A JAZZ-BASED BEGINNING BAND IMPROVISATION CURRICULUM

by

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ABSTRACT

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Although aural learning and improvisation of music have been fundamental components of music learning theories for at least two hundred years, published resources for beginning instrumentalists usually take a notation-first approach. An analysis of popular beginning band method books published in the last six years further reveals an emphasis on the teaching of techniques necessary to play music in the Western classical tradition, an emphasis which might influence instrumental teachers' values and teaching approaches. An alternative approach in beginning instrumental music instruction emphasizes improvisation and the development of music listening and speaking vocabularies prior to the development of music literacy. Jazz offers an ideal medium for this exploration, as improvisation is integral to this art form, and it is a genre outside of the Western Classical tradition.

The call to incorporate improvisation and jazz into the beginning instrumental curriculum will necessitate the revision of current curricula, the adoption of new learning goals, and the development of additional teaching strategies. This project aims to help fill this void and to make improvisation and jazz available to all instrumentalists through the creation of a jazz-based beginning band improvisation curriculum unit for grades 5 through 8. The unit that is the content of Chapter Four of the project meets the National Standards for Arts Education

improvisation content standard and can be taught within the typical time constraints of beginning instrumental instruction in a school setting.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

One of the highlights of teaching beginning band is watching students explore their instruments for the first time. Over the years of observing the eagerness, curiosity, and excitement with which beginning band students delve into those initial explorations, I have recurrently thought about how to sustain that same level of interest and motivation in those students throughout the year. Kindergarten through 6th grade general music teachers provide the musical foundation for children in public education. Beginning instrumental and choral teachers ensure that students continue to profit from the well-documented physical, social, emotional, and psychological benefits inherent in active musical experience in a musical community. As students from age ten on will not continue their musical development without active musical participation, maintaining student interest and motivation is crucial.

Music is a language that is best learned in the way that we learn our mother tongue—first by listening, then by speaking (in both an imitative and improvisatory fashion), and lastly by reading and writing. Educators would not consider teaching children how to read language who had neither listened to their mother tongue nor developed a strong vocabulary. Yet in the beginning band method books that are typically used by band students following those enthusiastic preliminary explorations on their instruments, the notation-first approach to the musical language is the norm.

Method books emphasize expanding student reading vocabulary without first developing a foundation in speaking (playing) the language of music.

Initial exercises in these books are usually visually complex and include most aspects of music notation: staff, time signature, clef, key signature, rhythm notation, and tonal notation. While focused on decoding notation, students' attention is concentrated on symbols rather than on listening to their sound and exploring the rich context of tonality, meter and style. In these curricula, the first melodies played by beginning band students—their melodic first words--are restricted to those that they can read and characteristically contain a limited rhythmic and tonal vocabulary. These musical limitations do not initially interfere with student engagement, but I have observed that over time the lack of melodic interest seems to negatively affect student motivation.

Creativity and improvisation in speaking invariably follow children's initial immersion in their mother tongue—an exciting period in which children apply the rules of language to perceiving and generating new speech. This holds true in musical development as well. Musical improvisation in playing naturally follows musical immersion, with children using their rhythmic and tonal vocabulary in novel ways within the schema of musical forms. However, this hallmark of musical language development is also mostly or entirely absent in beginning instrumental method books. In fact, although improvisation is one of the eight content national standards in music education, and although it has been a vital part of music-making throughout history, it is missing from most school music curricula today.

As the class method book functions as the beginning band curriculum, the type of music typically selected for these books determines the beginning band students' musical repertoire. This collection is dominated by songs that are from the Western classical tradition or music from the North American and European folk music repertoire. Of the two primary musical streams in America's musical mother tongue—African and European—only music of the European tradition is emphasized in beginning band method books. Jazz and the blues, which are America's authentic art forms and which combine African and European musical streams, are often barely represented, if at all, in these curricula. When a blues-based melody is included, it is usually presented in a stylistically inauthentic manner. This Eurocentric approach to teaching African-American music results in music sounding western European with an accent. While a musical interpretation of this nature represents a nod in the direction of multiculturalism, it is not the in-depth or authentic experience required for students' musical development.

Writing an effective beginning band curriculum is inherently challenging. While addressing all nine of the national content standards in music education in a pedagogically sound manner, it also needs to be flexible enough to accommodate the multiple variations in beginning band scheduling and student grouping. Perhaps above all, it must provide the framework to keep student motivation high throughout the first year of beginning band instruction.

I have found the beginning band method book to be an excellent resource in many respects in teaching beginning band students. However, I wondered if a

curriculum that paralleled the steps involved in language learning and that included more opportunities for student creativity and improvisation would increase beginning band student motivation and musical growth. Jazz is the perfect musical style on which to base such a curriculum. It is centered around improvisation, has historically paralleled the learning of language in its oral transmission from one generation to the next, and is an integral part of the American fabric. With this as my starting point, I set out to develop a jazz-based beginning band improvisation curriculum. This project describes the process involved in my journey.

The development of this project is presented in five chapters including this introductory chapter. In Chapter Two, I review the relevant literature addressing the role of jazz improvisation in the music teaching and learning process, with particular attention paid to beginning instrumental teaching and learning for children ages 9 to 12. The personal and professional experiences that influenced my pedagogical approach and lead to the development of a jazz-based beginning band improvisation curriculum are described in Chapter Three. The final version of the curriculum appears in its entirety in Chapter Four. In Chapter Five, I have provided a short summary of the main points in the design and development of the project as well as recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Music improvisation and creativity are routinely identified by many music educators as essential skills for all students (Azzara, 2002). However, a review of the literature on improvisation in music education reveals that it is rarely part of the core of music education curricula (Azzara, 2002). In order to correct this deficiency, there is a need for teacher education in improvisation and improvisation instructional materials (Azzara, 2002). Improvisation is an integral part of jazz, more so than in any other style of Western music, and therefore jazz serves as an obvious vehicle for the teaching of improvisation.

This review of literature, presented in three major sections, offers an investigation of the role of jazz improvisation in the music teaching and learning process, with particular attention paid to beginning instrumental teaching and learning for children ages 9 to 12. The first section of this chapter begins with a definition of jazz, followed by an overview of the historical context of jazz education specifically, and music education generally, with segments on philosophy and content. The second section is a discussion of development and its impact on children's abilities to play and understand music, specifically exploring cognitive development and the developmental characteristics of music learners, musical literacy, and student motivation. The review concludes with an analysis of traditional

and alternative methods of teaching music to children with a particular emphasis on first and second year beginning instrumental instruction.

Definition of Jazz

Any investigation of the role played by jazz improvisation in the musical teaching and learning process must begin with a basic understanding of the jazz musical style. Originating out of New Orleans around the beginning of the twentieth century, jazz combined elements from African- and European-derived musics into a distinctly American art form (Kuzmich & Bash, 1984). The African characteristics included syncopation, poly-rhythm, improvisation, call and response, audience participation (singing, dancing and/or playing of rhythms) and an emphasis on melodic expression through bending pitches, using growls or moans, wailing and vibrato (Kuzmich & Bash, 1984). European traits included the use of Western European instruments, a system of notation, harmony (chord progressions and scales) and musical form (Kuzmich & Bash, 1984). Developing out of its early roots in field hollers, work songs, blues, and ragtime, jazz has been articulated in a variety of styles from the 1900s to the present, including the earliest styles of jazz from New Orleans and Chicago, boogie woogie, swing, bebop, cool, progressive, hard bop, third stream, free jazz, fusion, and Latin jazz (Gridley, 2004; Kuzmich & Bash, 1984). While the term jazz has been used to describe many types of music, there are two aspects that almost all jazz styles have in common—improvisation and swing feeling (Gridley, 2004). Improvisation is the process of spontaneously creating the music within its rhythmic and harmonic contexts, and demands individual invention

of new melodies and an individual articulation of the style and rhythm that exceeds the musical notation (Gridley, 2004; Kuzmich & Bash, 1984). The swing feeling, while subjective in its interpretation, involves four basic elements: a steady beat; a pleasurable lilt or spirit (sometimes referred to as a groove); syncopated rhythms, in which the beat is emphasized or accented when it is least expected; and the continuous alternations between tension and release through the rising and falling motion in a melodic line (Gridley, 2004). The understanding and expression of improvisation and swing feeling in a musical context are the foundation for jazz education.

History of Jazz Education

A complete history of jazz education has yet to be published, and material on this topic is sparse (Beale, 2000). For descriptions of jazz education in the early years, many rely on biographies and oral histories stored in jazz archives (Beale, 2000). Jazz musicians in the first half of the twentieth century took one of two paths to learn their craft (Beale, 2000). Some musicians initially learned instrumental technique and music theory through formal training and then immersed themselves in the jazz idiom (Beale, 2000; Berliner, 1994). This style of training, based in Eurocentric music, efficiently focused students on key musical concepts and skills (Beale, 2000).

More commonly, however, jazz musicians learned the kind of specialized knowledge required for jazz performance without the support of formal educational systems (Berliner, 1994). They were primarily self-taught, learned by ear, and

emphasized the lived experience of the music rather than the learning of abstract ideas and facts (Beale, 2000). Many of these musicians learned through apprenticeships with mentors, jazz veterans who encouraged them to participate in the community's oral tradition of learning through a mixture of socializing, informal study sessions and jam sessions (Berliner, 1994). This approach, emphasizing practice over theory, continues to be a guiding force in jazz education, because it compels players to re-create and embellish the tradition in an interactive fashion (Beale, 2000).

As jazz became less mainstream and commercially successful, many bands were forced out of business, thus greatly reducing the depth and variety of training formerly available to aspiring jazz musicians through rehearsals, performances and jam sessions (Beale, 2000). This led to the emergence of a more formalized jazz education movement, whose goal was to widen the appeal of jazz to a broader audience and to train amateurs in addition to professional jazz players (Beale, 2000). By the late 1940s, jazz courses were offered at fifteen college-level programs, and big bands were formed at many American high schools (Kennedy, 2005). Jazz festivals or competitions first appeared during the 1950s (Kennedy, 2005). In the decade that followed, pedagogical materials emerged that included specific jazz-education ideologies (Kennedy, 2005). These pedagogical philosophies now include ear-training, primarily through the transcriptions of jazz recordings; jazz harmony, including mastery of various chord-symbol notations; improvisation, especially through the formulaic use of chord-scales, whereby a student, given a chord,

improvises on a corresponding scale; and composition and arrangement (Kennedy, 2005).

By the 1970s, the number of high school big bands had doubled, and the number of universities offering jazz classes for credit increased threefold (Kennedy, 2005). However, the vast majority of university music programs remained steadfastly dedicated to providing instruction in the Western classical tradition (Ake, 2002). Some of the more prominent conservatories not only omitted jazz from the curriculum but also forbade the playing of jazz in the school's practice rooms, with transgressions potentially leading to students' expulsion from the institution (Ake, 2002). Conservatory-trained directors led most college big bands of this period and usually stressed the same musical concepts valued in other university music ensembles based in the Western classical tradition (Ake, 2002). With few exceptions, most directors possessed little or no understanding of jazz improvisation skills due to their training in European-based ensemble practices (Ake, 2002).

To meet the demand for nonprofessional-level jazz arrangements, a growing industry of education-oriented arrangers and composers emerged in the 1950s (Ake, 2002; Beale, 2000). This industry created jazz arrangements that were graded for difficulty, so that different arrangements of the same piece could be marketed to a variety of skill levels within the jazz education market (Kennedy, 2005). Mindful of the limited improvisational skills of most ensemble directors, writers of these arrangements wrote performers' solos into their charts (Ake, 2002). Directors often encouraged students to play these notated solos rather than improvise, thus

improving the chance of cleaner, more standardized performances at concerts and festivals (Ake, 2002). Although improvisation has been a vital part of music making throughout history, it is missing from most school music curricula today (Azzara, 1999).

Some fifty years after it began, the jazz education movement has fallen short in its goals of training jazz professionals and amateurs and of widening the appeal of jazz to a broader audience (Kennedy, 2005). Part of this failure, at least in the United States, is due to the fact that at the under-graduate level most jazz programs are more concerned with creating generic professional musicians and educators than jazz musicians (Kennedy, 2005). Exceptions to this ideology do exist in some smaller university programs (most notably, at the Berklee College of Music and the New School University in New York), where there is a greater emphasis on small groups and the development of improvisational skills (Kennedy, 2005). However, most of the larger university jazz programs emphasize ensemble work in jazz bands over the development of improvisational skills (Kennedy, 2005). This is true at the secondary level as well, where music teachers often teach by rote so as to achieve a clean performance, at the expense of authentic student experience and understanding of improvisation and the jazz idiom (Kennedy, 2005). This approach to jazz pedagogy seems rooted in recent philosophical approaches to music education, as well as the content, teaching methods, and types of music that are at the core of most school music programs.

History of Music Education

Philosophy.

In the last fifteen years, two opposing schools of thought have dominated discussions on the philosophy of music education. The aesthetic education movement, which came into prominence in the 1970s, emphasizes the importance of the development of affective perception and of fostering aesthetic experiences through musical engagement (Mark, 1996; McCarthy & Goble, 2002; Reimer, 2000). According to this viewpoint, the relationships within a musical work alone are capable—in and of themselves—of stirring emotions in the listener, irrespective of the social, cultural, or political context of the music (McCarthy & Goble, 2002; Reimer, 2000). Music's power to make us feel and to experience through feeling in a way unique to music is its defining characteristic and therefore of highest value in music education (Reimer, 2000). The aesthetic approach became increasingly evident in curriculum projects in the 1970s, most notably in the fundamental series *Silver Burdett Music,* and emphasizes listening to and reflecting on masterworks, usually in the Western classical tradition (McCarthy & Goble, 2002).

Writings on aesthetic education began to be challenged in the mid-1980s by those formerly central to the advocacy of the movement (McCarthy & Goble, 2002). Drawing on a greater appreciation and acceptance of cultural differences that emerged in U.S. society in the late 1980s and early 1990s, many argued that the aesthetic philosophy of music education could not account for different types of affective responses to music outside of the Western art tradition (Elliot, 1995;

McCarthy & Goble, 2002). A praxial philosophy emerged which drew on Aristotle's view of *praxis* as action rooted in authentic practice rather than in theory (Elliot, 1995; McCarthy & Goble, 2002). Praxial philosophies of music education focus on "involving students in the musical practices of different cultural groups and helping them to understand the intentions of those who undertake them, as well as the social, historical, and cultural conditions in which they originate, exist, and have meaning" (McCarthy & Goble, 2002, p. 21).

One tenet of this perspective is that the behavior common among different forms of music-making leads to flow or optimal human experience in the music-makers (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Elliot, 1995; McCarthy & Goble, 2002). Flow is characterized by the concentration, absorption, and enjoyment an individual may experience in undertaking a particular activity in which all of the person's relevant skills are needed to manage the challenges of a situation (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). It does not happen without the application of skilled performance—any lapse in concentration will erase it—and requires the setting of clear goals and receiving immediate feedback that is logically related to the goals (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). As musicians take on challenges in music-making in their respective traditions, they typically effect flow and thereby bring order to their own consciousness, engendering greater self-knowledge, personal self-growth, and raised self-esteem (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Elliot, 1995; McCarthy & Goble, 2002). On the basis of these outcomes, advocates for the praxial philosophy affirm the value of music in education (McCarthy & Goble, 2002). Furthermore, they focus the dialogue in music

education on different cultural forms of authentic musical activity in everyday life as significant human behaviors, challenging the aesthetic philosophy's focus on what have been viewed as the musical masterworks of the Western classical tradition (Elliot, 1995; McCarthy & Goble, 2002). These scholars emphasize that philosophical accounts of music and music education must encompass the distinctive cultural characteristics of the multitude of musical traditions surrounding and impacting today's schools (Elliot, 1995; McCarthy & Goble, 2002).

One additional philosophical approach that implies a middle ground between the aesthetic and praxial philosophies proposes that at the heart of all creative action is the metaphorical process (Swanwick, 1999). The process of carrying something that we have already assimilated into a new context produces new insights and allows us to think and feel in novel ways (Swanwick, 1999).

> Music persists in all cultures and finds a role in many educational systems not because it services other activities, nor because it is a kind of sensuous pleasure, but because it is a symbolic form. It is a mode of *discourse* as old as the human race, a medium in which ideas about ourselves and others are articulated in sonorous shapes. (Swanwick, 1999, p. 2)

The symbolic discourse of musical engagement as described through this philosophy is based on three metaphorical levels: tones transform into melodies or expressive gestures, gestures evolve into new structures, and these structures evoke significant experiences as they relate to our personal and cultural histories (Swanwick, 1999). When all three levels of the metaphorical process are activated, peak experiences

arise which could be variously described as musical flow or aesthetic experience (Swanwick, 1999). While the psychological processes that underlie these metaphorical transformations are hidden from view, evidence of their existence can be observed through four layers: perceiving and controlling sound materials, as through technique on a musical instrument; identifying and demonstrating expressive character, for example through a choice of timbre or inflection in one's playing; and demonstrating awareness of interrelationships between expressive gestures that define the music's form (dynamic structure) and value (meaning), as through the interplay of call and response between two musicians playing 12-bar blues (Runfola & Swanwick, 2002; Swanwick, 1999). An educator committed to a quality of musical experience as approached from this philosophy is mindful that students move among all four layers of musical discourse (sound materials, expressive character, form and value), and should experience and be assessed on all four layers through performing, composing, and listening as audience-members (Swanwick, 1999). This philosophy also proposes that while music arises in a social context and is culturally reflective, it also can be creatively interpreted and produced outside of that context due to its metaphorical nature (Swanwick, 1999). The metaphorical approach to musical process was an attempt to synthesize major strands of debate in the aesthetic and praxial philosophies and forms the theoretical basis for a developmental theory that will be detailed later (Runfola & Swanwick, 2002). These three philosophies have greatly influenced the determination of the content of music curricula in the U.S.

Content.

An opportunity to translate philosophy into educational action presented itself with the passing in 1994 of a Congressional bill titled Goals 2000: Educate America Act (MENC, 1994; Reimer, 2000). The bill stipulated the arts as required learning for all students, along with math, English, science, foreign languages, civics, economics, history and geography (MENC, 1994). The Music Education National Conference (MENC) initiated a project to determine what U.S. schoolchildren should be taught in the arts which resulted in the creation of the National Standards for Music, Dance, Theater, and the Visual Arts (MENC, 1994). The National Standards for Music adopted by the MENC created a curricular structure for content and achievement outcomes in music (MENC, 1994). The music content standards are the same for all grade levels, kindergarten through twelve: singing; performing; improvising; composing and arranging; reading and notating; listening; evaluating; understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and outside disciplines and understanding music in relation to history and culture (MENC, 1994). Achievement standards are established under these content standards that clearly define the level of performance expected and are organized by grade levels K to 4, 5 to 8, and 9 to 12 (MENC, 1994). As students progress through the grades, the achievement standards increase in complexity and sophistication (MENC, 1994; Reimer, 2000). For example, under the improvisation standard, by grades 5 to 8 students are expected to be able to improvise melodic ornamentation and simple melodic and rhythmic variations on given melodies that are pentatonic or in major

keys, while by grades 9 to 12 students are to have advanced that identical skill to include minor keys (MENC, 1994). Also under the improvisation content standard, at grades 5 to 8 students should be able to improvise short melodies, unaccompanied and over given rhythmic accompaniments, each in a consistent meter, tonality, and style, whereas by grades 9 to 12 students are expected to be able to improvise original melodies over given chord progressions, again in a consistent meter, tonality, and style (MENC, 1994). In some instances, the level of achievement is implied through descriptors of difficulty level, on a scale of 1 (easiest) to 6 (most difficult) (MENC, 1994). For example, at grades 5 to 8, students are expected to sight read music with a level of difficulty of 2 on a scale of 1 to 6 (MENC, 1994).

Many music educators from a variety of cultures have acknowledged these standards as ideal for a comprehensive music education (Reimer, 2000). Developing and implementing standards-based curricula and finding effective ways to assess student learning in music may perhaps be one of the greatest challenges facing music education (MENC, 1994). However, while these voluntary standards lay the blueprint for what every child should be able to do in music, the teaching methods to achieve these standards are left entirely to the states, local districts, and individual teachers (MENC, 1994). Before exploring both the traditional and alternative teaching methods typically used in beginning instrumental instruction, it is necessary to understand how the development of musical abilities, the development of musical literacy, and student motivation impact children's abilities to play and understand music.

Development and Its Impact on Children's Abilities to Play and Understand Music

Cognitive development.

Some argue that artistic forms of knowledge and expression are less sequential, more holistic and organic, than other forms of knowing, and that to attempt to break them down into separate concepts or subdisciplines is risky (Gardner, 1991). However, an understanding of musical development within a cognitive framework greatly informs both curriculum design and the organization of instructional activities (Runfola & Swanwick, 2002). This understanding starts with the basic assumption that since musical aptitude is normally distributed, every human being is musical, and it is possible and worthwhile to develop this musicality (Gembris, 2002; Gordon, 1987). Also, musical development is a lifelong process and, contrary to popular belief, does not stop at the end of adolescence (Gembris, 2002). For the purposes of this review, the Swanwick-Tillman model of musical development will be used as a foundation from which the specific changes in musical development that occur in adolescence (defined as between the ages of 11 and 18) will be explored. This model is based on a four year study of unnotated compositions produced by children aged 3 to 11 from several ethnic and cultural groups in London (Runfola & Swanwick, 2002). Although there are other theories of musical development, most notably Gordon's Music Learning Theory, the Swanwick-Tillman model appears most valid and reliable in application to music learning of persons from diverse environments, as it is least ethnocentric to the Western musical tradition

and based on observations of actual music making rather than on a secondary form of representation such as notation (Gordon, 1993; Runfola & Swanwick, 2002).

Mastery, imitation, and imaginative and constructive play are essential psychological elements in all artistic engagement (Runfola & Swanwick, 2002). In specific musical terms, these are identified with perceiving and controlling sound materials, locating and projecting expressive character, and awareness of form and value (meaning) in the interrelationships between expressive gestures (Swanwick, 1999). The Swanwick-Tillman model is based on this original conception of the four levels of musical thinking and is linked to Piaget's stages of cognitive development (Runfola & Swanwick, 2002). On each of the four levels, a transformation is observed from a self-directed, personally interpreted musical encounter to a social sharing and cultural transmission of music (Runfola & Swanwick, 2002).

Thus, this developmental model is comprised of eight modes of musical functioning, two on each layer, with each mode seen as a qualitative shift (Runfola & Swanwick, 2002). Initially, from birth to age 4 (the materials level, corresponding to Piaget's sensorimotor stage), children explore sound and instruments in a spontaneous, loosely organized way, and this exploration gradually leads to manipulative control, with some repetition and a regular pulse possible (Runfola & Swanwick, 2002; Woolfolk, 1998). This technical ability leads to the expression level of musical development, occurring between the ages of 5 to 9 (Runfola & Swanwick, 2002). The expression level begins with personal expressiveness in music through a feeling of mood or atmosphere and with changes in speed and volume,

with some signs of elementary phrases that are not always repeatable (Runfola & Swanwick, 2002). This mode aligns with Piaget's Preoperational stage (Woolfolk, 1998). During the vernacular expression mode, children are able to create repeatable rhythmic and melodic patterns, often 2, 4 or 8 bars in length, that will work within established general musical conventions (Runfola & Swanwick, 2002). Compositions during this mode are fairly predictable and show influences of other musical experiences of singing, playing, and listening (Runfola & Swanwick, 2002). From ages 10 to 15, the musical conventions are assimilated into musical form, first on a speculative level through experimentation, then on an idiomatic level by integrating into a recognizable style, frequently using popular musical traditions (Runfola & Swanwick, 2002). Around age 14, making music in idiomatic ways becomes a strong imperative for many young people (Runfola & Swanwick, 2002). This phase is marked by experimentation, seeking to contrast or vary established musical ideas; call and response; and variation by elaboration or through contrasting sections (Runfola & Swanwick, 2002). The final developmental level of value involves the exploration of the symbolic meaning and value of music both for the individual and as part of a greater community (Runfola & Swanwick, 2002).

Whereas the first eight to ten years of life are characterized by musical enculturation and acceptance of the culture's principles and practices, the subsequent ten years are dominated by the search for and creation of one's own place within a musical culture (Gembris, 2002). Beginning at age 10, the development of interest in both music and in individual musical preferences rises and later plateaus around the

age of 13, remaining at a high level throughout adolescence (Gembris, 2002). As their musical preferences are less stable and less important to them than those of teenagers, children younger than 8, 9 or 10 are more open toward and tolerant of unfamiliar or unconventional types of music (Gembris, 2002). This musical openness or so-called open-earedness of children of preschool and primary age comes from the weaker internalization of musical conventions than that of adolescents and adults, and offers a tremendous opportunity for music education to introduce children to all kinds of music against which adolescents and adults might already have established prejudices (Gembris, 2002). There is evidence for a decrease in open-earedness with the beginning of adolescence, and at the same time an increase in preference for the music of one's peers (Gembris, 2002). However, preference for music increases once it becomes more familiar (Gembris, 2002). The determination of preferences appears to be closely related to the construction of a personal and social identity (Gembris, 2002). Interestingly, a rebound effect emerges at the end of adolescence, when listeners tend to return to the music that played a role in late childhood before the beginning of adolescence (Gembris, 2002).

The development of individual preferences (likes and dislikes, rather than cognitive analysis or aesthetic reflection) and tastes (long-term preferences for musical styles) are mainly influenced by one's socialization into a given sociocultural environment, including parents, school, social class, peers, and mass media (Gembris, 2002; Zillman & Gan, 1997). Adolescence is marked by a sharp increase in music consumption, as listening to music, the orientation towards music, and

knowledge about musicians become more important (Gembris, 2002). As the influence of parents and school decreases, the influence of peers and the media increases, with the degree of certain influences determined by social class (Gembris, 2002). Adolescents are not only passively influenced but also are actively choosing and shaping their own musical environment in an unrestricted fashion, preferably within the youth culture and often outside of the influences of formal education (Gembris, 2002). With the growing availability of compact disks, minidisks, mp3 players, the Internet, and music videos, adolescents consume music in a ubiquitous fashion, thus potentially further lessening the influence of formal education (Gembris, 2002). However, children and adolescents that play an instrument use the mass media less and in a more reflective manner than those who do not (Gembris, 2002). Also, verbal and behavioral musical preferences expressed by teens often do not match. That is, while a negative preference—based on peer group values—might be expressed about a label of a musical style, a positive evaluation – based on private taste – is given when actually listening to the same musical style (Gembris, 2002).

During puberty (ages 12 to 16), a time of significant change, decisions are made about instrumental music education with far-reaching consequences (Gembris, 2002). For example, the accuracy of melodic perception only improves by being musically active (e.g., by playing an instrument) (Lamont, 1998). Additionally, the best musicians are able to increase their practice time more than average during this period, as making music and practicing become part of personal identity (Gembris, 2002). Many other students drop out of instrumental lessons at this time, as young

people's longing for autonomy and their search for personal identification now require more freedom and less rigid guidance (Gembris, 2002). Unfortunately, many teachers' ability to cope with these changed desires in music lessons is limited (Gembris, 2002).

Although teachers and parents know that puberty is a critical stage for musical development, it is surprising that research has not yet adequately addressed the influences of changes in personality, motivation, interests, and socio-psychological conditions typical for this developmental stage on music instruction (Gembris, 2002).

Musical literacy.

Formal music education in the Western tradition places a strong value on musical literacy—the ability to read musical notation. Music is a form of discourse and shares a learning process similar, if not identical to, language (Swanwick, 1999; Liperote, 2006). Both language and music acquisition share four vocabularies: listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Gordon, 2003). As listening establishes the foundation on which the others are built, it is the most important of the four (Liperote, 2006). Just as listening primes children to speak, listening and speaking prepare them to read and write (Liperote, 2006). The four vocabularies form a sequence, with proficiency in the earlier levels giving the learner easy access to the next level (Liperote, 2006).

Similarly, children develop musical speaking vocabularies by engaging in music learning without notation: singing, chanting, moving, improvising, and

creating (Liperote, 2006). If done properly, these aural-skills activities allow children to focus on musical content, such as tonality, meter, style, and harmonic progression (Liperote, 2006). Understanding this musical content is the prerequisite to playing in tune and with a steady beat, improvising, reading notation with comprehension, and playing expressively with and without notation (Liperote, 2006).

This is clearly the position of Orff, Dalcroze and Suzuki and to some extent Kodaly, all classic influences in music pedagogy, for whom a rich background of playing or singing by ear is assumed before children read music (Liperote, 2006; Swanwick, 1999). Suzuki's Mother Tongue Approach is based on the belief that children who experience music as a natural part of their culture become natural musicians in the same way that children become natural speakers by hearing language spoken (Suzuki, 1969). From the beginning, attention is paid to touch, intonation, and imitation rather than notation (Suzuki, 1969).

The primary goal of music-literacy instruction, then, is to connect sound to symbol (Ester, Scheib & Inks, 2006). An essential aspect of this process is audiation, defined as the hearing and understanding in one's mind the sound of music that is not physically present (Gordon, 1993). Students must be able to hear a sound pattern in their mind's ear before they can read or notate it, and to connect the sound of music with the symbols of music (Gordon, 1993). Musical fluency—the ability to audiate coupled with the skill of handling an instrument or the voice—takes precedence over musical literacy (Stanwick, 1999). This principle is foundational in traditions outside the Western classical tradition and in fact characterizes jazz, Indian music, rock

music, steel-pans music, computer-assisted music, and folk music anywhere in the world (Stanwick, 1999). However, presently in many Western contexts, the relative lack of communal music-making in the home and other places where people meet casually, and the loss of the habit of music-making as an activity in which anyone and everyone can join, mean that much of the grounds for the development of musical fluency (through live listening, copying, and watching activities) have disappeared (Green, 2001; Liperote, 2006). Recorded music has replaced live music in many contexts, and the distance between musicians and listeners continues to increase (Green, 2001). This reduction in early exposure to and active participation in music has significantly reduced the development of music-readiness skills so crucial to beginning instrumental instruction (Liperote, 2006). Therefore, it is all the more crucial that children be engaged in aural-skills activities from their earliest entry into formal music instruction (Liperote, 2006). These activities will ultimately transfer to improved instrumental performance skills (Liperote, 2006).

Motivation

A common expression among musicians is that the hardest thing about practicing is opening the case. One of the greatest challenges for music educators is creating the conditions that elicit the interest and investment of children in learning music (Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002). This section will examine several conceptions of motivation and the ways in which they relate to instrumental music education. In order to understand the complexity of student motivation in how it applies to educational practice, it is first necessary to review the role of expectancies,

self-perceptions of ability, and values in influencing motivation, followed by a discussion of the achievement goal theory of student motivation.

Expectancy, ability, and values.

Whereas expectancy refers to students' expectations that they will succeed in future tasks, self-perceptions of ability concern students' judgments of their competence at these tasks (Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002). Elementary students do not distinguish between future expectancies and perceptions of ability (Wigfield et al., 1997). In all areas except sports, students' expectancies diminish across the elementary school years, and these decreases are the largest in the domain of instrumental music (Wigfield et al., 1997). In addition, the strongest predictors of subsequent grades in math and English are students' self-perceptions of ability and their expectancies for success (Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002). Expectancy beliefs are closely connected to actual achievement and engagement, and teachers and parents can help students to increase their expectancies by assisting them in developing the necessary skills to succeed on a particular task (Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002; Wigfield et al., 1997).

Students' values also play a distinct role in achievement, specifically in determining the choices that students make that provide them with opportunities to achieve in the future (Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002). Value beliefs are comprised of four components: importance, or how important it is to the individual to do well and how central the activity is to one's identity; utility, or the perceived application of the task to future goals; interest value, defined as how much the

student enjoys the activities related to the task on a personal level; and cost, the perceived need for effort or time invested in the task (Eccles & Wigfield, 1995). With the exception of valuing sports, it appears that values decline much as expectancies do as students move through the elementary years (Wigfield et al., 1997).

A positive correlation exists between expectancy and value components, and this relationship becomes stronger as children get older (Wigfield et al., 1997). That is to say, students tend to value the activities that they are good at and to be good at that which they value, and this is most likely a reciprocal relationship (Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002). However, expectancies and self-perceptions of ability are better predictors of actual achievement outcomes than are values (Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002).

Thus, from an educational perspective, improving students' expectancies is more likely to boost achievement, while increasing value may lead students to take more courses in a given field in the future (Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002). An elementary or middle school music director may want to work on increasing the values and interest beliefs of younger students in the hope they will choose to continue on with their music education once they are in high school, whereas the high school music director may want to focus on developing positive expectancy and competency beliefs (Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002).

Achievement-goal theory of motivation.

The main construct involved in achievement goal theory is goal orientation, which examines why people engage in achievement behavior and how they approach the tasks involved (Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002). The two primary goal orientations, task goal orientation and ego goal orientation, differ slightly in comparison to the concepts of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002). While intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are generally thought of as organic and personality-driven, achievement goal orientations are more concerned with a cognitive goal that is situation and context specific (Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002). A student adopting a task goal orientation is focused on "learning, mastering the task according to self-set standards, developing new skills, improving her competence, trying to accomplish something challenging, and trying to gain understanding or insight" (Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002, p. 359). In contrast, an ego goal orientation represents a focus on relative ability and the ways in which that ability will be judged by others, and can be divided into two types, approach ego goal and avoid ego goal orientations (Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002). Whereas students motivated by an approach ego goal are motivated to be better or appear smarter or more talented than others, those motivated by an avoid ego goal seek to avoid an unfavorable comparison to others (Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002).

These distinct goal orientations have been related to different motivational and behavioral outcomes (Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002). In task goal orientation, students are more likely to see a strong link between the quality and

quantity of their effort and the outcome of success or failure (Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002). Also, a task goal orientation seems to lead to pride and satisfaction when the individual is successful and guilt when unsuccessful, and to be associated more with intrinsic interest in and positive attitudes toward learning tasks (Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002). In the context of music education, then, students with a task goal orientation would be more likely to persist in their efforts, even on skills or pieces that they find challenging and in which failure is a possibility (Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002). They would also practice more effectively, monitoring their progress and working on more demanding passages (Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002). In contrast, students with an ego goal orientation are less likely to persist when challenged and more likely to practice less because they view practicing as a sign that they have no musical aptitude (Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002).

Achievement goal theory appears to be the most situated in the classroom and most applicable to educational practice of all of the social cognitive models of motivation (Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002). Differences in classroom context may impact students' adoption of achievement goals in three specific areas: tasks and learning activities, evaluation practices and uses of rewards, and distribution of authority and responsibility (Ames, 1992). These three areas provide a useful framework to discuss not only achievement goals but also students' expectations, values, self-efficacy, interest, and attributions (Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002).

Classroom tasks and learning activities and the means by which they are presented to the students strongly influence student motivation (Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002). Increasing the amount of variety and diversity in tasks and learning activities decreases the opportunities for social comparison regarding performance, and therefore can help to both maintain student interest and help students to adopt a task-goal orientation (Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002). Furthermore, allowing students to choose among a variety of tasks enhances intrinsic motivation by providing more opportunities for students' autonomous choice in their learning (Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002). How the tasks are presented to students is equally important. Increasing the personal relevance and the meaningfulness of the content to the students will facilitate an adoption of a task-goal orientation (Brophy, 1987) as well as enhance the personal value of the task to the student (Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002). Achievement goal theory also suggests that tasks offering an optimal balance between skill and challenge can facilitate a task-goal orientation (Ames, 1992). Succeeding at an activity that is just beyond their current level or understanding helps students to develop higher efficacy judgments as well (Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002). Tasks that are broken down into specific, short term, or proximal goals can help students to organize their efforts and to feel capable and effective as they accomplish their goals (Ames, 1992; Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002).

Following this line of reasoning, it is essential for music educators to give careful consideration to both the tasks that they assign and the manner in which they

assign them (Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002). A diverse selection of repertoire both in terms of difficulty and musical styles would help to generate student interest and would likely facilitate a task-goal orientation (Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002). Furthermore, by guiding students towards music that utilizes the musicians' strengths and is challenging but not too difficult, music educators can help to enhance students' efficacy in learning their instruments (Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002).

In addition to task selection, methods of assessment and reward systems used in the classroom can largely impact students' goal adoption and student interest (Ames, 1992; Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002). Both formal and informal assessment practices that focus on students' ability relative to others tend to foster the adoption of ego goals, while those that focus on each student's individual improvement corresponds to an increase in tasks goals (Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002). Furthermore, if evaluation is based on overall musical aptitude, it can suggest to students that musical ability is fixed (Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002). Students are then likely to attribute failure to internal, uncontrollable dimensions (Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002). Also, given the evidence that external rewards may undermine students' intrinsic interest, it is crucial for music educators to consider the messages that they send to students through reward systems (Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002). The possible use of rewards significant to the students in special one-on-one situations or in across-the-board recognition when the group as a whole has achieved a goal may have value, but only

in the degree to which the students see themselves as involved in the outcome (Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002).

The authority structure of the classroom also influences student motivation (Ames, 1992). Students should be given some choice and control in the classroom setting, as it increases both their interest and their cognitive engagement in the task (Ames, 1992). In music, ample opportunities are available to provide students with choice and autonomy in their learning (Ames, 1992). For example, students may choose from a variety of pieces, guide their own learning in sectionals or in chamber music, or improvise or compose music within a given structure or style. Activities such as these intrinsically motivate students by not only satisfying the student's need for autonomy but also the need for competence and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 1987). However, these opportunities will only have a positive influence on student motivation if students can demonstrate the cognitive and self-regulatory skills necessary to deal with the responsibility that comes with increased autonomy (Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002).

Music educators must consider the influences on student motivation of the many features of the classroom environment including task selection, assessment practices and the provision for student autonomy. An awareness of the concepts of motivation, the development of cognition and musical literacy, and their impact on children's' abilities to play and understand music should inspire the methods chosen by educators to teach instrumental music to children.

Methods of Teaching Music to Children

Traditional approaches.

Although sound before symbol has been a fundamental component of music learning theories for at least two hundred years, one problem of many instrumental programs has been that instruction begins with learning to read music, rather than learning the musical language first (Ester, Scheib & Inks, 2006; Liperote, 2006). Published resources for music literacy instruction such as beginning band method books and sight singing books often take a notation-first approach (Ester, Scheib & Inks, 2006). A beginning band student's initial exercises in a method book are usually visually complex and include most aspects of music notation: staff, meter signature, clef, key signature, rhythm notation, and tonal notation (Ester, Scheib & Inks, 2006). While the rhythmic and tonal vocabulary are typically limited, this approach not only makes the primary objective of connecting symbol to sound needlessly complicated, but also draws the beginning instrumentalists away from listening to their sound and exploring the context (tonality, meter, and style) for those symbols (Ester, Scheib & Inks, 2006).

While the class method book functions as the beginning band curriculum (Byo, 1988), there has been little scrutiny of the pedagogical methods employed by teachers in using them (Brittin, 2005). Pedagogical preferences in nine beginning band method books include singing, counting, using rhythmic labeling systems, and providing students opportunities for discovery and independence (Byo, 1988).

Modeling has been shown to be a very effective strategy but is not consistently used by all music teachers (Brittin, 2005). Expert music teachers are more likely than novices to model characteristics such as articulations and phrase shapes, whereas novice educators were more likely to rote-teach rhythms and notes (Brittin, 2005). Also, although the use of the voice is very productive in developing instrumental tonal concepts and sight-reading ability, performance achievement, and sense of pitch, very few teachers plan to model with their voices, and the majority do not state that they will ask students to use their voices (Brittin, 2005). The issue of modeling versus rote teaching is especially relevant to teaching beginning instrumentalists and should be explored further (Brittin, 2005).

An analysis of the types of music selected for use in five popular beginning band method books published in the last six years reveals a preference for music of composers of the Western classical tradition and multi-cultural folk and traditional music (Bullock & Maiello, 2001; Feldstein & Clark, 2001; Lautzenheiser et al., 2000; O'Reilly & Williams, 2001; Pierson, 2004). Of the folk music selected, most originates from countries of North America and Europe, with a much smaller percentage originating in Japan, China, Mexico, Australia, Israel, Africa (no country specified), and the Caribbean (Bullock & Maiello, 2001; Feldstein & Clark, 2001; Lautzenheiser et al., 2000; O'Reilly & Williams, 2001; Pierson, 2004). Although the Essential Elements 2000 book used one traditional jazz song and one ragtime song written by the book's author, and several authors selected one African American spiritual for inclusion, none of these method book authors selected music written by

jazz composers. Only two of these books, Essential Elements 2000 and Standards of Excellence, include an opportunity for composition (four separate exercises each) (Lautzenheiser et al., 2000; Pierson, 2004). All five of these books include accompaniment recordings for student home practice and for use in the classroom. Only Essential Elements 2000 provides an exercise in improvisation—the last exercise in the book (Lautzenheiser et al., 2000). The method book authors' priorities are a reflection of what many of those in the music education field expect: an emphasis on the teaching of techniques necessary to play music in the Western classical tradition (Brittin, 2005). This might influence instrumental teachers' values and teaching approaches (Brittin, 2005).

Alternative approaches.

An alternative approach in beginning instrumental music instruction emphasizes improvisation and the development of music listening and speaking vocabularies prior to the development of music literacy (Liperote, 2006). Improvisation study improves the music achievement of elementary instrumental music students and allows them to express their musical thoughts spontaneously (Azzara, 1999; Azzara, 2002).

A multilevel sequential model for understanding the improvisation process was developed by John Kratus and is composed of seven levels of development. In the exploration level, students try out different sounds and combinations of sounds in a loosely structured context. More cohesive patterns are produced in process-oriented improvisation, and in product-oriented improvisation students become conscious of

structural principles such as tonality, rhythm, and meter. In fluid improvisation students manipulate their instruments in a more relaxed and automatic manner. Structural improvisation is marked by an awareness of the overall structure of improvisation and the development of a repertoire of musical and nonmusical strategies for shaping improvisation. Stylistic improvisation involves the dexterous incorporation of the melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic structure of a given style. At the most accomplished level, personal improvisation is demonstrated by the ability to transcend recognized styles to develop a new style (Kratus , 1991, 1996).

Facilitating the development of improvisation begins with the singing and playing of rote songs by ear which helps children to develop a strong musical speaking vocabulary (Liperote, 2006; Wolbers, 2002). Students should learn music that includes a variety of styles, tonalities and meters so that they can compare these types of music and aurally learn their differences (Azzara, 1999; Liperote, 2006; Wolbers, 2002). The learning of a bass line along with the harmonic progression of the song helps to solidify the melody, provides the harmonic context for the song, adds interest for the students and allows them to anticipate what comes next in the music—all skills necessary for improvisation (Liperote, 2006; Azzara, 2002). Playing rote songs by ear allows students to creatively explore their instruments' sound while becoming oriented to the melodies and rhythms of the songs (Liperote, 2006). This approach helps to counteract habits of listening insensitively to sound quality, a habit that is often acquired by learning a performance repertoire through

imitation and decoding of notation, rather than through audiation (Runfola and Swanwick, 2002).

In the same way that children comprehend language through familiar words and phrases, they can understand the structure of tunes by becoming familiar with rhythm and tonal patterns (Liperote, 2006). Rhythm patterns consist of two to four measures of rhythms without reference to pitch (Liperote, 2006). These patterns convey meter and function, such as macrobeats and microbeats, and are chanted using function-based syllables such as those used in Gordon's Music Learning Theory or in the Takadimi rhythm-pedagogy system (Gordon, 1993; Hoffman, Pelto & White, 1996; Liperote, 2006). Tonal patterns are groups of two to five notes sung in sequence without objective rhythm (Liperote, 2006). The use of solfege syllables in tonal patterns provides a system for organizing and comprehending tonality and harmonic function (Azzara, 1999). Syllables allow students to memorize a greater number of patterns, consequently building a vocabulary that they can instantly associate with notation (Liperote, 2006).

Once students have developed listening and speaking vocabularies through rote-song and pattern instruction and performance, the first steps towards improvisation and personalized renditions of music are possible (Liperote, 2006). These steps include "improvising rhythm patterns to familiar bass lines and improvising rhythms on specific harmonic tones…improvising melodies by choosing notes that outline the harmonic functions of the progression…and combining rhythm patterns and improvised tonal patterns to improvise a melody" (Azzara, 2002, p.179).

Developing improvisation skills also requires taking risks in a community setting (Azzara, 1999). An essential element for creating an improvisation culture is the letting go of fear (Azzara, 2002). Self-expression and improvisation require "the taming of the mind, the dissolution of the ego, and the letting go of all fears" (Werner, 1996, p. 75). Studying improvisation as a beginning instrumentalist allows students to try new ideas and to take risks in a psychologically safe environment at a time when they are developmentally less inhibited (Azzara, 2002; Gembris, 2002).

Improvisation experiences allow for free expression and creativity, and challenge students to develop higher-order thinking skills (Azzara, 1999). Through listening to improvised music, knowing many tunes that they have learned by ear and understanding harmonic progressions, improvisers have musical thoughts necessary to create their own melodies, rhythms and harmonies (Azzara, 1999). While improvisation was once fundamental to the performance practice of music in the Baroque and Classical eras of Western music history, its role in Western classical music since the middle of the nineteenth century has significantly declined (Azzara, 2002). However, improvisation and playing by ear are vital to jazz and many folk and non-Western musical styles (Azzara, 2002). Of these traditions, jazz is arguably the most accessible improvisational music to beginning instrumentalists in the United States because it is a fundamental part of American culture. Jazz studies are usually not available to students until middle school or high school, and at that time is offered exclusively to a select few who fit the correct instrumentation and who are the most advanced musicians in their group (McKeage, 2004). The study of jazz at

the beginning band level offers all band students an authentic experience of improvisation and equal access to the jazz tradition (Azzara, 2002; Elliot, 1995).

Summary

The National Standards for Arts Education provide a blueprint for what every student should know and be able to do in the arts, and improvisation is a key component of these standards (MENC, 1994). Improvisation provides a means for students to express their understanding of music from within themselves, and helps teachers to better understand students' individual music learning needs (Azzara, 1999). Due to its organic nature and its profound contribution to the building of students' musical understanding and performance abilities, improvisation must become an integral part of all music classes at all levels of instruction. As improvisation is integral to jazz, it offers an ideal medium for this exploration. The exploration of improvisation is particularly well-suited to children ages 9 to 11 who are beginning instrumental instruction. Students of this age are primed to absorb music and instrumental skill through exposure to sound before notation; they are open-eared to jazz musical style both because of their developmental stage and because of jazz's close proximity to the popular music in which they are increasingly interested; and they are less inhibited and self-conscious, and therefore more inclined to take the risks inherent in the process of improvisation.

The call to incorporate improvisation and jazz into the beginning instrumental curriculum will necessitate the revision of current curricula, the adoption of new learning goals, and the development of additional teaching

strategies. Although there is a wealth of material designed for high school and adult use, especially jazz ensemble charts, home-study improvisation books and recordings, jazz appreciation texts, and an increasing number of jazz-band method books, there are very few class methods that have been developed for use in the elementary and intermediate full band setting, and none that I could find designed for use with the first year beginning instrumentalist.

This project aims to fill this void and to make improvisation and jazz available to all instrumentalists by answering the question: What would be the content of a jazz-based beginning band improvisation curriculum for grades 5 through 8? The next chapter will describe the methods used for creating, assessing, and modifying the curriculum unit.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

The jazz-based improvisation curriculum for beginning band students that is the content of Chapter Four has evolved over my years of experience as an instrumental music student and teacher and was shaped by feedback from the students for whom it was designed. This chapter outlines the processes involved in creating the curriculum. Featured in this section will be early personal and professional experiences that influenced my pedagogical approach, including establishing a jazz culture with pre-adolescents, teaching jazz improvisation in a full-band setting and dealing with other issues surrounding the teaching of jazz improvisation to beginning band students.

Early Influences

The seed for this curriculum was planted during my high school years while participating in the school band program. As a freshman, I became interested in auditioning for the school jazz band, but I knew that as a French horn player, I would need to audition on a more traditional jazz instrument. Although I loved playing the horn, for the first time I felt that playing it limited my choices for musical expression. I subsequently played keyboard bass in the jazz band for the next three years, and while I longed to learn how to improvise, I do not recall that this process was taught during rehearsals. The opportunity to improvise was given to those instrumentalists who were in a more traditionally soloistic role, and often the solos

played were written out in the music, as was the bass part that I played. While I learned what good bass lines sounded like from playing them as written, I never explored nor was expected to explore how to construe a bass line myself. Likewise, the art of improvisation remained a mysterious process, a process that I longed access to but was unclear as to how to approach. I also was aware that throughout my three years in the band, I was one of only two to four members of the band—roughly 10 to 15 percent—who was female, and although I do not believe that it was intentional, the other females were not usually in a soloistic role either.

Years later, as part of my music education coursework requirement, I took a jazz improvisation class. The course was the only jazz-related course required for the music education major and was designed to cover not only the basics of how to improvise but also offered a brief unit on jazz history and jazz nomenclature. Most instrumental music secondary education positions involve teaching a jazz band, and I remember thinking at the time that a course so broad in its approach and with so little focus on jazz pedagogy inadequately prepared me for my profession. Although I received an introduction to jazz inflection, the course provided little sense of how these inflections came to be or the context in which they are used. Soloing techniques seemed secondary to the knowledge of which scales to play over which chords when improvising. The differences between rehearsing a jazz ensemble and rehearsing a concert band or an orchestra were not explored, and the course curriculum implied that I was to teach jazz improvisation to students of all ages the

way I had learned to do it in that class and the way that I had experienced it myself in high school.

Fortunately, I explored improvisation a little through participation in a few university ensembles, although, again, I was left to my own devices to figure out how to improvise. I also played in a bar band in which improvisation played an important role, and it was here where I felt that I gained a few skills in improvisation, albeit mostly not in the jazz style. I loved the process of improvisation and was especially enamored with the collaboration involved in the process amongst the musicians in the group.

Teaching Improvisation

It is through my work as an instrumental music specialist at a small rural northern California school district that I began exploring the challenges inherent in jazz pedagogy with younger students. As the district contained only a K-6 elementary school when I was hired as their instrumental music specialist, the option to teach jazz to more experienced players as is usually done was not possible. In order for the students to experience jazz, I needed to develop the pedagogical skills to teach improvisation to students who had a limited range and were not yet very skilled in playing their instruments.

Initially, the group served band students who wanted a greater musical challenge or a quicker pace of instruction. As I wanted to be as inclusive as possible, anyone who wanted to play in the jazz combo could, and all instrumentalists were welcomed and accommodated whether they played a typical jazz instrument or not.

In the first few years of the group, I focused instruction on a few concepts. First and foremost, we worked on developing listening skills by listening to a broad range of audio recordings, including recordings of tunes from our repertoire, recordings that provided good models of jazz style and technique, and recordings of the jazz masters on the instruments played by the students in the group. As it is so important for the students to hear the music played by people who are like they are, I strived to find listening examples from jazz artists who were representative of the diversity of my students—in ethnicity, gender, culture, and socio-economic background. I was also careful to always choose simpler jazz standards such as "St. Thomas" by Sonny Rollins and "C Jam Blues" by Duke Ellington, tunes that did not need to be simplified so that the students could have an authentic experience and could hear recordings in which the tunes were played exactly as they were learning them.

To initiate the improvisation process, I first familiarized the students with the minor blues scale. This is a scale that would immediately sound idiomatically appropriate to the jazz idiom, in the key of B flat, a key that accommodated their limited range. Using notes from that scale, we practiced call and response with the whole group. In call and response, the students endeavored to make their response an exact imitation of my call. The calls that I played and that the students copied were initially no more than four beats long, contained one or two notes and were played in common swing rhythms. The students progressed to mimicking longer phrases and using more notes from the scale, and from there advanced to mostly

copying the response but changing one element, such as the pitches or rhythm used. Throughout this process, I stressed listening to and copying jazz articulations, so that students listened to not only what they were playing (rhythms and pitches) but also how they were playing it (beginnings and lengths of individual notes and the ways in which they fit together as musical utterances). When students tried to learn a new call, I observed that copying jazz articulations was often the last piece of the musical utterance to be adopted, after pitch and rhythm. As playing jazz articulations and jazz rhythms seemed to be the most important part of speaking the jazz language idiomatically, I learned to emphasize them more from the very beginning of the process.

After the group demonstrated some comfort with mirroring calls exactly, we moved on to student-created responses to calls. This evolved into the students creating short solos of two measures (eight beats) and progressively building from there to playing longer solos when ready. The students learned to create riffs (repeated musical ideas played in the jazz style) out of the short solo phrases and used these riffs as backgrounds during solos to create musical interest and to give soloists some ideas with which to shape their improvisations. Improvisations were done mostly on songs that used the 12-bar blues form, and students improvised using the minor blues scale almost exclusively.

In the first few years and in the years since, I have learned a great deal about teaching jazz improvisation to students of that age (approximately age 12). Although the following list of the attributes needed to establish an improvisation culture with

pre-adolescents is not complete, it does include those that I have found to be most conducive to student learning. First and arguably most important, the students need a safe environment in which they feel free to experiment and to make mistakes. This environment is greatly facilitated through the jazz cultural tradition of vocal affirmation and encouragement for the improvising soloist from everyone in the band, student and teacher alike. A supportive atmosphere of this nature seems to distract students from feelings of self-consciousness and doubt that can be so typical at this age. It also greatly contributes to group cohesiveness and a feeling of participating in something that is bigger than oneself. In addition, it is important to progressively increase individual responsibility for improvisation over time, beginning with group ear training and short musical utterances and leading to individual improvisations of increasingly greater lengths. This is most effective when the improvisation process is presented as one that all students, without exception, will experience in rehearsal and in performance. While some students may take a little longer than others to jump in to the process, I have found that the sooner students attempt to improvise, the easier it is for them to overcome any anxieties about the process. Also, the younger the students are when first attempting improvisation, the less inhibited developmentally they are and therefore the more successful. Thus, it is imperative that students begin improvising early in the year.

In spite of my efforts to include students of varying backgrounds, I observed over the years that the school jazz combo attracted students who came from families with high parental support and involvement and were typically from a higher socio-

economic background. These students were often very successful in academics and were frequently academically gifted as well. The school jazz combo today still typically draws students from this population.

As I wanted playing jazz and improvising to be accessible to a greater population, I began teaching jazz charts arranged for the jazz band instrumentation to the school concert band (comprised of all second year instrumentalists), writing French horn and flute parts as needed. As with the smaller group, I stuck to repertoire of simpler tunes, like Miles Davis' "Freddie Freeloader." At another teacher's recommendation, I also borrowed some Phil Hardymon arrangements that were specifically written for the jazz education market to teach improvisation in a full concert band context. This was my first exposure as a teacher to literature that came out of the jazz education market rather than from standards of the jazz tradition. I appreciated the time saved from not having to write out extra parts for instruments that are not part of the traditional jazz instrumentation, and the simplified rhythms made the music immediately accessible to beginning instrumentalists. However, while the main melody could be learned quickly, it did not sustain student interest. I attributed this to the music's focus on playability and readability over melodic interest. To work around this, I searched for jazz standards arranged for an intermediate band in music catalogues, on the Internet, and in the libraries of local music educators. The repertoire I found included music for intermediate jazz bands that would require writing out parts for non-jazz band instruments and advanced concert band arrangements and medleys of jazz standards

that did not include sections for improvisation. It appeared that improvisation in an intermediate band context was not a market that was being written for in the jazz education literature.

In addition to feeling initially limited by the lack of repertoire of jazz music for an intermediate band, I also found teaching improvisation in a larger group format to be more challenging. I noticed that more students were reticent to improvise in the large group and remained so over time. I attributed this to several factors. First, these students were from a broader population socio-economically and academically and had less family support than those from the jazz combo. To accommodate the greater diversity of students, I needed to invest more time and effort in establishing a safe learning environment for improvisation and for creative risk taking. It was also essential to provide more differentiated instruction and to more actively accommodate a seemingly wider variety of learning styles. Furthermore, while this group of students had chosen to participate in an instrumental music group, they had not self-selected to participate in a jazz and improvisation group. Generating enthusiasm and student interest in jazz required an even greater emphasis on the meaningfulness and relevance of the music and of the improvisation process to students' lives. This was accomplished in part by demonstrating the connections between jazz and the music that the students enjoyed, and by showing students how improvisation is used in other areas of their lives.

With the addition of a charter middle school to the district, the jazz combo became a combination of younger players (generally sixth graders) and more

experienced seventh and eighth graders who were interested in jazz style and improvisation and in learning more challenging music than what could be provided in a mixed-experience concert band of second, third, and fourth year instrumentalists. Around the same time as the addition of the charter middle school, I increasingly felt that the focus on reading in the beginning band method book was interfering with the beginning instrumentalists' focus on listening, sound production, and creativity. I also wondered how many students would be more likely to both participate in the band and to continue playing if the music that they played was based more on what they could play and could create and less on what music they could read. I also pondered how playing music that was stylistically closer to the type of music that they listened to on their own might increase beginning band students' motivation to practice.

With that in mind, I began an intensive review of the literature regarding the role of jazz improvisation in the music teaching and learning process, with particular attention paid to beginning instrumental teaching and learning for children ages 9 to 12. The literature review exposed that although music improvisation and creativity are identified in the Music Education National Standards as essential skills for all students, it is rarely part of the core of music education curricula (Azzara, 2002; MENC, 1994). The literature further revealed that the exploration of improvisation is particularly well-suited to children ages 9 to 11 who are beginning instrumental instruction. Students of this age are primed to absorb music and instrumental skill through exposure to sound before notation (Liperote, 2006). They are open-eared to

jazz musical style both because of their developmental stage and because of jazz's close proximity to the popular music in which they are increasingly interested (Gembris, 2002), and they are less inhibited and self-conscious and therefore more inclined to take the risks inherent in the process of improvisation.

As there were no improvisation curricula that I could find that were designed for use with the first year beginning instrumentalist, I started designing lessons that could be used with all of my beginning band students from the first day of instruction. I began piloting these lessons at the beginning of last year.

The beginning band schedule entails two rehearsals a week for each beginning band student: one large heterogeneous-instrument rehearsal and one smaller homogeneous-instrument rehearsal (flutes, clarinets, trumpets, French horns, low brass [trombones and baritones] and percussion). To facilitate a greater likelihood of success in students wishing to study bass clarinet, saxophone, oboe, bassoon or tuba, I advocate that students develop the musculature, size, and improved ear training skills for these instruments in their first year of instruction by learning one of the instruments previously listed and then switch instruments in their second year. As such, my lessons were designed for use with students learning flute, clarinet, trumpet, French horn, trombone, baritone and percussion only.

I focused the first few weeks of beginning band instruction on sound production alone, with no reading involved. As the large group rehearsal typically includes an average of at least thirty to forty students, I needed to devise an efficient means of communication with the students about what we were playing without the

use of written notation. To facilitate large group instruction, I taught all beginning band students their first five notes by associating each note to its corresponding scale degree number in a B flat concert scale. Thus, in a large heterogeneous-instrument group, I could refer to the same pitch (C concert, for example) for all students by saying its note number, without having to tell each instrument group its note name (for example, 'C' concert means 'C' for flutes, trombones, baritones and mallets; 'D' for trumpets and clarinets, 'G' for French horns). To further expedite the process of identifying the notes for students without the use of notation, I also used hand signals to refer to those note numbers, holding up the same number of fingers as the note number. I initially provided the verbal and visual cue along with modeling the sound on an instrument but later would at times just refer to the note by holding up a hand signal. In the small homogeneous-instrument lessons, I taught the students the name of the note associated with the note numbers as well (for example, clarinets' note number one is called a 'C').

Initial lessons involved some very basic call and response, first singing and then playing, using one note at a time. I observed that this process was very engaging for the students and that eliminating the use of notation at this stage seemed to simplify the learning process. I taught students their first song, "Hot Cross Buns," by ear. We sang the tune with note numbers, then students repeated that activity while fingering the notes and listening to me play the melody, and finally combined instrument fingering/hand position with sound production. The learning of a bass line helps to solidify the melody, supplies the harmonic context for the song,

increases interest for the students, and allows them to anticipate what comes next in the music—all skills necessary for improvisation (Liperote, 2006; Azzara, 2002). I therefore next taught them how to play a bass line to go with "Hot Cross Buns," again by ear. At this point, I also began teaching students rhythmic reading and basic notation completely independent of playing, first having them brainstorm why notation could be valuable to them in a community of musicians. Once students had a basic understanding of the notation that would be necessary to notate "Hot Cross Buns," I asked them to brainstorm how they might notate it with the notation skills that they had. After the students had produced how they would notate the song, we compared it to how it was notated in their method book. We played the song again with the notation in front of them, although most students continued to play it by ear rather than attempt to associate what they were playing with how it was notated. The process of allowing the students to discover on their own how notation is used, a technique in line with constructivist learning, contrasted sharply with previous experiences with former students in which I had showed them the notation of the song and taught them how to read it. Students making the discovery on their own were more engaged and excited with the process, approaching it much like mathematicians or scientists trying to solve a meaningful problem.

I wanted the students to experience music in a variety of styles, tonalities, and meters so that they could compare these types of music and aurally learn their differences (Azzara, 1999; Liperote, 2006; Wolbers, 2002). Our first experience with different styles of music was through listening in the large group rehearsals. When

introducing the idea of pulse, I also talked about how the pulse could be divided into groups of two, three, or four (the subdivision of the beat), and that different styles of music used different subdivisions of the beat. We listened to songs in a variety of different styles, from classical music to disco, and the students used body percussion—clapping or patting rhythms on different parts of the body—to manifest the subdivisions of the beat and to try to determine the subdivision of the beat in any given style. Although I had never introduced this concept so early in the curriculum, I thought that physically experiencing the subdivision of the pulse might give the students an entryway into taking a melody and changing its style by altering its rhythm. While most students could not readily identify the subdivision in a listening example, they were able to apply the concept of subdivision to a song that they were playing by performing subdivisions that they had heard in different styles of music. For example, the students took the melody for "Hot Cross Buns," changed its rhythm so that it had a duple subdivision of the beat and sounded more like a rock song, and renamed it "Rock Cross Buns." Similarly, by altering the rhythm so that it had a triplet subdivision, the students created a country version of the song ("Cow Cross Buns") and a jazz swing version as well ("Hip Cross Buns"). The students seemed to really enjoy the creative process in this exercise and loved the infinite variations that they could create using just three notes and one song. We continued this process, learning an original version of a song and then slightly altering its rhythm so that it was in a different style.

Although I knew that I wanted to start beginning band instruction without notation, once I had introduced the method book to the students, I planned to alternate between learning music by ear and reading music in the method book. However, I found that there was an interesting split amongst the students based on their learning style. Those who were seemingly more visual learners or who had previous music training such as piano lessons were eager to do more reading from the book and at times expressed mild frustration with not proceeding through more songs in the book at a quicker pace. Many of those new to reading, especially students who were more auditory learners, however, continued to depend on or expect instruction in learning the notated music by ear and were not progressing in reading music as quickly as many beginning band students had in the past. With such a limited amount of time for instruction—a thirty minute like-instrument sectional and a forty-five minute large band mixed-instrument rehearsal a week—what were the most important concepts to cover in the first year of instruction? If current students did not learn to read notation as much as previous students had, but they received a solid foundation in tone production, instrument technique, and ear training, would they catch up with their reading skills later on? As the literature on motivation supports increasing the values and interest beliefs of younger students in the hope they will choose to continue on with their music education once they are in high school (Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002), it seemed most important to make curricular decisions based on what would keep students' interest high.

While I continued to teach some out of the method book, I decided to teach the students their first song in the jazz style, "Old Abrahams Blues," also known as "Second Line." With a slight alteration, this song can be played using just six notes. It serves as an excellent teaching tool for many concepts, as "Second Line" uses stop-time (a technique in which the rhythm section does not play on every beat) and simple jazz rhythms, and is a great introduction to both the twelve-bar blues harmonic structure and the AAB form so typical of the blues. I taught the song by rote, emphasizing jazz articulations as a key to playing the style. I also added a repeated tag to the end, a technique used often in popular music. The students really loved the song and seemed highly motivated to practice it. They clearly enjoyed playing rhythms that they could not yet read. The beginning band performed "Second Line" at the winter concert, and another teacher and I accompanied them on piano and drum set. Their performance garnered a big response—many in the audience who had been attending school concerts for years said that it was a highlight of the program and that the beginning band had never sounded better.

Following the winter break, I began exploring improvisation in the context of "Second Line" with all of the beginners with moderate success. I realized later, after reading about the seven levels of improvisation as described by John Kratus, that I had not done any exploration with the students at the first two levels—exploration and process-oriented improvisation—before jumping in to the third level of product-oriented improvisation. I saw that I would need to go back to these stages to help students ease into the improvisation process. I also continued to struggle with

balancing the student experience of improvisation with the acquisition of reading skills, given the limited amount of time—approximately 75 minutes total—that I saw the students each week. This new style of teaching beginning band represented a paradigm shift for me as well. It was so different from any curriculum I had experienced as a student or used as a teacher, and I felt some cognitive dissonance in the process. I also noticed a resistance from many students to play or read music from the method book. In an effort to keep up the interest in reading, I mixed in more sheet music of longer pieces that I could relate to jazz in some way.

That spring I taught the beginning band "Night Train" by Duke Ellington, another twelve-bar blues tune very conducive to improvisation. Ellington composed "Night Train" in the 1940s, and soul artist James Brown did a funky version of the song in the early 1960s. As James Brown had performed a concert in the area in the fall and then died in December, there was a lot of media attention surrounding his life and career at that time. I played both versions of the song for the students, and we compared the differences in style. My student teacher and I created our own James Brown-inspired version of "Night Train." For the spring concert, we played the Duke Ellington version, featuring six soloists improvising four bars each and then transitioned into the James Brown-inspired version, layering three riffs on top of each other. Again, the students seemed very energized by the music, and it was great fun bringing a current event into the music that we were performing.

In the second academic year of experimentation with this curriculum, our school district started a pilot program that made band part of the fifth grade

curriculum for the first two-thirds of the year. This had long been a goal of mine, so that all fifth graders would have the opportunity to derive all of the benefits inherent in learning to play an instrument while exploring music as a means for self-expression and identity formation. This is especially crucial at the fifth grade level as students must be actively involved in the practice of music (such as learning an instrument) in order to continue their musical development from age ten on (Lamont, 1998).

While the beginning band usually included between 50 to 60 percent of all fifth graders, those who chose not to participate seemed to be influenced by the following factors: low academics, low socio-economic background, lack of value of music education in the family, or lack of student interest. Expanding the beginning band to include students who in the past may have self-selected out of the activity presented a new set of opportunities and challenges in teaching a jazz-based improvisation curriculum. First, as one would expect, those who were not receiving encouragement at home for their instrumental music studies required extra encouragement and support at school. These students' technical skills and music reading proficiency often lag behind that of their peers due to lack of practice at home. This complicates the practice of improvisation in class, as improvisation requires the foundation of basic skills (basic techniques, note fingerings and tone production) so that students feel safe to experiment in the rehearsal setting.

Second, students identified by their classroom teachers as having academic difficulties often seemed intimidated or quick to give up if not immediately

successful during large group instruction. As many of them struggled with symbolic representation of language in reading or mathematics, they also often struggled with reading notation. Frequently, they were able to more successfully play by ear, but this ability did not always translate to improvisation in a large group. These students greatly benefited from one-on-one instruction from my student teacher or me during class or recess so that instruction could be tailored to their needs in a more intimate setting. Once they experienced success through individualized instruction, they seemed more likely than other students to make the experience of learning an instrument or of participating in a music group a more important piece of their identity. A core group of these students regularly came over to the bandroom at recess to play songs on the piano that they made up or that we had learned in rehearsals. Allowing them to experiment individually or as a small group in this setting while providing encouragement but no formal instruction seemed to positively influence their self-perceptions of ability and their expectancies for success. Witnessing these students taking ownership of becoming musicians was particularly heartwarming for me, as students like these in the past would often not participate in the program at all or would give up early. I attribute these students' success in part to a better balance in the curriculum between playing music by ear and playing written music.

I also somewhat attribute these students' perseverance to band becoming part of the fifth grade curriculum. Playing for a full academic year helps children to increase their value beliefs in instrumental music, especially in regards to personal

enjoyment, the importance of the activity to their personal identity and the perceived application of playing an instrument to their future goals. Making band a part of the curriculum was therefore a benefit to many of the students who were more likely to quit in years past when challenged by a low expectancy belief or a conflict of interest with another activity like sports. Without the option to quit, many of these students persevered through their challenges in learning an instrument, especially those who performed poorly in other academic areas or who lacked support from their home environment.

I have observed that many band students typically experience a lull in motivation following the winter concert and winter break, especially those participating on a sports team with a heavy practice and game schedule. For that point in the year, I included lessons in the curriculum that refocused energy on creating a safe and playful environment in the bandroom. I also provided fresh approaches to improvisation through theater games and connected these games to the improvisation process in music and in daily life. These activities seemed to pique student interest and helped them to ease back into a regular practice routine following the break. It is important for band students to experience the whole cycle of the first year of instruction to truly know if playing an instrument is an interest that they wish to pursue further. If they keep participating through the winter, student interest in playing usually increases from that point on, especially as they approach the spring performances and the end of the year, and that momentum to continue playing is carried into the next year.

If band is not an integrated part of the grade level curriculum, any influences on student value beliefs and expectancies about playing an instrument are of paramount importance towards keeping children interested and playing. The classroom teachers' attitude towards their students' participation in band can strongly influence the children's beliefs about and approach to learning music. A pull-out program is difficult on classroom teachers, with small groups of students going in and out of their classroom at various times during the day. When these students are behind in their classwork, it is difficult for some teachers to justify these children missing class instruction time to participate in the band. I have found that teachers who have had positive experiences with music and the arts themselves are more likely to support student instrumental music study.

As students spend so little time in the music classroom during the week, any positive reinforcement or support from the classroom teacher promotes band students' progress, especially through positive classroom discussions about music or encouragement of individual band students. Maintaining communication with the classroom teachers is crucial in this regard. By visiting classrooms, viewing student work, and talking to the classroom teachers, I learned a great deal about the students' interests, academic progress, goals and needs, and their support network at home and at school. Learning improvisation is a complex process and is experienced differently through the lens of each child's experience. The more familiar I was with each child's background, the more I could tailor the curriculum to the child. The

curriculum presented in Chapter Four is therefore designed to remain flexible, so that teachers can accommodate their students accordingly.

Student participation in other activities also strongly influences student value beliefs. Practicing an instrument requires individual solitary discipline in a way that other time intensive activities such as sports and dance do not. In busy family schedules, it was easy for band students and their families to make practice time a lower priority. Communication about the improvisation curriculum content and home practice therefore became even more important both for band students and their families. Some parents reported that their children said that they did not know what to practice, as it was music learned by ear and not in the method book. I added Woodshedding (slang for practice on an instrument) homework sheets to increase clarity about expectations for home practice.

Summary

In this chapter, I presented the personal and professional influences on my pedagogical approach to teaching jazz improvisation. I also highlighted the opportunities and challenges inherent in teaching improvisation in a large group setting to intermediate and beginning band students. Finally, I outlined the steps involved in developing a jazz-based beginning band improvisation curriculum and described how I modified the curriculum based on student response to the lessons.

The next chapter contains the content of this project: A Beginning Band Jazz-Based Improvisation Curriculum.

CHAPTER FOUR
CONTENT

Chapter Four consists of a jazz-based beginning band improvisation curriculum unit. The curriculum follows in its entirety.

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Woodshedding 3

Lesson Eleven

Appendix A: Educator Handouts 1-4

Appendix B: Suggested Recordings

Appendix C: Additional Resources--Jazz Websites

Outline for the Jazz-based Beginning Band Improvisation Curriculum

Lesson One (30 minutes—Like-Instrument Instruction)

- Instrument assembly
- Student exploration: Moving parts of their instruments
- Large group improvisation: Teacher directed
- Improvisation debriefing: Music is organized sound
- Instrument maintenance: Introduction
- **Music: Teacher's choice**

Lesson Two (45 minutes)

- Exploration: What is sound? How is it created?
- Mouthpiece practice (wind players); drum pad practice (percussionists)
- Large group improvisation: Teacher and student directed
- **"The Music Goes 'Round and Round"—Louis Prima**

Lesson Three (30 minutes—Like-Instrument Instruction)

- Exploration: What posture is optimal for a musician?
- Posture and breathing practice
- Mouthpiece practice (wind players); drum pad practice (percussionists)
- Small group process-oriented improvisation: Teacher and student directed
- **"It Don't Mean a Thing if It Ain't Got That Swing"—Duke Ellington**

Lesson Four (45 minutes)

- Four Properties of Sound: Identify rhythm and timbre
- Identify and practice call and response
- Improvisation: Body percussion
- Improvisation: Mouthpiece (wind players) and drum pad (percussionists)
- **"Let's Call the Whole Thing Off" – Ella Fitzgerald & Louis Armstrong or "I Can Give You Everything But Love"– Ella Fitzgerald**

Lesson Five (30 minutes—Like-Instrument Instruction)

- Learn first three notes: B, C and D Concert (French horns only: F, G and A concert)
- First song: "Hot Cross Buns"

Lesson Six (45 minutes)

- Four Properties of Sound: Identify rhythm, timbre, dynamics and pitch
- Call and response—scat singing
- Roots of current popular music in jazz
- **"Heebie Jeebies"—Louis Armstrong**
- **"Honeysuckle Rose"—Ella Fitzgerald and Count Basie**
- Identify student favorite musical styles, artists and songs

- Review first three notes, "Hot Cross Buns"

Lesson Seven (30 minutes—Like-Instrument Instruction)

- Review first three notes and first song
- Teach students to sing a bassline for the first song

Lesson Eight (45 minutes)

- Student and teacher led call and response--scat sing syncopated rhythms
- Musical scavenger hunt for timbre and quotes: **"Air Mail Special" by Ella Fitzgerald**
- Melody—stepwise motion or with skips
- Harmony—how does it affect the mood of a song?
- How do you learn a song by ear?
- Instrumental call and response—syncopated rhythms

Lesson Nine (30 minutes—Like-Instrument Instruction)

- Learn notes number four and five: E flat and F concert (French horns only: B flat and C concert)
- How does the length of the tube affect the pitch that is produced?

Lesson Ten (45 minutes)

- **"Shulie A Bop" by Sarah Vaughan**
- Review notes number one through five
- Learn to recognize the subdivision of the pulse into two, three or four equal parts
- **"Lady Madonna" by the Beatles** or a student music selection
- Identify syncopation (rhythmic surprise) and scat sing syncopated rhythms
- Identify and demonstrate pulse, downbeat and upbeat
- Improvise new versions of songs by altering the rhythm of the melody

Lesson Eleven (10 minutes in each 45-minute rehearsal)

- **Music: Teacher's choice**
- Call and response—strict imitation
- Call and response—alter the rhythm (body percussion)
- Call and response—alter the rhythm (with instruments)
- Call and response—alter the rhythm and the melody (with instruments)
- Improvise new versions of songs by altering the rhythm of the melody
- Where do we go from here?

A Jazz-Based Beginning Band Improvisation Curriculum

Introduction

This curriculum is intended as an introductory improvisation unit to meet the needs of beginning band students in their first year of instruction. The objective is for students to begin their instrumental music studies through the exploration of improvisation in the jazz style, focusing on the sounds that they are creating rather than on the notation that they are reading.

The unit was designed for use by first year beginning instrumentalists who meet with the instructor at least twice a week, once in a small homogeneous group by instrument or instrument family for thirty minutes, and once as a large heterogeneous group in which all band members are together for forty-five minutes. Except where otherwise noted, lesson plans are designed for use in the large heterogeneous group, with the idea that material from these lessons, along with instrument-specific pedagogical instruction, is reviewed in the subsequent homogeneous classes. However, the curriculum can easily be adapted for use in other beginning band schedules. Lessons one through ten are meant to be taught in succession, with a much greater emphasis put on improvisation and playing in the jazz style. Lesson 11 includes five ten-minute activities that are designed to be inserted repeatedly into lessons that emphasize more traditional methods of teaching so that students can maintain their skills and interest in improvisation, composition ,and playing in the jazz style.

While a sound before sight (playing before reading) premise is the foundation of this curriculum, it can successfully be implemented alongside a more traditional approach to written music literacy, such as through the use of a beginning band method book. For this reason, many lessons can be stretched over two class periods so that other material can be presented in the same class period. This would allow the introduction of improvisation and the jazz language concurrently with students learning the first six notes on the instrument and learning some basic notation. However, the primary objectives of lessons one through five include the creation of a safe learning environment with an emphasis on listening and the immediate exploration of sound and music-making. Therefore, these lessons should be delivered in their entirety, without the distraction of learning to read music.

When immersing students in a music, it is important to share the stories of the people who created it and the times and places in which they lived. Like any music, jazz is imbedded in a rich cultural and historical context. There are many wonderful resources available both in print and on-line that describe the history of jazz and its musicians and those resources provide an invaluable supplement for this curriculum. A list of online resources are provided in Appendix C at the end of this curriculum.

National Standards for Music Education Addressed In This Unit

The following standards are excerpts from the National Standards for Music Education Grades 5 through 8 (MENC, 1994) that will be covered in this curriculum unit:

Content Standard 2: Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.

Achievement Standard A

Perform on at least one instrument accurately and independently, alone and in small and large ensembles, with good posture, good playing position, and good breath, bow, or stick control.

Achievement Standard C

Perform music representing diverse genres and cultures, with expression appropriate for the work being performed.

Achievement Standard D

Play by ear simple melodies on a melodic instrument.

Content Standard 3: Improvising melodies,variations, and accompaniments

Achievement Standard B

Improvise melodic embellishments and simple rhythmic and melodic variations on…melodies in major keys.

Achievement Standard C

Improvise short melodies, unaccompanied and over given rhythmic accompaniments, each in a consistent style, meter and tonality.

Content Standard 6: Listening to, analyzing, and describing music

Achievement Standard B

Analyze the uses of elements of music in aural examples representing diverse genres and cultures.

Prior Content Knowledge and Skills

As elementary music programs vary so much from school to school, both in the concepts covered and the amount of time that students receive music instruction, this unit was designed so that students with no or limited musical experience or instrumental playing experience could complete it. However, students with prior musical experience will progress at a more rapid rate and will likely experience a deeper understanding of the improvisation process than those with limited experience. In addition, students will advance more quickly if they begin the curriculum with the foundation of a steady internal pulse already in place.

What the Instructor Needs to Know

The Beginning Band Jazz-Based Improvisation Curriculum will be of greatest use to public school music teachers with a K-12 teaching credential in music. Although this curriculum can be used by music educators at all experience levels and by those well-versed in the language of jazz, it is targeted at teachers with a rudimentary understanding of jazz and of music instruction. The curriculum therefore provides a step-by-step process of instruction and does not assume any exposure to the jazz repertoire or jazz terminology or any experience of performance in the jazz idiom. That said, students greatly benefit from and are inspired by the instructor's enthusiastic and stylistic demonstration of the music, both vocally through the use of jazz articulation syllables and instrumentally through idiomatic playing. Legendary jazz trumpet player Clark Terry, who in his sixty-plus year career has appeared on over 500 recordings and has performed with virtually every

legendary jazz player over that time span, described this passing on of the jazz tradition as "Imitate. Assimilate. Innovate." Students need to hear the music expressed idiomatically in order to imitate the jazz style and will develop a relationship to the music as a means of expression when hearing it created by their teacher in the room with them.

Likewise, as imitation provides the foundation for our students' ability to assimilate and to create in the jazz idiom, we must teach our students to love listening. The following guidelines are suggested to encourage the love of listening to jazz recordings or to the teacher's musical demonstrations.

Inspiring a Love of Listening in Your Students

1. Know the recording well before presenting it. All the suggestions that follow are dependent on that preparation.
2. If you are excited about the recording, they will be too. If you sing a musical phrase with feeling, your students will as well. Do not be afraid to get out of your comfort zone and show some passion!
3. While listening to a recording, interact with the music in as many different ways as you can: sing along with it, dance with it, or mimic playing along to it to both focus the students' listening and to demonstrate playing techniques, such as playing with a mute or using slide vibrato.
4. Personalize the music for your students. For example, when mimicking playing of a certain instrument, make eye contact with the student who plays

that instrument. This will focus all students' listening, not just that of the individual student.

5. Encourage active listening to the musical examples that you share in class by regularly referring to the music, its performers and composers in subsequent lessons.

Instructional Materials

For all lessons in this curriculum, students will need to bring their instruments, music binders, and a pencil to class. The classroom should be equipped with a keyboard, preferably a piano so that students experience an acoustic rather than electronic representation of the piano timbre, whiteboard and whiteboard markers, and a compact disc (CD) player or other music player. Although this curriculum provides visual reinforcement of material on a white board, the teacher may instead make and use overheads of the material. Additionally, the teacher will need to have a wind instrument on which to demonstrate musical examples for the students. Although musical examples can be demonstrated on a piano or mallet keyboard instrument, due to the fast decay of the keyboard sounds, it is preferable to demonstrate jazz articulations on a wind instrument, especially for wind instrument players.

Curriculum Layout and Procedure

Level of Improvisation for Each Lesson:

As noted in the previous chapter, this curriculum is built on the premise first presented by John Kratus that in the process of learning how to improvise, students

advance from one level of improvisation to the next. The level of improvisation that is addressed in each lesson is noted immediately after the lesson title, as shown in the example Lesson Three—Product-Oriented Improvisation.

Length of lesson:

The length of each lesson is indicated in parenthesis following the title and improvisation level of the lesson, as in Lesson Three—Product-Oriented Improvisation (45 minutes).

Teacher Preparation:

While some lessons may be taught verbatim in their entirety, others require that teachers provide instruction on certain topics using a teaching method of their choice. If this is the case, a Teacher Preparation section is included in the lesson introduction to alert teachers to the topics that they need to prepare independently.

Entry and Exit Music:

As students are entering and exiting the classroom, music is played that relates to the objectives of that day's lesson. To help the teacher focus the students' listening when music is played in the course of a lesson, the objective of the recording is listed in parentheses before the listing of the song title. For example, "Entry Music suggested (demonstration of the effect of timbre on musical expression and listening experience)." While many recordings could be used, a reference list of suggested recordings is provided as Appendix A at the end of this curriculum. These recordings are referred to by title and artist name only in each lesson and are easily identified with the title put in quotes and both the title and the artist labeled in bold, as in the

example **"Let's Call the Whole Thing Off" – Ella Fitzgerald & Louis Armstrong**.

Visual Cues:

Academic language that is reinforced by being written on the board is italicized and put into brackets, as in *[The Four Properties of Sound]*. If it is written on the board as the students enter the classroom, then it is listed first in the procedure. Otherwise, it is identified as above in the body of the lesson text at the point at which it is written on the board. If the teacher has access to the use of an overhead projector or a computer and screening capabilities, all of these visual cues can be prepared in advance as well.

Educator and Student Handouts:

Educator handouts and student handouts are identified within the text of the curriculum using the jazz font, as in **Educator Handout 1: Call & Response Rhythms**.

The four Educator Handouts are provided in Appendix A at the end of this curriculum, Student handouts, included immediately following each lesson, are intended to be taken home with the student and are referred to and presented as **Woodshedding 1.** There are three practice lessons (woodshedding exercises) provided for use with your students. They are sequential in nature and are designed to remind students and their families of concepts for home practice. As the students meet only twice a week, practice lessons may be assigned over a several week period. A

handout is listed at the point in the lesson when it serves as a reference or is to be passed out.

Conclusion

If we excite students about music and encourage them to draw on their own resources then they will make music all of their life, not just while they are part of our school systems' organized ensembles. The ultimate goal of this curriculum is to be a vehicle for exciting and encouraging beginning band students; to inspire them to make the creative process involved in playing and making music their own.

LESSON ONE
EXPLORATION
(30 MINUTES—FOR LIKE-INSTRUMENT INSTRUCTION)

Objectives:

Students will:

- Improvise as a large group by loosely organizing sounds within a limited time-frame
- Open, close and store instrument cases properly
- Assemble and disassemble their instrument of choice
- Explore the sounds that can be created
    - with the moving parts of their instruments (wind players)
    - by blowing air through their instruments without forming a pitch (wind players)
    - with the use of one stick and a practice pad or drum (percussion)

Necessary Prior Knowledge

- Class procedure for optimum learning and enjoyment
- Procedure for working in small groups
- Deadline for obtaining an instrument
- Procedure for listening to music

Key Vocabulary for Lesson

- Brass players: tuning slides, valves, trombone slide, water key, mouthpiece, bell
- Clarinetists: bell, lower joint, upper joint, barrel, mouthpiece, ligature, reed
- Flautists: head joint, foot
- Percussionists: beaters, sticks, practice pad, drum head, resonator

Teacher Preparation

This lesson is designed to accommodate students who do not have their instrument yet. Students without instruments can practice on any available school instruments or be paired up with a student who does have an instrument.

Pedagogical review needed:

- Instrument assembly procedure for each instrument

Materials

- Large piece of butcher paper to write down student responses.
- As many instruments as possible for each presentation of this lesson so that students can experience the activities hands-on.
    - Listening music suggested:
        - **Teacher's choice.** Select music from the jazz tradition that you are excited about and that you think will excite your students on this first day with instruments!

Procedure

[Instrument Exploration Day!]

- [Why do you think it is necessary for the parts of your instrument that move to be able to move? What is the function of those parts?]
- [Do the instrument parts make any sound when you move them?]
- [If they do make a sound, why?]

In a different location on the board:

[improvise—to make up music on the spot]

Entry Music suggested (establishing an exciting learning environment):

- **Teacher's choice**

1) Introduce lesson

- Enthusiastically describe to students today's lesson: Instrument assembly and exploration, and improvising as a group with the instruments without even playing them!

2) Opening instrument cases

- Demonstrate to students how and where to open their cases so that the instrument is secure.
- Give students the opportunity to open their cases, assisting as needed.

3) Instrument assembly

- Tell students that we will now assemble our instruments in a step-by-step manner and that in order to protect our instruments, it is very important that students not jump ahead to the next step without instruction.
- Describe to students how to assemble their instruments. During assembly, introduce students to names of the parts of their instruments, referring to part names frequently to aid retention.
- Point out which parts of the instrument are particularly fragile and how to protect those parts.
- Clarinetists should not put their reed on. As this piece of clarinet assembly is the most time consuming and most difficult for students to grasp correctly, it will be introduced later in a lesson in which students will be playing and when more students have their instruments.
- Percussionists should be shown how to set up the practice pad on its stand. Two snare drums and other available percussion should also be available for the discovery process later in the lesson.

5) How do you hold the instrument?

- Demonstrate to students how to hold their instruments so that they are secure in their hands.

- Show students how to place their instrument in their laps or on the floor if needed for any reason. Demonstrate other incorrect ways to put them down, and ask students to share why they think these might lead to the instrument getting damaged. (Example: flute on the music stand, clarinet or trumpet standing on its bell, trumpet resting on the second valve slide, horn rotor side down, trombone with the slide resting on the floor, etc.) Have students place instruments on the floor correctly.
- After instruments are assembled, show students where their cases should be stored during class time.

6) Student discovery: How does an instrument work?

- Show students which parts of the instrument move and how to move them. Give students an opportunity to move movable parts on their own.
- Break students up into groups of no more than five, preferably four, and separate the groups to facilitate discussion.
- Ask the groups to discuss and report answers back to the class for the following questions (which are on the board): Why do you think it is necessary for the parts of your instrument that move to be able to move? In other words, what do you think the function of that part might be? Do the parts make any sound when you move them? Stress that you are referring to movable parts once the instrument is already fully assembled. If students answer those questions early, they may also address this question: If the instrument parts do make a sound, why is that?

- Tell students that they will have five minutes for this quick exploration and discussion. Inform students that in their discovery process they can move parts, but nothing in the instrument can be taken apart in the process, and maximum care must be taken at all times to protect the instrument. Tell students that we are looking for guesses in this process, not necessarily correct answers.
- Move around the room during student exploration. If students ask questions, answer in a way that further spurs their exploration. Allow seven minutes for the discussions if students are engaged in the process.
- Invite each group to report their answers. It is important for the instructor to avoid confirming or denying the correctness of the answers. Answer questions with questions to further guide the process. Write their answers on a piece of paper that can be posted in the classroom.

7) Large group improvisation—introduction

- Demonstrate that another cool sound that you can make on an instrument is when you blow air through it, without starting a sound on the mouthpiece, and move the keys or valves at the same time (brass and woodwinds only). Invite students to try doing this.
- Explain that while everyone has their own way of describing music, some people define music as organized sound. How might we organize the sounds that they just discovered on the spot? We will explore one way.

- Ask students to quietly pick one of the sounds that they discovered in their group. Seat the students into groups based on the sound that they chose. For example, possible trumpet sounds could include wiggling the valves, wiggling the valves while blowing air through the instrument, opening a water key or moving a slide. For clarinets and flutes, break up those pressing down keys into two groups: those pressing down keys with the left hand only (higher pitches) and those using both hands (lower pitches). For percussionists, use the snare drum throw, bass drum or hi-hat pedals, or mallets placed on a music stand without a protective rug fragment.
- Note that like all compositions, our composition will be inspired by the musicians and the instruments that they play. Our first composition will be inspired by the student-discovered sounds and will be created on the spot, or improvised. Point to *[improvise—to make up music on the spot]*.

8) Large group improvisation

- Before performing, remind students that we need absolute quiet from all musicians unless it is their turn to play. Students are to make their sounds when the teacher points at them.
- The teacher will direct this first improvisation by pointing to individual groups of students. Use gestures when pointing to the students to influence their sound dynamics, articulation, length and rhythmic pattern. End performance with a cut-off and see what they do. Do not inform students

what the gestures mean. If they do not change their sound based on teacher gestures, try gesturing in another way until they do.

- Do a few of these improvisations. After each one, ask students what they noticed about the process.
- Depending on the time left, you can also assign each group a character, animal or emotion that they should emulate with their sound.

9) Performance debriefing

- Mention again that some people define music as organized sound. Was what we just created music? Why or why not? Lead a discussion.

10) Instrument maintenance--introduction

- If time is available, you might introduce one of the ways that students' instruments are maintained. If time is not available in this lesson, insert this activity into the next lesson.
- Explain that while it was fun to improvise with those sounds, ideally the instrument mechanics should make as little sound as possible so that we hear (play a tone on the instrument) instead of (make a mechanical sound)
- Refer back to their earlier discoveries of what creates the mechanical sounds. Use their discoveries to lead to how we maintain our instruments to minimize those sounds and to keep instruments playing optimally. Call attention to the fact that any material that is in contact with other materials needs attention in order to keep working.
- Request that students postpone maintaining their own instruments until after they have been shown the proper procedure. Tell students that we will

maintain our instruments togther soon. Teacher note: It is recommended that most students have their own instrument when the majority of maintenance procedures are taught.

11) Disassembly of instruments

- Explain that to disassemble the instruments they should proceed in the opposite order to which they put it together.
- Help students to disassemble the instruments.
- Instruct clarinetists and flautists in how to swab out instruments.

12) Conclusion

- Remind students to bring instruments, music binders and pencil to the next band rehearsal.
- Tell students how much you enjoyed their creations and that you are looking forward to creating more music with them throughout the year!

No exit music *(to accommodate discussions with students after class—there are usually many questions students have at this point in the year regarding how to obtain an instrument or materials).*

LESSON TWO
EXPLORATION

(45 MINUTES)

Objectives:

Students will:

- Review and practice instrument assembly and disassembly and instrument case storage.
- Explore the concept of sound and how sound is created
- Explore how sound is created on their instrument specifically
- Create sounds on their mouthpieces (wind players) and practice pads (percussionists)
- Improvise large and small groups by loosely organizing sounds within a limited time-frame

Necessary Prior Knowledge

- Procedure for sharing or discussing with an elbow partner or in small groups
- Deadline for obtaining an instrument
- Procedure for listening to music

Key Vocabulary for Lesson

- Sound—something that can be heard; vibrations traveling through air, water or some other substance

Teacher Preparation

This lesson is designed to accommodate students who have instruments and those who do not. Students without instruments can practice on any available school instruments or be paired up with a student who does have an instrument.

Also, this lesson is built on the assumption that while selecting their instruments students had a chance to experiment with and were reasonably successful in producing a sound on a mouthpiece (if a wind player). Students should be seated in instrument sections.

Be sure to practice the balloon and grass demonstrations before the lesson!

Materials

- balloons

- long and wide blades of grass
- large round tupperware and a plastic bag
- As many instruments as needed so that students can experience the activities hands-on.
    - Listening music suggested:
    - **"The Music Goes 'Round and Around" by Louis Prima**

Procedure
[What is sound?]
[How is sound created?]
[How is sound on your instrument created?]

Entry Music suggested (establishing an exciting learning environment; How is sound created on an instrument?):

- **"The Music Goes 'Round and Around" by Louis Prima**

1) Lesson introduction
- Begin class by doing a rhythmic call and response using body percussion (using clapping, hands on your lap and stomping feet)
- Briefly touch on activities from the last lesson .
    - class improvisation—fun!
    - definition of music as organized sound
    - definition of improvisation--create music on the spot
- Describe to students today's lesson: we will explore sound, and how it is created and then apply that to playing our instruments.

2) Opening/storage of instrument cases and instrument assembly
- Remind students of procedure
- Request that students remove from their cases their mallets and practice pads (percussion), mouthpieces (brass), head joints (flutes), mouthpieces and

barrels (clarinets) and mouthpieces and necks (saxophones), and to gently put them under their chairs. This a good time to review with the woodwind players the importance of protecting their reed with a mouthpiece cover. Request that students then return cases to their appropriate location.

3) Demonstration and student discovery 1: What creates a sound?

- Blow up a balloon half way. Holding the mouth of the balloon between thumb and index finger on both hands, let the air out so that it makes a sound. Repeat this demonstration, this time describing what you are doing with the balloon.
- Ask students to hypothesize why this activity with the balloon created a sound. Request that students think about that while you repeat the demonstration in a different part of the room.
- Tell students to share/brainstorm with their elbow partner (the student immediately to their left or right) why they think the balloon created a sound.
- Share student ideas with the whole group, noting their hypotheses on the board.

4) Follow this same procedure, but vary what you do with the balloon and the questions that you ask, as follows:

- Blow up the balloon half way, block the mouth of the balloon, and release the fingers around the neck. Then remove your thumb, allowing the air to escape making a shhh sound (but not high pitched sounds as before). Ask why that sound was different than the first sound.

- Blow up half way. Holding the mouth of the balloon between thumb and index finger on both hands, let the air out so that it makes a sound. Start by pinching the mouth of the balloon tightly and gradually release the pressure so that the pitch descends from high to low. Ask students how the sound changed and why they think it changed.
- Note all of these hypotheses on the board, being careful not to share your own answer to the questions.

5) Demonstration and student discovery 2: What creates a sound?

- Clasp hands together, creating a large empty space that is completely enclosed between your hands. Take a long and wide blade of grass and stretch it taunt between your thumbs so that the thinnist edge of the grass faces you. Blow across the blade so that it vibrates and creates a sound.
- Ask students why they think that action created a sound. Lead large group discussion

6) Demonstration and student discovery 3: What creates a sound?

- Take a clear plastic bag and put a large round tupperware bowl inside it. Stretch the bag taut across the opening of the bowl, holding the bag tight with your hand under the bowl.
- Using a pencil, strike the taunt plastic bag (like a drum head).
- Ask students why they think that action created a sound.
- Tell students to share with their elbow partner their hypotheses.
- Lead a group discussion in which students share their ideas. Note student ideas on the board.

7) Compare and contrast

- Compare and contrast the three different ways that these sounds were created. Based on these demonstrations, ask students what they think a sound is. Students may or may not arrive at the connection between sound and vibration.

8) Compare the sound makers demonstrated to instrument parts

- Ask students to remove their instrument part that they had stored under their chairs earlier.
- Lead a brief discussion of which of the demonstrated sound makers is most like the instrument parts that they have in their hand.
- Invite students to make a sound on their instrument part like they saw in the demonstrations, leading one instrument group at a time. For example, you demonstrate the balloon, then demonstrate buzzing on a mouthpiece, then have brass players buzz on their mouthpieces.
- Lead a rhythmic call and response exchange using instrument parts.
- Throughout this part of the lesson, make general corrections about embouchur (winds) or playing position (all). Refering to the sound makers that you introduced earlier, ask students to change how they are playing. For example, ask them to fill their balloon (lungs) with more air.

9) Group improvisations

- Remind students that we need absolute quiet from all musicians unless it is their turn to play.

- Warm up: Give students large cues to all play at once and to stop at once. Change gesture to try to evoke change in sound from the students.
- Direct a large group improvisation by pointing to individual groups of students. Again, use gestures when pointing to the students to influence their sound dynamics, articulation, length and rhythmic pattern. End performance with a cut-off cue.
- Ask for volunteers to do a small group improvisation in front of the class that is similar to the large group improvisation. Students will use their instrument parts for this improvisation. As in lesson one, you may set up the improvisation so that it tells a story, with each player representing an animal, emotion, etc.
- Students who are reticent to play their instrument part may want to play the balloon or the tupperware drum instead. Have several extras of these on hand.
- Do a few of these improvisations with different groups of students. After each one, ask students what they noticed about the process. If appropriate for your students, you may invite up a student conductor to take your place. You may also have students in the audience play along whenever students with their instrument play in the small group.
- Do one or more of these improvisations without conductors. Preface by saying that the group members will need to decide who makes a sound next without saying anything to other members.

- 10) Performance debriefing
- Ask students what they noticed about performances without a conductor.
- Mention again that some people define music as organized sound. Was what we just created music? Why or why not? Lead a discussion.

11) Conclusion and disassembly of instruments

- Remind students to bring instruments, music binders and pencil to the next band rehearsal. Remind students of any band-related deadlines.
- Tell students how much you enjoyed their creations and that you are looking forward to creating more music with them throughout the year!
- Help students to disassemble the instruments.

No exit music *(to accommodate discussions with students after class—there are usually many questions students have at this point in the year regarding how to obtain an instrument or materials).*

LESSON THREE
PROCESS-ORIENTED IMPROVISATION
(30 MINUTES—FOR LIKE-INSTRUMENT INSTRUCTION)

Objectives:

Students will:

- Improvise as a small group by loosely organizing sounds within a limited time frame
- Identify and practice optimal breathing techniques and posture for playing an instrument
- Demonstrate a steady beat
- Play a steady pitch on their mouthpieces (windplayers)
- Play a steady beat on their drum pads using alternate sticking (percussionists)

Key Vocabulary for Lesson

- Embouchure
- Alternate sticking

Teacher Preparation

Please note: Procedure steps one through six are designed for wind players but are easily adaptable for use with percussionists. Steps one through five are very applicable to good posture in general and on the drum set specifically.

Pedagogical review needed:

- Breathing technique for playing a wind instrument
- Embouchure development techniques

Materials

- Audio recording equipment to record student compositions
- One small balloon labeled "droopy lung" and one large balloon labeled "full lung," blown up and tied

- As many instruments (particularly wind instrument mouthpieces) as possible for each presentation of this lesson so that students can experience the activities hands-on
    - Listening music suggested:

"It Don't Mean a Thing If It Ain't Got that Swing"—Duke Ellington

Procedure

[Our first recording!]

Entry Music suggested (playing with commitment):

"It Don't Mean a Thing If It Ain't Got that Swing"—Duke Ellington

1) Lesson introduction

- Briefly touch on activities and terms from the last lesson:
    - What is sound and how it is created
    - Music—organized sound
    - Improvisation—creating music on the spot
- Describe to students today's lesson: playing on our mouthpieces and percussion instruments, and then creating a composition that we will record!

2) Opening/storage of instrument cases and instrument assembly

- Assist students as needed with assembly
- Request that students remove from their cases their mallets and practice pads (percussion), mouthpieces (brass), head joints (flutes), mouthpieces and barrels (clarinets) and mouthpieces and necks (saxophones), and to gently put them under their chairs. This a good time to review with the woodwind players the importance of protecting their reed with a mouthpiece cover. Request that students then return cases to their appropriate location.

3) Breathing techniques for optimum sound production

- Tell students that the most important aspect of producing a sound on an instrument is how we breathe in and blow out air.
- Remind students of the balloon representing the lung demonstration from the last class. Ask for two volunteers to blow up balloons.
- Ask one student to blow up the balloon ("droopy lung") while sitting with upper body curled up so that her head is at her knees, and to stop blowing when the balloon touches her legs. Ask the other student to blow up her balloon (labeled "full lung") while sitting with her back straight.
- Tell students that we will now compare what happens when we let each balloon go one at a time. Take prepared smaller balloon (labeled "droopy lung") and exchange balloons with the student who blew up the smaller balloon.
- Let that balloon go.
- Do the same activity with the other balloon, exchanging that balloon for the prepared larger balloon (labeled "full lung").
- Ask students to compare what happened with these balloons. Be sure to discuss the differences in how far and with what force the balloons flew. You may also compare the sounds produced.
- Ask students which lung they think would help them to make the best sound on their instrument and why. Depending on your students, you might first ask which will help them to play a certain sport or do any other activity.

- Ask students how they would need to sit so that their lungs could expand fully.

4) Posture and breathing practice

- Following student ideas, demonstrate posture that supports good breathing—sitting at edge of the seat, feet flat on the floor, back straight, neck straight.
- Show students how to breathe in and exhale out in a relaxed manner using whatever visual works for you.
- Show students how to mark music's steady beat with their heel going up and down on the floor.
- While marking the steady beat with their heels, have students practice breathing in and out for an increasingly longer number of beats. Explore with them how long they can breathe out before they need to take a breath.
- Demonstrate that if you play a note using the last third of air left in your lungs your note will be supported with "droopy lung" air—not conducive to good tone. So when you are down to your last third of air, take another breath.

5) Mouthpiece practice (wind players)/grip, stick control and drum pad practice (percussionists)

- Explain to students that the sound that you produce on your instrument all starts with what you do on your mouthpiece. For that reason, many musicians practice on their mouthpieces alone.
- Demonstrate on your mouthpiece a droopy lung sound compared to a full lung sound.

- For percussionists, focus on proper grip and alternate sticking using exercises of your choice.
- Refer to the entry music—"It Don't Mean a Thing If It Ain't Got That Swing" is another way of saying to give everything you've got to what you are doing. When playing your mouthpiece/drum pad, don't hold back!
- Lead student practice on instrument parts that were described in procedure step 2.
- Ask students to use straight fast air. Illustrate this concept with a visual metaphor of your choice. Soccer penalty kick air compared to goalie kick air or baseball fast ball air compared to curve ball air are metaphors that work well.
- Practice maintaining a steady pitch, changing pitch, and other drills helpful to developing a good embouchure.
- Provide individual and group feedback to students on embouchure formation and tone production (wind players) and grip and stick control (percussionists).
- Provide students with exercises (teacher's choice—learned by rote) that they can use for mouthpiece/drum pad practice at home. Tell students that to build the strength they will need to practice at least 5 to10 minutes a day. Suggest to students that they play along with their favorite song. Arrange for those who do not yet have instruments to come to the bandroom outside of class for practice. All others are welcome as well.

6) Group improvisation

- Tell students that they will create a very brief composition, organizing mouthpiece/drum pad sounds that they have been practicing. The guidelines for the composition are as follows (write the guidelines in short form on the board):
    - Mouthpiece/drum pad sounds or sound pattern should be performed one at a time, and each student decides how long that sound is. Each sound or sound pattern can be played only once.
    - You can create your sound based on the sound that the student before you or played or can play a completely different sound.
    - Sound must be created using fast straight air (wind players) and good posture.
    - Sounds can have silences in between them—music is made of sound and silence!
    - Everyone in the group participates.
    - The length of the composition is determined by how long the timekeeper can breathe out (silently) until only one third of his air is left. While exhaling, this student needs to mark the steady beet with his heel. Demonstrate this. When he is down to the last third of his air, this student will signify with a two-handed cut-off gesture the end of the piece. Depending on the size of the group, this student may need to do two exhalations in a row.

- Tell students that we will practice a few times before recording the improvisation.

7) Performance of improvisations
- Before performing, remind students that we need absolute quiet from group members not playing so that we can hear every sound.
- Record these compositions so that they can be played back immediately.
- Count down the beginning of the recording silently using hand signals (5, 4, 3, 2, 1, point to starting musician).
- The person determining the length of the piece needs to breathe in with the countdown.

8) Performance debriefing
- Play the piece just recorded.
- Ask students how many figured out ahead of time what sound they were going to play. Ask how many students based their sound on the sound that came right before theirs. Explain that improvisation is a mixture of both learning in advance and listening in the moment.
- Ask how many students decided how long their note would be based on watching the timekeeper. What was keeping time like for the timekeeper?
- Ask students to share what this process was like for them.

9) Conclusion
- Tell students that it is very important that they practice only on their mouthpieces (wind players) so that they build the strength to play their first notes. Those who don't have instruments yet or those who would like to do

their playing at school can come over to the bandroom at designated times to play on instruments, if that is a possibility for the teacher.

- Remind students to bring instruments, music binders and pencil to the next band rehearsal.

10) Disassembly of instruments
- Help students to disassemble and clean the instrument parts.

No exit music *(to accommodate discussions with students after class—there are usually many questions students have at this point in the year regarding how to obtain an instrument or materials)*

LESSON FOUR
PRODUCT-ORIENTED IMPROVISATION

(45 MINUTES)

Objectives:

Students will:

- Identify two of the four properties of sound (rhythm, timbre) in discussing and by listening to music
- Analyze the effect of musical timbre on the listener's experience
- Identify and demonstrate call and response, varying their responses by changing one of the properties of the sound
- Produce syncopated and straight rhythms
- Continue exploration of the improvisation process by experimenting with different combinations of sounds using body percussion
- Experiment with sounds and different combinations of sounds on their mouthpieces (brass), head joint (flutes), mouthpiece and barrel (clarinets), mouthpiece and neck (saxophones) and sticks or mallets (percussion).

Necessary Prior Knowledge

Basic technique on producing a sound on a mouthpiece or a drum pad:

- Procedure for listening to music

Key Vocabulary for Lesson

- The four properties of sound: rhythm, timbre (only two out of the four are introduced)
- Call and response

Teacher Preparation

- This lesson is the recommended deadline for all students to have their own instruments.

Materials

Accompaniment CDs from the Jamey Aebersold collection. Suggested:

- Swing feel: **"B Flat Blues" – All Blues**

- Straight eighth feel: **"Watermelon Man"– Maiden Voyage**

Listening music suggested:

- **"Let's Call the Whole Thing Off" – Ella Fitzgerald & Louis Armstrong**

  or **"I Can Give You Everything But Love"– Ella Fitzgerald.**

Handouts

Educator Handout 1: Call & Response Rhythms; **Woodshedding 1**

Procedure

["Let's Call the Whole Thing Off" – Ella Fitzgerald & Louis Armstrong]
[The Four Properties of Sound]

Entry Music suggested (demonstration of the effect of timbre on musical expression and listening experience):

- **"Let's Call the Whole Thing Off"– Ella Fitzgerald & Louis Armstrong** or

  "I Can't Give You Anything But Love"– Ella Fitzgerald.

1) Introduce call and response

- Ask students to remove from their cases their mallets and practice pads (percussion), mouthpieces (brass), head joints (flutes), mouthpieces and barrels (clarinets) and mouthpieces and necks (saxophones), and to gently put them under their chairs. Request that students then return cases to their appropriate location.
- Begin class by doing a rhythmic call and response using jazz scatting syllables. See **Educator Handout 1** for examples of possible rhythms for the call and response exercises. When doing all call and response exercises, point to yourself when doing the call and invite the group response with an open palm facing up.
- Ask students to describe what we were doing. Listen for some version of the response of "question and answer" or "call and response." *[call and response]*

- Demonstrate that the answer you give directly relates to the question asked by asking a couple of students the same question and waiting for their responses. Point out that although the two students gave different answers to the same question, both made sense and were in the same language as the question. Note that neither student gave a nonsensical answer or an answer in another language to the question and give a humorous example of a non sensical answer and an answer in another language. Note that when giving a musical answer, or response, to a musical question, or call, the answer should relate to the musical question and be in the same musical language, or style. Explain that while making your answer an exact repetition of the question like we just did is the simplest version of call and response, often the response varies from the call.

2) The use of rhythm in call and response

- Give several examples of call and response in which the response repeats at least some rhythmic element from the question but is slightly different rhythmically. Create these straight (not swung) rhythms using clapping and hands on your lap (body percussion). Ask students to tell their neighbor how they thought the response was similar to the question. Listen to student responses for a version of "rhythm" or "length of sounds and silences." *[rhythm—the length (duration) of sounds and silences]* underneath *[The Four Properties of Sound]*.

- Using body percussion, practice doing call and response with the students, first as a group and then individually with volunteers, asking them to change the rhythm of the response a little but not completely. For this practice, at first use quarter and eighth notes and rests until students demonstrate close to mastery. Add in sixteenth notes if an additional challenge is needed.
- Practice the same exercise using spoken scat syllables and swung rhythms.

3) Timbre and call and response

- Give two examples of call and response in which the rhythms in the response are exactly the same as in the question but the timbre is changed by making rhythms on a different part of the body.
- Ask students to brainstorm with an elbow partner how the response was similar to the question and how it was different. Listen to and guide the responses until students arrive at "quality of sound" or "type of sound." Explain that the musical term for quality of sound is timbre (rhymes with amber) *[timbre – quality of sound]*.
- Explain that a person's vocal timbre is what makes it possible for us to recognize who is calling out to us without seeing that person. Everybody has his or her own unique vocal timbre.
- Reinforce that concept by saying "timbre" first normally, then saying it again while plugging your nose. Do a couple of call and responses, using spoken scat syllables and swing rhythms, varying the timbre of the syllables by plugging and unplugging your nose during the call.

- Elicit descriptions of different qualities of sound and write them on the board. Responses can include metaphorical descriptors, such as "like the sound of a lawn mower," or tone descriptors, such as scratchy, nasally, airy, rough, growly, buzzy, rattly, pure, raspy. As this can be a difficult concept for students to grasp and is one so important in jazz, elicit or provide many descriptors of timbres.

4) Student practice of call and response on instrument parts and assessment of understanding

- Ask students to gently take out their mouthpieces/sticks and practice pads from under their chairs.
- Remind students that since how we create the sound on a mouthpiece or on the practice pad really influences what we can play on our instruments, many musicians do a lot of practice on these parts of their instrument only.
- Using a mouthpiece of your choice, continue leading similar call and response exercises while students use their mouthpieces/drum pads to make sounds. Make individual corrections on student embouchures while doing this. Alternate this with playing calls on a practice pad.
- Provide variety in the exercise and reinforce the concept of timbre by calling on different instrument sections to respond using the exact same call. Ask students what aspect of the sound changes in these different call and responses.

- Using an accompaniment CD played quietly, lead call and response exercises, varying the property of sound that is changed in the question. Again, vary this exercise by asking different instrumental families or groups to respond.
- Check for understanding by repeating the call until a majority of the students alter the correct property of sound in their response, and by verbally asking the whole group which property of sound had been changed between this call and the previous one. Reinforce answers by pointing to the correct property of sound on the board.

5) Listening **"Let's Call the Whole Thing Off"– Ella Fitzgerald & Louis Armstrong**

- Pass out scratch paper (or notebooks), and instruct students to take out pencils.
- Explain that one of the reasons that we listen to recordings in rehearsal is to hear what the musicians are doing so that we can copy it ourselves in our playing. Explain that any gestures that you make is to help focus their listening.
- Ask students to write down the different timbres that they are hearing in the song. Does the use of a certain timbre make them feel a certain way? Review the list of timbres that were elicited earlier.
- Listen to this recording, following the procedure for listening to music as described in the introduction.
- Give a couple of minutes for students to jot down any last thoughts.

- Ask for volunteers to share responses and write them on the board. Involve all students by asking how many of them felt or heard in similar or different ways to the answers that students had volunteered.

6) Review of concepts: Call and response, rhythm, timbre
- Review that the calls and responses have been altered by changing the rhythm and the timbre, and elicit an example of each after naming that property of sound and pointing to it on the board.

7) Student discovery
- Using their mouthpieces/mallets and practice pads, ask students to take a minute to try to discover any other ways that they might vary the sounds.

8) Woodshedding assignment
- Pass out **Woodshedding 1 Handout**.

- Explain that "woodshedding" is a musical slang term meaning to practice.
- Tell students that between now and the next band rehearsal they should explore making sounds on their mouthpiece and drum pads only, attempting to vary each of the properties of sound in as many different ways as they can. Tell students that after playing the woodshedding assignment for their family they need to get a parent or guardian signature (autograph) and bring it back exactly a week from today.
- Explain that students will share an example of what they have figured out at the next class, and that we will use their discoveries to create our own short pieces of music and to figure out the other two properties of sound.

"Let's Call the Whole Thing Off"– Ella Fitzgerald & Louis Armstrong (the same music that was used as entry music).

Name_____

Woodshedding 1

1) On your mouthpieces (brass and woodwinds) and drum pads (percussionists) only, practice the exercises and patterns that you have learned in your last two band rehearsals.

2) While practicing these patterns, explore:

   A) In what ways can you change the rhythm (patterns of long and short sounds)? Improvise at least 10 different rhythms. Play the rhythms from your favorite songs!

   B) How can you change the timbre (the tone quality) of your sounds?

   C) In what other ways can you change your sounds? How might you play if you were at a rock concert? How might you play if a baby was sleeping in the next room?

D) Can you make your musical sounds impersonate an animal? Which ones?_____

Share these sounds with your families and then get a parent or guardian autograph to bring to class!

_____

Parent/Guardian Autograph

LESSON FIVE
(30 MINUTES—FOR LIKE-INSTRUMENT INSTRUCTION)

Objectives:

Students will:

- Assemble their instruments
- Play the first three notes on their instruments
- Play "Hot Cross Buns" using their first three notes.

Necessary Prior Knowledge

- Basic embouchure formation (wind players)
- Hand position, matched grip (percussionists)

Key Vocabulary for Lesson

- Brass players: tuning slides, valves, trombone slide, water key, mouthpiece, bell
- Clarinetists: bell, lower joint, upper joint, barrel, mouthpiece, ligature, reed
- Flautists: head joint, foot
- Percussionists: mallets, bells, stand

Teacher Preparation

So as to accommodate heterogeneous-instrument instruction, most method books select the students' first three notes from the first five diatonic notes in the key of B flat concert. Many would argue that these are not necessarily the best first notes for beginning students on all instruments. However, as this curriculum is designed to supplement the use of a method book, it is assumed that teachers using this curriculum will teach the first notes used in their method book.

- Pedagogical review needed:
    - Review procedure for teaching students their first three notes on all instruments.

Materials

- As many instruments as needed so that students who do not yet have instruments can still experience the activities hands-on.

Procedure

[Our first notes!]

1) Lesson introduction and review of previous lesson
   - Tell students that today we will learn our first three notes and our first song!

2) Full instrument assembly
   - Review with students how to assemble their instruments
   - Percussionists should assemble their bell kits for this lesson. Tell percussionists that for the next few months we will be focusing on mallet percussion and that we will return to drums later.
   - Tell students that from this lesson on they should set up their instruments and store their cases as soon as they enter the bandroom while music is playing. They should be finished with setting up their instruments and ready to play by the time the music is over.

3) First three notes
   - Teach students their first three notes. In beginning band method books, this is typically B flat concert, C concert, and D concert. Greet every student attempt with much enthusiasm!
   - The first three notes for the French horn players should be concert F, G and A.
   - For each of these notes assign numbers 1, 2, and 3 respectively. For example, tell trumpets and clarinets that their note number one is called a C and tell flutes, mallets, and low brass that their note number one is called a B flat.

- When teaching students each note, give them a visual cue by holding up a corresponding number of fingers (for example, for note number two you hold up two fingers).
- Review optimal posture and breathing for playing their instruments.
- Review keeping a steady pulse with their heel.
- After students have demonstrated some success with generating a first note, have them play four of the same notes in a row, one note per beat, while marking the pulse with their heel.

4) First song

- Teach students how to play "Hot Cross Buns" by rote. Please note the procedure below for teaching songs by rote for the future.
    - Teach "Hot Cross Buns" to students using the song lyrics.
    - Sing "Hot Cross Buns" with students using the numbers that you just assigned to the notes.
    - Sing "Hot Cross Buns" with the students using the numbers that you just assigned to the notes while you and the students do the corresponding fingerings on instruments. Have the percussionists "ghost" the notes, meaning play the piece exactly as you would normally except without making contact with the bars of the bells.
    - Repeat the above step while playing the song on an instrument, preferably one similar to what the students are playing in that class.
    - Play the song along with the students.

- Enthusiastically encourage every student effort!

5) Woodshedding assignment

- Tell students that in order to grow as musicians we need to build the musculature necessary to produce a sound along with the habit of mental discipline. Compare this to athletics. Tell students that this is only accomplished through daily practice.
- Tell students that you are looking forward to hearing all students play our first three notes and "Hot Cross Buns" at our next heterogeneous-instrument rehearsal this week and that we will be playing it in different styles like rock, country, and jazz soon. Explain to students that in order to help them progress, you look forward to listening to each of them play the song individually at our next like-instrument class. Also remind students that you are available for extra help during recesses or at other times that fit into your schedule.
- Remind students to also continue practice on the drum pads, mouthpieces and headjoints because that builds the muscles for playing their instruments even faster.

6) Disassemble instruments

LESSON SIX
PRODUCT ORIENTED IMPROVISATION

(45 MINUTES)

Objectives:

Students will:

- Identify the four properties of sound (rhythm, timbre, pitch and dynamics) in discussion and by listening to music
- Identify and demonstrate call and response, varying responses by changing each of the four properties of sound
- Identify major artists well known for scat singing
- Analyze a musical conversation between a singer and a jazz orchestra
- Analyze the effect of musical timbre, pitch and dynamics on the listener's experience
- Produce syncopated rhythms
- Play the first three notes on their instruments.
- Identify their favorite artists, songs and musical styles

Necessary Prior Knowledge

- Assembly of whole instrument
- Basic embouchure formation (wind players)
- hand position, matched grip (percussionists)

Key Vocabulary for Lesson

- Pitch—the highness or lowness of sound
- Dynamics—the softness or loudness of sound
- Scat singing—singing nonsense syllables in a way that imitates instruments
- Call and response—a musical conversation

Teacher Preparation

- Students will now be assembling their instrument and storing cases when they first walk in and should be done by the time the entry music is done. In setting up the room allow plenty of space in front of the students with the larger instruments so that they can place their instruments in front of them when they need both hands for other activities.
- Be prepared to provide a musical example from rock and roll or other popular style that illustrates the use of nonsense syllable to imitate instruments. You may want to provide a recording as well.
- Students turn in their first Woodshedding assignment with a parent or guardian signature at this lesson. It is advisable to contact families of students who do not turn these in to help to develop the habit of home practice and of turning in practice charts and woodshedding assignments at every large group lesson.
- Throughout lessons assess student playing progress and be prepared to adapt lessons as needed for your students. Students can become easily frustrated if they are struggling with tone production or playing position, and the teacher must be vigilant and provide frequent encouragement to keep students feeling successful.

Materials

- As many instruments as needed so that students can experience the activities hands-on.
    - Listening music suggested:

- **"Heebie Jeebies" by Louis Armstrong**
- **"Honeysuckle Rose" by Ella Fitzgerald and Count Basie**

Procedure
[The Four Properties of Sound]
[Scat singing—singing nonsense syllables in a way that imitates instruments]
["Heebie Jeebies" by Louis Armstrong]
["Honeysuckle Rose" by Ella Fitzgerald and Count Basie]
Entry Music suggested (Scat singing):

- **"Heebie Jeebies" by Louis Armstrong**

1) Lesson introduction and review of previous lesson

- Assist students with completing their instrument assembly by the time the entry music is done. Request that students place instruments either underneath their chairs (flutes, clarinets, trumpets) or in front of them (low brass, French horns). Tell students that when setting up they should allow space for themselves to be able to do this in the future.
- Begin class by doing four-beat rhythmic call and response (straight, not swung) using body percussion (clapping, hands on your lap and stomping feet). Vary the calls by changing the dynamics, playing all soft, all loud, a mixture of the two and gradual changes (crescendos and decrescendos). Make certain that students are copying your dynamics.
- Ask students to tell their neighbor what aspects of sound were changing from call to call. Listen for descriptive terms of dynamics and rhythm.
- Tell students that the musical term for the softness or loudness of sound is dynamics. *[dynamics—the softness or loudness of sound]* underneath *[The Four properties of Sound]*. That is the third property of sound, and it is a big

part of why we experience a lullaby and a rock concert differently. The other property that you heard students describe was rhythm *[rhythm—the duration (lengths) of sounds and silences]*.

- Plug your nose and ask students the name of the property of sound that describes the quality of the sound. *[timbre (rhymes with amber)—the quality of the sound]*. Elicit from students some words that describe different timbre such as scratchy, nasally, airy, pure, rough, or buzzy.

2) Students' musical favorites and its connection to jazz

- Ask students to take out their Woodshedding 1 autographed assignment and ask students to take out pencils. Ask students to turn over the page so that they can write on the back. Tell students that we have been listening to a style of music called jazz that started developing in the early 1900s and is responsible for most of the music that we listen to today. We will be listening to music that they enjoy and tracing its roots to jazz. To do that, we need to know what music students enjoy.
- Ask students to list on that piece of paper as as many styles of music, artists, bands or songs that they like in three minutes. Give examples of styles of music (country, rhythm and blues, rock and roll, hip hop, rap, and so on). Tell students that if they list a song title to also include the artist or band that sings that song.
- After collecting these lists, ask students to share some of their favorite styles of music. Write those styles on the board.

- Explain that none of those styles would exist if not for jazz—jazz influenced them all. For example, mention that pop artists often imitate instruments in their singing using nonsense syllables. Give an example of an artist and a song, such as Little Richard "Tutti Frutti." Sing that part of the song yourself or play that part of the recording.
- Ask students if they can remember the name of the singer that we heard singing "Let's Call the Whole Thing Off" with the raspy timbre to his voice (Louis Armstrong). Tell students that Louis Armstrong is one of the most influential people in music. He is generally recognized as the first recorded scat singing soloist in jazz, and one of those first recordings was playing when the students first walked in. Point to *[Scat singing—singing nonsense syllables in a way that imitates instruments]* The song is called "Heebie Jeebies" and was recorded in the 1920s. As we listen to it, tell students to note what they notice about the scat solo and what other instruments providing different timbres are playing in the group.
- After listening to the recording, ask students what they noticed and discuss.

2) Scat singing--call and response

- Tell students that now it is our turn to scat sing!
- Scat sing a short phrase or two.
- Tell students that scat singing is even more fun when you do call and response—have a musical conversation.

- Using four-beat and eight-beat phrases, do call and response in a swing style. Vary your timbre by imitating different instruments. Pretend like you are playing whichever instrument you are imitating and make eye contact with those students who play that instrument. In the middle of scat singing, ask students what property of sound you are altering (timbre). Add dynamic contrast to your scatting, asking again what property of sound you are changing (dynamics).
- Ask for student volunteers who would like to do the calls in our call and response. Initially, have the student lead the call and response with you alone.
- If students are resistant to scat singing, ask students just to have a conversation with you in which all they need to do is ask a question. Scat sing an answer to their question. Do this with other students.
- Bring the whole class back into the call and response by asking a student to ask you a question. Scat sing back an answer. Tell the same student to ask you that same question again. Then have the whole class sing back the answer exactly the way you had done it. Keep your responses simple so students will have immediate success with copying you.

3) Listening: Call and response between a scat singing singer and a jazz band

- Tell students that you can also do a scat singing call and response with an instrumentalist or a whole band. One famous singer known for her scat singing is the woman who sang that duet with Louis Armstrong in "Let's Call

the Whole Thing Off." Ask students if they can remember her name (Ella Fitzgerald).

- Tell students that we will now listen to Ella Fitzgerald sing with the Count Basie Orchestra in a performance of "Honeysuckle Rose." Ask students to raise their hand whenever they hear Ella scat sing.
- Listen to the recording and briefly discuss student observations.

3) First three notes: Review

- Tell students that we will now do a little call and response of our own using the first three notes on their instruments.
- Ask students to remind their neighbor what the note number one is called on their instrument and what the fingering is. Make corrections as you observe this.
- Ask students to mark the steady beat with their heel.
- Tell mallets players to play notes with the steady beat (one per beat) on note number one. Tell the other band members to listen to the percussionists for the steady beat and to make sure that their foot is exactly in time with their heel.
- Ask students to show you a playing position that will help them to play with their best tone (sitting at the edge of your seat, feet flat on the floor, back and neck straight)
- Review note number one with students by modeling it for them and then asking them to play it while maintaining a steady beat with their heel.

Initially use long notes and then change the rhythm of your call. Do four beat patterns, mixing quarter notes and quarter rests. Assist students with playing position, embouchure formation, and proper breathing throughout by reminding them individually and as a group.

- Tell percussionists to play one note per beat for the length of the longer notes. For example, percussionists would play a whole note as four quarter notes.
- Tell the French horn players that their note will sound different than the others' notes. Demonstrate their note number one and have them play it separate from the rest of the band. It will be necessary to do this regularly with the French horns until they are able to play the same notes as the others. It is best that they sit in the front row so that you can give them the extra attention to do this, as this can be challenging and frustrating for many students.
- Repeat the process above for note number two and three. Observe that we are now playing with the fourth property of sound called pitch. Pitch describes the highness and lowness of sound. *[Pitch—the highness or lowness of sound]*
- Play a call that uses two notes, telling students which two notes, or pitches, you will be using.

5) Review "Hot Cross Buns"

- Review "Hot Cross Buns" by rote, one two-measure section at a time.

11) Conclusion and disassembly of instruments

- Tell students to keep building up their musical muscles by playing every day. Tell them to work to easily play notes number 1, 2, and 3 so that we can make up more songs with those notes and to keep practicing "Hot Cross Buns." Do a little scat singing around the house too!
- Remind students to bring instruments, music binders, and pencil to the next band rehearsal. Remind students of any band-related deadlines.
- Tell students how much you enjoyed playing and scat singing with them!

"Honeysuckle Rose" by Ella Fitzgerald and Count Basie (Scat singing)

LESSON SEVEN

(30 MINUTES—FOR LIKE-INSTRUMENT INSTRUCTION)

Objectives:

Students will:

- Play the first three notes on their instruments
- Play "Hot Cross Buns" using their first three notes
- Sing and finger a bass line for "Hot Cross Buns"
- Play a bass line for "Hot Cross Buns" (mallet percussion only)
- Maintain their instruments

Necessary Prior Knowledge

- Basic embouchure formation (wind players)
- Hand position, matched grip (percussionists)

Key Vocabulary for Lesson

- Brass—valve oil, tuning slide grease
- Trombones—slide grease, water bottle
- Clarinets—cork grease

Teacher Preparation

Review students' list of favorite bands, artists, songs and musical styles from the previous lesson. Summarize this information for you and your students using a graph or table.

- Pedagogical review needed:
    - Review procedure for teaching students how to maintain their instruments.

Materials

- As many instruments as needed so that students who do not yet have instruments can still experience the activities hands-on

- Maintenance supplies

Procedure

1) Lesson introduction and review of previous lesson
   - Tell students that when reviewing their lists of favorite groups and songs you observed that many of them listed groups with bass players in them. The bass line is a crucial element in music. It provides the pulse and often outlines the harmony for a song. Today we will learn a bass line for "Hot Cross Buns."

2) Full instrument assembly and maintenance review
   - While students are assembling instruments, remind them of the day when they were looking at the parts of their instruments that moved. Ask students if they recall what parts of their instrument need attention daily or weekly in order to keep working.
   - Use their responses to lead into teaching maintenance of a part of their instrument that you have not taught yet.

3) First three notes
   - Review their first three notes (fingerings, note names, note numbers).
   - Review optimal posture and breathing for playing their instruments.
   - Review internalizing the pulse by keeping a steady beat with the heel.
   - Practice playing the first three notes, giving them patterns of four quarter notes and four quarter rests. During the rests request that they count them out loud ("1, 2, 3, 4").
   - When teaching students each note, give them a visual cue by holding up a corresponding number of fingers.
   - Hear each student individually to assess progress.

4) First song
- Review "Hot Cross Buns" by rote.
- Before playing it, sing it by the numbers and finger along.
- Enthusiastically encourage every student effort!

5) Bass line for "Hot Cross Buns"
- Sing with students the first five notes of a B flat concert major scale. With French horns, sing the first five notes of an F concert major scale.
- When you get to note five, begin singing call and response with the students, vocalizing the numbers and giving visual cues. Keep rhythms straight and simple and use the five notes that you just sang.
- Teach students the bass line through call and response, using two measure phrases. The bassline is as follows, with each number getting a quarter note and each rest a quarter rest.

  1155 1115 1155 111rest 1111 5555 1155 111rest
- Teach mallet players to play this bassline on their instruments.

6) Combine bassline with melody.
- Combine singing the bassline with the melody.
- Alternate this with some students singing the melody, some playing the melody and some singing the bassline.
- Add drum set accompaniment to the singing and playing of the melody and bass. Provide a rock drum set part for one version and a swing style accompaniment for another version.

7) New explorations for home practice

- Encourage students to make up new songs with the notes that they know. Ask them if they can figure out how to play "Mary Had a Little Lamb."
- Ask students to see how high and how low they can play on their instruments. Can they discover any new notes? How soft and how loud can they play?

8) Woodshedding assignment

- Remind students of the need for daily practice. Remind them that their weekly practice chart autographed by a parent or guardian is due at the next heterogeneous-instrument class.
- Remind students to also continue practice on the drum pads, mouthpieces, and headjoints because that builds the muscles for playing their instruments even faster.
- Tell students that we will begin playing "Hot Cross Buns" in different styles like rock, country and jazz soon. Explain to students that in order to help them progress you look forward to listening to each of them play individually again at the next like-instrument class.

9) Disassemble instruments

LESSON EIGHT
PRODUCT ORIENTED IMPROVISATION

(45 MINUTES)

Objectives:

Students will:

- Identify the four properties of sound (rhythm, timbre, pitch and dynamics) in discussion and by listening to music
- Identify and demonstrate call and response, varying responses by changing each of the four properties of sound
- Scat sing syncopated rhythms
- Analyze the effect of musical timbre, pitch, and dynamics on the listener's experience of popular music
- Analyze the effect of harmony on the listener's experience of music

Necessary Prior Knowledge

- Label first three notes (note name and note number)
- Play first three notes
- Play "Hot Cross Buns"

Key Vocabulary for Lesson

- Chord—two or more notes played at the same time
- Melody—two or more notes in sequence that describe a musical character
- Scat singing—singing nonsense syllables in a way that imitates instruments
- Call and response—a musical conversation

Teacher Preparation

- Gather musical recordings of your students' favorite music in advance so that you can pick some appropriate examples to demonstrate concepts from this and future lessons.

- Although it will not be mentioned in the procedure of future lessons in this curriculum, please note the following:
    - It is important to encourage student effort frequently and enthusiastically so that students feel successful and motivated to practice.
    - Students should receive frequent reminders of the foundational skills involved in playing an instrument listed below.
    - Posture: Sitting on the edge of the seat, feet flat on the floor, back straight, neck straight
    - Breathing: "Hot potato breath," shoulders relaxed, abdomen and back expand with each breath
    - Correct instrument playing position
    - Since instructional time with beginning band students is so limited, it is important to make individual contact with the students and their families on a weekly basis. For this reason, practice charts and Woodshedding handouts are collected every week at the large heterogeneous-instrument rehearsal and returned with comments at the like-instrument rehearsal.
- Materials
    - **Educator Handout 2**
    - **Woodshedding 2**

- Listening and accompaniment music suggested:
  - **"Air Mail Special" by Ella Fitzgerald**
  - **"B Flat Blues" – All Blues (Jamey Aebersold)**

Procedure

[The Four Properties of Sound: rhythm, timbre, dynamics, pitch]
[chord—two or more notes played at the same time]
[melody—two or more notes in sequence that describe a musical character]
[step] [skip]
["Air Mail Special"]
Entry Music suggested (scat singing):

- **"Air Mail Special" by Ella Fitzgerald**

1) Introduction

- Begin class by scatting your greeting to the students. Lead from this into scatting a call and response with them, pointing to yourself when it is your turn and inviting their response with your outstretched hand, palm up.
- Vary your calls by changing the dynamics, rhythm, and timbre, and make certain that students copy these nuances before changing your call. When scatting to sound like a certain instrument's timbre, mimic playing that instrument.
- Invite student volunteers to take turns leading in call and response.
- Ask students if anyone recognized the singer scat singing in the song "Air Mail Special" as they walked in to rehearsal today—someone they have heard here before. Ask students to share their guess with their neighbor. Write *[--by Ella Fitzgerald]* after *["Air Mail Special"]*. Tell students that we

will listen to that song again to hear all of the fun techniques that she uses while scat singing.

2) Listening: A musical scavenger hunt for jazz quotes

- While passing out Woodshedding 2 ask students to take out a pencil. Direct students to the back of the page. Tell students that as we listen to Ella Fitzgerald sing "Air Mail Special," we will be going on a musical scavenger hunt, looking for the musical choices that she makes that make her solo so interesting and exciting. Ask students to find the following (see Woodshedding 2 handout):

- What instruments do you think that Ella is imitating in her scat singing? Ask students how they might figure out what instrument she is imitating (by the sound of its timbre and its pitch), and how they can figure out that she is switching to a different instrument (by changing the timbre of her voice)
- Sometimes musicians quote parts of other songs in their solos as a way to connect with the audience who also know these songs. How many of these quotes can you find? Write down the words. Write quickly—they go by fast! Explain to students that since the whole song is scat sung, every time she sings words she is quoting a song. Tell students that you have provided the first quote. Also, special bonus for anyone who can find the quote of a song that we listened to a few classes ago! Tell students that musicians also quote songs to pay tribute to other artists who have influenced them.

- After listening to the song, discuss what students heard. In the course of the discussion, call attention to how buzzy Ella Fitzgerald made her voice when imitating a muted trumpet. If possible, model that sound on a trumpet with a harmon mute. Also call attention to her glissando from low to high at the end of the song that ends her solo in an exciting way. The special bonus quote is from Louis Prima's "The Music Goes 'Round and Around"—"It goes in here, the music goes 'round and 'round, whoa whoa."
- Ask the students: if "Air Mail Special" described a feeling, what would that feeling be? In your discussion, note that sometimes music expresses feelings that are difficult to put into words. Also note that you can take one element of the music—say the melody—and by changing another element of the music, like the harmony or the rhythm, you can completely change the feeling of the tune. Tell students that we will now explore that with our instruments.

3) Warm-up

- Ask students what you do before playing sports (stretch, warm up). Tell students that you need to warm up your muscles and your mind with the musical equivalent of stretches or warm-ups before playing more challenging music. Warm-up by reviewing with students notes number 1, 2, and 3, providing the visual cues with each note.
- Tell students that a melody is two or more notes in sequence that describe a musical character (point to written definition on the board). The first melody that we have learned on our instruments is "Hot Cross Buns." Review "Hot

Cross Buns," by rote if necessary. Note that the melody for "Hot Cross Buns" uses a step-wise motion, meaning the notes are right next to each other (sing 1 2 3). Compare that to a melody of your choice that uses skips.

4) What is harmony and how does it change the feeling of the music?—part one

- Request that some students play note number one, then cue in other students playing note number three. Tell students that they just played a chord *[chord—two or more notes played at the same time]* and that a chord is an example of harmony, one of the basic elements of music. We can completely change the feeling of a melody—like "Hot Cross Buns"—by changing the harmony underneath it.
- Demonstrate this by first reviewing the bassline learned at the last class for "Hot Cross Buns"—played by mallet percussionists and sung (with note numbers) by the rest of the students. Remind students that in addition to providing a steady pulse—a heartbeat for the music—the bassline usually outlines the harmony of the chords in the song.
- While students play and sing the bassline a second time, accompany them with the chords that are traditionally played with "Hot Cross Buns" (see **Educator Handout 2, example A**) and sing the melody. Do this again, with students playing the melody on their instruments.
- Now playing the minor accompaniment (see **Educator Handout 2, example B**), sing "Hot Cross Buns." Repeat with students playing the melody.

- Ask students how the new harmony—the chords played on the accompanying instrument—changed the feeling of the music. Rename the song based on the feelings they describe, such as "Sad Cross Buns."

5) More tunes using three notes

- We just played two different versions of "Hot Cross Buns." There are an infinite number of versions that we could create, and an unlimited number of songs that we could create using our first three notes. "Mary Had a Little Lamb" is an example that most of us know—let's sing that one. Sing "Mary Had a Little Lamb" using its lyrics.

6) Learning a song by ear

- Ask students how we might approach learning to play a song by ear. Invite those who have figured out how to play the song to share their strategies with the rest of the students. Use these strategies to break the process down into steps:
    - Sing the song
    - Clap the rhythm of the song while singing it, marking the rests in both hands with palms up.
    - Listen to hear if the melody proceeds in a step-wise motion or uses skips. Remind students that a step-wise motion means the notes are right next to each other (sing 1 2 3 2 1). Ask if any students figured out which of the three notes is the starting pitch.
- Allow the students who know the song to teach the others as much as possible. Help as needed by filling in the steps to teach a song by rote.

7) How does changing the harmony affect the feeling of the music?—part two

- Sing and finger/"ghost" on instruments "Mary Had a Little Lamb" with you playing an accompaniment using traditional harmony (see **Educator Handout 2, example C**).
- Again using traditional harmony, accompany the students playing the song.
- Sing the song again using the note numbers, this time accompanying with the seventh chords (see **Educator Handout 2, example D**). Use the same rhythm in your accompaniment that you did with the traditional harmony. Ask students to play along with the new accompaniment.
- Ask students how they would describe the differences between the two versions. Which one did they like better?
- Tell students you have one more version for them. Using the same harmony of the previous version, use more jazz-based rhythms in your accompaniment with the students (see **Educator Handout 2, example E**). Ask students how that version was different from the last one (change of rhythm). Ask students what they might call the jazz-based version (example: "Hip Lamb"). Also, which one did they like best and why?
- Tell students that next week we will explore how we can change the rhythm of the melody to fit into a particular style. We will change our songs to fit the styles that they listed as their favorites and will use some of their favorite songs as examples.

8) Call and response

- Tell students that we will use similar rhythms from the accompaniment for "Hip Lamb" to end today's lesson with a little call and response.
- Using **"B Flat Blues" – All Blues (Jamey Aebersold)** as accompaniment**,** play some call and response using simple rhythms from **Educator Handout 1.**
- Make sure students are successful! Start with one note per rhythm pattern. Mix in some scat singing too.

9) Conclusion and disassembly of instruments

- Call students attention to the front of the Woodshedding 2 handout. Remind them that an autographed copy is due at this time next week along with their practice chart.
- Review their woodshedding assignment for next week:
- Continued practice of different versions of "Hot Cross Buns" and "Mary Had A Little Lamb." Make up a new version!
    - Make up some melodies using your first three notes. Experiment with using different rhythms in your melodies.
    - Can you discover any new notes? We will be learning two new notes at the next lesson.
    - Keep scat singing!

A musical selection from the list of favorite music by your students

Name_____ **Date**_____

Woodshedding 2

1) Play "Hot Cross Buns" and "Mary Had a Little Lamb." How many different versions of the two songs can you create?
2) Make up some melodies using your first three notes.
   A) Experiment with using different rhythms in your melodies. Improvise at least 10 different rhythms. Play the rhythms from your favorite songs!
   B) Make up a melody that moves in a step-wise direction.
   C) Make up a melody that uses a skip (going from note number one to note number three).
3) Investigate how to play some new notes on your instrument. At our next lesson we will learn two new notes.
3) Keep scat singing around the house! Invite your pet to do a little call and response with you!

Share these sounds with your families and then get a parent or guardian autograph to bring to class!

_____

Parent/Guardian Autograph

NAME_____

MUSICAL SCAVENGER HUNT

Listen carefully to "Air Mail Express" by Ella Fitzgerald. How many of these can you find?

1) What instruments do you think Ella is imitating in her scat singing?
   A)
   B)
   C)
   D)

2) Sometimes musicians quote parts of other songs in their solos as a way to connect with the audience who also know those songs. How many of these musical quotes can you find? Write down the words of the quotes. Write quickly—they go by fast!
   A) "Davy Davy Crockett, king of the wild frontier"
   B)
   C)
   D)
   E)
   F)

LESSON NINE
(30 MINUTES—FOR LIKE-INSTRUMENT INSTRUCTION)

Objectives:
Students will:

- Play two new notes
- Play songs from memory using their first three notes
- Explore how the length of an instrument affects its pitch

Necessary Prior Knowledge

- First three notes

Key Vocabulary for Lesson

- New notes names and numbers (four and five) for each instrument
- pitch—the lowness or highness of sound
- sharp
- flat

Teacher Preparation and Materials Needed
Set up separate displays of different lengths and types of tubes so that students can explore and you can demonstrate how the length of the tube affects the pitch that can be produced. For at least one of these displays have the tubes tuned to exact pitches so that you can play a song on it. Some of these displays could include:

- Similar glasses or bottles with different amounts of water in each
- Boomwackers
- Slide whistle
- Recorder
- Drums with resonators of differing lengths
- For percussionists only: pieces of wood of different lengths and thicknesses
- Clear rubber or plastic tubes from a hardware store cut to the lengths of different brass instruments, each with its corresponding brass mouthpiece. Be

certain that the diameter of the tube fits the corresponding mouthpiece for each instrument. For example, the tube for the tuba needs to be 5/8 inch outside diameter and ½ inch inside diameter. Lengths of tubes for each instrument:

  - trumpet—seven feet
  - trombone/baritone—nine feet
  - French horn (F side)—twelve feet
  - tuba—twenty-four feet

- Pedagogical review needed:
  - Review procedure for teaching students the two new notes

Procedure

1) Lesson introduction

- After students have assembled their instruments, get their attention by reviewing notes number one, two, and three just by playing the note yourself and then giving them the corresponding hand cue.
- Review songs played at previous lessons. Introduce songs in sections, using call and response if necessary (you play a four to eight beat section, students copy)

2) Student exploration—how does the length of the tube affect the pitch that can be produced?

- Take a glass bottle full of water and tap a rhythm on the glass with a metal beater. Take a drink from the bottle and tap the same rhythm on that glass again. Ask students what happened to the sound after you took a drink. If the

students do not observe that the sound gets lower, keep drinking the water and playing a rhythm on the bottle.

- From this demonstration, lead to student explorations of the different displays. Ask students to predict how the length of the tube will affect the sound that is produced. Have students go to the display that most relates to their instrument first. For percussionists, explore not only the drums but also the pieces of wood.
- Interchange the term flatter for lower and sharper for higher as students describe the changes in the pitches.
- Special instructions for brass classes: For the plastic tube display, have three tubes (one for each brass class) that is one foot too long for students' instruments. After inviting students to experiment with and play on the fully extended tubes (with students using their own mouthpiece to play on the tubes), bring out the tube that is a foot too long for their instrument.
    - Ask a student to play her note number one so that you can tune the pitch on your tube to the pitch on her tube.
    - Play your tube. Ask the students if the note that you played matches the note played by the student. Play the two pitches again separately. Ask the students to sing each of the pitches if possible.
    - After your students arrive at your tube's pitch being lower than the student's number one pitch, ask them what we should do to the tube to get both tubes in tune, or playing the same exact pitch.

Have lengths of tubes that could be inserted into your tube in case they suggest to make your tube longer.

- If students suggest to make your tube shorter, cut off a piece with heavy duty scissors. Check the pitch at its new length, until it is in tune with the trumpet. For added dramatic effect, use an axe and a chopping block to cut the tube (after telling students to not try this at home without adult supervision)!
- Some students may suggest that the trumpet player adjust her tube. Experiment with this as well if student initiated.

3) How does this apply to our instruments?

- We have discovered that the longer the tube, the lower the sound. As we make the tube of the instrument longer, the pitch gets flatter, or lower.
- Teach students the fingering or position for note number five. For flutes only, teach them the fingering to note number six (G concert).
- Cue students to play note number five, three, two, and one. Then sing "5, 4, 3, 2, 1" and ask students to copy you. Slowly repeat this exercise twice, asking students to finger the notes as they sing them.
- Tell students that we will now play note number five, sing note number four, then play notes number three, two and one. Model this for students.
- Ask students if they can figure out what they need to do with their hands or fingers in order to make the tube longer so that the pitch will go lower. This

will be more obvious on some instruments than on others. Tell students that they are welcome to work with their neighbor on this.

- Ask students if they can figure out the fingering for note number four (flutes—note number five and then note number four).
- Use their responses to lead into demonstrating the fingering for note number four: E flat concert (French horns only: C concert; Flutes only: F and E flat concert)

4) Call and response: Notes number one through five

- Do some call and response without accompaniment, emphasizing the new notes first, one at a time.
- As students demonstrate greater comfort with this, play patterns that use two notes that are sometimes a step apart and sometimes a wider interval (skip). Ask students to identify the two notes as step or skip.
- Using **"B Flat Blues" – All Blues (Jamey Aebersold)** as accompaniment**,** play some call and response patterns using simple rhythms from **Educator Handout 1.**
- Once again, make sure students are successful! Start with one note per rhythm pattern and emphasize the new notes initially. Mix in some scat singing too.

5) New explorations for home practice

- Encourage students to make up new songs using the new notes that they learned.

- Knowing that a shorter tube makes a higher sound and a longer tube makes a lower sound, ask students to see what other pitches they can discover on their instruments. How high and how low can they play?
- What else is involved in changing the pitch on their instrument? Ask students to investigate that in their practicing.

6) Woodshedding assignment

- Review with the students the **Woodshedding 2** handout that was passed out at the last lesson and is due at the next heterogeneous-instrument class.
- Remind students to also continue practice on the drum pads, mouthpieces, and headjoints because that more quickly builds the muscles necessary for playing their instruments. Can they improvise a tune using just these parts of their instruments?
- Tell students that you look forward to listening to them play one of the melodies that they create at the next like-instrument class!

7) Disassemble instruments

LESSON TEN
PRODUCT ORIENTED IMPROVISATION

(45 MINUTES)

Objectives:

Students will:

- Identify the four properties of sound (rhythm, timbre, pitch and dynamics) in discussion and by listening to music
- Identify and physically demonstrate the pulse, downbeat and upbeat in popular music
- Identify duple and triple subdivision of the pulse in popular music
- Identify rhythmic syncopation and scat sing syncopated rhythms
- Analyze the effect of musical timbre, pitch, and dynamics on the listener's experience of popular music
- Improvise different versions of a song by altering the rhythm of its melody
- Play new versions of 2 songs learned by ear

Necessary Prior Knowledge

- Label by note name and note number the first five notes of a B flat concert scale (French Horns only—F concert scale)
- Play first five notes of a B flat concert scale (French Horns only—F concert scale)
- Play "Hot Cross Buns" and "Mary Had a Little Lamb"

Key Vocabulary for Lesson

- pulse subdivision— the division of the beat into groups of two (duple subdivision), three (triple subdivision) or four (quadruple subdivision)
- scat singing—singing nonsense syllables in a way that imitates instruments
- call and response—a musical conversation
- syncopation—rhythmic surprise

Teacher Preparation

- Gather musical recordings of your students' favorite music in advance so that you can pick some appropriate examples to demonstrate concepts from this and future lessons.

Materials

- **Educator Handout 3**
- **Educator Handout 4**
- **Woodshedding 3**
    - Listening and accompaniment music suggested:
        - **"Lady Madonna" by the Beatles**
        - **"Shulie A Bop" by Sarah Vaughan**
        - **"B Flat Blues" – All Blues (Jamey Aebersold)**

Procedure

["Shulie A Bop"—Sarah Vaughan]
["Lady Madonna"--The Beatles]
[subdivision of the beat: duple (2)
triple (3)
quadruple (4)
Entry Music suggested (scat singing):

- **"Shulie A Bop" by Sarah Vaughan**

1) Warm-up—Review of notes one through five

- Begin playing the recording of **"B Flat Blues" – All Blues.**
- While providing hand signals, play long tones of notes number five through one, beginning with note number five. Model the note first, t hen invite students to play the same note back. Assess student fingering of the new notes and provide feedback as needed.
- Playing four beat rhythmic patterns from **Educator Handout 1**, lead the class in call and response using note numbers one through five. Provide hand signals indicating to students the note that you are playing. Play at least four rhythmic patterns for each note and repeat rhythms as needed, ensuring that the rhythms are played in time.
- Check that students are copying jazz articulations in addition to playing the correct pitches and rhythms. Using the jazz syllables in the handout, interject scat singing of the rhythmic patterns to reinforce the sound of the jazz language.
- If students were successful with the above exercise, do call and response using two notes for each pattern. You may also challenge students by playing eight-beat patterns. Again interject scat singing of the patterns using jazz syllables to both reinforce the sound of jazz and to ensure student success. If students are unsuccessful in playing longer phrases or using two notes, return to playing what students were successful with earlier.

2) Rhythmic animals—introduction to subdivision

- After the recording is done, begin scatting in a swing style using animal names (see **Educator Handout 3**). Ask students if in their scat singing at home they have ever interjected words whose rhythms fit the style of their singing. Look for a show of hands. Tell students that you do that all the time, and that you especially love using animal names when you scat sing.
- Begin playing the recording of **"B Flat Blues" – All Blues** again. Sing some more examples that use triple subdivision of the beat. Lead a call and response using animal names (see **Educator Handout 3**). Vary your calls by changing the dynamics, rhythm, and timbre, and make certain that students copy these nuances before changing your call.
- Switch to singing call and response examples that use a duple subdivision. Look perplexed as you do this because your duple-based rhythms do not fit as well in the swing style of the accompaniment. Go back to singing examples that use a triple subdivision of the beat and look relieved.
- When this recording shifts midway to a straight eighth style, use the duple-based rhythms again in your call and response. Look happy with how these duple rhythms fit with the new style, and further expand your calls to include more duple rhythms, increasing your enthusiasm in singing the rhythmic patterns.

3) Analysis—why do triplet-based rhythms sometimes fit better than duple-based rhythms in a song, and visa versa?

- Ask students what they observed. Ask students if they noticed what kind of rhythms fit better at the beginning and what kind of rhythms fit better at the end. Refer to the rhythms by their animal names (for example, "rab-bit-ty hop skit-ter-y cat" for triple subdivision rhythms and "mon-key mon-key mon-key mon-key chim-pan-zee" for duple subdivision rhythms).

4) Subdivision of the beat and its affect on music

- Explain to students that for every style of music there is an underlying subdivision of the beat, or division of the beat into two, three, or four equal parts. That subdivision of the beat has a big effect on the feeling of the music and is a vital part of its style.
- What do we mean by the subdivision of the beat? First, tell students that the beat is the steady pulse of the music that we can immediately identify and with which we can clap along or mark with our heel. Sing several short examples from popular music and music that are well known, and ask students to indicate the beat with their heel and by clapping it. Tell students that the beat is sometimes used to keep people walking, like in a march for a parade (sing an example) or in the song used to march in the graduates at a school graduation (sing "Pomp and Circumstance"). It is the heartbeat of the music and in popular music is often played by the bass.
- The subdivision of the beat is the division of each beat into two, three, or four equal parts, and that is the part of the music that makes us want to dance. It is

usually played by the drums but is often emphasized in other parts of the music too.

5) Duple subdivision of the beat—introduction

- Choose a student's favorite musical example to illustrate duple subdivision. For the purposes of this example, we will use "Lady Madonna" by the Beatles. Tell students that many of their musical favorites use a duple subdivision of the beat—each beat is divided into two equal parts—as that is the subdivision used in most rock music.
- Play a rock drum beat on the drum set. Call attention to the steady eighth note pattern on the cymbal. Tell students that the bass drum and snare drum are laying down the steady pulse (demonstrate this pattern with four quarter notes, bass drum on beats one and three and snare drum on beats two and four). Invite students to clap along and to mark the steady beat with their heel while counting out loud "1, 2, 3, 4." If keeping a steady beat with their heel challenges students, tell them to pretend that they are playing the bass drum. Play the bass drum on all four beats so that they can line up their heel with the sound of the steady beat.
- Tell students that you will now play a duple subdivision of the beat on the cymbal. Say "1 and 2 and 3 and 4 and" with the cymbal. Stop playing and tell students that the numbers represent the first half of the beat, the "ands" mark the second half of the beat. Ask students to copy you. Each beat—two equal parts.
- Making sure that students can see your heel, show them that your heel is down with the numbers and up with the "and." Tell them that the part of the

beat that goes with the numbers and with your heel down on the floor is sometimes referred to as the downbeat. The downbeat is emphasized or accented in many of the songs that they listed as their favorites. The second half of each beat that goes with your heel up is called the upbeat and is not emphasized. Demonstrate your heel going up and down while saying the counts "1 and 2 and 3 and 4 and."

6) Musical example: duple subdivision of the beat

- Before listening to "Lady Madonna," ask students to pay attention in the song to what other instruments besides the drums are emphasizing the duple subdivision of the beat. Also, ask students to raise their hands or mimic playing a trumpet when they hear the Beatles singing like trumpets. Ask students to tell their neighbor who they heard singing like a trumpet last week (Ella Fitzgerald).
- Play a recording of "Lady Madonna" by the Beatles.
- After listening once through the form of the song, motion to students to mark the steady beat and the duple subdivision of the beat in similar ways to how they did earlier (clapping, moving their heel, and saying the counts).
- After listening to the recording, discuss students' observations of what they heard in the musical example. What other instruments were emphasizing the duple subdivision of the beat? (Answer: piano, bass, trumpet, saxophone). Tell students that Paul McCartney wrote the song and is the lead singer in the song. Tell students that Paul McCartney's dad was the leader of a jazz band,

and so he grew up hearing jazz around his house a lot. Jazz was one of the popular musics when he was born, just like rock music is today. You can really hear the influence of jazz in Paul McCartney's songs, like in the trumpet imitation part of "Lady Madonna."

- One thing the subdivision of the beat does is set up an expectation of what kind of rhythms will be used. When the musicians play rhythms that do not fit that expectation, something different than what we were expecting, we are surprised and delighted. The term for rhythmic surprise like that is syncopation. *[syncopation—rhythmic surprise]*
- Let's listen to the syncopation in Paul McCartney's melody and how he goes back and forth between lining up with the duple subdivision of the beat and singing syncopated rhythms. Ask students to mark the duple subdivision with their heel and by saying "1 and 2 and 3 and 4 and." Play part of the recording again, singing along with the melody. When it lines up with the duple subdivision sing "duple duple" and when it is syncopated sing "syn-co-pa."

6) Changing the rhythms of a known melody so that it is in a different style—duple subdivision

- Remind students of last week's class in which we changed the harmony of "Hot Cross Buns" to give it two different feelings. We will experiment with changing the rhythm of the melody now.
- First, have students play through the two different versions of "Hot Cross Buns" from last week.

- Tell students that in the same way that we changed the harmony to give the song a different feeling, we can change its rhythm to make it sound like it is in a different style. For example, if we want to play "Hot Cross Buns" in a rock style, how might we change its rhythm?
- Ask students what they know about a typical rock band. Ask students to tell their neighbor what instruments are typically in a rock band. Write on the board as you listen *[bass, drums, lead guitar, rhythm guitar]*. Ask students who might be able to vocalize what the drummer plays in a typical rock song.
- Copy the students' example on the drum set. Be sure to add in straight eighth notes on the cymbal—the duple subdivision of the beat. Tell students "Hot Cross Buns" could sound more like rock music if we changed some of the rhythms in the melody so that they sound more like the rhythms in the rock drum set part.
- Brainstorm with students how we might change the melody so that it had more of a rock feel (see **Educator Handout 4**).
- Once the students have agreed on a version of the song, have them sing it in a rock style. Ask students to demonstrate the duple subdivision of the beat with their heel as they sing. Do this again, and while you play the new version of the song, students finger the notes as they sing.
- While you accompany them in a rock style on drums, guitar, or piano, students play their rock versions of "Hot Cross Buns."

- Ask students how we should rename the song, paying tribute to the original but putting our own spin on it ("Rock Cross Buns").

7) Changing the rhythms of a known melody so that it is in a different style—triple subdivision

- We could also change "Hot Cross Buns" so that it is in a jazz swing style. Remind students of how good the "rab-bit-ty hop" rhythms sounded with the jazz accompaniment that we scatted to at the beginning of class.
- To help students to hear the jazz style, scat a few rhythms from **Educator Handout 3** or **Educator Handout 1.**
- Ask students how we might use more triplet rhythms ("rab-bit-ty rab-bit-ty") to change the melody so that it sounds jazzier.
- Once the students have agreed on a version of the song, have them sing it in a swing style. Do this again, and while you play the new version of the song, students finger the notes as they sing.
- While you accompany them in a swing style on guitar or piano, students play their swing versions of "Hot Cross Buns."
- Ask students how we should rename the song, paying tribute to the original but putting our own spin on it (for example, "Hip Cross Buns").
- If time permits, do this exercise with "Mary Had a Little Lamb."

9) Conclusion and disassembly of instruments

- Pass out the Woodshedding 3 handout.
- Review their woodshedding assignment for next week:

- Continued practice of different versions of "Hot Cross Buns" and "Mary Had A Little Lamb." Make up a new version!
  - Make up some melodies using your first five notes. Experiment with using different rhythms in your melodies.
  - Can you discover any new notes?
  - As you listen to your favorite music, figure out its style and what kind of subdivision of the beat (duple or triple) the music is based on. Do not worry if you cannot figure out the subdivision—it might take time!
  - Write down the name of one of those songs and the subdivision of its beat (duple, triple or quadruple) if you can.

A musical selection from the list of favorite music by your students with a duple subdivision of the beat.

Name_____ Date_____

Woodshedding 3

1) Play "Hot Cross Buns" and "Mary Had a Little Lamb." How many different versions of the two songs can you create by changing the rhythm of the melody?
2) Make up some new melodies using your first five notes.
   A) Experiment with using different rhythms in your melodies. Make the rhythms of your melodies fit a certain style (rock or swing, for example).
      B) Make up a melody that uses syncopated rhythms (rhythmic surprise!)
      C) Make up a melody that uses a skip (for example, going from note number one to note number three, or from note number two to note number four).
3) Wind players only: Can you play any lower notes on your instrument by making the tube longer?
   Percussionists only: Can you play the cymbal part for your favorite style of music while keeping a steady beat with your heel?
4) Try to figure out the subdivision of the pulse of one of your favorite songs!

Name of the song_____ Artist name_____

In what style of music is your song? _____

Some examples of some popular music styles include rock and roll, jazz, funk, rhythm and blues, hip hop, country, heavy metal. There are an infinite number of different musical styles!

What do you think is the subdivision of the beat in your song? Circle one.

duple triple quadruple

Share these sounds with your families and then get a parent or guardian autograph to bring to class!

_____

Parent/Guardian Autograph

LESSON ELEVEN
PRODUCT ORIENTED IMPROVISATION
(10 MINUTES OF EVERY 45-MINUTE REHEARSAL)

Objectives:

Students will:

- Identify rhythmic syncopation and scat sing syncopated rhythms
- Improvise different versions of a song by altering the rhythm of its melody
- Describe improvisational techniques such as call and response, playing in the groove and altering rhythm and melody
- Experiment with these techniques in their own improvisations
- Define and apply musical terms such as timbre, rhythm, dynamics, pitch, melody, harmony, form, groove, call and response, and improvisation
- Identify duple, triple, and quadruple subdivision of the pulse in jazz and jazz-influenced music

Necessary Prior Knowledge

- Ability to play new notes as they are presented
- Label new notes learned on instrument by note name and note number

Key Vocabulary for Lesson

- pulse subdivision— the division of the beat into groups of two (duple subdivision), three (triple subdivision) or four (quadruple subdivision)
- scat singing—singing nonsense syllables in a way that imitates instruments
- call and response—a musical conversation
- syncopation—rhythmic surprise
- back beat—a strong accent on the second and fourth beats of every four-beat measure

- groove—when all the parts of an ensemble are fitting together giving the music a sense of forward momentum
- riff—a musical idea that is repeated

Teacher Preparation

- At this point in the curriculum students are introduced to reading notation through the use of a beginning band method book. In the same way that children learn to read words that they can already speak, it is recommended that beginning band students first be exposed to notation for music that they have already learned how to play. Learning notation through discovery increases student ownership of reading music. Students enjoy creating their own symbolic representation of sound and music first, and then comparing their system to the traditional system of notation.
- The ten-minute activities in lesson 11 are designed to assist students in maintaining their skills and interest in improvisation, composition, learning music by ear, and playing in the jazz style while also learning notation. These activities should be inserted into your lesson plan for heterogeneous-instrument rehearsals. Concepts from these lessons should then be reinforced in the subsequent like-instrument class.

Materials

- Educator Handouts 1-4
- Listening and accompaniment music suggested:
  - **"B Flat Blues" – All Blues (Jamey Aebersold)**

Procedure

[title of the song—artist's name]

Entry Music suggested: Music from the jazz tradition that reinforces a concept in that day's lesson or in one of these activities

1) Warm up

- While providing hand signals, play long tones of notes that will be used in today's improvisation. Model the note first, then invite students to play the same note back to you.
- Use the recording of **"B Flat Blues" – All Blues** as accompaniment for the swing-feel activities that follow.

2) Activity 1: Call and Response—strict imitation

- Playing four- and eight-beat rhythmic patterns from **Educator Handout 1**, lead the class in call and response using notes that students have at their disposal.
- Responses should be exact imitation of the calls. If students are experiencing difficulty in copying your calls, provide hand signals indicating the notes that you are playing.
- As students become more adept at this, gradually increase the melodic and rhythmic complexity of these calls. Repeat calls as needed, ensuring that the rhythms are played in time and in the groove (fitting with the accompaniment and the subdivision of the beat). Add dynamic contrast as well.
- Check that students are copying jazz articulations in addition to playing the correct pitches and rhythms. Using the jazz syllables or animal name syllables, interject scat singing of the rhythmic patterns to reinforce the sound of the jazz language.

- Invite individual students to lead call and response with the rest of the group, initially using only one note and four-beat phrases for their calls, as in **Educator Handout 1**. Encourage students to play with a jazz inflection! Students may initially be more comfortable leading call and response in the small group rehearsals.

2) Activity 2: Call and Response—Alter the rhythm of the response (body percussion)

- Remind students of our activity in lesson four in which we did call and response, slightly altering the rhythm or melody of the call instead of doing an exact imitation. This is similar to conversation—if someone asks you a question, the answer you give relates to the question and might even use some of the same words from the question, but is not a direct copy of it. Give an example of this, asking several students the same question. Note how the students used their natural speaking inflection when they answered. Also note that all students have their own style when they talk, influenced some by their families and friends but a style uniquely their own. We do the same when we play a response to a call or when we make up a solo: what we play is related to what the other musicians in the group are playing at the time, and it is influenced by the musicians that we have listened to and learned from in our life. However, the way that we play our solo is uniquely our own way and with our own style.
- Ask students to keep the pulse with their heel and count with each beat "1, 2, 3, 4." Motion to students to quiet down the counting but to keep it going.

- Ask students to provide the backbeat for our call and response by clapping on beats two and four. Tell students that we will go back and forth between doing group call and response, in which the response is a direct imitation of the call, and individual call and response, in which students make up their own responses to the call.
- Lead 4-beat call and response using body percussion. For group response, motion to the whole group with both arms out stretched and hands palm up. For individual responses, point in advance to the student who is to respond.
- Although students may opt out of individual improvisations the first few times, provide encouragement and simplify the process as needed so that students can join in and feel successful. For example, initial student responses could be straight quarter notes or straight eighth notes.
- As students gain confidence with this activity, increase the rhythmic complexity of the calls.

3) Activity 3: Call and Response—Alter the rhythm of the response (with instruments)

- Repeat the procedure for Activity 2 while playing instruments in a swing feel. Begin by modeling a call and some possible responses, alternating between playing a wind instrument and playing a mallet instrument. Stress playing with a jazz inflection, repeating calls for group responses until students demonstrate the articulation that you played. Interject enthusiastic scat singing or animal scatting to emphasize jazz phrasing. As always, respond to student playing with great gusto!

- To assess individual student progress in group responses and to provide greater student involvement and interest, provide different roles for small groups during the improvisations. For example, assign small groups to the following roles:
    - Keep the count by saying "1, 2, 3, 4." Tell students that they are playing the role of the bass and are welcome to mimic playing a bass while they count.
    - Provide the triple subdivision feel of the beat by saying "rabbity hop, rabbity hop, rabbity rabbity rabbity rabbity" or "skittery cat, skittery cat, skittery skittery skittery skittery." See **Educator Handout 3** for rhythms.
    - Say the repeated swing pattern of the cymbal on the drum set by saying "spang spang spang spang-a-lang spang-a-lang spang-a-lang" (8-beat repeated pattern).
    - Say the snare drum knocks, saying "1, 2, 3, knock" or "1, knock, 3, knock." Students can try to mimic the knock sound as well by clicking their tongue.
    - The remaining students do the group call and response with you. For easier differentiation of individual student progress, ensure that the students in this group each play a different instrument so that you can pick out individual timbres.

- Give as much attention to students providing the groove as you do to those improvising or doing call and response. Stress how important and necessary it is that each of us plays our role well in order for the whole group to succeed. Provide an analogy to other groups, such as a sports team, in which each member has a specific role in order to help the team to reach a larger goal.
- To maintain student interest and provide practice for all with each of the roles, have students switch roles frequently.

3) Activity 4: Call and Response—Alter the rhythm and the melody of the response

- Repeat the procedure for Activity 3 (with instruments), this time altering the melody in the responses as well. Improvise in a swing feel.
- Again, begin simply. Initially use only two notes in both the call and the response. As students gain confidence and skill in using two notes, add more.
- Gradually increase the complexity of both pitch and rhythm.
- Initially use notes number 1-3 (concert B flat, C and D) only. Next add the use of notes 5 and 6 (concert F and G) for soloing on a pentatonic scale.
- Although the so-called blue notes are not usually introduced in the method book until later in the year, use of these notes will provide an authentic jazz sound to your students' solos and will greatly add to their enthusiasm and motivation. It is recommended that these notes first be taught by ear in the following order: the flat 3, the sharp 4 and the flat 7.

- Solo using the following scale: 1, 2, flat 3, 3, 5, 6. Tell students that it is called the major blues scale. Solo using this scale only over many lessons so that students are immersed in the sound of the major blues scale.
    - To indicate that a note is flat, its corresponding hand signal is directed down. To indicate that a note is sharp, its corresponding hand signal is directed sideways so that the arm and fingers are parallel to the floor.
    - When reviewing the concept of flat and sharp, refer to the discoveries made in lesson nine. For example, flattening a pitch means lowering it, so any note with a flat in its name (E flat) is that pitch (E) lowered by a half a step. The longer the tube the flatter (or lower) the note, so to flatten the pitch you have to lengthen the tube. Demonstrate this on an instrument in each family, involving the students by asking them to predict what will happen when you manipulate the instrument and asking for student volunteers to provide the demonstrations.
    - As a trombone is so visual, demonstrate on it first by changing the pitch by moving the slide.
    - Next, lower an open note on a brass valve instrument by pulling out the main tuning slide. Show students that pushing

down a valve just adds another length of tubing, just like pulling out the main tuning slide.

- Lastly, demonstrate the concept on a woodwind instrument. Show students that the keys allow the fingers to open and close holes all along the length of the instrument, thus shortening and lengthening the tube.

- Review this principle in like-instrument classes, and frequently assess student understanding of this concept. Grasping this idea will greatly assist students in learning their fingerings and understanding how we affect intonation on an instrument—time well spent!

5) Activity 5: Changing the rhythms of a known melody so that it is in a different style—duple and triple subdivision
[subdivision of the pulse] [duple] [triple] [quadruple]

- Remind students of rhythmic changes that we made to "Hot Cross Buns" to change its style.
- Remind students that the subdivision of the pulse (duple or triple) is a big part of the style. To play a tune in a certain style we have to know what subdivision of the pulse that style is based on so that what we play fits in the groove.
- Listen to a variety of musical examples to determine style, parts of the groove and subdivision of the pulse. Over time create lists on poster board of student observations:

  - Which musical styles have a duple subdivision of the pulse? Example: rock and roll.
  - Which musical styles have a triple subdivision of the pulse? Example: swing (jazz)
  - Which musical styles have a quadruple subdivision of the pulse? Example: funk
  - What is the typical instrumentation for groups that play in each style?
  - Who are some famous artists that play in each style?
  - When was the style first developed? How did the development of one style influence the development of another?
- Select a melody that students are learning from the method book. Brainstorm with students how we might change the melody so that it is in another style.
- Once the students have agreed on a version of the song, have them sing it in their chosen style. Ask students to demonstrate pulse with their heel as they sing. Do this again, and while you play the new version of the song, students finger the notes as they sing.
- While you accompany them in the appropriate style, students play their new version of the song.
- Ask students how we should rename the song, paying tribute to the original but putting our own spin on it.

- Play student versions of songs in future lessons. Encourage students to make additional changes to their versions of the songs over time. Tell students that in the same way that students edit stories that they write, this is how composers compose: They hear a musical idea in their heads, play it or notate it, and change it over time until it is exactly the way they want it to be!

6) Where do we go from here?

- Use these activities to springboard into increasingly longer student improvisations.
- Teach students simple twelve-bar blues jazz standards by ear. Riff-based tunes, in which the same musical phrase is repeated three times, are wonderful tunes with which to start. Duke Ellington's "C Jam Blues" is a prime example. Help students to create riff-based backgrounds to be played during solos.
- Accompany students while they play the tune twice, take turns soloing, and play the tune once again. Provide lots of encouragement, and urge students to encourage each other during solos. Jazz musicians have been playing and creating music like this for generations, and your students are now part of that tradition. Congratulations!

CONCLUSION

The bottom line for any beginning instrumental curriculum is its ability to musically inspire and motivate children. While the many benefits of instrumental music study and participation in a musical ensemble have been well documented, children do not reap those benefits unless they are inspired to begin instrumental study and then are motivated to continue playing through that first year and beyond. Consequently, it is crucial that the beginning band curriculum engages students by being pedagogically sound, accessible to all students, developmentally appropriate, and highly motivating.

The pedagogical foundation of this curriculum is built around legendary jazz trumpet player Clark Terry's three word description of the jazz tradition: "Imitate. Assimilate. Innovate" (Crook, 1991, p. 6). As imitation provides the foundation for students' ability to assimilate and to create in the jazz idiom, the curriculum promotes a love of listening and interacting with the music. Each lesson provides multiple opportunities for students to hear the music expressed idiomatically, whether as sung or played by their teacher or as demonstrated through recordings of great jazz artists. Also, as the use of the voice is very productive in developing instrumental tonal concepts, sight-reading ability, performance achievement, and the sense of pitch (Brittin, 2005), vocal modeling by the teacher and vocal imitation by the students are employed in the teaching of jazz articulations and phrasing. These lessons stress listening, sound production, and student creativity first, and notation is layered on

top of that foundation second. Improvisation is experienced in a hierarchical manner, with students assuming greater responsibility for the improvisation process over time. They gain insight and understanding of improvisation and the jazz culture through direct experience.

To maximize accessibility, the curriculum is designed to accommodate a variety of student learning styles and ability levels and can be used with any beginning band instrumentation. Activities are highly interactive and dynamic and are intended to encourage creativity and experimentation in a safe and fun learning environment. Lessons are comprised of a mixture of teacher-centered and student-centered activities that are constructivist in nature, and activities are devised to foster individual learning and critical thinking while also teaching group collaboration skills.

The exploration of improvisation in this curriculum is designed to take advantage of the unique window of opportunity presented by the developmental stage of students aged 9 to 12. Musically, students of this age are on the cusp between two stages of development. The first is a period of musical enculturation and acceptance of the culture's principles and practices, and it is marked by personal and vernacular expression that is imitative in nature and shows influences of other musical experiences (Runfola & Swanwick, 2002). The second is a time of searching for and creating one's own place within a musical culture through imaginative play, marked by speculative and idiomatic experimentation (Gembris, 2002; Runfola & Swanwick, 2002). Jazz and improvisation offer a perfect vehicle for the transition

from one stage to the next. It is also around this age that most children take on music as a real interest, even those who did not express such an interest earlier (Gembris, 2002; Levitin, 2006). Cognitively, students at this age are more open toward and tolerant of unfamiliar musical styles such as jazz. They are also less inhibited and self-conscious than teens and therefore may be more inclined to take the risks inherent in the process of improvisation. One can not underestimate this last piece, for as Aaron Copeland stated, "Inspiration may be a form of super-consciousness, or perhaps of sub-consciousness—I wouldn't know. But I am sure that it is the antithesis of self-consciousness" (Nachmanovitch, 1990, p. 51).

Perhaps above all, this curriculum was designed to increase student interest, value, and motivation in instrumental music. The lessons provide many opportunities for autonomous choice through improvisation within a given structure or style, which in turn increases both students' interest and their cognitive engagement in the activity (Ames, 1992). Students find jazz more immediately relevant and meaningful to their personal experience due to its similarity in style to the popular music in which they are progressively more interested. The variety in tasks and diversity of music studied decreases the opportunities for social comparison regarding performance and therefore helps to both maintain student interest and help students to adopt a task-goal orientation towards learning. The tasks are broken down into specific and short term goals which help students to organize their efforts and to feel capable and effective as they accomplish their goals (Ames, 1992; Maehr, Pintrich & Linnenbrink, 2002). As all of the students' relevant skills are needed to manage the

challenges of improvisation, the curriculum provides an optimal balance between skill and challenge. The activities in these lessons require students to set clear goals, and through call and response in rehearsals, they receive immediate feedback that is logically related to their goals.

This curriculum is developmentally appropriate for fifth grade students, but it can easily be extended or broken down to reach students from fourth to eighth grade, and it is aligned to many of the content standards for national music education for fifth through eighth grade students. Although lessons are designed to be sequential and taught as a whole curriculum throughout the first year of instrumental music, many of the lessons can be adapted so that they can be taught as stand-alone lessons if necessary or preferred.

Limitations of the Curriculum

The use of this curriculum may be limited when applied in certain contexts. Music educators are often faced with a limited teaching schedule and a limited budget. Teachers may not have the 30 to 45 minute block or homogeneous or heterogeneous grouping that is recommended for each lesson and would need to adapt the lesson accordingly. Also, if teachers have less than 75 minutes a week for beginning band instruction, they may feel limited in how much of the overall curriculum can be devoted to improvisation and listening to musical examples.

Other limitations include the potential lack of access to or the budget for the recordings needed to teach this curriculum. The unit requires audio recordings that demonstrate the concepts in each lesson. Teachers who do not have access to these

recordings would need to purchase the recordings themselves or network with those people who do have them. Fortunately, individual songs are now much more available for purchase on the Internet. Also, the curriculum is flexible in this regard as many recordings beyond those listed could illustrate the concepts in each lesson.

Lastly, for some educators using a jazz-based improvisation curriculum to teach beginning band may involve a leap of faith. Most teachers teach the way that they were taught (Marshall, 2007). Many were not taught to improvise as beginning instrumentalists themselves, nor were they taught to teach improvisation to beginners as part of their preservice training. Additionally, many preservice teacher education programs provide only a limited background in jazz pedagogy. Those who are accustomed to primarily teaching out of a beginning band method book may initially feel uncomfortable with this curriculum or with the time and energy that is required for preparation. Nonetheless, it is my hope that the benefits to students inherent in the process of experiencing improvisation will outweigh any teacher concerns.

Implications for Further Research

Although this curriculum offers a solid introduction to jazz improvisation for beginning instrumental students, it could be supplemented and broadened in several areas. First, the curriculum in its current form supplements the use of a traditional method book or other traditional teaching methods used in beginning band instruction. Ideally, I would like to expand this curriculum so that supplementation of this nature would not be necessary. This would allow for a more seamless presentation and exploration of all of the concepts typically covered in the first year

of instruction and would incorporate a greater emphasis on constructivist learning. It would also allow for the incorporation of the first notes that are pedagogically most appropriate for each instrument as the choice of notes would not be based on the ability of all students to read the same concert pitches in a large heterogeneous-instrument rehearsal. The curriculum could also be expanded to include string instruments so that it could be used in a beginning strings class or could be tailored for use in a general music classroom using Orff instruments.

Another area for further research would be the development of a student home practice CD to supplement this unit. I have listed recordings that students can use in their home practice. However, an inclusive recording tailored for this unit would make practicing improvisation with accompaniment more accessible for all students.

A beginning band curriculum serves no purpose unless it is used by music educators and can be applied in a variety of settings. The viability and practicality of this curriculum needs to be field-tested across various populations of students and with teachers of varying experience levels. Also, jazz and improvisation remain two of the least addressed areas in elementary through university music education, so a strong need exists for much more teacher education in jazz pedagogy, including how to effectively use a jazz-based beginning band improvisation curriculum. I am hopeful that this curriculum will spawn new ways of thinking about first year instrumental music instruction and increase participation and interest in America's greatest art form.

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APPENDIX A
EDUCATOR HANDOUTS

APPENDIX B

SUGGESTED RECORDINGS

Ella Fitzgerald & Louis Armstrong, *Ella & Louis Together!* Delta Music: 15706.

"Let's Call the Whole Thing Off"

Compilation, *Nicky's Jazz for Kids*. Dominick Music: 72435-81908-2-3.

Louis Prima, "The Music Goes 'Round and Around"

Ella Fitzgerald, *Sings the Duke Ellington Songbook*. Verve: 837035-2

Duke Ellington,"It Don't Mean a Thing If It Ain't Got That Swing"

Louis Armstrong, *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, disc 2.

Columbia/Legacy: CAK 57176.

"Heebie Jeebies"

Ella Fitzgerald and Count Basie, *Ella and Basie!* Verve: 314-539-059-2

"Honeysuckle Rose"

Various Artists, *The Best of Newport '57: 50th Anniversary Collection*.Verve: 000952702

Ella Fitzgerald, "Air Mail Special"

Sarah Vaughan, *Verve Jazz Masters 18*. Verve: P218199.

"Shulie A Bop"

The Beatles, *The Beatles 1*. Apple/Capitol: 29325.

"Lady Madonna"

Jamey Aebersold, "*Blues in All Keys: Volume 42*." Jamey Aebersold Jazz Inc.: JA1264D "B Flat"

APPENDIX C

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES: JAZZ WEBSITES

www.jazzinamerica.org

www.smithsonianjazz.org

www.si.edu/ajazzh

www.jazzatlincolncenter.org

www.pbs.org/jazz

www.jazzforyoungpeople.org

www.neajazzintheschools.org

www.allaboutjazz.com

www.jazzcorner.com

www.jazzphotos.com