he does a hip shake with "El" and snaps his fingers for "vis". Once Elvis has done his action while saying his name, the whole group repeats. After the 2nd person does his/her name, the whole group repeats, then does Elvis's again and so on 'til everyone's done it.
- As an extension try doing it again while everyone is stomping to a steady beat OR standing on one foot OR keep the same actions and see how fast you can go- time the group!

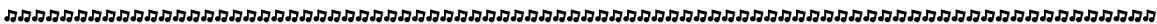
**Mind Reader on the D String**

Skills this concept addresses: Note naming and finger association, left hand dexterity and speed recognition.

Procedure: Begin with the D String

- Show students where the open D is on the staff. We play this with NO fingers
- Ask students what the next letter in the musical alphabet is- E. To play E we use 1 finger on the D string. It is also one letter away from D so we use 1 finger.
- What is the next note in the musical alphabet- F. We play F by using 2 fingers on the D string. It is also 2 letters away from D so we use 2 fingers.
- What is the next note in the musical alphabet- G. We play G by using 3 fingers on the D string. It is also 3 letters away from D so we use 3 fingers.
- Then have the students recite it back to you. You hold up the left hand fingers and ask the students to "shout" the letter back to you. Then you "shout" the letter to them and see if they can hold up the appropriate finger.

~~~~~



- Practice this in a large group a number of times so that students get faster with the ‘call and answer’.
- Have students get into groups of 2 and do this for each other. How fast can they go?
- Return to the large group and try patterns of 4.

Left vs. Right Dexterity

Skills this concept addresses: Students will improve finger dexterity and will learn finger patterns with 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th fingers.

Procedure

- Have the students watch you and copy the following; Place the LEFT thumb on RIGHT index finger and place the thumb & index fingers from the opposite hands together. Then release the fingers that point down and bring them back together on top without releasing any other fingers. Repeat a few times. Shake out hands. Repeat using the thumb and 2nd finger together. Repeat using 3rd and 4th fingers as well.
- As an extension you can try doing this with each finger, it will look like your fingers are walking. Or, try skipping fingers! Then try walking on the opposite hand. And try using your left hand and a partners right hand.

Body Parts/ Simon Says

Skills this concept addresses: Students learn to recognize the parts of the violin while training their fine motor skills

Procedure:

- In this activity you will be playing Simon says with your “string body”
- Introduce the basic body parts of the string instrument to the class
 - Head/scroll, neck, fingerboard, strings, front, back, ribs, end pin, tail piece, bridge, pegs, and fine tuners.
- Teacher points to and says a body part and the students repeat the string body part and point to that part on their own body.
- Head/scroll= head
 - Ribs= ribs
- Neck= neck
 - End pin= belly button
- Finger board= atoms apple
 - Tail piece= students take their “tail”
- Strings= hair
 - Bridge, peg’s and fine tuners I call NO NO spots! Use big hand gestures
- Front= tummy
- Back= back
- In order to play Simon Says students must listen and watch what you do. Students must demonstrate the action for the body part you say not the one you point to!
- For a larger game divide the classroom into 2 sections. Everyone starts in one and as students get “out” they go into the other section. They can still participate and practice but this keeps them separated in case you wanted to give out prizes for the students who lasted the longest.

Other ideas may include;

A foot map

How to carry the case

Introducing lunch bunch or sports rhythms with clapping/patching

Posture- statue of liberty pose or rest position- freeze dance

