

*Find the Fifth – Strategies for improving
intonation in string rehearsals
Midwest Band and Orchestra Clinic 2014
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I. Tuning and tone development

- Teacher tunes
- Student turns tuners under teacher guidance
- Student tunes with tuners independently
- Student works with pegs
- Student bows and moves pegs while playing fifths

II. Basics – pitch structure of our instruments (except bass☺)

- “Hoedown” from *New Tunes*. (1974). Fletcher, S. pub. Boosey and Hawkes
- Establish the fifths

III. Intermediate development

- “Scale and Chorale in F” from *Scales in Time*, (2012). Erwin, Horvath, McCashin, Mitchell, FJH Music Pub. Ft. Lauderdale, FL
- Compare parts for interval tuning

IV. Repertoire

String Quartet K458 “The Hunt,” Mozart, Barenreiter pub., first movement

1. Sing their parts
2. m. 2,4,6 fifth between F and C – who listen to? F as the root of the 5th
3. m. 11 viola and second violin – chord building
4. m. 18, 19 – unison or octaves – easier to hear and correct than fifths?

V. Conclusions

String intonation is a moving target

Give students ‘handles’ or ‘ear markers’ to help identify

Use open string octaves when possible

Give intonation regular attention – don’t assume it will improve

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