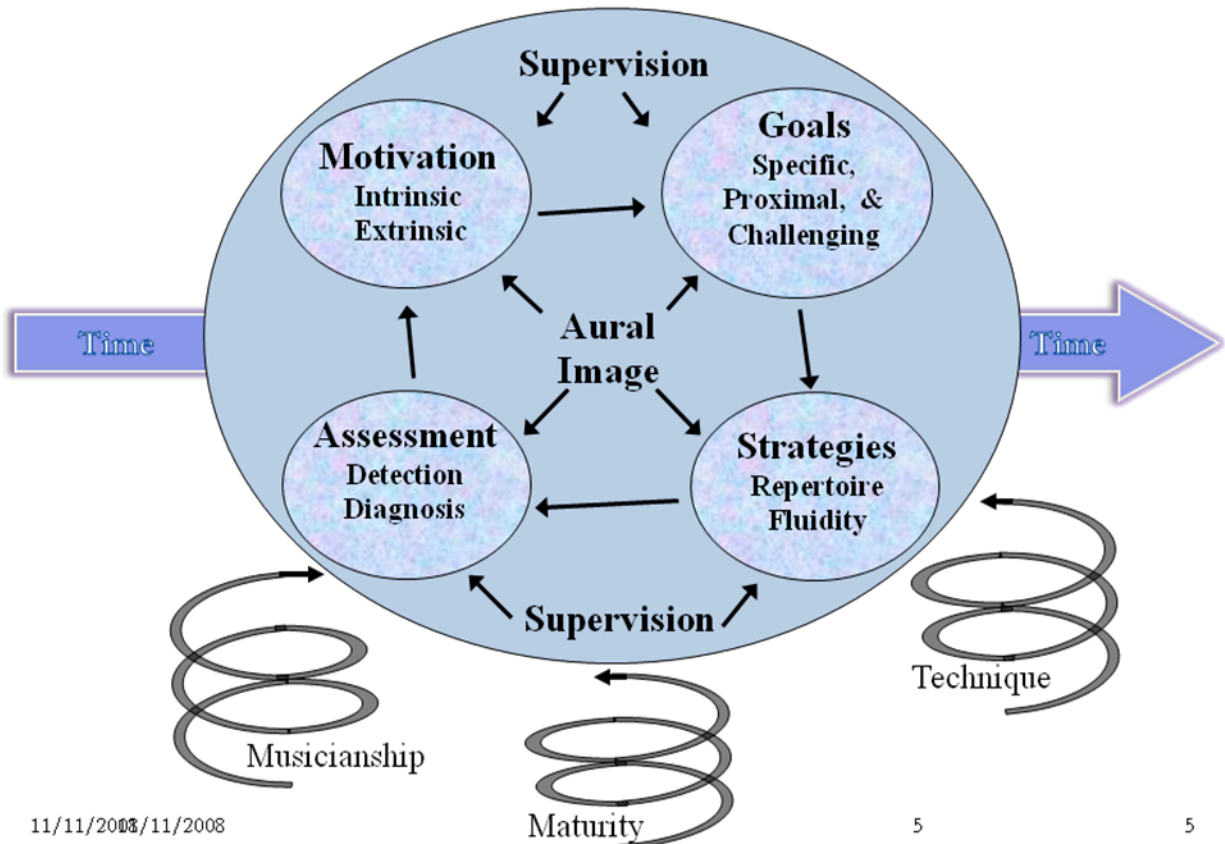


**Practice Makes Permanent:  
Teaching Students to Practice Effectively**  
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# Self-Regulated Practice



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### **A Model for Effective Practice With Novice Learners**

- As maturity, musicianship, and technique improve, practice skills will improve.
- Supervision is needed in all aspects of practice. As practice skills improve, the need for supervision decreases.
- Students must have an aural image of the music they are playing in order to practice effectively. Quite often, this means that students will learn songs by ear. As they gain in skills, they begin to inner hear what they see in notation. Quite often, technical skill improves faster than literacy.
- Contemporary students do not tend to have a solid aural image of characteristic tone for their instruments or of the style tendencies of the music played in bands and orchestras. Therefore, they need multiple opportunities to thoughtfully listen representative of the music they play.
- **How do we motivate practice in large ensembles?**
  - Grades
  - Parental communication
  - Daily assignments with Follow-up
  - Emphasize improvement over achievement

- Allow some student choice
- **How do we help students set goals?**
  - Make sure their goal is not to simply put in the time!
  - Write rehearsal goals on the board
  - Model remedial goal setting based on assessment
  - Ask students to set goals in their practice sheets or journals
- **How do we teach practice strategies ?**
  - Teach students how we learn
    - Repetition, Chunking, Categorizing, Transfer
  - Teach them to analyze their music
    - Same/different/similar, Pattern identification,
    - Phrase structure, Part function, Climax
  - Develop a practice toolbox to develop executive skills
    - Different tools are needed for different jobs
- **How do we teach self assessment?**
  - Develop their ears to feel beat and meter, tonal center, and to know their music well enough to hear & anticipate mistakes
  - Develop self- and peer-assessment skills based on stated goals & using practice sheets
- **How do we use Aural Image?**
  - Students must listen to band & orchestra music to understand the musical language before they speak it.
  - They need models for tone, balance, & style
  - Anticipation of harmonic, melodic, or rhythmic turns will improve accuracy
- **TOOLS TO REINFORCE GOOD PRACTICE HABITS**
  - Use the walls to display posters that teach practice skills, goal setting, and assessment
  - Encourage self-assessment
  - Design practice grades & based on Quality and Quantity
    - Include a spot for writing goals
    - Have students self-assess
    - Use a practice tool check-list
    - Include recording and listening assignments
    - Assign practice routines
  - Use technology – SmartMusic, recordings, etc.

### **SUGGESTED READING**

- Caine, R. N., and G. Caine (1991). Making connections: Teaching and the human brain. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Green, Barry, with Timothy Gallway (1986). The inner game of music. Garden City, N.Y. : Anchor Press/Doubleday, c1986.
- Hunter, Robin(2004). Madeline Hunter's Mastery teaching : increasing instructional effectiveness in elementary and secondary schools. Thousand Oaks, Calif. : Corwin Press.
- Wolfe, P. (2001). Brain Matters: Translating Research Into Classroom Practice. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Example 1: Focus is on goal setting with assessment and reflection  
2<sup>nd</sup> TRIMESTER PRACTICE & LISTENING RECORD

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Week \_\_\_\_\_

Practice Goals: *One of our main goals is for students to develop the self-discipline and skills to practice consistently and effectively. Your grade for this month will be graded on the average of two things: your ability to reach the goals set for each week and the number of days you practice.*

| Goal Grade                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Daily Practice Grade                                                                                                  |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Grade yourself each day based on how well you can play each goal based on a +, /, - grading system<br>A = both goals are +<br>B = 1 + and 1 /<br>C = both goals are /<br>D = one goal is a /<br>F = both goals are - | You must practice a minimum of 15 minutes<br>A = 6-7 days<br>B = 4-5 days<br>C = 3 days<br>D = 1-2 days<br>F = 0 days |

JANUARY

| WEEKLY GOALS | SU<br>N | MO<br>N | TUE<br>S | WE<br>D | THUR<br>S | FRI | SAT | PARENT<br>SIGNATURE |
|--------------|---------|---------|----------|---------|-----------|-----|-----|---------------------|
| Goal #1      | 5       | 6       | 7        | 8       | 9         | 10  | 11  |                     |
| Goal #2      |         |         |          |         |           |     |     |                     |
| Goal #1      | 12      | 13      | 14       | 15      | 16        | 17  | 18  |                     |
| Goal #2      |         |         |          |         |           |     |     |                     |
| Goal #1      | 19      | 20      | 21       | 22      | 23        | 24  | 25  |                     |
| Goal #2      |         |         |          |         |           |     |     |                     |
|              | 26      | 27      | 28       | 29      | 30        | 31  |     |                     |
|              |         |         |          |         |           |     |     |                     |

What aspect of your playing needs most work? Tone \_\_\_ Fingering \_\_\_ Articulation \_\_\_ Musicality \_\_\_

What techniques will you use to improve it?

What aspect of your playing is best? Tone \_\_\_ Fingering \_\_\_ Articulation \_\_\_ Musicality \_\_\_

What advice will you give friends who need to improve this area?

PRACTICE TOOLS TO USE

| FINGERINGS                                                                                                                              | RHYTHMS                                                                                    | TONE                                                                                         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5 Times in a row without a mistake<br>Take small bites<br>Start slow, then speed up<br>Start in different spots<br>Change up the rhythm | Count and Clap!<br>Play it on one note<br>Take out the slurs<br>Use a metronome<br>Sing it | Long Tones<br>Experiment with your tongue placement<br>Crescendo drill<br>Breathing exercise |

Example 2: For beginning band. This is directed practice, focusing on repetition  
 Beginning Band Practice Goals  
 Week #2 September 22-26

Name \_\_\_\_\_ 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher \_\_\_\_\_

| GOAL: By the end of this week, you should be able to:                               | Put an "X" in a box each time you play an assignment correctly. |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |  |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|--|
| Play a steady tone on your mouthpiece for a full breath of air (at least 5 seconds) |                                                                 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |  |
| Play a steady tone on your instrument for a full breath of air (at least 5 seconds) |                                                                 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |  |
| Play "Au Claire" with a steady tone                                                 |                                                                 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |  |
| Play "Hot Cross Buns" with steady tone and good hand position                       |                                                                 |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |  |
| Accurately complete the worksheet below                                             | #1                                                              | #2 | #3 | #4 | #5 | #6 | #7 | #8 | #9 | #10 |  |

#1. Write the counting under this rhythm:  $4 \quad \eta \quad \theta \quad \theta \quad \eta \quad | \quad \eta \quad | \quad |$

#2. What is this?  $\frac{6}{8}$  \_\_\_\_\_ The top number means \_\_\_\_\_  
 The bottom number means \_\_\_\_\_

#3. Draw 10 whole notes in the space between the two lines.  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

#4. Draw 10 whole notes on the two lines.  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

#5. Draw 10 half notes on lines and in the space.  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

#6. How many beats does a half note get? \_\_\_\_\_

#7. How many beats does a quarter note get? \_\_\_\_\_ Draw 3 quarter notes: \_\_\_\_\_

#8. How many eighth notes fit in one quarter note? \_\_\_\_\_ Draw 3 pairs of eighth notes: \_\_\_\_\_

#9. How many quarter notes fit in a whole note? \_\_\_\_\_

#10. How many eighth notes fit in a half note? \_\_\_\_\_

Example 3: Focus is on Routine, Goal Setting, and Self-Assessment

JACOB'S PRACTICE FOR November 28- December 5

| WARM-UPS                                             | T | W | Th | F | Sa | Su | M |
|------------------------------------------------------|---|---|----|---|----|----|---|
| Scale Book G major 3, 4, 6, 12, 16, 24 notes per bow | / | / | /  | + | +  |    | / |
| Home base shifting (du-di, du-di)                    | + | + |    |   |    |    | + |
| Wohlfahrt #33 - 8 lines                              | - | - | /  |   | /  |    | / |
|                                                      |   |   |    |   |    |    |   |
| SONGS                                                |   |   |    |   |    |    |   |
| Vivaldi G minor 3rd movement all                     | / | / | +  | + | +  |    | + |
| Vivaldi G minor hot spots 5x                         | - | - |    | / | -  |    | / |
| Gigue A section                                      | / |   |    | / |    |    | / |
|                                                      |   |   |    |   |    |    |   |
| OTHER                                                |   |   |    |   |    |    |   |
| Tour group review                                    |   |   | /  |   |    |    |   |
| Sight Reading – p. 28                                |   | + |    | + |    |    | + |

Which of your areas do you feel are really going well?

Which of your areas are you dissatisfied with the results that you had (detail the process you've used to improve them too)?

Comments to the directors on how your practice is going, areas you'd like feed back on, and other general notes to the directors.

Example 4: Notes I presented to my 8<sup>th</sup> grade (I taught 1 concept every few days)  
 GENERAL THOUGHTS ABOUT HOW THE BRAIN WORKS

| CONCEPT                                                                                                        | WHAT THIS MEANS TO YOU                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. You learn by repetition.                                                                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practice makes PERMANENT --- not perfect</li> <li>• You have to play something correctly at least 5 times for every mistake you make</li> <li>• You need to do something new correctly many days in a row before it becomes comfortable</li> <li>• Most new things will feel uncomfortable at first, but repetition will make it comfortable.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                             |
| 2. Your brain can only learn 7 +/- 2 things at a time                                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You should only practice small amounts at a time</li> <li>• Simplify things that are too hard.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 3. Your brain can group separate thoughts into one main thought --- Psychologists call this process “chunking” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Once you can play a group of notes consistently, your brain will begin to process it as one thought</li> <li>• You can combine new “chunks”</li> <li>• You remember chunks better when you can name them</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 4. We have 3 types of memory: short, medium and long term                                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You forget new things very quickly</li> <li>• To get things into long term memory, we need to repeat them often with little time in between repetitions.</li> <li>• The better they’re learned, the more space you can put in between repetitions</li> <li>• Don’t get frustrated when you can’t play something you just learned</li> <li>• You can remember things better when you file them away in more than one way (ie: note names, fingerings, what they look like)</li> </ul> |
| 5. There are 6 levels of learning: knowledge, understanding, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The higher the level of learning, the better you understand something</li> <li>• Instead of trying to “memorize” concepts, learn to “understand” them --- You’ll learn them faster.</li> <li>• Once you understand something, try to apply the concept to new things, analyze how they work, make totally new things, and evaluate how others have used the concept</li> <li>• When something looks tough at first, analyze it using the things you already know.</li> </ul>         |
| 6. Your brain can think of more than one thing at a time, but there is a limit to its capacity                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When something is too tough to learn, simplify it, so that you can focus on the important thing<br/>           SLOW IT DOWN<br/>           TRY JUST ONE ASPECT (just rhythm or just notes etc.)<br/>           LEARN ONLY A FEW NOTES OR MEASURES</li> <li>• Get rid of unnecessary thoughts while you’re playing</li> <li>• TRUST your abilities! Worrying about it takes too much brain power.</li> </ul>                                                                          |

Example 5: 8<sup>th</sup> Graders' Assignment after I presented example 4

“EFFICIENT” PRACTICE SHEET

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Due Date: January 30

|                     | DAY 1    | DAY 2    | DAY 3    | DAY 4    | DAY 5    |
|---------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| WARM-UP EXERCISES   | 1.<br>2. | 1.<br>2. | 1.<br>2. | 1.<br>2. | 1.<br>2. |
| GOAL #1             |          |          |          |          |          |
| GOAL #2             |          |          |          |          |          |
| PRACTICE TOOLS USED |          |          |          |          |          |
|                     |          |          |          |          |          |
|                     |          |          |          |          |          |
|                     |          |          |          |          |          |
|                     |          |          |          |          |          |
| PRACTICE TIME       |          |          |          |          |          |

What goals did you accomplish particularly well?

What practice technique seemed to work best for you?

What seems to be the hardest thing about practice?

Example 6: I turned this into a poster



REPETITION:

Play it 5 times correctly in a row

SMALL BITES:

Take the smallest pattern that makes sense – 5 to 9 things usually works

CHUNKING:

Little bites can turn in to single thoughts

SCHEDULING:

Frequent, high repetition practices at first, followed by gradually spread out review sessions

REMEDiate:

Break your large goals down into small ones that ensure success

ANALYZE:

Are there patterns / pitfalls that you recognize? Use the knowledge you've already gained!

THINK:

Count it, say the note names, alternate fingerings, ASSESS YOURSELF!

FOCUS:

Force yourself to concentrate

BELIEVE:

Whether you think you can or whether you think you can't, you're always correct!



Example 7: This was another poster (it wins lots of brownie points from principles who preach integration!)

# THE SCIENTIFIC METHOD OF PRACTICE

**Select a problem**

**My tone is fuzzy.**

---

**Review the knowledge base**

**What effects tone?**

---

**Develop a hypothesis**

**My embouchure is weak.**

---

**Test through experimentation**

**Play with a firmer embouchure.**

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**Collect data**

**Listen**

---

**Analyze data**

**It's a little better,**

**but I still here some  
fuzz**

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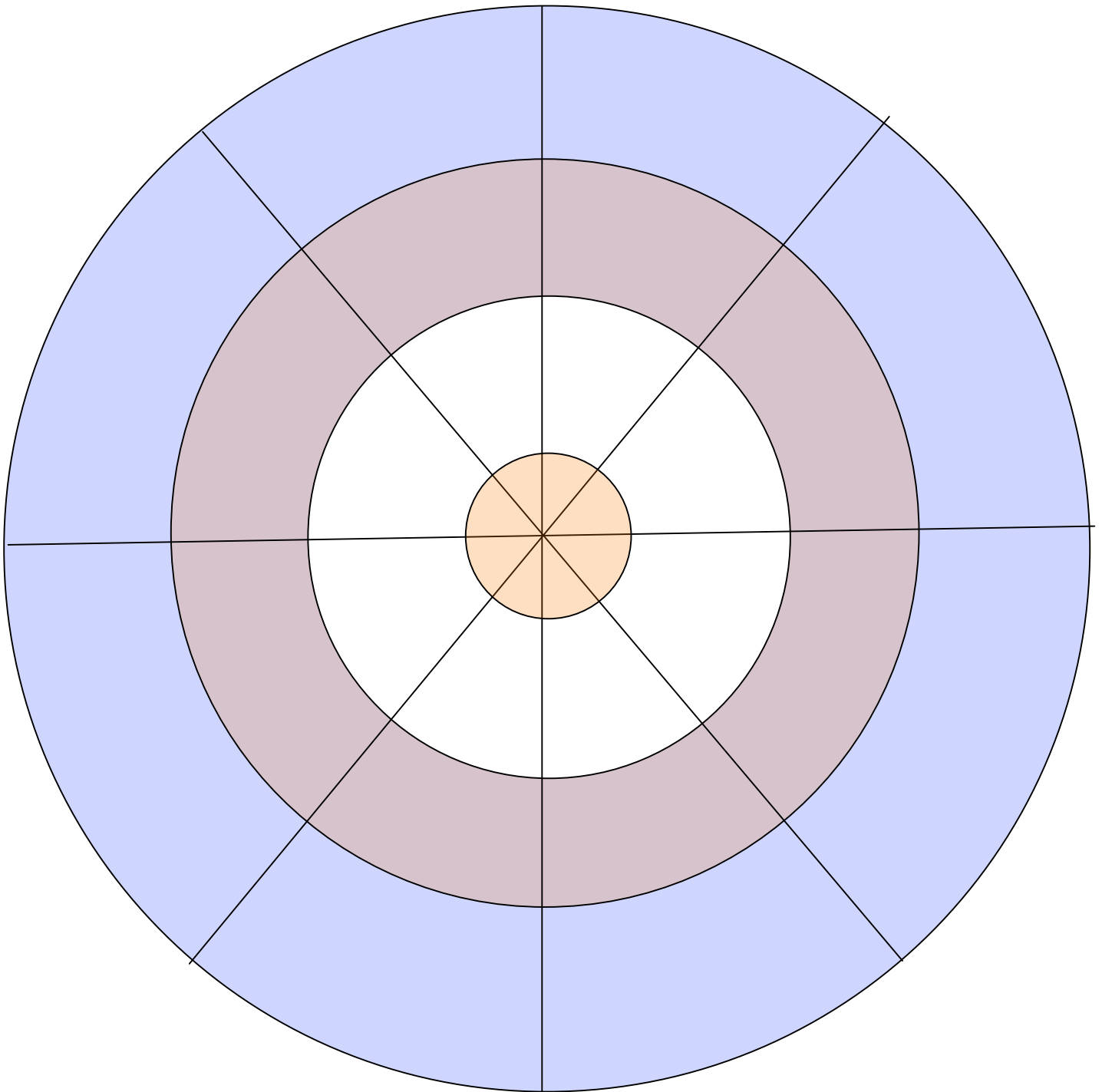
**Interpret the  
results**

**A firmer  
embouchure helps  
my tone – but  
there's more!**

Example 8: This gives a visual representation of progress made while learning a piece of music.

                      
TARGET

- Break your piece into sections.
- Color in/cross off each level of each section once the class has met the standard
  - Students will see their progress as well as hear it.



Level 1: Notes & Rhythms Separately  
Level 2: Notes & Rhythms Together

Level 3: Articulations, steady tone, in tune  
Level 4: Fluent & Musical