

Notes- This lesson plan is more of an outline of a typical rehearsal with my 6th grade. We meet twice a week so one of the days I try to focus on learning something new and the other day we work on improving that skill. I tried to include ways to keep students engaged and responding and include enough structure so you can change the exercise to whatever your bands are working on.

Georgia Standards-

MSBB.PR.2a- Analyze characteristic tone quality utilizing playing technique (e.g. proper embouchure, playing position, posture, breathing techniques, articulation, appropriate percussion technique)

MSBB.PR.2b- Demonstrate proper warm-up techniques (e.g. long tones, lip slurs, chorales, technical exercises)

MSBB.RE.2c- Compile a list of strengths and weaknesses in performances and suggest areas of improvement using self-reflection and peer feedback

National Standards-

MU:Pr5.3.E.5a- Use self-reflection and peer feedback to refine individual and ensemble performances of a varied repertoire of music

MU:Pr4.1.E.5a- Select varied repertoire to study based on interest, music reading skills (where appropriate), an understanding of the structure of the music, context, and the technical skill of the individual or ensemble.

MU:Pr4.2.E.5a- Demonstrate, using music reading skills where appropriate, how knowledge of formal aspects in musical works inform prepared or improvised performances.

Purpose- The purpose of this lesson is to continue to teach the beginning band members how to hold, practice, and play their instruments. My students have been 100% virtual since we started school in late August.

Time- 70 minutes

Learning Target- I will be able to play my fourth note: Concert C

Opening- (7 minutes)

- Give the students 5 minutes to log in, turn on their cameras, and get out their instruments. Perform an instrument check. Once you see the student with their instrument in the camera, thank them by name. Once you have a whole section checked off, give them a shout out. Sometimes I put a riddle or a brainteaser on the screen for students to solve while we wait.
- Run through what we will be doing today and if you have any announcements for the week. (1-2 minutes depending on questions)

- Breathing to a song
- Long tones on mouthpieces
- Long tones on Concert F, Eb, and D
- Tonguing practice on Concert F, Eb, and D
- Create our goal for the week
- Learn our new note! Concert C
- Practice numbers 7 and 8 in Essential Elements (we use Smart Music)

Warm Up- (30 minutes)

- Breathing (2-3 minutes)
 - We alternate between breathing to a metronome and a song. Sometimes students will have suggestions ready for songs, but if not I play my music. I try to switch up the genre. The most important thing is finding a tempo that works for the breathing patterns. Most songs are in 4/4 but make sure the song matches the breathing patterns. Between 60 and 90 BPM seems to work well for us.
 - Display the patterns on the screen for the students just in case they get lost or cannot hear you give directions. Below is an example of what I would display. I keep everything in intervals of 4 for simplicity.
 - In for 4, out for 4
 - In for 4, out for 8
 - In for 8, out for 8
 - In for 8, out for 12
 - In for 4, out for 12
 - Have students hold the side of their hand perpendicular to their mouth while they breathe in. Remind students that it should be a low, rushing sound and not a high sound. High sound means you are tense. Be relaxed.
 - Have students focus their “out” air into the center of their hand. It helps to have these hand signs so you can see students participating.
- Long Tones on Mouthpieces (10 minutes)
 - Have students get out their tuners. BandMate Chromatic Tuner is a free app for personal devices. My students without personal devices like Tuner.Ninja
 - Remind students of the mouthpiece pitch
 - Flute head joint- Concert A
 - Clarinet mouthpiece and barrel- Concert F#
 - Alto Saxophone mouthpiece- Concert A
 - Tenor Saxophone mouthpiece- Concert G
 - Trumpets- Shooting for G (first note)
 - Euph, Trombone, Tuba- Shooting for F (first note)

- We will start with playing for one whole note. Ask students to show you on their fingers how many toe taps a whole note is. Give a shout out to a student who correctly answered 4. You can snap or put on a metronome. I like to switch between mouthpieces so I can model.
 - Play for one whole note. Then whole rest. Then whole note. Then whole rest.
- Play for 8 beats. Ask students to give a thumbs up or a thumbs down if they were able to play for the entire 8 beats (or toe taps). If you made it, great job! If not, let us try again!
- Longest note challenge! Students will unmute when I start the count off. I will go “1, 2, 3, play!” and the class will play or buzz on their mouthpiece for as long as they can with their one breath. Students need to mute when they run out of air and stop playing. Give a shout out to first and second place.
 - All Woodwinds play. Brass help judge (2 times)
 - All Brass play. Woodwinds help judge (2 times)
 - Whole class plays (2 times)
- If you have percussionists, have them put one their metronome (our school laptops have a metronome app but any should be fine) and have them practice from Alfred’s Drum Book or a method book you are using.

My brass players struggle with hitting the concert F. A lot still play a Concert Bb. We have been having competitions to see who can play the most notes in first position/open valves. Their goal is to be able to play 2, but I already have a few who can play 3 and almost 4. It has helped them listen to their notes, but this takes some extra time.

- Long Tones on Instruments (7 minutes)
 - Quick note review of what we know so far. Everyone starts of their Concert F.
 - Team Charlie (concert pitched instruments)- F
 - Team Bravo (Bb instruments)- G
 - Team Echo (Eb instruments)- D
 - I do not have any instruments in the key of F, but they would be called Team Foxtrot
 - Play your first note for 4 toe taps, or one whole note. Repeat this once or twice. Make this more challenging by having students try to play different dynamics or crescendo/decrescendo during.
 - Repeat this process with Concert Eb
 - Team Charlie- Eb
 - Team Bravo- F
 - Team Echo- C
 - Repeat this process with Concert D

- Team Charlie- D
- Team Bravo- E
- Team Echo- B
- Tonguing Practice (10 minutes)
 - Have students tongue 4 quarter notes without their instruments. Students should say “Too”. Do this 2 or 3 times.
 - Have students do the exact same thing, but without moving their lips or jaw. Repeat 2 or 3 times.
 - Have students say “Too” but without moving their lips or jaw AND without their vocal chords. Now they are just practicing moving their tongue and their air. Remind them that the air should not stop. Repeat 2 or 3 times.
 - Now tongue with the instruments. Ask the class to vote in the chat. Which note should we start on? Concert F, Eb, or D. Some students might call them “first, second, third” note. I would say the note name associated with that note. “Oh Eddy suggested we start with our second note, which is a concert Eb”
 - Go through Concert F, Eb, and D tonguing four quarter notes in a row. Ask if anyone wants to unmute and play for the class. Take a few volunteers. If no students volunteer, I find it helpful to say “Oh, I wish I could hear from a trumpet” or “the saxophones have had great recordings on Smart Music, I wonder if any of them would like to try”.

Individual Work/Break (6 minutes)

- Create goal for this week
 - Goals need to be Specific, Measurable, and Manageable.
 - Specific- What exactly do you want to improve?
 - Measurable- You need to be able to say “yes, I accomplished this goal” or “no, I still need to work on this goal”
 - Manageable- You only have 1 week to accomplish your goal. Keep your expectations for yourself reasonable.
 - Put a 5-minute timer on the screen. I have students post their goals in a public discussion post for our class. I give students the next 5 minutes to write their goal, run to the bathroom if they need to, get water if they need, stand up and stretch, and we will begin again at the end of 5 minutes

Ensemble Practice (27 minutes)

- Learn our new note! Concert C (10 minutes)
 - Have students open Smart Music and open number 7 from Essential Elements. This is where they practice Concert C for the first time.
 - Have students check the fingering and try to figure it out themselves.
 - Rapid Fire Check! I like to go in score order or backwards score order. Remind students to have their cameras on and to unmute when we get to their section. I always say

which section I will be checking next so they can be ready. Check for fingerings, then play concert C on their instrument. You will play the note for about 4 beats, then they will play after. The goal is quick feedback. This is what I am listening for usually.

- Flutes- Correct fingers down for the correct note
- Clarinets- Correct fingers and firm enough embouchure
- Saxos- Correct fingers and focused air
- Brass- Correct fingers/slide positions and partial
- Once you have gone around the class, have everyone play Concert C (back on mute)
- Practice numbers 7 and 8 in Essential Elements (10 minutes)
 - Start with rhythm. Show me on your fingers how many toe taps a whole note will get.
 - Clap the rhythm for number 7.
 - Note name- Now, say or sing the note name (s) for this exercise in time.
 - Notes and Fingers- Say or sing the note names again, but now move your slide or fingers
 - Extra step- instead of saying note names, say “too” to practice tonguing
 - On air- Move air through your instrument to practice before fully play
 - Play number 7
 - Ask for volunteers to count off the class and lead. You and the class will mute and follow along while the volunteer counts off the class and plays off mute.
 - Repeat number 7 two or three times with you leading or student volunteers leading.
 - Repeat these steps for number 8 if you have time.
- Record number 7 in Smart Music (last 7 minutes of class)
 - Students may stay and ask questions if they need individual help, or they can log off of the call so they can record number 7 on Smart Music.