

# Beginning Band: The First Days

Laura Arthur  
Athey Creek Middle School

# Background

- 11 years at Athey Creek
- Average 80-100 6th graders in band, split into two mixed classes
- Everything I've learned I've stolen from very smart people or it came about organically

# Disclaimer

- This is what I do... you may have different ideas and want to do things differently. Go for it!
- Community, school culture, and bell schedule impact logistics
- Be authentic to your own skill set, teaching style, and expertise.
- You do you! You're the only one who can.

# Three Guiding Principles

---

1. Relationships

2. Energy

3. Pacing

# June of 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

- Recruiting trips
- Performance at Incoming Parent Night
- eBlasts to elementary parent lists
  - [Band Info for 5<sup>th</sup> Graders](#)
- Instrument Petting Zoo
  - Percussion and Saxophone – different expectations
  - [Petting Zoo Sheet](#)

# Day Zero

---

- Students have SOME idea of what they want to play
- Rosters ASAP
- Open band room hours during In-Service Week

# Day 1

1. Names – relationship building immediately
2. Tour of the band room

“Where can I...”

“How do I...”

FAQ's for Parents

# Day 2

1. Names!
2. Review
3. Sitting and visual/verbal clues: Podium Training!
  1. Sit Tall
  2. Relax Back
  3. Instruments Up
4. Breathing

- In for 8, out for 8:
  - Neutral
  - Shhhhh
  - Ssssssss
- In for \_\_, out for \_\_
- 12 On Down
- Sip Sip Sip



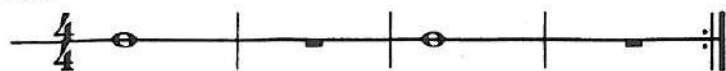
# Day 3

1. Names – impress them!
2. Review sitting, breathing, and visual/verbal clues
3. Clapping rhythms:
  - Quarters first - just do it!
  - Rests
4. First CCC (Clap Challenge for Candy)

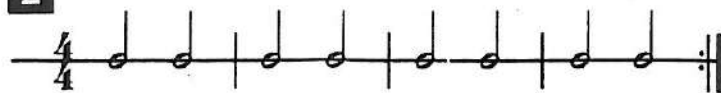
$\frac{4}{4}$  or C



1



2



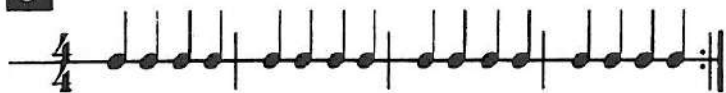
3



4



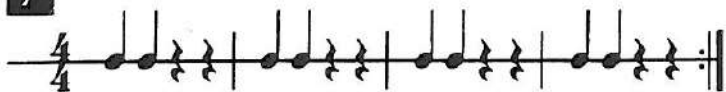
5



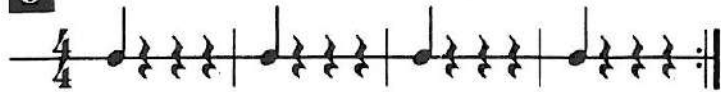
6



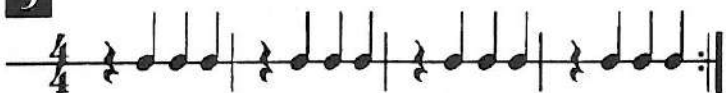
7



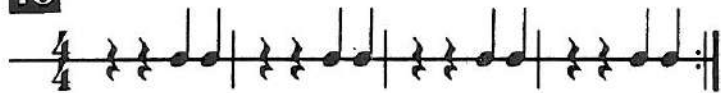
8



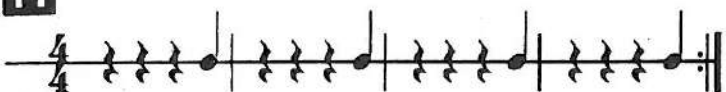
9



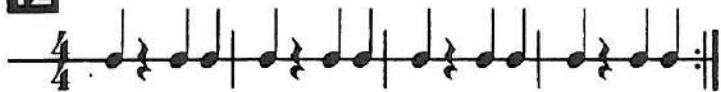
10



11



12



# Day 4

---

1. Review all
2. Quick instrument demos
  - Know your Blurbs!
3. Question Time!
4. CCC

# Clarinet/Bass Clarinet

## Blurbs 3.0

arr. Arthu

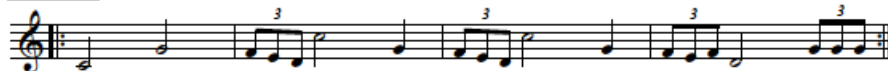
Blurbs 3.0 - Clarinet p.2

2

### Let's Go Band



### Star Wars



### Imperial March



### Lord of the Rings



### Jurassic Park



### Seven Nation Army

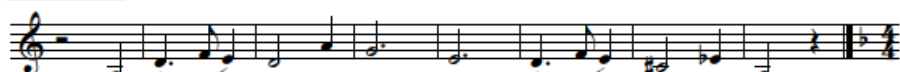


### Pirates of the Caribbean



Version 2017

### Harry Potter



### Let It Go



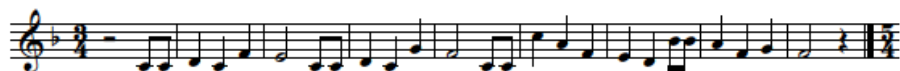
### Everything Is Awesome



### Another One Bites the Dust



### Happy Birthday



### Mission Impossible



# Day 5

1. Review all
2. Clef and Staff – lines only
3. Around the Room
4. Combine rhythms and staff

# Day 6

1. Review all
2. Staff - spaces
3. Around the Room
4. [MusicTheory.net Exercise Customizer](#)
  - Staff Practice time
5. Individual check-ins

# Day 7

1. Review all - quick
2. All Instruments:
  1. Case care – opening, closing
3. Woodwinds
  1. Anatomy
  2. Noisemakers
  3. Assembly
  4. Holding
  5. Care and Maintenance

## Enemies:

1. Gravity
2. Food
3. Pressure
4. Moisture

# Day 8

1. Review all – quick
2. Brass:
  1. Anatomy
  2. Noisemakers
  3. Assembly
  4. Holding
  5. Care and Maintenance
3. Last day without instruments! Noodle rules, Time-out, countdown
4. “Be the Band Director”



# Flute

1. Anatomy
2. Noisemakers
  - “Be sad, spit rice”
  - Two fingers under the lip
  - Chin can move back and forth
  - Three shelves
3. Assembly
4. Holding
5. Care and Maintenance

## Flute Care and Maintenance

### Supplies:

1. Flute cleaning rod
2. Rectangular cotton rag (an old t-shirt will work) that is approximately 10"x8"
3. Polishing cloth

### Before You Play:

1. Always rinse out your mouth with water
2. Make sure your hands are clean
3. Make sure the case has the correct side up when opening it

### After You Play

1. Use your cotton rag: Threading the corner of the rag through the cleaning rod hold, fold the rest of the rag over the tip of the rod so that the metal end is covered.
2. Use the rod to swab out each section of the flute to remove moisture build-up. Do this every time you are done playing and before you put the instrument away!
  - a. Be careful when cleaning out the headjoint – you don't want to ram the tuning cork on the inside.
3. If the pads get sticky, you may clean them with a dollar bill by putting the bill underneath the key and pressing the key several times. It may take several cleanings to remove the sticky-ness.

### Once Every Two Weeks:

1. Carefully polish the exterior of the flute with a polishing cloth. Be careful with the keys – wipe them individually so as to avoid accidentally ripping one of the keys off with the cloth.
2. Wash the cleaning rag by hand or in the washing machine to avoid mildew.

### Once a Year:

1. Take the instrument into the music store to have a technician re-align the keys, add key oil to the rods, and check for old or damaged pads.

### WARNING:

1. NEVER leave anything extra (book, papers, music) on top of your flute in the case when you close the lid. This can damage your flute. Keep your music and book in its own folder.
2. NEVER leave your flute resting on the music stand – make sure it's in the case, on the chair, or on a flute stand.

# Clarinet/Saxophone

1. Anatomy
2. Noisemakers
  - Awww, ooeeehh, eeewww
  - Thumb on lip as a guide, reverse milkshake, angry cat
  - Ligature – “big feet”
3. Assembly
  - Find the holes, watch the bridge
4. Holding
  - “Pinkies chillin, fingers hoverin”
  - LH thumb angle
5. Care and Maintenance
  - SHAKE OUT THE SWAB
  - Reeds off and away

# Oboe/Bassoon/Horn

---

1. Individual holding positions
  - Instrument comes to them
2. Horns should have a buddy
3. 70/30

# Trumpet

1. Anatomy
2. Noisemakers
  - Capri-Sun Straw
  - “Drink tea” on the shank
3. Assembly
4. Holding
  - Marry your trumpet
  - Racquetball right hand, sled down the hill
  - Weight in your left hand
5. Care and Maintenance
  - One valve at a time
  - Silent spit

## Trumpet Care and Maintenance

### Supplies:

1. Valve oil
2. Tuning slide grease
3. Mouthpiece brush
4. “Snake” clearing tool
5. Clean rag

### Before You Play:

1. Always rinse out your mouth with water
2. Make sure your hands are clean
3. Make sure the case has the correct side up when opening it

### After You Play

1. Empty the water from both water keys before putting the instrument away

### Once a Week (or as needed):

1. Apply valve oil to the valves. Do one valve at a time:
  - Unscrew the top of the valve casing (not the top pearl keys!) and pull the valve out
  - Apply 4-6 drops of oil on the valve, avoiding the holes
  - Insert the valve back into the casing, making sure that the valve guide is lined up with the “notch” in the interior of the valve casing
  - Once it’s lined up, check it to make sure the valve doesn’t turn right or left
  - Screw the top of the valve casing back on and push the valve 10-15 times to work the oil into the valve
2. Clean the mouthpiece out with a mouthpiece brush under warm running water. Make sure the brush is wet before putting it in the mouthpiece.

### Once a Month:

1. Remove the tuning slide (carefully!) and clean the interior of the lead pipe and tuning slide with the “snake” brush under running water. Make sure the brush is wet before putting it into the lead pipe.
2. Remove all the slides to apply new slide grease. Before applying a thin layer of grease, wipe off the old grease with a clean rag.
3. Remove fingerprints from the exterior of the instrument with a polishing cloth.

### Once a Year:

1. Take the instrument into the music store to have a technician sonic clean the interior of the instrument, check the valve alignment, check the cork on the water key, and remove dents.

### WARNING:

1. NEVER leave anything extra (book, papers, music) on top of your trumpet in the case when you close the lid. This can damage your instrument. Keep your music and book in its own folder.
2. NEVER leave your trumpet resting upright on the bell or unattended. Make sure it’s in the case, resting on the chair or floor (with the 2<sup>nd</sup> valve up), or on a trumpet stand.
3. Secure your mouthpiece inside the case. If you let it rattle around it can dent your trumpet.

# Trombone/Low Brass

1. Anatomy
2. Noisemakers
  - Regular soda straw
  - Boba tea for tuba
3. Assembly
  - Slide on the ground
4. Holding
  - “Live long and prosper, then drink tea”
  - Shake out left hands
5. Care and Maintenance
  - Spray bottles
  - No oil

# Percussion

1. Anatomy – mallet instruments
2. Noisemakers
  - D in the Doghouse
3. Holding
  - Mail delivery
  - Wrists
4. Care and Maintenance
  - Percussion section responsibilities

Percussion is a PRIVILEGE

# Rental Night!

1. 6-8pm
2. Not required\*
3. Invite ALL local stores
4. Providing a convenience for parents

\*Students using a school instrument are REQUIRED to attend\*

\* NAMES ON BOOKS \*

# Day 9

1. Agenda on the board – front-load
  - Noisemakers only
  - Tonguing
  - Repeater
  - Rapid Fire
2. Articulating: Visuals - Hose, Elf on Truck
  - Too, Dee, toe, ding. “What-too”
3. Countdown practice
4. Front-load expectations. You’re on their side!



# Day 10

1. Agenda on the board
  - In Case – tour of the book
  - Noisemakers – no noodling
  - Repeater
  - Put it together
  - Mi (Re if time)
2. Patience!
3. Countdown practice

# Day 11

## 1. Agenda:

- Noisemaker out - No noodling
- Repeater
- Put it together
- Mi, Re Repeater
- Page 4!
  - Long tones/fermata, quarter notes/rests, half notes

First Band Assignment: Teach your Parent

# Teach Your Parent - Winds

## 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Band Parent Teaching Assignment

Due Friday, September 15<sup>th</sup>

Band Member Name \_\_\_\_\_

Period \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ I taught my parent/guardian how to put my instrument together

\_\_\_\_ I taught my parent/guardian how to hold my instrument

\_\_\_\_ I taught my parent/guardian how to take care of and clean my instrument

\_\_\_\_ I taught my parent/guardian how to clap whole, half and quarter notes and rests

\_\_\_\_ I taught my parent/guardian how to name the lines and spaces of the staff

\_\_\_\_ I taught my parent/guardian how to use the fingering chart in my book

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

# Teach Your Parent – Percussion

## 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Band Parent Teaching Assignment - Percussion

Due Friday, September 15<sup>th</sup>

Band Member Name \_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ I taught my parent/guardian about the four mallet instruments in the band room

\_\_\_\_ I taught my parent/guardian which mallets work best on each instrument

\_\_\_\_ I taught my parent/guardian how to hold my mallets correctly

\_\_\_\_ I taught my parent/guardian how to clap whole, half and quarter notes and rests

\_\_\_\_ I taught my parent/guardian the alphabet names and how to find the keys for the first three notes

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

# Day 12

## 1. Agenda:

- Noisemakers out – no noodling
- All together
- Repeater - voice and instruments – Do Re Mi
- Five Ways to Play:
  1. Alpha
  2. Air
  3. Clap
  4. Practice on your Own
  5. *For Realsies!*

### Three Group Rotation:

1. BassFlop
2. Clar/Tpt
3. Alto/Horn


# Hot Cross Buns



# Rest of September

1. Do Re Mi Fa Sol – “Five Note Warm-Up”
2. La and Ti – “Seven Note Warm-Up”
3. Mad Music Minute
4. Fun Fridays:
  - Longest Note
  - CCC
  - Eventually, scales (DDRD)
  - Dum Dums for Band Shirts

**Mad Music Minute** Name \_\_\_\_\_ Per \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Clarinet/Trumpet Corrected by \_\_\_\_\_ Score /30



The image shows a worksheet for a music activity called "Mad Music Minute". It includes a title, a line for the student's name, period, and date, and a line for the teacher's name and score. Below this is a musical staff with five staves of music. The first staff starts with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music consists of five measures, each containing a single note or a rest. The notes are: C4 (whole note), D4 (half note), E4 (quarter note), F#4 (quarter note), and G4 (half note). The rests are: A4 (half note), B4 (quarter note), C5 (quarter note), D5 (quarter note), and E5 (half note). The second staff continues the sequence with F#5 (half note), G5 (quarter note), A5 (quarter note), B5 (quarter note), and C6 (half note). The third staff continues with D6 (half note), E6 (quarter note), F#6 (quarter note), G6 (quarter note), and A6 (half note). The fourth staff continues with B6 (half note), C7 (quarter note), D7 (quarter note), E7 (quarter note), and F#7 (half note). The fifth staff continues with G7 (half note), A7 (quarter note), B7 (quarter note), C8 (quarter note), and D8 (half note). The music ends with a double bar line.

# What should they know?

1. Sit Tall
2. Breathe
3. Follow visual cues
4. Clap whole, half, and quarter notes/rests
5. Name the lines and spaces of their staff
6. Carry their case safely
7. Open their case safely
8. Clean their instrument
9. Put together their instruments safely
10. Hold their instruments correctly with no tension
11. Form an embouchure
12. Articulate Correctly
13. Copy their teacher for four beats of playing
14. Read a fingering chart and find vocab in their book
15. Perform a line in the book five ways



# How do you assess?

1. Raise your hand if...
2. Give me a rating to 5...
3. Show me with your fingers...
4. Talk to your neighbor...
5. Play for your neighbor...
6. GoogleClassroom Reflections

# Rest of the Year

1. October - Living Room Performance
2. November - First concert
3. March - Blurbs
4. Late March - Second Concert
5. April – Recruiting Trip
6. May - Movie Night/5<sup>th</sup> Grade Parent Night
7. June - Picnic Concert
8. Last week of school – Bando Lympics

# Thank you!

[arthurl@wlwv.k12.or.us](mailto:arthurl@wlwv.k12.or.us)

<https://www.wlwv.k12.or.us/Page/12746>

→ OMEA Resources

