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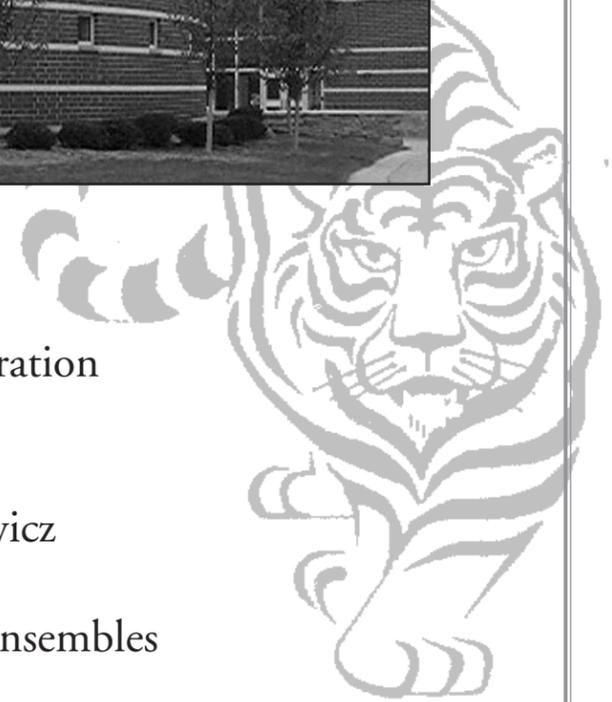
# Premium Blend:

Middle School Percussion Curriculum  
Utilizing Western and  
Non-Western Pedagogy



A Clinic/Demonstration

Presented by  
Bob Siemienkowicz  
And The  
Winfield Percussion Ensembles



## ACT 1

Good morning. Thank you for allowing us to show what we do and how we do it. Our program works for our situation in Winfield and we hope portions of it will work for your program. Let's start with a song and then we will time warp into year one of our program.

**SONG** – *Prelude in E minor*

**YEAR 1** – All those instruments

The Winfield Band program, my philosophy has been that rhythm is the key to success. I tell all band students “You can learn the notes and fingerings fine, but without good rhythm, no one will understand what you are playing.” This is also true in folkloric music. Faster does not mean you are a better player. How well you communicate musically establishes your level of proficiency. Our first lessons with all band students are clapping exercises I design and lessons from the Goldenberg Percussion method book. Without the impedance of embouchure, fingerings and the thought of dropping a \$500 instrument on the floor, the student becomes completely focused on rhythmic study. For the first percussion lesson, the focus is also rhythmic. Without the need for lips, we play hand percussion immediately. For the first Western rudiment, we play paradiddles on conga drums or bongos (**PLAY HERE**). All percussion students **must** say paradiddle while they play it. Practice and application become a vocal exercise. This approach accomplishes several things. The first introduces the idea of space. With the 2 different pitches, the students can differentiate the diddle part easier. After awhile, this exercise becomes part of our warm-ups. The use of “space” is also stressed. Percussionists constantly have to deal with space issues. The positioning of hands and the placement of

the body in relation to the equipment becomes very important. After these initial lessons we will add some of the Goldenberg exercises the band is working on to our regular warm-up.

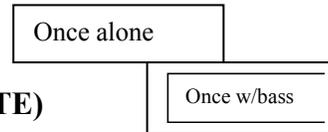
Next we move to the marimba. I feel if a young student cannot hear the melody, it is difficult to compensate for dynamics and balance. Here on the marimba we play paradiddles in octaves. Again, the idea of space is critical. Once the students understand this exercise, we will move stepwise around the instrument. Next we may use combinations of marimba diddles with conga diddles and a steady beat cowbell to keep it together. **(Demonstrate)**

Soon we introduce our first Afro-Cuban technique to the students. This would be the Tumbao rhythm. It sounds very similar to the paradiddle, but is played differently. The correlation here is the paradiddle rhythm is in eighth notes as is Tumbao. If the student is struggling with the standard rhythm, we use Tumbao simplified. **(EXAMPLE)**

*(Combine both with the marimba)*

At this time the band is learning their first songs like Merrily We Roll Along. The percussionists will learn this song on mallets as well as snare and bass. Here is the snare part for Merrily We Roll Along **(DEMONSTRATE)**. We have to get ready for the first big concert, but the percussionists need something more to keep them interested. We also do not need 9 snare drums at the first gig. Here is what we do.

Conga - Tumbao  
Snare- written  
Bass drum - written  
Mallets - written  
Guiro – quarter notes or  
Cowbell – quarter notes  
Here is what it sounds like.



Add a 1 – 5 bass part and you get this. **(DEMONSTRATE)**

To sum up year one, we start with hand percussion using Western rudiments then we graduate to mallets, sticks on drums and basic skills of Afro-Cuban instruments.

Everything reinforces aurally and vocally.

Walt Hampton has some wonderful Orff pieces we use in our repertoire. These pieces are used constantly in the advanced ensemble as warm ups or as fillers when the band is in an informal performance. It is simple enough, but reinforces the groove while limiting the amount of space the students use on the mallet instruments. It also gives the performers their first chance to solo. It is in AB form. On the repeats a students can solo on their written part. It can be used in first or second year percussion.

**SONG – *Crunchy, Crunchy, Crunchy – Short Version***

Once the students have a feel for rhythm and melody, where do you go from there? Well we as band directors introduce more instruments. The band kids are responsible for learning their one instrument while the percussionists are learning several. In some cases, percussionists are reading split lines with trying to subdivide rhythms the band is playing. If you think about it, traditionally we introduce the snare drum just to get them started. After the first few weeks they have an idea of snare, we say great, let me show you the bass drum. “Do I play it like the snare?” Nope. You read it the same way, but it is played differently. When they have an idea of that, we say great, let me show you crash

cymbals. When they have an idea of that and are not falling over with them anymore, we say great, let me show you timpani. “Oh, these are like mini bass drums, right?” Nope, you read it in Bass clef and the technique is similar to snare but no double strokes. Here is a pitch pipe let me show you how to tune. Oh by the way, you play mallets on the slow piece, snare on the march, and crash cymbals on the closer.

## **YEAR 2 - Moving Beyond The Band Book**

Let me preface with, I DO use method books regularly with my percussionists. Because these students are a unique breed, we find it important to use all previous Western and Non-Western techniques as much as possible. In addition, we supplement studies beyond the band repertoire.

In our second year, we will get deeper into rudiments, timing and accuracy. Our warm ups will be on pads. Before we had pads, we used chair backs. At the beginning of second year lesson groups, we review what we have learned, and perhaps play through some of the old tunes. We do not let our old tunes “go away.” Our warm ups become more intense. As we hit the pad I will call out rudiments that I want the students to execute. For example, we will start out on paradiddles. As we approach 4 or 8 measures, I will call out Flams. After another 8, I will call out other rudiments the students will need to master. This warms up the brain and the body and the students are concentrating at a high level. **(DEMONSTRATE)**.

Repertoire at this level may consist of transcriptions from children’s piano works or perhaps a pop tune like La Bamba. We will visit transcriptions again later in the program. The next song is a Cha Cha. We will have the Tumbao rhythm, the all-

important clave and a strong ostinato from the marimba. The new instrument introduced is the Timbales. We use this Cascara rhythm as a warm up on the pads.

**(Kevin DEMONSTRATES).**

On the pads, it looks like this **(DEMONSTRATE)**. It is a great way to start the independence process if the students are thinking about playing drum set.

It is important to remember that much of the ethnic instrument techniques come from vocal exercises. The Cascara rhythm on the timbales was taught to me this way. Cow bell keeps time LH and RH plays “Please pass the ketchup in East St. Louis.” For 3/2 clave. You would do the reverse for 2/3 clave. So if you have timbales, use these patterns. You can really hear the difference when the clave is on the wrong side.

**(DEMONSTRATE 2/3 to 3/2 on Cha Cha Sandwich.)**

For these students at this level, when we play music of this type, they know which instruments to play according to the style of the song. We use La Bamba for the band, but the only written percussion part distributed is the mallet part. The reason the other parts were not passed out was because they were folklorically wrong. I had the students, not these, play the actual parts once. They could play them accurately, but the entire band lost its groove. From a Western music perspective they were correct, but ethnically it was not working.

This next song has been transferred from steel band music. We have added an electric bass that plays 3 rhythms throughout the song. I play the clave. Since the clave is the key instrument (literally translated), I use it as my conducting baton. Also, there is a solo section in the song that uses the G minor pentatonic. You are now combining all the elements we discussed, adding improvisation; a bass player in a multi layered

composition. This is suitable for mid or late year performance depending on how often you meet with your students.

**SONG** – *Cha Cha Sandwich*

### **MIDDLE SCHOOL EXTENSIONS**

There are some students that do not catch the music bug until later in school. World Beat is an ensemble that reaches out to the rest of the Winfield school population. It is less formal than the Western style of band music, and has less of a time commitment. Some students opt to come to World Beat but they are reluctant to perform. Most of this music is taught aurally. The similarity between the groups is their discipline. As Western conductors, we control everything from the podium. In this setting, the conductor is usually with the players. Most of the music we perform comes from everyday music from other cultures. **A word of caution when using this music. Do your homework when performing this music. We teach in environments that are sensitive. Some of the music we think sounds really cool, may contain meanings that could get us into trouble.** Much of our repertoire comes from clinics and classes I have taken, and from some the resources listed in the back of your program. The music itself is also taught the same way it was taught to me. Some of my teachers were very adamant about not writing everything down and some refused to allow you to bring in a recording device. Unlike the Western style setting, we may have different students come in at any given time. A similarity at our school is both groups rehearse only once per week. Obviously the senior group has put in more time to show you their capabilities. If there are new World Beat players that have joined the program and do not know the tune, the older students teach them the parts. World Beat rehearses on Friday at the end of the day during study hall.

We have our core set of tunes and new players learn the tunes from other members of the group. Many of the rhythms are quite complicated and it takes a few times through for the students to get it. If they struggle, the group will stop and we will all play the part together. In some songs, the members are required to learn all the parts. My African drum teacher says, “If you don’t get it today, there is always tomorrow.” He also says “When you play, mean (be real about) what you are playing. Play like there is no tomorrow.” Why would anyone give a bunch of middle school students a bunch of drums on a Friday afternoon? Listen to this!!

**SONG – *Borbobo***

Like Western music, technique is very important and stressed often. If you watch our hands, all the tones are created precisely. This is the only way the drum talks clearly. This song is first taught vocally. Let me teach it to you quickly. By the way, no writing anything down until after I am done. My students are watching you now.

**(DEMONSTRATE FANGA, Vocally using the room in thirds).**

If you do not have the drums, find anything that has 3 pitches to play. You could even use various types of plastic garbage cans. This type of music works best if it is taught authentically. It becomes internal upon singing or rapping the rhythms. You and these students will remember this tune forever. You’ll be driving home tonight or you will see me next year and you’ll say. Fanga, it’s a Drum song Baby!

The next song is originally done on bamboo, but this works better for us. A doctor of music from Ohio transcribed this. Here is where I introduce the concept of notation to the group. What is interesting is at this point the group wants me to sing a phrase for their rhythms. This is now a reverse pedagogy compared to the concert percussionist.

The concert percussionist started with reading simple rhythms with the band applied an Afro-Cuban technique to the Western paradiddle, and as the music became more difficult, vocalises were applied to simplify complex rhythms. World Beat learned repertoire and technique by ear and was introduced to written rhythm at a later date. After the students learned this piece, they have the option of composing their own bamboo song on the MIDI workstations in our General music classrooms.

The bamboo stick game comes from children who are using mortars and pestles to grind fruit and nuts for an afternoon treat.

**SONG – Bamboo Stick Game**

This last example for World Beat incorporates our African Xylophones. There is a small section for soloing that can be expanded. We do not have a double bass xylophone, so we use the synth on a marimba patch. On a day like today, this song should take your mind to a lazy sand beach in Florida. This is Sanibel by Paul Corbiere and James Mader.

**SONG – Sanibel**

**YEAR 3-5**

Cumulative Curriculum means we build a library of tunes over the years. It worked for the legendary Big Bands and for us, it keeps foundational techniques solid. As in World Beat, when someone new comes in, I try to have older students teach the younger ones.

**SONG – Pad Warm ups**

The older group will now so warm ups that include more rudiments and ethnic patterns. We also use a more complicated accent warm up that will stress syncopation. **(DEMO)**

This next piece is one of our "hook" pieces. Thanks to the popularity of some performance art shows, Fresh Trash is complicated enough, yet attainable for students in the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> year of study.

This garbage can piece has many hard core rudiment studies incorporated. It is also very specific about the player ability to judge space. Throughout this piece there is an element of trust. They are trusting that the person next to them does not smash their hands with the pretty red sticks. The cans were donated by our local Ace hardware store. I am sure you can get your hands on some if you explain your concept. We introduce this song in 5<sup>th</sup> grade. By the end of the year, most students can read through the first half of the song. In 6<sup>th</sup> grade we start memorizing it. The students are required to play very specific stickings on the sides and tops of the cans. When some of the rhythms or techniques get too complicated, we change them to vocal exercises.

### **DEMONSTRATE**

For a 3<sup>rd</sup> year student, some of this notation is kind of crazy. With a Non-Western approach to certain areas of the song, it becomes quite easy.

### **SONG – *Fresh Trash***

Other hooks I use are playing tunes the students suggest. One of my first arrangements was for Heart and Soul in a Latin feel. This piece incorporated 3-mallet technique in the marimba accompaniment. Finding repertoire is the most challenging for this level of performer. Depending on how often you meet, the music will be just out of bounds for a middle school student. I have found that using 4 hand piano books, and arranging string quartets are very effective. This short song can be used for solo contest. It also

introduces 3 mallet technique. The mallets stay in a Perfect 5<sup>th</sup>. This helps in not scaring away students when they have to use multiple mallets.

**SONG – Zug Nacht Grand Junction**

Finding material has always been a challenge. Winfield is a small school and the percussion classes have varied from the class to see here to my current beginning percussion class of 0. I do have 5 students on Trombone, so hopefully things will even out over time.

This next quartet is very musical. It highlights the different timbres of the percussion section. It is a multipercussion piece and the most difficult rhythm is the sixteenth note. The instrumentation is common to most programs. Dimensions by Elliot Del Borgo is an excellent vehicle for developing percussion musicality.

**SONG – Dimensions**

This next song is also a quartet. It is in 4 movements, and features Latin instruments. The trick here is that it must be played in a Western style. Even the students noticed, after looking at the other movements, that the music is classical in nature. Because of the difficulty of some of the other movements, we only play the first movement. Here is an excerpt from Till the Cows Come Home.

**SONG – Cows**

Many of the band methods contain music for electric bass. For the small band program, it is sometimes easier to get bass players than tuba players. Adding the bass can move the group into all kinds of stylistic tunes. You can do Latin, Caribbean, and arrangements of pop tunes once you have a capable bass player. This next song is ideal for a small ensemble with bass and can be expanded on with part doubling. We are going to layer to

for you. Layering is something we do often in World Beat and Percussion Ensemble. It provides a solid rhythm foundation for the players and the ones preparing to add their layer. This is Puttin' Out The Cat.

**SONG – Puttin' Out the Cat**

Our Premium Blend Culminates with both ensembles performing together on select works. This xylophone piece is written for African xylophones, which are pentatonic in nature. The Concert percussionists learned the piece by ear on Western tempered scale instruments. Again, to conduct, I will play with the students. The cues are musical and quick so everyone needs to pay attention throughout the song.

**SONG – Bawa**

This next work is by Walt Hampton from Hot Marimba. World Beat backs up with percussion. In this piece, the African xylos do not work. Walts stickings are very specific.

**SONG – Rip!!!!!!**

For Winfield Central School, this type of program has been very successful. Much of the material has been gathered from a few classes. A majority of the ideas for my entire program have come from the Midwest Clinic. If I had questions, I would seek out those experts in and around my area. Send an email to your former college. In fact, I am always looking for new material. My email is on the back of your program. The Midwest connection is just a starting point. I hope there is something here today that has caught your attention that you could use in your program. Before we play our last number, I would like to thank our sponsors listed in your program, the Winfield school percussion parents and administration, these kids who have committed themselves to this

program and most importantly my wife Janette and daughter Jaina who supported me and kept me alive and laughing for the past 18 months.

Shongaloo Ramble is one of our favorite works. It is a 10-layer percussion ensemble of independent parts composed by Chris Brooks. It has a New Orleans style street beat interlude with, again, a cool layering closer. Happy Holidays from Winfield percussion and myself.

# Winfield School District 34

Elementary School - OS150 Winfield Road, Winfield, IL 60190

Middle School - OS150 Park Street, Winfield, IL 60190

It is with great honor and pride that the Winfield Schools present our Winfield Percussion Ensembles to the most prestigious music program in the world; the Annual Midwest International Band and Orchestra Clinic!

The student musicians performing at this event, represent the finest facets of our music programs in our Winfield Schools. This event presents an opportunity for our students to celebrate the years of dedication, perseverance, and plain hard work put forth in preparation for this level of performance.

I am proud to say that numerous individuals and groups have supported the students' endeavors leading up to this presentation today. Under the direction and tutelage of Mr. Robert Siemienkowicz, these ensembles have developed and flourished; learning more and more about their craft with each lesson, each rehearsal, and each performance.

In addition, our ensembles have been the benefactors of incredibly supportive parents, administrators, teachers, school board members, and fellow students; all united to support our successful music program.

I offer my most sincere commendations and congratulations to Mr. Siemienkowicz and the fine young men and women of our Winfield Percussion Ensemble.

Thank you for the invitation to perform at the greatest music education clinic in the world!

Mr. Michael Backer, Principal  
Winfield School District 34  
Winfield, Illinois



Diane P. Cody, Ed.D., Superintendent - 630/909-4900  
Michael S. Backer, Principal - 630/909-4960



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## Acknowledgements

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Sowah Mensah – Ghanaian Music  
Josh Ryan – Afro-Cuban  
Paul Corbiere  
James Mader  
Dede Sampaio – Brazilian Music  
Rich Holly – Northern Illinois Univ.  
Mike Backer, Principal at Winfield

# Year 1

Pedagogical Concepts

Western-The Method Book

Non-Western-The Ear and Voice

Techniques and Warm Ups

*Congadiddles, Malletdiddles*

Examples

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# Year 2

Pedagogical Concepts

*Moving beyond the band book*

Techniques and Warm Ups

*Accent Warm-Up*

*Extensions*

Examples & Repertoire

# Middle School Extensions

World Music Curriculum

Reverse Pedagogy

Cultural Respect

Techniques

Examples and Resources

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# Year 3-5

Cumulative Curriculum

Warm Ups

*Accent Warm Up, Call Warm Up*

Hooks

Formal Literature

Adding The Bass and Going Deep

## Winfield Percussion Repertoire Library

Song Title	Composer	Publisher	Grade	Players
Puttin' Out The Cat	Chris Brooks	Row-Loff	2	5 or 6
Bercuese	Dawson/Steinquest	Row-Loff	2.5	4 to 6
Mahna Mahna	Umiliani/Siemiencowicz	NA	1.5	6 to 12
Cha Cha Sandwich	Phil Hawkins	P-Note	2	6 to 10
Prelude In E Minor	Chopin/Steinquest	Row-Loff	2.5	9
Dimensions	Elliot Del Borgo	Kendor	3	4
Ritmo Rico	Wolfer/Siemiencowicz	NA	3.5	12
Ritmo Suave	Lalo Davila	Row-Loff	2.5	6 to 8
Four Comments For Latin Hands	Larry Snider	Ludwig Music	3+	4
Ukrainian Bell Carol (with band)	Tony Gibbs	Gore	2	3 to 10
Christmas Time Is Here	Guaraldi/Brooks Mendelson	Row-Loff	2	8 to 9
2001 A Mallet Oddity	arr. Steinquest	Row-Loff	1.5	8 to 10
Low Rider	Dickerson/Siemiencowicz	NA	1.5	6 to 9
Das Vierhandige Tasten Krokodil	Various	Breitkopf & Hartel	1.5	2
Shongaloo Ramble	Chris Brooks	Row-Loff	3+	9 to 11
Four Studies	Mario Gaetano	C. Alan Pub	3+	4
Five Easy Two Mallet Pieces for Marimba	Jon Metzger	C. Alan Pub	3+	1

### Video

Drum Along Drum Circle Video	Hands on Drum Circle Video	InterWorld Music
Adventures in Rhythm-Congas	Richie Garcia	LP Music Group
Adventures in Rhythm-Timbales	Richie Garcia	LP Music Group
Latin American Percussion	Birger Sulsbruck	Edition Wilhelm Hansen
Sheddin' The Basics-Latin Music	Interactive CD-ROM	Roxmedia.com
Arthur Hull-Guide To Endrummingent		InterWorld Music
Arthur Hull-Facilitating Drum Circles	Arthur Hull	Village Music Circles

### Books

Ancient Traditions-Future Possibilities	Mathew Montfort	Ancient Future Music		
The Art and Heart of Drum Circles	Christine Stevens	Hal Leonard	1	
World Music Drumming Curriculum	Will Schmid	Hal Leonard	1	many
The Lion's Roar-Chinese Percussion Ens	Kuo-Huang, Shehan-Campbell	World Press Music	1	4 to 6
DRUM	Jim Solomon	Bel-Win Mills	1	many
Conga Town	Jim Solomon	Bel-Win Mills	1	many
Music Of The Village	Corbirere/ Mader		1 to 2	many
Hot Marimba	Walt Hampton	World Music Press	1	many
Marimba Mojo	Walt Hampton	World Music Press	1	many
Wood Songs	Brent M. Holl	Beatin' Path Pub	1 to 3	many
Alfred Drum Method Book 1	Sandy Feldstein & Dave Black	Alfred Publishing		
Building Percussion Technique	Sandy Feldstein	Warner Brothers		
Fundamental Studies for Mallets	Garwood Whaley	JR Publications		
Fundamental Studies for Timpani	Garwood Whaley	JR Publications		
Fundamental Method for Mallets	Mitchell Peters	Alfred Publishing		



Winfield Percussion Ensemble



World Beat Percussion Ensemble