

Integrating a Student-Centered Instructional Style within a Performance-Based Band Rehearsal

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Friday, January 29
9:30 – 10:45 a.m.

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Instructional Styles

- Teaching is intuitive.
- Many instructional styles can be effective.
- The Teacher - Student Continuum

Teacher-led Student-centered

Dependent Inter-dependent Independent



- Engage the Student.

Video Examples

In the following two clips, we want you to observe the interaction between teacher and students...

Comparison of Clips

What did you observe in terms of:

- Student Engagement
- Teacher Action
- Efficiency
- Musical Learning

So, here's what today's session is about...

A Legal Disclaimer

...

Challenges for Students

Why can't the typical band student talk about the music they experience in rehearsals?

- Limited Vocabulary
- Limited Opportunities for expressing themselves
- Limited Listening and Discriminating Skills
- Received no TRAINING or "How To"
- Lack confidence

Challenges for Teachers

- It's an "inefficient" use of time.
- It's SCARY!!
- It requires special skills.
 - How to ask questions
 - The teacher multi-task
 - Monitor the interaction between:
 - teacher & student
 - Student & student

Principles of Student-Centered Rehearsals

1. The director is a **facilitator**; not a dictator.
2. **Every** student should be able to make **independent** musical decisions.
3. Music learning is rooted in **organic, discovery-based** rehearsals...

Director as Facilitator

- *Primary motto: "Ask, don't tell."*
- Eye contact
- Teaching by contrast
- In-flight decision-making. You react and guide students based upon their responses.
- *Video Example...*

Socratic Method: Use of Q & A

- **Three Types of Questions**
 1. **Open:** Gather information
 2. **Guided:** More targeted response
 3. **Closed:** Produce a single answer
- Questions can be either direct (*individual*) or indirect (*collective*)
- *Other examples...*

Independent Decision-making

- **Students** making **independent** musical decisions.
- Students contribute to a collective interpretation.
- Methods and Examples:
 - Do you agree or disagree?
 - Rate on a scale of 1 to 10
 - What's good? What needs to improve?
 - Use sections not playing for revisions
 - Do you like that interpretation?

Discovery-Based Activities

- Periods of **ambiguity**
- Environment that encourages **risk-taking** (student and teacher)
- Music as the absolute truth through **listening**

Common Pitfalls

- Lack of student discipline and focus
- Lack of balance between performance goals and conceptual learning activities
- Lack of student comprehension:
 - heading in the wrong direction
 - inability to “connect the dots”

Intended Outcomes of Student-led Instruction

- Students develop a sense of **ownership**.
- Students develop their **musicianship**, not just their performance skills.
- Opportunities for ongoing, informal **assessment** of individuals.
- Rehearsals become more **energized and positive**.
- Better **student engagement**.

Maintaining Performance Standards

- Student-centered instruction enhances the overall performance quality.
- Students become *independent learners*.
- Students develop a greater depth of musical understanding.
- Provides motivation for musical achievement.

Beyond the Classroom

- Continue musical education and involvement beyond the classroom.
- Use of “virtual avenues” of instruction, including:
 - Blackboard
 - SmartMusic
 - Powerpoints
 - Websites

Concluding Thoughts

- Student-centered instruction is a system of learning that moves from:
 - Unknown to the known
 - Dependent to independent
 - Knowledge to understanding
- Independent musicianship is demonstrated by one’s ability to apply learning in different contexts, not the same one over and over.

Coda

“Tell me, and I will forget.
Show me, and I may remember.
Involve me, and I will understand.”
~Chinese Proverb

Virtual Avenues

The following is excerpted directly from the New Trier Wind Ensemble Curriculum.

Blackboard

Students shall be enrolled as users for their respective ensemble's Blackboard course. Blackboard will be used periodically to post announcements, recordings of in-class performances, playing test assignments, powerpoint presentations, and streaming audio of reference recordings. The instructor will notify all students in class and via email when any of the above are updated. Additionally, it will contain a wealth of practical course documents including the syllabus, departmental policies, music major contracts, annual calendar, etc.

SmartMusic

Every student in the New Trier wind ensembles will be required to purchase a one year subscription to SmartMusic. Students will have access to a digital tuner and metronome, scalar exercises, select solo/ensemble literature, and full concert band repertoire. Students will complete an average of two playing tests per quarter via SmartMusic. For students interested in auditioning for Symphonic Wind Ensemble or for participation in the annual IMEA music ensembles, the IMEA scales will be available as accompaniment files.

Powerpoints

The fundamentals of music-making must be emphasized in a way that connects with all styles of learning. Traditional band rehearsals have relied primarily upon lecture-style presentations of new material with almost exclusively verbal explanations, followed by kinesthetic performance by the student. As a result, the needs of visual learners are often neglected. Modern technology compels us to use a combination of auditory, visual, and kinesthetic presentation to communicate appropriately with each learner. Powerpoint presentations will be used to explain a wide range of relevant and critical issues in musical performance. Appendix J (pg. 31) contains outline versions of sample powerpoints.

Website

The wind ensembles website (<http://org.newtrier.k12.il.us/arts/windens/default.htm>) will provide information for students, parents, and the public at large. It will contain current band rosters and photos, calendars, relevant forms and documents, and this curriculum in a pdf format. In addition to its practical content, the website will serve as a gateway to the band program's history and traditions.

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