

Classroom Management (and Other Survival Tactics!) for Young Performing Ensembles

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Session Outline

I. My [Viewpoint of Presenter] Journey with Classroom Management

- A. My first teaching position, and how classroom management quickly became my center of attention
- B. My current position, and adapting classroom management practices

Always aim to improve your teaching to better serve your students.

II. What Does Classroom Management Do for Music Spaces?

- A. Classroom management **keeps students organized** with their materials, **attentive** to the rehearsal, and **on task** with the musical choices they are making
- B. Classroom management **minimizes** the behaviors that **slow rehearsal progress** for the ensemble and **maximizes the amount of music created in rehearsals**

III. M.U.S.I.C. Classroom Management Steps We Can Improve NOW

*i. **M = Make sure YOU are prepared***

Always prepare or think about the following before rehearsal begins:

1. Your rehearsal plan (including score studying)
2. Your necessary rehearsal supplies
3. Your students' necessary rehearsal supplies
4. Staying ahead of conflicts
5. Pacing, Transitions, and Engagement

Pacing: Do your rehearsals continuously move forward?

Transitions: Are you actively avoiding “downtime”? (Successful ideas: “I’m looking for the first hand to raise and tell me which one of our concert pieces I am singing... that is the piece we are going to work on next.” / “Let’s pull out (piece). If you’re ready before the group is ready, air

practice your part." / "Repeat this rhythm after me... (rhythm is clapped)... now find measure _____. That's what we just clapped! Let's play there now.")

Engagement: An active, busy rehearsal is a more successful rehearsal. (*Successful ideas:* Encourage students to sizzle/sing/clap their part along with the section you are working with / "Turn and talk with your partner about that last play through. What do you think is one thing YOU can do as a musician to perform that better?" / Full group practice of the melody or other challenging lines in the piece ("Musical Jumpstart" sheets, writing exercises on the board, etc.)

REFLECTION CHECK-POINT #1:

ii. U = Use Routines

- Routines are the backbone of efficient music rooms that make teaching young ensemble members easier and save valuable rehearsal time
- **Examples of possible routines to teach in the music classroom:**
 1. Entering and leaving the music space
 2. How should instruments and/or music be properly stored?
 3. What should students do if they need to use the restroom or get a drink?
 4. What if a reed breaks/a valve is stuck/a string snaps?
 5. What if they forgot their music?
 6. (If students are responsible for ensemble set up/tear down) How should chairs be racked, or stands be put away?

NO routine is too small to teach them independence.

iii. S = Set Expectations

1. Explain expectations and their WHY
2. Follow through with any expectations that you set

Make sure expectations are:

- Easy to recall
- Applicable to multiple situations
- Music Oriented
- Skill-level appropriate for the students that you teach

3. My [Presenter's] example of band expectations

REFLECTION CHECK-POINT #2:

iv. I = Inform Yourself on Student Accommodations

1. Checking in with student IEPs and 504s
2. Adapting materials (*Successful ideas*: larger printed text, writing parts for students with elongated rhythm values, noise dampening headphones)
3. **Reflect often** about if your teaching style is meeting the needs of your entire ensemble at all levels

v. C = Care, and Have Patience.

1. When you have a good connection with students, they are more likely to have a positive relationship with music making and with participating in an ensemble
2. Examples of showcasing caring and patience in the music room

REFLECTION CHECK-POINT #3:

IV. Other Young Performing Ensemble Tips

This section of the presentation showcases additional tips, tricks, and resources that can be implemented immediately into a classroom to help with program organization and efficiency, such as the following:

- A. Changing up rehearsal “arcs” or physical layout (I.E. Adding a “walkway”)
- B. Adding the date for when handouts were distributed

- C. Taping/Marking off high-traffic areas for organization
- D. Assigning chair/stand captains
- E. The value of thank-you cards
- F. Question “Parking Lots” or boxes
- G. Over communicating versus under communicating

V. Final Words on Classroom Management for Young Performing Ensembles

References:

- Kraemer, Jonathan, and Michelle Kraemer. *The Band Director’s Guide to Success: A Survival Guide for New Music Educators*. Oxford University Press, 2016.
- Linsin, Michael. *Classroom Management for Art, Music, and PE Teachers*. JME Publishing, 2014.
- Plevin, Rob. *Take Control of the Noisy Class: Chaos to Calm in 15 Seconds*. 2nd ed. Life Raft Media, 2019.

Artwork by: “Vector Juice” on Canva

Image: “Head Over Heels for Teaching”

Thank you for attending this presentation!

Questions?

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