

# **“Successful Beginning and Intermediate Junior High/Middle School Percussion Concepts”**

Presented by  
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For  
Midwest Clinic  
December 20, 2007, 1:30 pm, Gold Room/Congress Plaza

This handout was developed to provide a curriculum schedule and structure for the beginning and intermediate years of young percussionists. This outline is designed for the most common age/grade groupings for public school; sixth grade, or beginning percussion class, and seventh and eighth grade years as part of the standard concert band class.

## **Sixth grade or beginning year**

### **Fall Semester**

#### August/September

- Establish all correct equipment; bell kits, practice pads and sticks/mallets
- Establish stance and approach to percussion instruments
- Begin Lever 1 technique, pivoting from the elbow, to establish the buzz roll
- Begin Lever 2 single hand exercises, pivoting from the wrist, to establish the “Legato” stroke for general playing
- Begin Lever 2 double hand exercises to develop “2:1 Ratio” exercises; i.e. eighth notes to sixteenth notes

#### October/November

- Begin single hand mallet keyboard exercises in all key signatures
- Begin simple reading for both practice pad and mallet keyboards

#### December

- Begin working on holiday music for both concert band and percussion ensemble

## **Spring Semester**

### January/February

- Introduce double hand scales, patterns and thirds in all key signatures
- Introduce sixteenth note timing exercises on practice pads
- Introduce Accent/Tap exercises on practice pads with a legato approach
- Introduce roll types and lengths; i.e. five stroke roll, nine stroke roll, etc.

### March/April

- Begin testing on all curriculum from both semesters
- Introduce lever changes
- Begin to work on both a snare and mallet solo
- Introduce timpani knowledge and technique

### May

- Finish up timpani knowledge and technique
- Introduce basic accessories; concert bass drum, crash cymbals, suspended cymbal, tambourine, triangle, etc.

## **Seventh and eighth grade years**

### **Fall Semester**

- Review technique, grip, strokes and approach that were introduced in beginning percussion; eight on a hand, 2:1 ratio exercises, sixteenth note timing exercises and roll exercises
- Review all scales, patterns and thirds exercises
- "Football music" and cadences/street beats
- Region or District Band music
- Christmas band music and percussion ensembles

## **Spring Semester**

- Introduce one octave arpeggios and introduce “stair step arpeggios” in all key signatures
- Prepare solo and ensemble music
- Prepare U.I.L. or competitive concert band literature
- Begin working on additional percussion ensemble literature to possibly include “novelty” ensembles for inclusion on spring concerts or high school percussion concerts
- Begin working on spring concert literature

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Please feel free to contact us with any questions or clinic requests at the contact information listed below.

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