

**Beginning Strings - Keep it Simple**  
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**I. Layering - the first few weeks**

- A. Recruiting
- B. Parent involvement - Parent Night and Rental Night
- C. Instrument safety - unpacking, tuners, bow hair etc.
- D. First lessons - get them playing and reading music right away
  - holding instrument
  - open strings and fingering - by rote at first (rote warm-ups on teacher CD)
  - pizzicato (Lesson 1)
  - first fingered notes F#ED (Lesson 1)
  - solfege
  - intervals
  - stay on three notes while bow hold is introduced
  - establish good tone bowing on open strings and then go back and play previously learned songs in book
  - all instruments play F#ED on the D string until A is introduced along with the concept of string crossing because of the bass strings D and G
  - new note G follows A
  - establishing practice habits

**II. Introduction of new concepts**

- rhythms are introduced in this sequence:  quarter rest
- when a new note and interval are introduced, a series of practice measures are learned before using the new note in songs
- interval progression is unison, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, Perfect 5<sup>th</sup> (because of string crossing in the bass to A), Perfect 4<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, octave and 7<sup>th</sup> and respective solfege syllables
- time signatures start with 2/4, and then 3/4 and 4/4 (C for common time used as well)
- bowing styles: pizzicato, staccato, and lift

- students learn how phrases create the form of the music by marking letters of phrases in the boxes provided (ABA1B1)
- ensembles: ostinato, round, tonic and dominant accompaniment
- dynamics used are forte and piano
- keys signatures and scales used are D major, G major and C major
- bass players shift to III, II and II  $\frac{1}{2}$  positions and always play the melody as written (not dropping an octave for certain notes)
- violin and viola learn 4<sup>th</sup> finger notes
- students learn about Mozart, Vivaldi, Beethoven, and Dvorak and play their music
- introduction of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> endings and repeat signs

### **III. Practice steps example (Lesson 3)**

1. Say the note names: F#, E, and D.
2. Name the interval and say if it goes up or down.
3. Sing mi, re, do.
4. Sing the words to the songs.
5. Clap and count aloud. Did you find the quarter rests in Hot Cross Buns?
6. Remember to say the beat number during the rest.
7. Play each note pizzicato.

### **III. Blending standards into the first year**

- A. Sing lyrics (Standard 1) - most songs have words to be sung.
- B. Sing in solfege (Standard 1) - part of practice is singing songs in solfege.
- C. Play individually or in a group (Standard 2) - check students' posture, note reading accuracy and intonation frequently by having a solo day or listening to one line of a song.
- D. Improvise (Standard 3) - students are asked to improvise using the notes and rhythms they are currently studying.
- E. Compose (Standard 4) - students first practice copying a song and then create their own songs using the notes and rhythms they are currently studying.

- F. Read music (Standard 5) - have students say note names or clap and count one line of a song periodically to check for understanding.
- G. Listen (Standard 6) - record individual student performance and have the student tell you what needs to improve and how to make those changes.
- H. Evaluate (Standard 7) - play recordings of composers and styles studied and have students discuss the musical concepts they heard as a group or have students evaluate their own individual performance.
- I. Music and other disciplines (Standard 8) - music relates to math (rhythm), language (musical terms), science (sound production), and history (musical eras and composers).
- J. Music, history and culture (Standard 9) - music is played from a variety of musical cultures and musical eras.

**IV. Assessment the first year -**

- A. What do you assess? Rubrics provided on teacher CD.
- B. When do you assess?
- C. Types of assessments
- D. Self-assessment
- E. Recording assessment
- F. Reporting assessment
- G. "Chunking" standards

**V. Record keeping - traveling teacher or not**

- A. Attendance
- B. Lesson plans - standards based lesson plans on CD in teacher's manual
- C. Sub preparation for several schools

**VI. Retention to the next year**

- A. Cross-over concerts
- B. Other ideas - share