

The 12-Month Musician Versus the 9-Month Musician:

Strategies for Fostering Musical Growth Over the Summer Months

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1. Establishing a Culture

2. Fostering Student-Driven Instruction

3. Strategies for Cultivating Self-Reliant Learners

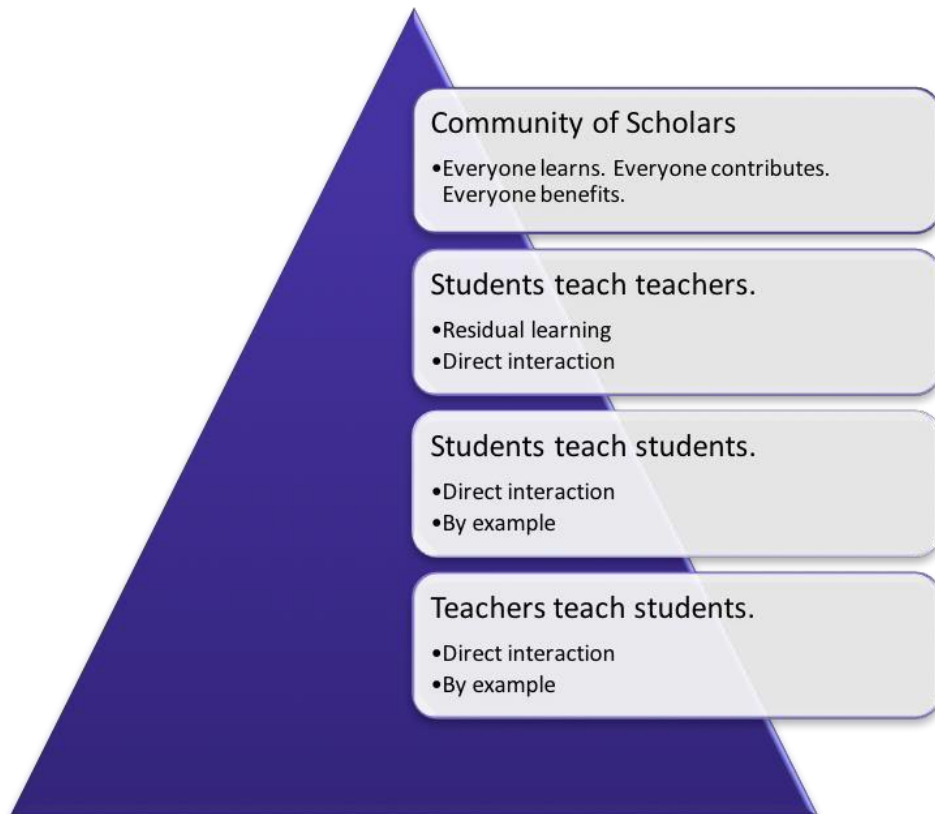
4. Sustaining Progress for 12 Months

I. Establishing a Culture.

A. *Students relate more closely to other students.*

1. Teachers work to facilitate positive working environments.
 - a. Promoting a culture of excellence
 - i. Students help to model quality work.
 - Students teach by example.
 - Students teach directly.
 - ii. Students help to uphold a performance standard.
 - Less experienced students emulate the work habits of more experienced students.
 - Students help to define a culture in attitude, work ethic, and musicianship.

2. Promoting a culture of creativity
 - a. Student collaboration
 - i. Students work together to realize common goals.
 - ii. Studies become more autodidactic.
 - iii. Students work under the framework of synergy.



II. Fostering Student-Driven Instruction

A. Students can be their most effective instructors.

1. Gain ownership of the information
 - a. People do not work like calculators.
 - i. Approaching and delivering information to best suit the needs of students
 - The same information does not mean the same thing to different students.
 - Students respond to criticism and praise in different ways.
 - Teachers must be elastic to elicit the best out of each student.
 - ii. Process reflection: tonal modeling, fundamental approach
 - Demonstrate tonal modeling to address short-term objectives.
 - Demonstrate (and explain) tonal modeling to address long-term and advanced objectives.
 - Embed fundamentals into other objectives to maintain the interest of your students.
 - Demonstrate and insist on consistency in the fundamental routine.
 - This is also a way for the students to teach themselves when they are not in an instructional environment.
 - b. Fostering a sense of urgency to improve
 - i. Gaining ownership of technical and musical concepts
 - Though the information may remain the same, teachers must often be flexible to address to same concepts to different students.
 - Approaching the same information in a different way allows for greater command of that information.

III. Strategies for Cultivating Self-Reliant Learners

A. Students must learn to teach themselves.

1. Students must be taught to make their own informed decisions.
 - a. Often, students are capable of making informed decisions for themselves and should be encouraged to do so.
 - b. Students must learn to think independently and not depend on a teacher for critical decision-making—students must be self-reliant learners.
2. Learning is increasingly the result of mentorship.
 - a. Applied study becomes more of an exchange of ideas.

- i. Students ultimately learn to inspire ideas in their teachers.
- ii. Teachers plant seeds that inspire students to take ownership of their education beyond baseline curricular objectives.

B. Instilling a culture of expectations and accountability

1. Chamber music is a vehicle for musical excellence.
 - a. Fostering creative interpreters
 - i. Chamber music can help to create musicians who think deeply about music.
 - Students have an opportunity to overtly develop musical affect through contrast.
 - ii. Chamber groups have an opportunity to independently discuss important structural components of music and how to deal with these ideas in performance.
2. Chamber music is a microcosm for large ensembles.
 - a. Chamber music emphasizes the significance of non-verbal communication and eye contact within ensembles.
 - b. Concepts regarding phrasing and musical hierarchy can be easily understood and reinforced.
 - c. Chamber music provides an opportunity to solidify musical objectives and elevate ensemble skills and critical decision-making.
3. A culture of excellence and accountability transfers from chamber music to private lessons and large ensembles.
 - a. Students are empowered to make critical decisions.
 - b. A desire for improvement and musical progress comes from within the large ensemble.
 - c. Chamber music drives students to play at a higher level and encourages them to be greater than the sum of their parts.
4. Developing music programs through chamber music
 - a. Student chamber ensembles can help to advocate for music programs and private studios.
 - b. Chamber ensembles can provide a greater degree of visibility for music programs and private studios.
 - c. Working through chamber ensembles can help students take greater ownership of their music education.

C. Creating a studio environment throughout a program

1. Studio performances and activities
 - a. Developing a culture and identity within each studio
 - b. Studio events can help to develop camaraderie within the studio.

- c. Studio performances can help embed tonal concepts and performance standards.
- 2. Assignments to inspire academic creativity
 - a. Composition and research projects that include presentation and performance components push students to expand knowledge and hone important career skills.
 - b. Group work in the classroom and outside of it enables the exchange of ideas. Students make the material their own, and their understanding becomes stronger because of it.

D. Working for improvement at the top of the studio and the classroom first to create models

- 1. Competitions
 - a. Emphasize the process of preparation rather than the results.
 - b. Competitions can help students learn to listen more critically.
- 2. Assignments to inspire creativity
- 3. Working for consistent musical, tonal, and technical ideals

E. Recording lessons and lesson reports

- 1. Recording lessons allows students to better internalize the concepts covered in lessons.
 - a. Students can evaluate their progress and lesson preparation and can summarize this in a written lesson report.
 - i. Students have an opportunity to accurately gauge their long-term progress through a weekly record of events.
- 2. Can help the students learn to think critically

IV. Sustaining Progress for 12 Months

A. Focus on the process

- 1. The importance of clearly defining goals
- 2. Example: The goal is to save money
 - a. This goal is too vague to be useful
 - i. Process for saving \$500 vs. \$5000 is very different
 - ii. First component to consider is timeline to achieve
 - iii. No clearly defined goal/marginal improvement
- 3. Goals are most important when the task is simple (e.g. Duck Hunt) because the pathway to improvement must be focused and specific.
- 4. Constantly reassessing and redefining goals
 - a. especially important when unsure about the final goal
- 5. Goal setting requires insight into the process

- a. Goals can be unachievable to too easily achieved
- b. Identifying the barrier(s) to success
 - i. Problem saving \$5000—due to timeline or amount?
- 6. Reassessing and redefining goals helps on two levels – one creates more achievable goals and a more sound process of achievement.
- 7. Goals that are too easily achieved are also problematic
 - a. Meeting a goal without changing habits does not necessarily constitute success—it may be the illusion of success
 - b. E.g., saving \$500 without changing spending habits or choices
 - c. Goal is achieved, but there was no alteration to the process
- 8. Goals must be challenging, yet achievable—somewhere in the middle range of a rubber band. The focus should equally be on the process to achieving the goal. If one meets the goal with no change to the process, there was only superficial success.
- 9. Importance of jointly-set goals prior to the summer
 - a. Goals set by both the student and teacher keeps both parties accountable.
 - b. Teachers can help guide appropriate goal setting.
- 10. Outcome assessment following breaks
 - a. It is critically important to assess progress toward goals following a break.
 - b. Outcome assessment can also inform goals and affect progress.

B. Developing opportunities during the summer months

- 1. Keeping students connected to a community of scholars and musicians
- 2. Importance of summer festivals, workshops, and camps
 - a. This provides an opportunity for continued direct instruction.
 - b. This provides an opportunity for instruction in specific areas.
 - c. Summer programs help students to develop a greater awareness of how other students and programs are achieving.
 - d. Summer programs also help cultivate a level of sustained excitement and enthusiasm, further inspiring students to work.
 - e. Remaining active and visible helps provide students with a foundation for professional development and creates opportunities.
 - f. Students begin building a pre-professional network.

C. Increasing performance opportunities beyond competitions

- 1. This provides tangible goals for the students throughout the semester.
- 2. Not all students are motivated by competitions.

3. This provides opportunities for outcome assessments.
4. Instructors listen differently in performances than in lessons.

D. Creative, enrichment, and research projects

1. Research projects allow students an opportunity to take ownership of their own education.
2. Creative projects can help students keep their studies fresh and inspiring, and students can learn to engage music at a high level away from their instrument.
 - a. Writing program notes for music they will study
 - b. Composition or arranging projects for solo instrument or small chamber ensemble
3. Creating a listening curriculum for students during breaks
 - a. Guided YouTube/music streaming research

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