

Principles of Teaching (Brass)
Brass Methods Class, University of Wyoming
Dr. Brinkman

1. You have to make it fun (define fun for various ages and interests)
2. The teacher must be organized
3. Teaching must proceed with planning (daily, weekly, semester, etc)
4. Not every person learns in the same way.
5. Teaching is problem-solving
6. Teaching is person-to-person. You must connect with students on a personal level.
7. Students will meet your expectations
8. Classroom management is essential
9. By looking at the student and listening to the sound you should know what is good, and what needs to be improved.
10. The teacher must continue to learn

Effective Teaching
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Dr. Brinkman

Many things make an effective teacher. Here are a few:

Love of Music

Love of Teaching/being with students

Personal characteristics

- Teaching Personality
- Voice
- Body Language
- Appearance
- Enthusiasm
- Ethics and moral responsibility
- Ability to connect and get along with people
- Persistence
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Professional Characteristics

- Understanding music
- Teaching techniques
- Organization
- Reflective Practitioner
- Creativity
- Administrative skills—budgets, programs, office, etc.
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Planning for Teaching

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Effective teaching will not happen over the long term without effective planning

Elements of a good plan

Long term (semester, 3 years, etc.)

- Long range goals
- Standards
- Assessment of where the students are
- Realistic timetable
- Resources to work with

Short term (daily)

- Assessment of where the students are
 - You know because you taught them yesterday or last year
 - You don't know—so you evaluate playing, musicality, physical issues, etc.

Goals/objectives for day

- How they fit with long range goal—each day should be a step toward that
- State/National Standards met
- Materials needed

Teaching sequence

- What you are going to say and do
- Get their attention
- Review needed?
- Pacing
- Meeting the needs of all students
- Extensions (Plan B—if you need more to do or a different approach)

Assessment

- Did they learn?
- Did they meet the objectives you had for the day?
- Based on what happened in class, what will you do tomorrow? Next week?
What changes will you make in content? Approach? Objectives? Teaching
sequence? Teaching Strategies?

Don't get in a rut—try new ideas, new approaches, new music

Lesson Plan

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Teacher	Materials needed
General Goal of Lesson	Previous Knowledge
Specific Objective(s) of lesson	National Standards taught
How you will meet the needs of diverse learners (e.g. aural, kinesthetic, visual).	
Teaching Sequence (what you are going to say and do)	
Evaluation (how will I know if my teaching is successful?)	

How students learn / Teaching to all students

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We tend to group students (trumpets, sopranos), but individuals in those groups may not be at all alike.

Each individual is different:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gender• Physical development• IQ• Scholastic achievement• Reading level• Learning style<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Random/sequential○ Abstract/concrete○ Visual, aural, kinesthetic○ Etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Personality• SES• Parental support• Music background• Amount of practice• Persistence• Self concept/self esteem• Motivation• Quality of instrument• Etc.
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Principles of teaching

- A safe and respectful teaching environment
- Learning by doing
- Experience it, then explain it
- Plan, Teach and Review/ Plan, Teach and Review
- Cognitive, psychomotor, affective
- High (but reasonable) expectations
- Not all students learn or progress in the same way
- You have to make it fun (define fun for various ages and interests)
- The teacher must be organized
- Teaching is problem-solving
- Teaching is person-to-person. You must connect with students on a personal level.
- Classroom management is essential
- By looking at the student and listening to the sound you should know what is good, and what needs to be improved.
- The teacher must continue to learn

Teaching Beginners
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Students

- Most Instrumental Beginners are motivated and intelligent
- Most students will have had elementary general music, so they understand music basics--though they have not applied them in the way that is needed in band or orchestra
- Students may a bit apprehensive about learning a new instrument, but most are very excited at the new experience.
- It is normal for students to go through stages where they are less enthusiastic--when the novelty of playing an instrument wears off. Your job is to get them past that by ensuring that their musical, learning and social experiences are still fun and satisfying.

Teaching Techniques

- **Present things one at a time.** Too much information at once does not work.
- Break things down to **smaller concepts**. Example: if rhythm is the problem, have the student stop and clap and count.
- **Re-teach** and reinforce earlier concepts.
- **Sound before sign.** This means that they should experience a concept before you get bogged down on how it will look on the page. Example: play an easy tune such as Mary Had A Little Lamb in cut time. Then tell them what they did, how to count it, etc.
- **Assess constantly.** This does not mean you are always giving formal tests. An example would be having students play a line by themselves or with another student during the context of the lesson. You will assess their tone quality, posture,
- **Don't get in a rut.** Come up with new warmups, songs, rhythmic exercises, etc. to keep the students (and yourself) interested.
- **Move** around the room
- **Consider Visual, Audio, and Kinesthetic Learners**
- There is **no** one teaching or classroom management technique that works all the time.
- **Classroom Management** is essential. Your job is to keep things moving to avoid disruptions.

The Teacher

- Be friendly, but don't try to be friends.
- Be prepared for the lesson
- Long term and short term lesson plans
- Be sensitive to issues with parents, teachers, etc. Get to know the parents!
- If you are excited about music, your students will be, too.
- You may have 2 roles that overlap: conducting an ensemble and teaching individuals and small groups. Your conducting will change for each situation.

Selecting a Band Method Book
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The method book is a teaching tool. You are still the teacher!

What has been used before?

- If a school has used a book successfully, there may not be a reason to change
- Consider cost of changing--will you have to spend from your budget?

Content

- Does the book teach the basics in the order you prefer
- What notes are first--and how does that affect each instrument?
- What rhythms are first?
- Are the songs and exercises appealing?
- How are Horn and Percussion handled?
- Other special problems--such as clarinet high register
- Coordination with National Standards and local curriculum

Pacing

- Does it move at the right speed? One or 2 concepts at a time
- Is content presented in consistent way? Is it reinforced later?
- Is content appropriate for the way you will use the book?

Visual appeal

- Interesting graphics and layout
- Color
- Pictures that help students to learn

Supporting Materials

- CDs
- Web site
- Theory books
- Concert pieces that coordinate

Availability

- Does the local dealer stock it?
- Can you get a copy overnight?

Cost

- Is it in line with other books

Band Method or Individual Instrument Book

- Most schools use a band method--every instrument has the same songs

Designing Instructional Materials
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Even though you have access to published method books and music, there are still times when you need to supplement with your own Instructional Materials.

Instructional Materials: Any item that you create that introduces, drills, reinforces or tests a student's knowledge and achievement.

Good Instructional Material has

- Appropriate Content
- Pertinent to what is being learned
- Supplements other instruction
- May take students in a new direction

Pacing

- Are new concepts appropriately introduced and reinforced?

Visual/audio appeal

- Is there something that will get and keep the student's attention?

Consider Future Use

- Can you design something that can be used by other instruments or classes, and can be used in other years?

Examples of Instructional Material

- Scale Sheet
- Rhythm Drill
- Recording
- Theory Worksheet
- Review Sheet
- Quiz
- Web Site
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Recruiting Instrumental Beginners
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Every non-required class in music requires recruiting.
 Recruiting needs to happen year-round.
 Everything you do as a music teacher/music program affects recruiting.

What has been done in the past? Ask elementary teachers, principal, elementary vocal person, or previous director. Visit with local music dealer.

Decide on dates

- Display or date for parent meeting.
- When 5th grade band will start. Don't try to do this in the first two weeks of school unless that has been done in the past and it worked.

Talk to the 5th grade classes.

- This meeting should be during school time during music class or regular class. You must secure cooperation from those teachers! Talk to all the 5th graders, not just the ones who "might want to join band."
- Demonstrate all the instruments (flute, clarinet, sax, horn, trombone, trumpet). **This demo can be your most powerful recruiting tool--make it good. The kids will be excited!**
- You will want to look at the instrumentation in 6th, 7th, and 8th grade to see if there are certain instruments needed or not needed. You can then guide students based on instrumentation needed.
- Give the students a letter to take home announcing details of display or starting date. You might want to include a response card to get an idea who will be joining.

Find out about the kids.

- You can check school records for academic ability, music grades, etc. Visit with the elementary staff about the kids.
- Try to create general enthusiasm for the program--if you are too selective too early you won't end up with many kids by the time they get to high school.

The Display

- Parents and students come to the school to rent instruments from a dealer you have selected. You can use this opportunity to parents and kids what is expected of a beginning band member. If you don't have a display it might still be a good idea to have a meeting--so you can meet the parents.
- There are many ways to recruit and organize this process. Get ideas from other directors who have had good success or who have been similar situations.

Some Other Issues

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large Group vs. small group or solo lessons • lessons per week • When are the lessons held • Practice time required? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grading • Contact with parents • Performances • Selecting a dealer • Start beginners in summer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-term: concerts in the elem. by older kids, visibility and success of your program, your personality, your relations with parents & public.
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Instrument Repair
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You can do these repair jobs

- Stuck mouthpiece. Use a commercial "mouthpiece puller."
- Stuck tuning slides. Use some penetrating oil to break up the crud. Also try a razor blade on the corrosion. Wait a few hours. Pull firmly but gently. A rag can be put through the slide to help get a better grip.
- Cleaning. Student can clean and oil horn with water.
- Water key corks. You should have some of these. Just take old cork out and replace with the correct size cork. It should fit snugly--no glue needed.
- Water key. This may get bent or damaged. You may be able to bend it back, but this metal will break easily. The screw may also be gone--take to a repairman.

Leave these to a professional repairman

- Take out dents in the horn or mouthpiece.
- Solder joints
- Stuck tuning slides.
- Cleaning/flushing of horn. This should be done every year or two, depending on use and maintenance that has been done.

Evaluating used instruments

As the band director, you will be asked to evaluate "attic" horns. A parent will want to know if the student should start on the horn, and will expect you to give an expert opinion. Consider the following items:

- General condition of horn. Would you want to play it?
- General condition of case. Is it usable? Handle, hinges, lining.
- Do valves work well (you may need to oil them). Take them out and examine for dirt, corrosion, etc. These can be cleaned.
- Trombone slide. Will it move without sticking or clicking?
- Tuning slides. Do they move?
- Water Key Corks. They can be replaced, but make sure the mechanism is OK.
- Smell. Odor may come from a horn that needs flushing or the case.
- If there is much wrong with the instrument, suggest that a professional repairman do the evaluation. Fixing up a horn can cost \$25-\$200. If it is much more than that, I would suggest renting a horn to see if the student is interested before making such an investment.

Evaluating the Condition of Brass Instruments

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General <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finish• Condition of Case• Dents• Soldered joints• Brand•	Mouthpiece <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finish• Dents• Appropriate size
Slides <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do they move• 3rd valve slide ring•	Spit Corks <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are they there?• Decent shape?• Is mechanism OK?•
Valves--piston <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do they move• Dents• Cleanliness• Take valves out and unscrew bottom cover• Noise when moving--felt missing•	Horn Valves-rotary <ul style="list-style-type: none">• String present and installed correctly• Do they move• Cleanliness•
Trombone Slide <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dents• Cleanliness• Rust, corrosion, wear•	Discuss merits of used horn vs. rental <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cost• Horn condition• Instrument that is right for student•

Working with Dealers
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As a band, orchestra or choir director you will have to make decisions about where you will purchase your music, instruments, repairs, and accessories. Your students and parents will also expect you to give them guidance about music purchases.

There are two main choices for you:

- Local Dealers--merchants in your town or area
- Distance Dealers--catalog or web site merchants

It is the opinion of your instructor that a music teacher should do as much business as possible with a local dealer.

Local Dealer	Distance Dealer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you support the dealer you will get much positive support in return: service, music folders, help in recruiting, help with repair estimation and pickup, teaching tips, history of a program, etc. • Your local dealer is paying your salary through property and sales taxes. • Local dealers support your state music association (WMEA) • No dealer can offer everything that you could possibly need. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A distance dealer may offer a lower price. However, service must be considered. • A distance dealer may have a wider selection of instruments or music. • Distance dealers seldom support state music association. • No dealer can offer everything that you could possibly need.

- Is a local dealer willing to visit your school when it is convenient for you?
- You are in charge of a relationship with a dealer. Make sure you are comfortable
- Stay away from dealers that want to offer "kickbacks" or "free" items for you personally. Such behavior is unethical on your part, and would be grounds for your employment termination.
- If you have questions about working with dealers, consult your principal, business manager, or superintendent.
- Be wary being put in the position of being "between" a dealer and a parent.

Band Program 5-12
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Whether you are a 5-12 director or just direct on part of the program (such as Middle School Band), it is important that you keep the total program in mind.

General Ideas

- A program will have a beginning band, intermediate band (JH or MS) and an advanced band. There may be more than one step at each level--a JH might have a 7th grade band and an 8th grade band.
- Students should have a good musical experience at each level.
- Students should see how their development at one level will continue at the next level.
- Students do not have to "do everything" at the younger ages. They need to have a reason to continue.
- There will be dropouts
- A balanced instrumentation must be considered from the beginning. If you don't start enough trombones, where will you get them in 10th grade?

5-12 Band

- You have the luxury of controlling the whole program. You do not have to worry about someone wrecking the feeder program--you are responsible.
- Students have the stability of the same teacher for a number of years.
- You have no one to balance your weaknesses. Example: you teach clarinet really well, but are weak in percussion.

Multi-Level Band

- Different directors for Elementary, JH/MS, and HS.
- Coordination of the band program can be a problem when there are several directors at various schools/levels.
- Students get a variety of musical experiences and expertise from directors.
- The entire staff must have the same goals. All must produce good musicians that are ready to move on to the next band.
- Some directors focus only on their own level--to the detriment of the entire program.