

CMP (Comprehensive Musicianship Through Performance) A Brief Overview of the Model

**St. Clair County ROE
Music Educator Institute**
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Materials available at
www.makejoyfulsound.org/more-music

Music Selection
Choose well crafted, quality literature that fits the unique needs of each ensemble.

I am student centered.

I analyze and study great music.

I continually refine my musical 'chops.'

I know my real 'products' are my students.

Analysis
Learn as much as possible about the music through detailed score study and background research.

Assessment
The process of gathering information about what students know and can do, evaluating the data and then determining future actions.

I recognize that musical skill is best taught through thoughtful inquiry and deliberate practice versus mindless repetition.
I bridge the gap between my students and the music so we can authentically study great works of art together.

I strive to identify the 'heart' of each composition and use it as my North Star in the classroom.

I use a method of planning that creates a mirror for my own strengths and weaknesses as a teacher.

Comprehensive Musicianship through Performance

I program appropriate, high quality music from varied cultures and genres.

I have a continual 'growth mindset' as a teacher and work daily to cultivate this attitude in each of my students.

I intentionally plan, scaffold, and assess strategies for all learners in my classroom.

I teach transferable, long-range musical concepts, not just 'the piece.'

I help students explore their personal feelings and attitudes about life through music.

I seek to reveal the composer's intent.

I make my students' lives richer.

Strategies
How the students learn--all the activities, questions and tools involved in teaching the outcomes.

Outcomes
What the students will learn--the skill, knowledge and affective goals.

One paradox of master teaching is that it comes across as organic and easy, even though it is thoughtfully and carefully crafted. Similarly, this model for planning instruction seems quite simple and intuitive, but contains the possibility for infinitely complex and rich thinking.



The *Illinois* CMP Project
Teaching with Intention,
Performing with Understanding

What are we to make of this position and power? **What are our responsibilities to our students?** And to our blood families, who sacrifice so much of their time to this extended family of families. We owe this sacrifice an investment in substance, the pursuit of quality and an undying enthusiasm for improvement. I think that important answers to be found in surveying our former students. How they participate at home and in the life of their community is a testament to the quality of our teaching. As adults, does it really matter that the bands they were in made ones, or twos, or God forbid threes in competitions? What is the most memorable part of their band experience? I often wonder, is what you impart more important than even how good your band sounds or competes? Yes. We teach because we were taught.

But what is the greater meaning of our personal involvement in this profession and endeavor. What can we add to the teaching that has gone before, to claim our space on the timeline, to participate in the continuum of our way of life? What is it that we want to fix? Because what we want to fix is what fires us to improve and change. It's what inspires us to act.

For a director, selecting music to play is the first and most crucial action. The identity of our band is shaped more by what we play than by how well we play it. Choose wisely, because only through quality music making, and through quality music making practices and substantive literature will our students be challenged to go deeper inside themselves, to play above themselves, to realize more fully their individual and collective potential. To engage in a creative dialogue across time, and to innovate with the finest minds and spirits that have ever lived. We are all challenged to combine with the best that our way of life affords. With all the sacrifice of getting a band together: Getting parents, alumni and administration invested. Learning woodwind fingerings. Shouldn't we play the highest quality music possible? And what we play IS the meaning of what we teach.

Our music states our purpose, to the nobler purposes or the noble achievements. Lord knows, our country needs higher quality music, and engagement with the arts in general. Kids need to be led more now than ever. They need to learn and they need to be taught, because the musical glories of our heritage are no longer a part of our contemporary cultural discourse. For many of the tens of thousands of kids represented by teachers all over this country, you are the only arts contact they may have had. Most of your kids' entire cultural experience depends on your teaching. **If the future success of the American way of living depends on your teachings, how would you approach lessons, rehearsals, concerts? How would you approach the literature?**

Now is a good time to rethink our goals. Are we primarily concerned with producing a star soloist, great symphonic players or a halftime band? Do we want to produce more band directors? Or all of the above? Sadly for most of us, a large majority of our schools put their instruments away after school, and they are never going to play them again. I mean, person after person - "I used to play trumpet, clarinet, violin, tuba..." If we had a band of "used to be's," it would be the largest band in the universe.

Over the years, this has caused me to think: **What are our educational aspirations for the third clarinet player in the second concert band?** Or the last chair second violin? Or the third trombone in the jazz band? Is it a social experience? An opportunity to make friends and have to talk over some music? Memories of some trophies or plaques that hang on the band room wall? Is it a chance to play some very bad music that has become popular far beyond its quality, because a principal wants you to keep enrollment up, by playing what the kids want to play?

I strongly suggest that our expressed purpose should be to create citizens forever engaged with and excited about the arts, not people who never want to see or touch their instruments ever again, not even on the holidays. We are all sitting on a treasure trove of home grown pieces and songs, musical practices that profoundly and directly address cultural ideas that define us as a country. Our primary objective should be to teach that body of work and musical approaches to our youngsters. We are sitting at a musical banquet table of dishes that demand further exploration, and can continue to feed our kids' souls for years to come. Yet, you are eating, and no one can figure out why.