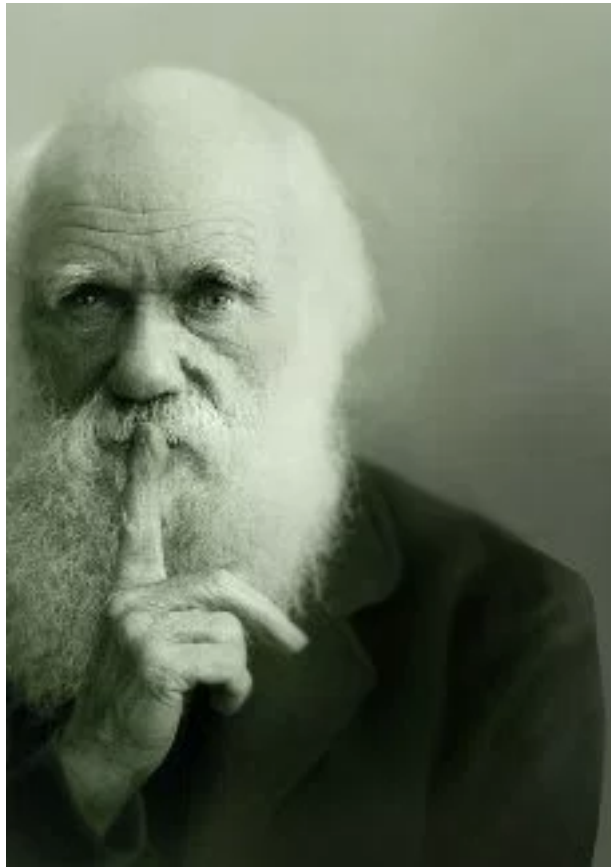


"You Are The Band Whisperer"

Small Ideas, Spectacular Results

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Outline/Notes

How to Maximize the Benefits of this Clinic:

MENC, IIMEA, TMEA, all of the MEA's, Amazing band pedagogy workshops and books, great Music Ed Teachers at outstanding universities and colleges...

If there are so many excellent music education resources available today, why do so many of us struggle to achieve the excellence for which we strive?

I believe that it is because many of us make the mistake of picking up a strategy or two either from our education, or a book, or a clinic like this one, then, when we try it with our own bands; and it fails in the first few attempts, we give up on it. This undermines our trust that tools and strategies can work, so we adapt to our failures by going on emotional autopilot as our passion and confidence erode. Over time, we get burned out.

The strategies mentioned in this clinic are tools that will work best when they are adapted to our individual personalities, teaching styles, and learning environments. It takes time, perseverance, patience, and skill to achieve maximum results. Remember above all: a tool is only as good as the craftsperson that wields it.

For this reason, I encourage you to connect, or reconnect, with your passion for music and teaching. Let it guide and inspire creativity within you to effectively use the tools made available to you. Have the courage to fail, try again, fail, and keep trying until you find an adaptation of a particular teaching strategy that works for you. Reach for your inner teaching self, and then share it with your students.

Moreover, be vulnerable; give your students that gift; and, in turn, allow them to feel safe and protected within their own vulnerability. The gifts that they will give you in return will be far greater.

Finally, music is not something that we stamp out like widgets in a factory. It is a delicate, yet powerful emotional force that must be coaxed out and nurtured. Yes, teach your students the language of music-syntax, vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation, but don't neglect the purpose for that language which is poetic expression that connects us all and nourishes our soul.

When you have created and sustained a culture where linguistic excellence flourishes and where experimentation and expression are encouraged, miracles become possible.

I. Introduction

- A. Personal experiences that galvanized my approach to teaching band
 1. The first day of my career-the kit-building analogy
 2. The "Tom Lee" and "James Keene" effect, why not make every rehearsal special?
 3. Students don't necessarily understand and process the same way we adults do, so we need to find New ways to reach the students from their own perspectives

II. Eclectic incorporation of rubrics found on a "typical" judging sheet. Seeing the rubrics through the lens of the "spinning plates" analogy. You need to be a little ADD.

Note 1: Some of the strategies and theories mentioned below may seem at first to be a bit, "Off the Wall." One might think that, "That will never work with my group; my band is too-inexperienced/experienced/mature/immature/untalented/talented/fill-in-the blank..."

I am here to tell you that they DO work. I have used them with my graduate and undergraduate university students, my high school students, my middle school students, and my 4th grade beginners. A little adapting and you are good to go.

Note 2: The Theory of Riding a Bicycle

- A. Tone-breath support
- B. Pitch "The Bad Smell Theory"
- C. Balance and Blend-creating a new "instrument". Harmonic and Hierarchical balance
- D. Technique-Fluency and Articulation
 - The "Right Thing Feels Wrong" theory
- E. Rhythm-subdivision and pulse-the "Freight Train" theory
- F. Written expression-dynamics and accent
- G. Phrasing-unwritten rules-It's all about tension and release
- H. Style-"Pronounce" the music. Clarity and Transparency

I. Musicianship-why we do everything else! It's all about communication.

III. The use of "tools" applied with craftsmanship and artistry to incorporate the principals of good fundamental individual and ensemble playing

- A. The "Universal Teaching Method"
- B. Using Sound-byte technology
- C. Momentum-teaching your students to become self-correcting and self-directed
- D. Don't be afraid to fail; be vulnerable
- E. Never give up-expect everyone to rise to the level of your "stars"

- F. Look for the best in yourself and those around you
- G. Be more stubborn than the problem
- H. Put yourself in your students' shoes and walk around for a while
- I. How to keep everyone at every level actively involved in the rehearsal-like the character in a 3D film (right in front of your face!) Each student thinks that you are talking directly to him or her
- J. Everyone gets a private lesson in the context of the larger rehearsal
- K. Make a plan that you may or may not stick to, depending on the circumstances of rehearsal-be in the moment
- L. Using the exercise of patting the head while circling the stomach to demonstrate the connection between music making's combination of right brain and left-brain activities
- M. Teach yourself and your students to be "Happy, but not satisfied"-Stay hungry
- N. With music, you are never "there"
- O. Show the students that you love what you are all doing
- P. Provide your students with opportunities to "rise to the occasion"

- PP. Give your student's mini, 30-second practice sessions within the context of your large rehearsal. Chances are that they will individually work out problems that would take you much more time to address with the whole group.
- Q. Above all, keep a sense of humor while caring for the special people with whom you are privileged to work

Look for my upcoming book, "The Band Whisperer" or drop me a line at dmorriso100@hotmail.com

Good luck; and make great music!

Warm-Up 1

David Morrison

Rest 4 counts at each breath mark

Moderato (♩ = c. 80)

Flute
Oboe
mf

Clarinet in B-
Bass Clarinet
mf

Alto Sax.
mf

Tenor Sax.
mf

Trumpet in B-
Euphonium
Treble Clef
mf

Horn in F
mf

Trombone
Euphonium
B.C.
mf

Tuba
mf

Mallets
mf

Timpani
mf

Warm-Up 2

David Morrison

Rest 4 counts at each breath mark

The musical score for 'Warm-Up 2' (measures 22-31) is arranged for a full orchestra. The score is divided into two systems. The first system includes parts for Flute/Oboe (Fl. Ob.), Bass Clarinet (B. Cl. Clar.), Saxophone (A. Sax.), and Trombone (T. Sax.). The second system includes parts for Trumpet/Euphonium (Tpt. Euph.), Horn (Hn.), Trombone (Tbn. Bar.), Tuba, and Percussion (Perc.). The music is written in a key signature of one flat (B-flat major or D minor) and a 4/4 time signature. The tempo is marked 'Allegretto'. The score features a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together. There are numerous breath marks (indicated by a vertical line with a horizontal bar) and articulation marks (indicated by a vertical line with a horizontal bar) throughout the piece. The percussion part includes a variety of instruments, including snare drum, tom-tom, and cymbal, with specific rhythmic patterns. The overall texture is dense and rhythmic, typical of a warm-up exercise for an orchestra.

The Universal Teaching Method

1. **Identify, locate, and prioritize** an issue-*Something sounds sour in the low brass area, it sounds like it's coming from the trombones. They are playing a major triad and the third of the chord sounds sharp. If this issue can be addressed successfully, the pitch of the ensemble will noticeably improve to the point where further refinements will be possible.*
2. **Articulate** this to the trombone section-*"Trombones, you have a pitch issue on this major chord. Can you hear it also?"*
3. **Provide a tool** for the students to use-*"Did you know that the third of a major chord has to be played 'flat' in order to sound in tune? Who has the third of this chord? Ok. Let's build that chord from the bottom up and see what we can do."*
4. **Guide** students through use of the tool-*Ask the person with the root to play, then add the third. When it is played sharp (which it usually is), keep asking the player with the third to move the slide out until it locks into pitch with the root. Then add the fifth.*
5. **Check** for understanding- *once the adjustments are made, and the chord sounds good, ask the students if they can hear the difference.*
6. **Encourage and empower** the students to apply the tool called, "*lower the third of any major chord*", to all of the major chords that they perform. Asking students to maintain **momentum** by frequently reminding them to use the tool on their own creates a self-correcting culture within the ensemble.
7. **Repeat** steps 1-6 as you hear similar problems crop up in rehearsal.

Rehearsal Comment Worksheet

Sound Byte Technology

1. As you are listening to the sample, jot down comments in the appropriate categories below. Include the instrument (s) where the problem exists. Keep the comments down to several words (sound byte). Don't be afraid to guess.
 - a. Tone
 - b. Pitch/Blend
 - c. Note accuracy
 - d. Rhythm/Time
 - e. Articulation
 - f. Expression marks
 - g. Style

h. Musical expression/Phrasing

2. Summarize and prioritize (limit to one or two major ideas) your thoughts below.

3. Write a two sentence sound byte below. This should include:
 - a. Statement of the problem
 - b. Origin of the problem (what instruments/sections)
 - c. Location of the problem -measure (s)
 - d. Proposed solution and a tool the students can use to solve the problem
 - e. Something motivational (was there something to be commended?)

Sound Byte:

(As you become comfortable with filling out this form, wean yourself off of it, and come up with the entire process as you "think on your feet")

4. Present your two sentence sound bytes to the band (you can practice by looking in the mirror, or just go for it in class).
 - a. Cut off with the baton
 - b. Look at the band (mirror)
 - c. Deliver the sound byte
 - d. Start the "band"
 - e. While the band is playing repeat the process.

Evaluate your effectiveness below. As you watch a video of your performance, make a little chart and use the criteria including, but not limited to the following:

1. Clear cut off
2. Eye contact
3. Clear speaking voice
4. Conviction
5. Cogent assessment of the problem

6. Clear instructions for solution to the problem
7. "Gut" feeling of the effectiveness of the performance by the conductor/ is the band inspired to act?
8. How would you feel about being in your band?

Incantation and Dance Worksheet 1

Allegro (♩ = c. 138)

The score is divided into two systems. The first system, labeled 'Part 1', includes parts for Flute/Oboe, Clarinet in B♭/Tenor Sax, Alto Sax, Bass Cl., Trumpet in B♭, Horn in F, Trombone/Baritone, Tuba, and Percussion. The second system, labeled 'Part 2', includes parts for Fl. Ob., B♭ Cl./T Sax, A. Sx., B. Cl., B♭ Tpt., Hn., Tbn. Bar., Tuba, and Perc. The music is in 4/4 time with a tempo of approximately 138 beats per minute. Dynamics include *f* (forte) and *fz* (forzando). The key signature has one flat (B♭).

Part 1

Flute
Oboe

Clarinet in B♭
Tenor Sax

Alto Sax.

Bass Cl.

Trumpet in B♭

Horn in F

Trombone
Baritone

Tuba

Percussion

Part 2

Fl.
Ob.

B♭ Cl.
T Sax

A. Sx.

B. Cl.

B♭ Tpt.

Hn.

Tbn.
Bar.

Tuba

Perc.

Attitude

The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. Attitude, to me, is more important than facts. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failure, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness or skill. It will make or break a company... a church... a home. The remarkable thing is we have a choice everyday regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change our past... we cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude. I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me and 90% of how I react to it. And so it is with you... we are in charge of our Attitudes.”

Charles R. Swindoll