

Taking Your Indoor Sound Outdoors

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Lewisville Independent School District
67th Annual Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic
Friday, December 20th, 2013

Presentation Website: www.takingyourindoorsoundoutdoors.weebly.com

What Do You Want the Ensemble to Sound Like?

1. Philosophy or Accident

2. Some basic questions for deliberation

- What are you using as a role model in “your mind’s ear” for the sound of the ensemble? (Drum Corps, College Marching Band, Symphony Orchestra)
- Is your ensemble sound concept the same for both the indoor setting and the outdoor environment? What are your expectations regarding the marching band’s commitment to basic balances, blends, and transparencies? Are you exploiting all the colors of the outdoor ensemble? What is your acoustic sound palette?
- What is your expectation of the woodwinds section?
- What is your expectation of the of the brass section?
- What is your expectation of the percussion section? And, are you tapping into the colors and textures made possible by the front ensemble? Does your battery percussion provide contrasts and texture changes? Does your percussion section have sufficient control to support wind balance and phrase structure?
- Do you have a systematic set of daily drill fundamentals to create and refine the sound you desire for the marching band? Does your daily drill include the same elements that you would want to develop inside in a concert band setting? Do you approach these essential sonic ingredients from multiple directions on a daily basis?

Developing Daily Ensemble Fundamentals – Basic Musicianship

1. The Daily Drill - Fundamentals – Warm Ups

- Development of a useful and flexible set of fundamental exercises that emphasize tonal concepts that align with the desired indoor ensemble sound. Use identical vocabulary with regards to styles, articulation and central concepts. The same set for indoor and outdoor ensemble fundamentals.
- Suggested items to include in Daily Drill/Fundamentals/Warm-up
 - Breathing Exercises-Deliberate exercises for air capacity and tension free breaths
 - Breathing tubes or other breathing apparatus
 - Long Tones (Remington F Descending and Ascending, Long Tone F “Follow Through” in F, Bb, and C. Rotating Remington, Remington and “Follow Through” in 5ths
 - Air Flow Studies

- Lip Slurs of increasing difficulty
 - Technique - Major Scales and Arpeggios with articulation and Chromatic Scale
 - Articulation Check Patterns for styles and some double tonguing development
 - Chromatic Scale (w/articulation variations)
 - Chorale-Chorale subdivided for articulation/style variations
 - Sing and buzz (lip vibrations) fundamentals
 - Various series available commercially inspired by the drum corps activity or develop your own
2. **Staff “buy in”** to head director’s tonal concepts and ensemble fundamentals. Same expectations from the staff vertically. Uniform reinforcement of desired tone qualities.
 3. **Mentorship** from someone you trust.
 4. **Rehearsal etiquette**

Strategies for the Marching Season

1. Summer Band

- Instrumentation and part distribution for balance purposes
- Meet with and rehearse fundamentals with your top ensemble and/or leadership students daily or a couple of times a week during Summer Band Camp even if this rehearsal takes time away from your outdoor movement or visual block. Use this group as a sonic modeling tool for the other performers.
 - Stress tonal concepts, breathing, woodwind and brass choir concepts
 - Emphasize “don’t play louder than” your first chair player. Then expand that concept to “don’t play louder than” the top band, or student leadership. Match the first chair’s volume but don’t exceed that volume.
 - Stress basic concept of uniformity of sound player to player. Equal contribution performer to performer. Match tone, pitch, and tone color. First chair player represents our potential sound and our last chair player represents our current sound. Don’t encourage the performer to take their personal volume to levels they cannot control.
 - Constantly be sending the message that the way students sound on their instrument individually is critical. Insist that the instruments sound the way you want them to.
 - Rotate students from “Concert Instruments” to “Marching Instruments” back and forth on the same fundamentals to stress the relationship of sounding terrific on each instrument (Horn to Mellophone or Marching Baritone to Euphonium). Send the message constantly about balance and pitch matching.
- In the “Marching Band Concert Arc” set-up call and response patterns between the top ensemble and the rest of the winds, or first chairs and the rest of the winds.
- As the head director or music caption head spend some time everyday in front of at least some portion of the marching band reinforcing ensemble concepts.
- Make time to work on your All-District/Region/State music during summer sectionals. The more opportunities the better. Stress the importance of making the same sounds individually and that those are the exact tone qualities that you expect on the marching field.

- Make time for your percussion and double reed students to work on their All-District/Region/State music as well.

2. In the Concert Arc

- Pitch matching player to player and section to section
- Outdoor source of pitch on the field. Tuners are not just for indoor use.
- Expansion of call and response patterns
- Expansion of singing and lip vibrations
- Different dynamic levels in your fundamentals. Are students asked to play pianissimo, mezzo piano, etc. in the concert arc? Sixteen count or more crescendos and diminuendos. Same ratio of instrumental sound. No color change. Same balances.
- Varying tempos. Are you preparing the students to play/perform at tempo musically in advance of asking them to march and play at that tempo? (Same concept applied to marching fundamentals).
- Continued emphasis on breathing skills and then trying to place in context
- Utilizing the role modeling of top players
- Incorporating "Step-Outs" on everything

3. Integration of Daily Drill/Music Fundamentals with Movement/Visual Block Fundamentals

- Breathing
- Step-Outs with basic lip slur for brass and major scale and arpeggio for woodwinds
- Concert F Starts and Stops 8x8
- Concert F Remington with Forward 8 Backwards 4
- Concert F Follow Through (ascending and descending) with basic slides flat to front
- Increasing difficulty level sequentially
 - Concert F Starts and Stops with pli 
 - Concert F Remington with pli 
 - Rotating Concert F Remington with lunges and pli 

4. Student Accountability

- Hear students individually often
- Individual Passoff/Playoff Objectives by Memory (Standing at POA)
 - Fundamentals
 - Traditional football/school related tunes
 - Competition show tunes at tempo, marking time and with step-outs
 - All-District/Region/State Music
 - In pairs? For student leaders?
 - Timetable for completion
 - Electronic/Digital/Online student submissions
- Create or Assign a Mini Band (3 or 4 groups with balanced instrumentation)
- Same expectations for Stand Tunes or Drill Team Tunes
- Utilizing Students Leaders
- Feedback from judges comments or recordings of performances

5. Musical Priorities in Context

- Assigning balance priorities for each tune or section of a tune
- Performers role within each major section of music...Melody-Harmony-Counter Line-Accompaniment
- Cadence point or impact point chords and releases
- Ensemble sound remains the same whether stationary or on the move

Other Considerations

1. Drill Design and Staging
2. March and Play vs. March or Play/March then Play
4. Battery Percussion Volumes and Writing
5. Soloists
6. Microphones
7. Electronic/Synthesized Sound Refinement
8. Performance Venues
9. Adjudication System
10. Impact of Tempo on Phrase, Breathing, and Fatigue. Phrasing in such a manner that performers can stay more full of air especially in last third of program. More opportunities to breathe and more opportunities to cycle air and recover from long passages.
11. The Warm-up Lot

Thanks to the Midwest Clinic Board of Directors, Midwest President, Richard Crain, and Generation Next Coordinator, Frank Troyka.

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