

Developing Successful Middle School Bands Through Daily Ensemble Drill

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Food For Thought

1. Nothing is original! All of the concepts we will discuss today were learned from other teachers, but adapted to fit our individual programs.
2. Don't be afraid to ask for help – let go of your ego .
3. Get help early in the first semester on your daily ensemble drill. Don't wait until you are working on your contest music to have clinicians.
4. There is no "quick fix". At first you may not be able to hear some of the concepts we will discuss. You will have to develop your listening skills, as well as those of your students, before the improvement in your ensemble will occur.

It All Starts in Beginning Band

1. All teaching is based on three fundamentals: Sound, Rhythm & Notes. Sound should be the first priority during the beginning year
2. Isolate initial instruction into two aspects at first.
 - Hand Position and Posture
 - Tone Production
3. When combining these aspects to produce the first sounds on the instrument, focus on mastering hand position and tone production and don't be driven to move too quickly in order to play songs.
4. Other aspects to address at the initial stages
 - Breathing
 - Rhythm
 - Basic ensemble concepts are introduced

Purpose of the Ensemble Drill

1. Establish mental focus – Most technical and musical problems can be solved by thought and approach
2. Develop and reinforce playing concepts
3. Establish relaxed tone production
4. Warm-Up the embouchure
5. Ear training/intonation
6. Improve fundamental ensemble skills

Concepts & Techniques addressed through Ensemble Drill

1. Playing Skills
 - Breathing
 - Matching characteristic sound, tone quality, and energy – Note to Note, Person to Person and Section to Section
 - Characteristics of Notes
 - Attack – no extraneous sounds
 - Middle of Note – constant and steady sound
 - Note Changes – moving together without bumps or extra noise between notes
 - Ending – no decay, best sound touches silence
 - Pitch and Interval matching – Unisons, 3rds, 4ths, 5ths and octaves
 - Articulation & Style
 - touch the same place with the same strength each time
 - no extraneous sounds
 - With middle school students focus on three basic styles: legato, staccato, marcato
 - Ensemble Balance (within sections and entire ensemble)
2. Cognitive Skills
 - Concentration
 - Listening Skills

Questions?

In order for these concepts to be beneficial, they must transfer from ensemble drill to the music you perform. If you are persistent with learning and constantly improving these skills, you will find that the need to address intonation, precision, balance, and articulation while learning music will not be needed as often. All problems with a piece can usually be traced back to tone quality, articulation, and balance. All these areas contribute to intonation and rhythmic precision problems.

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The Foundation and Approach to Ensemble Drill starts with teaching fundamental concepts in Beginning Band. The students must understand in detail the expectations of how each concept is to be performed or modeled. You must be relentless about what you want them to do every day and constantly remind them. Daily reinforcement throughout the year will foster the correct environment for basic ensemble drill development.

- *Basic Theory/Counting Concepts
- *Correct Body Position/Posture
- *Understanding of Embouchure/Aperture/Vibration and their role in characteristic sound production. (Brass players – Air/Airy Buzz/Buzz/Airy Buzz/Air)
- *Knowledge of Instrument Parts/Proper Instrument Assembly
- *Tone Production - Beginners must understand that a good, characteristic sound is #1.
- *Basic Breathing Concepts
- *Correct Hand/Horn Position

Ensemble Drill - Again, it is all based on fundamentals! Tone is #1.

Students must understand the purpose of ensemble drill and the importance of working on concepts daily. As they rehearse, the students must transfer the concepts learned in the daily drill to their music. These concepts are all performed at the same time; however they must be isolated in order to improve them and the listening skills it takes to further develop the maturity of each concept.

- Relaxed and natural body/hand/horn position & posture
- Relaxed and natural approach to breathing – start breath on Beat 3 and have air ready at front of the note.
- Tone production – match energy (tone quality) side to side, section to section, across the band side to side and back to front. Resonant, relaxed and centered tone.
- Air Flow – use same air, same syllable, and same resonant tone on each note in the phrase to make the moving notes sound like a steady whole note. Same energy/air at beginning of the note/phrase, in the middle, and at the end of the note/phrase.
- Articulation – how and where to tongue and what syllable to use (in the same place with the same strength). There are three parts to every note regardless of their value. All notes have same noise free start, steady middle and clean release/end. Use articulation studies daily to teach different styles (legato, marcato, staccato).
- Balance and Blend – students must know who to listen for i.e. the melodic line, the color, the section. Measure by measure or phrase at a time, not louder than...?
- Matching pitch and interval matching – matching tone quality person to person and section to section, proper air flow and energy in the sound, all students listening for the same quality of sound improves intonation. Students must know the pitch tendencies for problem notes on the instrument.
- A Chorale should also be part of daily drill. No more than 8 measures are needed to combine all of the aspects of ensemble drill. It is a great reference when teaching the music!
- Air Flow studies, Key studies, Rhythmic studies and flexibility studies will further improve skills needed in pieces performed by the band.

These concepts must transfer to the music the ensemble is playing. Referring back to the drill will help the music continue to improve. Add to daily drill the concepts needed for the pieces you wish to play.

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Techniques and Concepts for Teaching Middle School Band

Fort Settlement Middle School

Greg Countryman, Director

Establish an Appropriate Classroom Environment

1. Address the students as they enter the room. Use this opportunity to calm them down and set the appropriate tone for learning.
2. Establish a routine for the students as they enter the room and give a specific amount of time for them to be ready for class. This should not be a time for the students to socialize. Unless the students are very mature and self-disciplined, I would not recommend allowing them to warm-up individually. If you allow individual warm-up, make sure they are aware of your expectations.
3. The director must also be organized and ready to begin the rehearsal in order to set an example for the students (assignment on the board, materials at the podium, announcements on the board instead of talking, etc.).
4. Move quickly from one activity to the next and have an outline for what you want to cover in the rehearsal.
5. ALWAYS start rehearsals on time. With rehearsals before or after school, insist that the students arrive early so they will be ready to play at the designated time. Even if only half of the students are present, START THE REHEARSAL. If the students don't feel they have missed something, they won't see a need to be on time. This often involves training the parents more than the students and it will take some time. Be Persistent!
6. If the proper tone is not set prior to the start of the rehearsal, the students will not have the level of concentration and focus needed to improve their playing and listening skills.

Beginning Band

1. **Posture** (teach without the instrument at first)
 - Upper body is as if you are standing
 - Head floating on the shoulders
 - Shoulders sloped and relaxed
 - Center of back slightly toward the stomach to lift the chest
 - Feet flat on the floor with heels under the knees (should be able to stand up without moving the feet)
 - Body remains soft – check palms and neck for softness
2. **Breathing** (teach without the instrument at first)
 - Shoulders stay down – stomach moves
 - Calm air in/calm air out. Air should come in and go out silently. Any noise means that something (tongue, teeth, throat) is interfering with the air.
 - Basic Breathing Exercises (4 in/4 out; 2 in/4 out; 1 in/4 out)
 - Do not hold air before releasing. Air flows in and out like waves washing up on a beach.
 - Use hand motion to reinforce the calmness and steadiness of the inhale/exhale.
 - Face and body should stay natural and relaxed. Keep the opening of the mouth the same for the inhale and exhale (no embouchure).
3. **Woodwind Hand Position**
 - Teach hand position separate from tone production.
 - Introduce one hand at a time. If you are teaching left hand position, then hold the instrument with the right hand. Rest clarinet and flute on the knee. Saxophone hangs from neck strap and is pushed forward with the other hand.
 - Place fingers on the instrument first and then add the thumbs – helps positioning and to eliminate squeezing.
 - Fingers should be flat and the middle of the finger should be in the center of the key (flat and centered)
 - Fingers should move from the knuckles with two exceptions:
 - First finger on the left hand on flute
 - Left hand thumb for clarinet and sax
4. **Brass hand position** – One hand holds the instrument and the other hand is for fingering
5. **Finger Exercises**
 - After basic hand position is mastered, teach finger patterns so the students become comfortable with moving the fingers.
 - Don't try to teach note names at this point - just use numbers.
 - Left Hand – T (thumb), 1, 2, 3, P (pinky)
 - Right Hand – 4, 5, 6, P (pinky)
 - Reinforce keeping the shape of hands, moving from the knuckles, fingers staying low, fingers moving up and down/not back and forth, quick motion, and no tension (check palms).
6. **Embouchure and Tone Production**
 - Flute
 - Natural face, corners relaxed, pew/poo syllable
 - Lips slightly blowing away from face is okay
 - Air makes the opening (can use a cocktail straw to help with the aperture)
 - Corners should stay natural - not pulled back or forward
 - Clarinet
 - Chin MUST be flat and firm
 - Like "sucking a thick milkshake through a straw"
 - Form the embouchure first, then insert the mouthpiece
 - Bottom lip should be in front of and not over the teeth when forming the embouchure. As the mouthpiece is inserted, the lip will cover the bottom teeth like a sheet over a mattress).
 - Set the opening of the teeth so that the mouthpiece hits the top teeth when the correct amount is in the mouth. You should not need to close the jaw for the top teeth to hit the mouthpiece.
 - Mouthpiece must be anchored with pressure into the top teeth (not biting pressure) without letting more mouthpiece slip inside the mouth.

- Saxophone
 - Similar to clarinet except more of an “oo” shape and face is not as firm.
 - Make sure the angle and the amount of mouthpiece is different from clarinet.
 - Trumpet
 - “mm” syllable
 - Mouthpiece placement $\frac{1}{2}$ & $\frac{1}{2}$
 - Can feel the inside of the lips touching the teeth
 - Trombone
 - Same as trumpet except $\frac{1}{3}$ (bottom) and $\frac{2}{3}$ (top)
 - Mouthpiece Vibration for Brass Players
 - At first, work for open and free vibrations and don’t worry about the pitch.
 - Lips must be soft so they can vibrate freely.
 - Don’t try to make the lips vibrate – the air does this.
 - Make sure the lips are even – bottom lip should not be wet from the top lip.
 - Corners of the bottom lip shouldn’t pull over the teeth.
 - Double buzz is usually because the bottom lip is blowing out into the mouthpiece.
7. **Combining the hand position and tone production**
- Don’t bother with reading music at first.
 - Start with notes that don’t touch (individual notes).
 - As you progress to notes that touch (changing notes), use the finger exercises you taught earlier (not reading yet).
8. **Music Reading and Rhythmical Skills**
- While practicing the skills listed above, spend time each day on learning to read rhythmical notation.
 - Use a counting system - pulsing while you count greatly improves subdivision of the beat.
9. **Articulation**
- Introduce articulation after the students have a good foundation on the above fundamentals.
 - Brass players will probably learn articulation sooner than the woodwind players.
 - Tongue touches the same place with the same strength each time.
 - Be very careful when starting articulation, because this will be the first fundamental you have taught where you can’t SEE what is happening. Check students individually.
 - Practice articulation on just the head joint, mouthpiece/barrel, mouthpiece/neck, etc.

- It is okay to let the cheeks puff slightly. This will help produce a smooth and velvety sound.
- Only think about keeping the inside of the lips touching the teeth when you blow – Don’t try to set an embouchure at this stage
- Don’t let there be pressure on the top lip (check mouthpiece angle). The mouthpiece should rest on the bottom lip and only touch the top lip enough to seal, because the top lip does most of the vibrating.
- Have the students listen for the quality of the vibrations - should be open and relaxed vibrations with an airy quality.
- Once they are vibrating correctly, even beginning students can begin to match pitch.
- When the students are comfortable with moving around on the instrument, go back and show them what these exercises look like in written music.
- Brass players will move much slower at this stage and should not try to learn too many notes at first.
- Sometimes use fingers in the air (1, 2, 3, 4) to reinforce the downbeats as the students count rhythms.
- Once you start reading music, also have the students same note names and finger

It is imperative that you constantly remind, check and reinforce all the fundamentals learned to this point. You must work with students individually, which requires good classroom management skills on your part and good self-discipline from the students. This is where students learn to pay attention, concentrate, and stay quite in rehearsal. Place your main emphasis on tone production, hand position, basic articulations and music reading skills. If these things are correct, then technique and range will usually take care of themselves.

Using Daily Ensemble Drill to Teach Playing Fundamentals in the Performing Bands

1. **Breathing** (Have the students stand to practice breathing exercises)
 - See “Breathing” in the Beginning Band section.
 - Must convince the students to take these exercises seriously.
 - Can use longer and combined sequences with older students to increase air capacity and level of concentration.
 - “Air on Hand” – This exercise is excellent to work on attacks, steady air, and no decay of sound.
 - No burst of air at the beginning
 - Same air speed throughout
 - Air stream doesn’t wiggle
 - Air doesn’t slow down or decay at the end
 - Discuss how upper body feels - relaxed/calm
 - “Air Through The Horn” – This exercise reinforces the amount of air and how freely it should flow.
 - Brass players “eat the mouthpiece” – Woodwinds don’t use an embouchure because you only want air sound.
 - This can be used as an initial breathing exercise or to help with airflow while working on music. If using it in conjunction with the music, have the students finger while doing “air through the horn”.
 - The students will run out of air quickly and need to breath often. Be careful, because they will become light-headed when they first practice this exercise.
2. **Characteristic Sound in all Registers & Matching Tone Quality and Energy**
 - Concert F is probably the best reference note for the band (Eb Saxes must learn how to lower this pitch – I would suggest using a taller mouth instead of adding the low B key)
 - Use simple exercises (such as #1 or #2) to introduce these concepts to your students.

- Students must be mentally focused and listening carefully to improve these aspects.
 - As they move from one note to the next, they should listen for the following:
 - No extraneous sounds at the beginning of the notes or when the notes change.
 - Same tone quality note to note.
 - Same resonance (body of sound) note to note.
 - Same volume and energy as they change notes.
 - Make sure the tongue drops quickly, because this is sometimes the cause of extraneous sounds at the beginning of the note.
 - Use vowel sounds to help with resonance and holding notes still.
 - Clarinet – “ee”
 - Low Brass & Saxophone – “oo”.
 - All others – “ah”
 - Brass may change vowel sounds in extreme ranges
 - When these concepts can be demonstrated on basic exercises, add exercises containing skips (# 3 & 4).
 - Use of Pedals – Divide the band into two groups by assigning a number to each student (1,2,1,2, etc.). Have one group hold a pedal (sustained note) while the other students play the exercise. This provides a reference note they can use in order to match tone quality, resonance and energy. This should probably be introduced in sectionals.
 - Example – Using warm-up # 3, have ½ the group hold a pedal on the upper note while the other students play the pattern as written (maybe not in tempo). Stress the concepts mentioned above while performing the exercise.
 - Use of “Around the Room” exercises – This can be done person to person or section to section.
 - Matching person to person helps with balance and tuning (Ex. - create one clarinet sound instead of several individual clarinet sounds).
 - Everyone listens to the people on either side of you (trios around the room).
 - If you play louder than those on either side of you, then you are listening to yourself.
 - If you play softer than those on either side of you, then you are listening to them.
 - If you play the same as those on either side of you, then you are listening to yourself and those around you.
 - Same ideas are applied when matching section to section
- 3. Starting, Changing, & Ending Notes**
- It is important that you isolate each of these aspects and work on them individually. The importance of this concept is easily seen when you think about how many times you start, change, or end notes in a piece of music.
 - The “Air on Hand” exercise (see Breathing above) is an excellent technique to use.
 - Starting a Note
 - Whatever vibrates (reed, lips, air stream) must be free to vibrate instantly.
 - Make sure the air at the start of the note is calm and steady – can’t be an explosion.
 - Work to get rid of all extraneous sounds - tongue drops down quickly in the mouth.
 - Mentally subdivide the beat before the attack (you can help by clapping the subdivisions one beat before the note should start, stop or change).
 - Blow the air past the point of vibration (reed, lips, etc) and get the air to the back of the note quickly.
 - Changing Notes
 - Make sure the fingers move quickly and on the beat (use subdivision discussed above).
 - Be careful that fingers don’t move slowly at slower tempos.
 - Air does not change as the note changes (whole note air) and think the same vowel sound through all notes.
 - The air at the back of one note is the air that starts the next note (glue the notes together with the air).
 - Stress the importance of maintaining consistent tone quality and energy note to note.
 - Ending Notes
 - Let your best sound touch the silence
 - Air can’t slow down
 - Face must stay the same until all air/sound stops
 - Make sure the tongue doesn’t move (vowel sound)
- 4. Pitch and Interval Matching**
- As you stress the importance of matching tone quality and energy person to person, you will find that the students will automatically become better at matching pitch (unisons and intervals)
 - You will need to help them learn what “in tune” and “out of tune” sounds like. Use students to demonstrate.
 - In order to play in tune, the students must learn how to change (bend) the pitch on their instrument. I would suggest teaching this in sectionals since each instrument does different things to change the pitch.
 - Flute
 - Raise or lower air stream
 - Relax throat (warmer air)
 - Make the inside of the mouth taller
 - Relax the corners
 - I would not suggest doing much with rolling the flute in and out. Raising the head slightly for decrescendos can keep the pitch from dropping.
 - Add fingers or open keys
 - Oboe & Bassoon
 - Slightly slow down or speed up air
 - Taller mouth and corners pulled to the center
 - More or less reed in the mouth.
 - Add fingers, open keys, change fingering
 - Clarinet
 - Slightly relax or tighten the embouchure
 - Make sure tongue is in an “ee” syllable
 - Slightly slow down or speed up the air
 - Adding fingers, open keys, change fingering
 - Saxophone
 - Slightly relax or tighten the embouchure
 - Taller mouth and “oo” syllable
 - Relax throat
 - Adding fingers, open keys, change fingering

➤ Brass

- MAKE SURE YOU ARE VIBRATING IN THE CENTER OF THE PITCH
 - Raise or lower the direction of the air stream
 - Change vowel sound or relax throat
 - Slightly change lip tension
 - Alternate fingering
- It is important that the students learn the tuning tendencies for their instrument.
 - Looking at a tuner is helpful, but it is even more important that the students learn how to match pitch with others.
 - We use the **Intonation Trainer** computer program. During the fall semester, each student is scheduled for a 10 minute session with the computer each week during their band class.
 - We also use the **Yamaha Wind Synthesizer** in sectionals where the students learn to match the pitch played.
 - Another good technique to use in sectionals is “around the room” on a specified pitch where the students match each other. We often overlap the notes from person to person. Each student holds the note for 8 counts with the first 4 counts played with the person on their right and the next 4 counts played with the person on their left.

5. **Articulation**

- Touch the same place with the same strength each time. Touch with one taste bud.
- Listen carefully for extraneous sounds when the tongue touches.
- Tongue should move quickly and spend 99% of the time down.
- Don't let the articulation change the tone quality or resonance of the sound (especially on shorter note values).
- Stress the use of “whole note” air when practicing articulation. Tongue only briefly interrupts the air.
- Practice articulation exercises “around the room” to match person to person and section to section on a specific style
- Start by teaching one style of articulation at a time - Legato, then staccato, then marcato.
- We use a pattern of whole note, four quarters (later using 8th notes), whole note to work on articulation. The 4 quarters should sound just like the whole notes on either side of the quarters. This also works well with “around the room”. The first whole note is played by two people/sections, the 4 quarters are only played by one individual or one section, and the last whole note is played with a different person/section as it is passed around the room.

6. **Ensemble Balance (within sections and across the ensemble)**

- As you work on matching person to person and section to section in your ensemble drill, you will be establishing and improving the balance within the ensemble. No individuals/sections can play louder or softer than those around them.
- Balance and intonation are strongly related. Correcting balance between individuals or sections will often automatically improve or fix tuning problems.
- When working to balance the various lines within a piece of music, I very seldom discuss dynamics. Instead, the students learn to hear how the various parts should fit together using the procedure described below
- Before starting on a piece of music, go through the piece, section by section, to determine an order of priority for the various lines or parts and mark this on the score. While in rehearsal, take the piece, one section or phrase at a time, and tell the students which instruments have the most important line, 2nd most important, etc. As you work on the piece, layer the parts starting with the most important line. (most important line play, then **ADD** the 2nd most important, etc.) As you continue to add lines, make sure you and the students can still hear all the previous lines. Less important lines can't dominate. By teaching balance in this manner, the students are not thinking they should be playing at a certain dynamic level, but instead they are **LISTENING** to how the parts sound when combined.
- There are specific guidelines for mixing various instrument colors, but it is not possible to cover these within the constraints of this clinic. Some examples of these guidelines would be:
 - Low WW's usually inside low brass sound
 - Flute inside Trumpet sound with unison melodies
 - Flute inside clarinet sound when the flutes are an octave above the clarinet
 - Clarinet inside the flute sound when they are in the same octave
 - Alto Sax usually inside French Horn sound
- Ensemble balance is basically trying to achieve a variety of tonal colors in your performance. Just as a painter mixes colors to create certain visual effects, we combine instrumental colors to create a variety of sounds.

7. **Incorporate the percussion section, using melodic or battery instruments, into your daily ensemble drill!** Although we did not discuss percussion today, exercises can be written to help them improve their playing skills as you work your ensemble drill each day. I would recommend focusing on their keyboard skills and us minimal battery instruments (if any). The battery instruments are an asset when working on precision and subdivision, but they can also make it difficult to hear the concepts we have discussed today.

This information is a brief outline of some of the concepts that can be used in teaching middle school students. The purpose of our clinic is to give you some information to “think about”, and hopefully, help you see ways to incorporate this material into your current instruction. Keep in mind that these are not original ideas and that we learned these concepts from our friends and colleagues. If you would like further information concerning any of the concepts presented today, or an explanation of any item mentioned in this outline that was not discussed in today's clinic, please do not hesitate to contact me. I would be glad to provide a more detailed discussion for your staff or the directors in your school district. Although the concepts presented today can be very useful, much of your success will be determined by the expectations you have for your students, regardless of the teaching methods you implement. It will take time to improve your students' playing, listening and concentration skills, but be **PERSISTENT** and **PATIENT** and you will be pleased with the results.

Fort Settlement MS Band Warm Ups

Trumpet

1

2

2b

3

* Variation 3b - With a Pedal on the Upper Note

4

Variation 4b - With a pedal on the middle note of each pattern
Variation 4c - With a pedal on the upper note of each pattern

FSMS Band Warm Ups

Trumpet

6b

7b

FSMS Band Warm Ups

Trumpet

5

5b

5d

6

Variation 5c - Band divided into two groups (1's & 2's).
One group plays what is written while the second group hold the first note in Mes. 2 of each pattern.
Listen and tune the M3 that is created.
Variation 5d - WW's play 5B, while the brass add an upper note to the lip slur. Brass see 5d below.

FSMS Band Warm Ups

Trumpet

7c

8

9

Developing Successful Middle School Bands Through Daily Ensemble Drill-Joe Pruitt

- I. All teaching is based on three fundamentals.
 - A. **Sound** (hardest to teach, not concrete-can't see, taste, touch, smell)
 - B. **Rhythm** (concrete-right or wrong)
 - C. **Notes** (concrete-right or wrong)

- II. Beginner Band
 - A. Breathing (body tension and air usage)
 - B. Teach posture/hand and horn position
 - C. Tone production
 - 1. mouthpiece/head joint
 - 2. mouthpiece buzz (airy)
 - D. Teach mouthpiece/head joint and body of instrument as two separate entities (microphone to amp.)
 - E. Pulse when counting
 - F. Counting on fingers (in front of face, concrete level thinking) "Let me see your brain"
 - G. Say on pitch the count, foot tap, note name, position-all pulsing, say syllable-no pulse
 - H. I do not push range in brass the 1st year.
 - I. Tone production most important concept taught the beginner year. Notes and rhythms can always be learned at a later time.

- III. Ensemble Drill (Daily Warm-up)
 - A. Sound is a reflection of your body. (posture/hand position/breath/embouchure)
 - B. Tone/Sound has three sides regardless of length (beginning/middle/end)
 - C. Breathing
 - 1. controlled breathing (vary-specific number of counts/in and out/through mouth)
 - 2. soft body, rib cage elevated
 - 3. use hand as visual aid
 - D. Articulation
 - 1. legato, accent, staccato
 - 2. match note lengths
 - 3. direction of line
 - 4. feel subdivision even in rests
 - 5. tongue in the same place on reed or in mouth every time (within a style)
 - 6. tongue utilizing the same strength within a given style
 - E. Tonal Energy
 - 1. Match quality of sound from person to person (trio concept/string of lights)
 - 2. Match from section to section
 - F. Balance
 - 1. Identify the most important line.
 - 2. All lines must know how they relate
 - 3. All notes must have direction.
 - G. Rhythm/Pulse
 - 1. Use a metronome
 - 2. Use a counting system (I use modified Eastman for better articulation)
 - 3. Use note names, positioning (brass), numbers to replace counting system.
 - 4. Work for rhythmical perfection in order to gain a minimum of ensemble clarity.
 - 5. Compare musical pulse to the body's pulse (strong pulse-you are well, weak pulse-you are sick, even dead)
 - 6. I encourage my students to tap foot!

- H. Notes/Theory
 1. I use grand staff to teach both treble and bass clef
 2. I have students count up the staff as well as learn lines/spaces.
 3. This helps teach ledger lines.
 - I. Dynamics
 1. I am first concerned about ensemble tone quality.
 2. I will allow dynamics to suffer before ensemble tone quality and precision.
- IV. Conclusion/Approach to Daily Drill/Fundamentals
- A. Daily Drill should teach student *how* to play!
 1. Know why you are doing an exercise... have a purpose... constantly improve... do not allow it to become stagnant.
 2. Vary the daily drill from time to time to keep interest up.
 - B. Include exercises that improve the individual breathing, articulation, flexibility and range considerations along with ensemble drills-this drill becomes your reference.
 - C. **Rehearse it like a piece of music and your band will play better and better.**
 - D. We must be *relentless* about embouchures, hand position, breathing, articulation, and tone quality. Anytime something is wrong, that's the first place you go. Then, check balance within the band and between those two, you will probably solve the problem.
 - E. **Make the drill fit pieces you are working on. You must apply daily drill to pieces; otherwise, it's no good. The students will see why drill is necessary.**
 - F. If you get the daily drill to a high level, then your ensemble will transfer that high level to the music you play. The better the drill, the better the ensemble. You must develop the skills needed to play a certain piece in the daily drill before you teach the piece.
 - G. Incorporate difficult rhythms into your drill.
 - H. Do you rehearse the daily drill in sectionals and then build on it to develop the individual player?
 - I. Your ensemble is an average of your strongest and weakest players.
 - J. Develop a drill to improve everyone as if they are not taking lessons.

CLARINET ENSEMBLE DRILL

Square Note Exercise

GOAL: Consistency, Notes that are even (square and sound the same)

1. breath on counts 3 and 4 each time so that body is tension free
2. start each note with the tongue in the same place and the same air pressure
3. keep the same "ah" syllable throughout
4. allow air to go to the back of every note
5. allow each pitch to have the same resonance as the concert F

Interval Resonance Exercise

GOAL: Even, easy note changes

1. breath on counts 3 and 4 each time so that body is tension free
2. allow face to remain still
3. keep the same "ah" syllable throughout
4. second note should be same as concert F as the air travels to the backside of note(s)
5. upper note is not louder-lower note is not weaker

Clarinet Ens. Drill (cont.)

EX. 1

EX. 2

EX. 3

EX. 4

FOUNDATIONS FOR SUPERIOR PERFORMANCE

Articulation Exercises

Articulations: A Study in Styles

Four connected quarter-notes Four quarter-notes in "lifted" style. Four quarter-notes "lifted and tenuto". The sound of one note "touches" the next note. The attack is the same as tenuto, short" (staccato). Separated and detached (half full value).

Eighth-notes in connected style. Eighth-notes in lifted and short style.

Eighth-note triplets in connected style. Eighth-note triplets in a detached style (bounced).

Sixteenth-notes in a connected style.

Articulation Exercise on Concert F

EX. 5

EX. 6

Alto/Bari Sax Ensemble Drill (cont.)

EX. 1

EX. 2

EX. 3

EX. 4

Trumpet Ensemble Drill (cont.)

EX. 1

EX. 2

EX. 3

EX. 4

Flute Ensemble Drill (cont.)

EX. 1

EX. 2 *Harmonic Study—small note indicates the fingered note*

EX. 3 *Harmonic Study—small note indicates the fingered note*

EX. 4

EX. 5

EX. 6

First Colony MS Daily Drills

Square Note Exercises

Three staves of square note exercises in G major. The first staff is labeled '30 Concert F - Air Flow Exercise'. The second staff is labeled '49 Concert F - Interval Matching'. The third staff is labeled '61'.

71 F Major Scale Study

Two staves of F Major Scale Study. The first staff is labeled '92 Concert Bb - Air Flow Exercise'. The second staff is labeled '111 Concert Bb - Interval Study'. The third staff is labeled '125'.

Flute/Oboe/Mallets

Iron Slur Group 4,5, and 6

Iron Slur Variation #1

Five staves of Iron Slur Variation #1, featuring a complex rhythmic pattern with slurs.

Iron Slur Variation #2

Three staves of Iron Slur Variation #2, continuing the complex rhythmic pattern.

Three staves of Iron Slur Variation #3, continuing the complex rhythmic pattern.

Iron Slur Variation #4

Five staves of Iron Slur Variation #4, continuing the complex rhythmic pattern.

Iron Slur Group 4,5, and 6

Iron Slur Variation #4 123

Iron Slur Variation #5 123

Air Flow and Articulation Studies Concert F

Goals: Resonate sound on every note, Smooth note changes

1. keep the face still
 2. keep the same syllable for every note
 3. keep the same knee color on every note
- Hint:** Make the moving parts feel and sound like the sustained notes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Goals: Consistent articulation, Consistent tone (resonance)

1. tongue in the same place with the same strength
2. use the same "kiki" syllable on every note
3. make all notes resonate like the last note

- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Hint: The faster that you have to tongue, the more legato the articulation must be.

Make sure you see every note

Key Studies

Concert B \flat Major/G Minor

Goals: Learn all major and minor keys, Transfer fundamental concepts into all keys

1. practice slowly at first
2. accuracy is a must
3. review the previous fundamentals
4. practice in another octave when possible

- 1.
- Scale in Thirds
2.
- Tonic/Dominant 7th Arpeggio
3.
- keep the face still
4.
- 5.
- 6.
- Natural Minor - play the notes in the key signature
Harmonic Minor - raise 7th scale degree going up and down
Melodic Minor - raise 6th and 7th going up, revert to key signature going down
7.
- Melodic Minor Scale in Thirds
8.
- Poly Diminished 7th Arpeggio
9.
- 10.