

Stopping the Leak...

How to Keep Kids in Your Program

Texas Bandmasters Association

Sunday, July 25, 2004

9:30 – 10:30 AM

CC-Room 216

Clinicians:

Nick Nicholson, Director of Bands, Creekside Intermediate, Clear Creek ISD
Teri Poole-Brockway, Director of Bands, Clear Lake Intermediate, Clear Creek ISD
Richard Maher, Associate Director of Bands, Katy Junior High, Katy ISD
Sue Fletcher, Director of Bands, Brenham Junior High, Brenham ISD

I. Self Assessment

Look yourself in the mirror every day.

Do you like what you see?

- **Ask yourself why kids are leaving your program (student perspective)**

- a. Are you inflexible?
- b. Do you require too much extra time outside of rehearsal?
- c. Do you make the children choose?
- d. Are you a Dr. Jekyll/Mr. Hyde?
- e. Do you use fear as a motivational tool?
- f. Do you humiliate the students?
- g. Is your classroom competition based?
- h. Are you a “my way or the high way” teacher?
- i. Have you taken the fun out of learning?
- j. Are you a “professional?”

- **Respect**

- a. Investment
- b. Reasonable Demands
- c. Development
- d. Ownership
- e. Facilitate Individual Learning
- f. Open Door

LEAD BY EXAMPLE

**Anything less is a disservice to you
and your students!**

II. Self Motivation

Put yourself in your student's shoes.

Would YOU enjoy YOUR class?

- **How do you motivate and energize yourself?**

- a. What makes you tick?
- b. Contests?
- c. Winning?
- d. Career advancement?
- e. Personal time is important.
- f. Negativity is a dangerous thing!
- g. Interaction is critical!

- **Routine**

- a. Consistency
- b. Entertain
- c. Expectations
- d. Non-Contest Driven
- e. Begin with the End in Mind
- f. Predictability
- g. Understanding

SUCCESS

It's not how fast you reach the top...
It's how fast you bounce back once
You've hit the bottom!

III. Motivating the Student in the Classroom

It's always we...never I

- **Beginning Band Classes**

- a. Take credit for success and failure.
- b. Chair test options
 - 1. "Good vs. Bad"
- c. Testing accommodations accounting for ability
 - 1. Tempo
 - 2. Mess Up, Stand Up
 - 3. Concert Day
 - 4. Solo Day
- d. Parental involvement is crucial!
 - 1. "Teach the Parent to Play Night"
 - a. Letter
 - b. Drawing project

- **Performing Band Classes**

- a. Ability grouping
- b. Variety
- c. Keep all students engaged – rehearsals aren't sectionals
- d. Never allow a "Me against You" atmosphere
- e. Positive vs. Negative reinforcement
- f. Fun Check
- g. Moodiness is not a dynamic!
- h. Discipline
 - 1. Individual
 - 2. Group

COURAGE

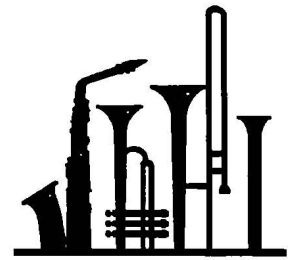
In the end, the only people who fail
are those who do not try!

Clear Lake Intermediate Band

15545 El Camino Real Houston, TX 77062 281/488-1296

Teri Brockway, director (tbrockwa@ccisd.net)

Stephanie Carter, assoc. director (scarter@ccisd.net)



September 22, 2003

Dear Beginner Band Parents,

Our beginners are off to a great start! By now you should be hearing some “musical” sounds in your household. Now that the students know how to assemble their instruments and make the proper sound, they’d like an opportunity to teach you what they have learned!

“Teach-the-Parents-to-Play-Night” is scheduled for Tuesday, September 30th. This is a change from the original date we sent home (the original date was 9/25). “TTPTPN” is a one-time, thirty-minute session for all beginner band parents (one or both parents are welcome). During the session parents will have the opportunity to learn to assemble their child’s instrument and make a sound. This is a fun opportunity for parents to have a better understanding of what their child is “going through” in the beginning stages of learning to play an instrument. It is also a good review for the students since they will be responsible for helping their own parents be successful. This is NOT a required event and no parent will be forced to play an instrument. This is an enjoyable, casual evening and a great opportunity for the band directors and parents to get to know each other. We will also have a short demonstration by the students at the end of the session. We think you’ll really be proud of how much they have learned!

Our past experiences with this event were extremely successful! The students and parents had a wonderful time and parents were very surprised at how difficult it is to play an instrument correctly. The Band Booster Club will provide refreshments and we will award certificates for “Best Sound” and “Most Likely to Make the Dog Bark” for each class! Please see times below for your child’s class.

Hope to see you on September 30th!

Sincerely,
Teri Brockway
Stephanie Carter

“TEACH-THE-PARENTS-TO-PLAY-NIGHT” SCHEDULE

5:30 Percussion

6:00 Trombone, Euphonium, Tuba

6:45 Flute, Saxophone, Oboe, Bassoon

7:30 Trumpet, French horn, Clarinet

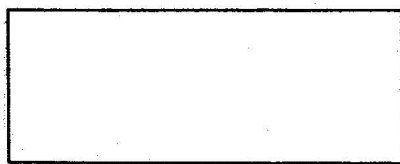
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Sound Drawing Samples – from Teri Brockway

In order to teach the kids how to draw sounds, I let everyone in the class take a turn making a sound and I draw each one on the board. I also have everyone practice drawing my sounds (I always produce a variety of sounds to make sure everyone understands!). When the students turn in the drawings of their sounds from home, they get a grade of 100, no matter how the sounds look. I give this assignment when at least 80% of the students in the class are able to produce the correct sound at least 80% of the time.

When students draw their sounds, I use the following: flute- head joint only, clarinet-mouthpiece & barrel, saxophone-mouthpiece & neck; brass instruments- either mouthpiece or entire instrument.

1. Perfect sound:



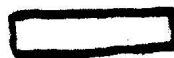
2. Good start, poor ending:



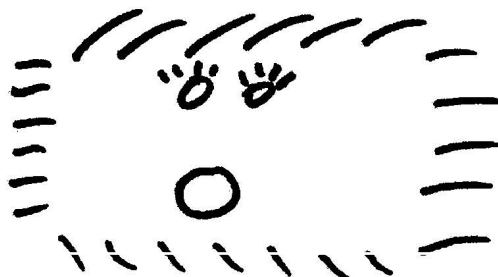
3. Unclear or “fuzzy” sound, caused by an unsupported embouchure:



4. Decent sound but too soft (slow air):



5. Too loud; out of control:



Teach-the-Parent-to-Play Night

Trumpet Parent Help Sheet

What can I do at home?

- * Is your child cleaning his/her mouthpiece at least once a week?
- * Is your child using proper fundamentals?
- * Ask your child to play for you often. S/he will be learning many fun songs to play and s/he needs an audience other than Mrs. Brockway!

Private Lessons

- * Are NOT required.
- * Make students better musicians/performers.
- * Are fun!

To Make a Sound

- * Align top/bottom teeth and keep inside of mouth open.
- * Lips should feel as if you are saying "m".
- * There is a small amount of tension needed to keep the lips together, but that is all.
- * Make this BUZZ as consistent and smooth as possible*keep it LOUD! It's okay if it tickles.
- * Aim air through the center of the lips.
- * Place the mouthpiece on the center of the lips.
- * Breathe BIG and let it ALL OUT! Air should work in a cycle
- * No air should stop inside your body.
- * Air is the key to producing a sound! If you blow enough fast air, your lips will vibrate on their own.

To Hold the Instrument

- * Right hand is for valves. THE PINKY SHOULD REST ON THE HOOK
- * The thumb rests under the lead pipe and does not hook around it. The palm is in a relaxed "C" position with the palm away from the leadpipe.
- * Left hand holds all of the instrument's weight and should feel natural and relaxed. The most important finger is the finger that manipulates the third valve slide - this will be either the middle finger or ring finger (depending on hand size and maneuverability).

IV. Motivating the Student out of the Classroom

Get out of your cave!

Remember that a wave goes a long way.

- **Getting to know your students**
 - a. Hobbies
 - b. Activities
 - c. Listen!
 - d. Greet your students!
 - e. Notice your students in the community
 - f. Say hello...it won't kill you!

- **Activities**
 - a. Your attendance is important
 - b. Interaction!
 - c. Trips
 - d. Have social functions for your students
 - e. Be visible – get out of your cave!

- **Community Involvement**
 - a. Other organizations
 - b. Band doesn't end when you become an adult
 - c. Band Camp
 - d. Volunteer for your school!

RESPECT

The more you give, the more you get.

Treat your students the way YOU

would want to be treated!

V. Motivating the Village

Do the right thing, for the right reason.

Communication is the Key!

- **Retention – whom and why**

- a. **Beginners**
 - 1. **Ensure their success!**
- b. **Middle/Junior High School**
 - 1. **Challenge, but Mentor**
 - 2. **Band isn't life**
- c. **High School**
- d. **Student families.**
 - 1. **Activities for students and parents to share experiences**
 - 2. **Booster Club**
- e. **School faculty & staff**
 - 1. **Elitism serves no one**
 - 2. **Be visible**
- f. **Community**
 - 1. **Communicate to the point of over-communication!**

- **Do the Right Thing, for the Right Reason**

- a. **Pillars**
- b. **Affirmation & Acknowledgement**
- c. **Team Players**
- d. **What is the benefit?**

INTELLIGENCE

**Recognize the need to be a life-long learner.
Master Teachers watch, listen, and learn from others.**

VI. How to reach us

Additional Information

- If you have suggestions that you would like us to add to this packet, please email them to Nick Nicholson at:
 - nnichols@ccisd.net

- If you would like to receive an electronic copy of our presentation, please contact any of the clinicians:
 - Nick Nicholson
 - nnichols@ccisd.net

 - Teri Poole-Brockway
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No Excuses, Just Results