



A Team Approach to a Successful Marching Program

CLINICIANS:

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DEMONSTRATION GROUP:

Cedar Park HS Marching Band

Texas Bandmasters Association 2016 Convention/Clinic

JULY 21-24, 2016

**HENRY B. GONZALEZ CONVENTION CENTER
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS**

A Team Approach to Teaching a Successful Marching Band

Featuring the Cedar Park High School Band Program

Clinicians: Steve Wessels, Evan VanDoren, Jason Robb, & Justin Sullivan
2016 Texas Bandmasters Association Convention

The Cedar Park High School Band Staff will discuss and showcase rehearsal techniques focused on improving high school musicians during the marching band season. From movement to music, the entire staff will break down strategies to affect change in your students and simplify your routine.

Visual Fundamentals

Classroom Setup

- **Circle**
 - Provides clear line of sight between every student and teacher
 - Great for use in classes and smaller groups
- **Block**
 - Students feel less individual accountability (less risk)
 - Great for large groups and learning new material

Movement Vocabulary

- Building a basic understanding of dance vocabulary
 - Relevé
 - Plié
 - Lunges
 - Rond de jambe
 - Passé

Establishing a solid foundation: Posture

- Establishing quality posture is the foundation of quality marching and movement programs
- "S Curve" Exercise
 - 5 Points of Alignment: Ankles, Knees, Hips, Shoulders, and Ears
 - Allows for clear, tangible discussion of posture, and how to improve it
 - Equal, even motion over space and time

Shaping the lower body: Shape & Weight Transfer

- Pointe Exercise – Leg Shape
 - Focus on maintaining the length of the leg and moving from the hip
 - Work to maintain posture (top three points of alignment) throughout
- "50/50" Exercise – Weight Transfer
 - All motion is based upon "50/50" weight distribution
 - Applies leg motion learned in pointe exercise, while layering in new responsibility of weight transfer
 - Exercise results in accomplishing "one step"

- Mark Time
 - Recreating the sensation of moving as much as possible
 - Work on feet timing and musical relationship in all rehearsals
- The 2-Step Step-out
 - Applies all previously discussed movement concepts in a very short exercise
 - Helps to create a more realistic performance scenario
 - Use step outs as often as possible, especially during "off the field" rehearsals
 - Recreate performance scenarios as closely as possible, as often as possible!

Visual Fundamental Rehearsal

- “Across The Floors”
 - Used for marching and body movement
 - Individuals have more individual accountability to perform
 - Great medium to use student leaders to teach

Video Supplement

Please find, linked below, a YouTube channel with tutorials breaking down each visual exercise!
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1f4nF2x6MLfCImcGWx1o_A

Music Fundamentals

Breathing - “They know how to breathe – they need to remember to do it in the music!”

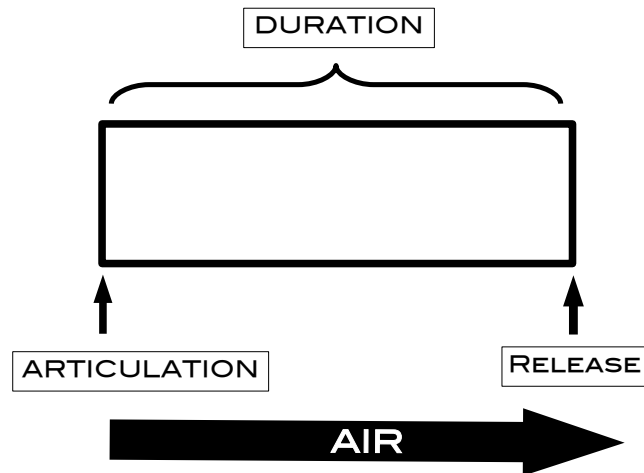
- Tools for “remembering to breathe”
 - Syncing the breath with the step
 - Breathing Tubes
 - Stagger breathing
 - Very detailed definitions for where students should breathe
 - Using *Early, Middle, and Late* breathing assignments for staggering

The image shows a musical staff in 4/4 time with a treble clef. A single note is held across the entire measure, indicated by a slur. Below the staff, the steps are numbered 1 through 4 for the first half and 1 through 4 for the second half. Below the numbers are three rows of black bars representing breathing patterns:

- Early Breathers:** A bar with a rounded end at the beginning of the first half (steps 1-2) and a bar with a rounded end at the beginning of the second half (steps 1-2).
- Middle Breathers:** A bar with a rounded end at the beginning of the second half (steps 1-2) and a bar with a rounded end at the beginning of the first half of the second half (steps 1-2).
- Late Breathers:** A bar with a rounded end at the beginning of the first half of the second half (steps 1-2) and a bar with a rounded end at the very end of the measure (step 4).

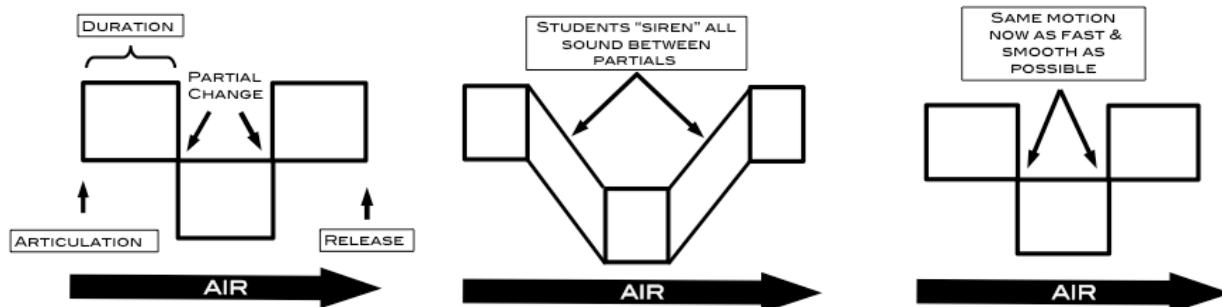
Long Tones – Synchronizing the feet with the three parts of sound

- Synchronizing the feet with the breath
 - 2 count breath – Breath – Push – 1
 - 1 count breath – Breath/Push simultaneous
- Three Parts of Sound – How they are affected
 - Start
 - Duration
 - Release



Flexibility/Lip Slurs – Improving how we move from note to note

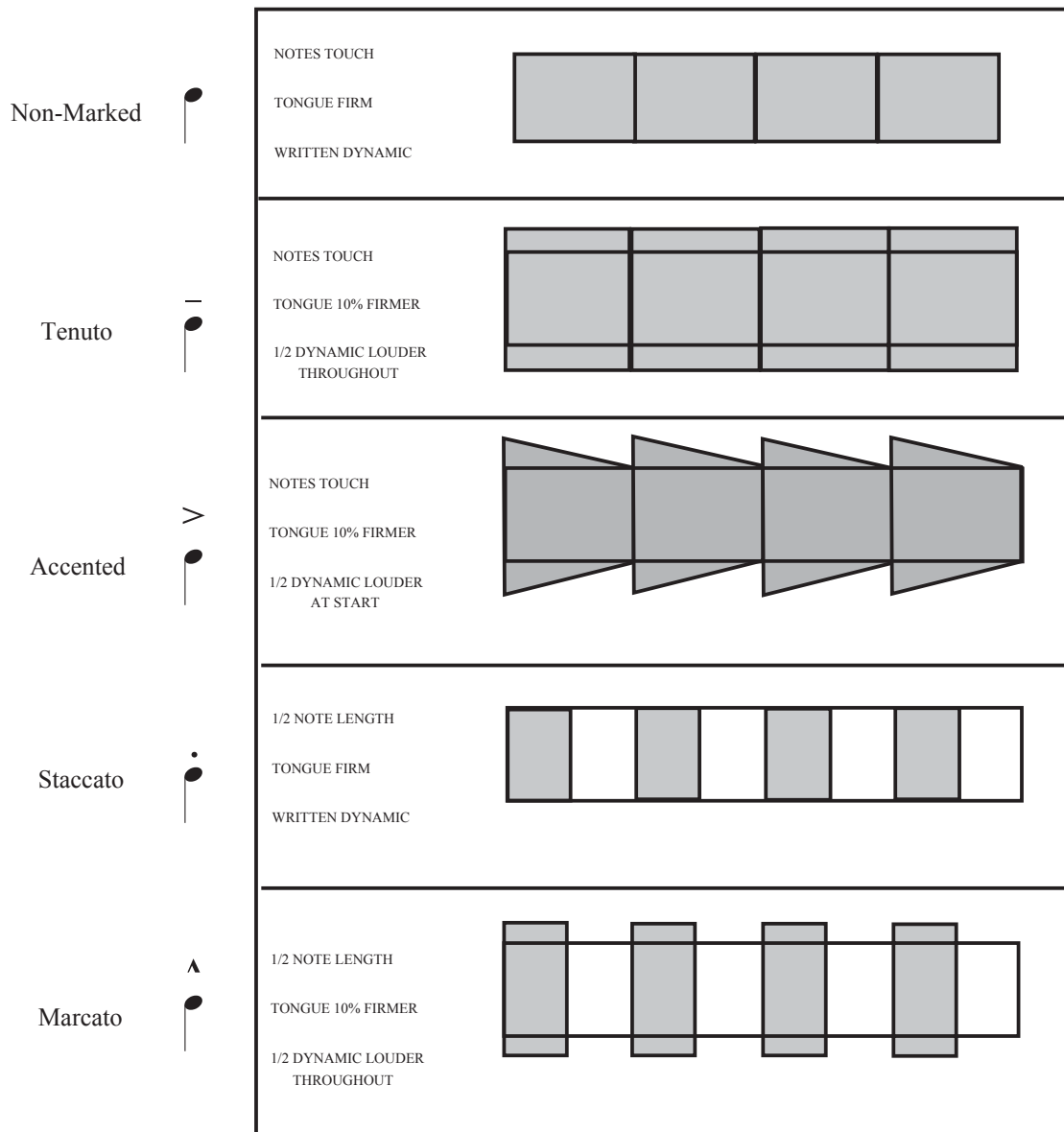
- Purpose: Brass vs. Woodwinds
 - Brass – Increase flexibility and develop embouchure
 - Woodwinds – Improve hand position and develop proper finger technique
- Unison vs. Woodwind Scales
 - Performing unison increases students awareness of ensemble noise
- Brass Pedagogy
 - Simplifying concepts
 - Improve students understanding of how to move through/between all registers



Articulation – Defining note shape & length vs. Developing ability to articulate as a skill

- Note Length Definitions
 - Articulation – “Paint by Numbers”
 - Use number counting to define note length and strengthen internal subdivision
 - Articulation visualizer
- Articulation “Strength”
 - 16th Note Timing Exercise

**Cedar Park Timberwolf Band
Articulation Visualization**



Show Articulation Exercises – Applying it all to the music

- Difficult Show Excerpt
 - Modified and turned into an articulation exercise on Concert F or Bb
 - Students are able to focus on fundamental concepts
 - Students can directly apply concepts to show excerpt immediately following
 - Process allows for an increased repetition of the most challenging components of the program

For additional information on the Cedar Park H.S. Band, please visit: ***www.cedarparkbands.org***

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