

**The Midwest Clinic
McCormick Place West
Chicago, Illinois
Meeting Room W185
Friday, December 21, 2018
8:30 – 9:30 AM**

***Creative Rehearsal
Techniques from Around the Country***

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Creative Rehearsal Techniques from Around the Country

1) *Internalizing Ensemble Pulse and Rhythm*

– Scott Boerma, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan

- Have a percussionist play steady eighth notes in the given tempo.
- Have all remaining students clap on 2 & 4 establishing a “pop/rock groove.”
- Encourage everyone to “move” to the music (and YOU do it too).
- Have the students with the problem passage play it along with the created “pop/rock groove.”

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/0B-tGFvP9t8UbFktVFIQUjNsdVU>

2) *To Beat of Not to Beat: The Use of the Metronome in Rehearsal*

– David Kish, Metropolitan State University, Denver, Colorado

- Direct breathing exercises including dynamics w/ the metronome.
- “Tizzle” rhythms of scale patterns before playing them w/ the metronome.
- “Tizzle” legato and staccato patterns w/ the metronome.
- For improved sight reading, “tizzle” & “finger click” rhythms in passages before playing.

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/i88kw4elsfmw19x/MetronomeVideo.mp4?dl=0>

3) *Effective Singing Strategies*

– Scott Jones, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio

- Mind’s Ear Game – Show scale degrees by holding up fingers while the students sing the appropriate pitch & implement audiation exercises.
- Tuning – Have the students sing the given “tuning note” on “Dah” before playing them and prior to adjusting instrument length.
- Within the Pieces – When encountering out-of-tune sonorities, have the students sing the passage before replaying them.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XZDK5844F-s&feature=youtu.be>

4) *Wind Patterning and Sound Production*

– Elizabeth Peterson, University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois

- Have the students “tizzle” rhythms with an energetic stream of air.
- Have the brass buzz while the woodwinds play, sing or “tizzle”.
- Have the students sing their notes in a chord to instantly improve the pitch.
- Play a scale in round or canon dividing them creatively into three groups.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hdPdQVvbTbA&feature=youtu.be>

5) *Rehearsals “In the Round”*

– John Bina, St. Thomas Academy, Mendota Heights, Minnesota

- “Scrambled Circle” – no two like instruments sitting adjacent to each other
- Quartets – Arrange the band into SATB groupings.
- Sectionals – Arrange Brass or Woodwinds only “in the round.”
- Quick & Easy version – Have rows 1 & 2 turn their chairs around facing rows 3 & 4. You conduct or lead from the middle.
- Move the entire percussion section to the front and facing the band.

6) *Silent or “Monk” Rehearsals*

- Jared Burch, Pioneer Middle School, Yorkshire, New York

- Do this in the late stages of concert preparation.
- Begin announcing the “silent” or “monk” rehearsal a week in advance.
- Place a sign outside the bandroom door prior to the beginning of the rehearsal as a reminder to them as they enter.
- Display the rules for the “silent” rehearsal immediately as they walk in the door.
- Place a half sheet of paper on each music stand with the rehearsal order for the day.
- Run the entire rehearsal “miming” all instructions with absolutely no talking or whispering by the students or YOU.
- Break the silence near the end of rehearsal to debrief the progress made that day.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5A6ykqOcrKA&feature=youtu.be>

7) *Novice Staff Videos to Alleviate “First Concert” Jitters*

- Chris Gleason, Patrick Marsh Middle School, Sun Prairie, Wisconsin

- Use this idea at the beginning band’s first concert to help them to play confidently.
- Seek volunteer non-musician staff and administrators from around your building to be video recorded playing an instrument they have never played before.
- To introduce each mini-video, have them say “Hi, my name is ... and I’m playing the (instrument) for the very first time.”
- Have them play a few notes (or, at least, *attempt* to).
- Edit the footage and play it for the students & audience intermittently throughout the concert.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xZL7ZzJO0_8&feature=youtu.be

8) *Giving Thanks*

- John Zarco, University of Texas at San Antonio, San Antonio, Texas

- Distribute “thank you” cards to each student in the ensemble.
- Encourage quiet reflection regarding a person who has helped them in a specific way in recent months.
- Have each student write a sincere “thank you” note to that special individual.
- Instruct each of them to present the card, in person, to that individual on or before Thanksgiving.

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/ezogs61yhfc1vyv/Giving%20Thanks%20-%20General.mp4?dl=0>

9) *Focusing On the Audience*

- Matthew Schlomer, Interlochen Arts Academy, Interlochen, Michigan

- Begin by involving the students in the analysis of the piece in rehearsal.
- Without initially telling them, have the students gradually memorize their parts.
- In an effort to impact and educate the audience in a more profound manner, have the students help *choreograph* the performance of the piece for the concert.

<https://www.interlochen.org/media/archived-webcast-band-performance-2-14-2015>

Highly Recommended Additional Resources

- Effective Performance of Band Music* by W. Francis McBeth (pub. by Southern Music Company, 1972)
- Practicing with Purpose: An Indispensable Resource to Increase Musical Proficiency* by David Kish (pub. by Meredith Music Publications, 2017)
- Rehearsing the Band* by John E. Williamson (pub. by Meredith Music Publications, 1998)
- Rehearsing the Band, Volume 2* by Donald Miller (pub. by Meredith Music Publications, 2015)
- Rehearsing the Band, Volume 3* by John Zarco (pub. by Meredith Music Publications, 2017)
- The Artistry of Teaching and Making Music* by Richard Floyd (pub. by GIA Publications, 2015)
- The Creative Director: Conductor, Teacher, Leader* by Edward S. Lisk (pub. by Meredith Music Publications, 2006)
- The Pursuit of Excellence: A Band Director's Guide to Success* by Sally Wagner (pub. by Meredith Music Publications, 2016)
- Tuning for Wind Instruments: A Roadmap to Successful Intonation* by Shelley Jagow (pub. by Meredith Music Publications, 2012)

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Gary Stith is Professor & Conductor Emeritus at the Greatbatch School of Music, Houghton College (NY) and also adjunct professor of music education at Ithaca College. He taught instrumental music in the Holland and Williamsville (NY) Central Schools for a total of thirty years, also serving as Instructional Specialist for the Fine and Performing Arts in the Williamsville schools from 1993-2002. Past President of both the New York State Band Directors Association and the New York State Council of Administrators of Music Education, he was the northeast regional recipient of the 1976 ASBDA-Stanbury Award, the Outstanding Educator Award at the 1993 World of Music Festival in Chicago, the 2003 Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra Award for Excellence in Music Education, and the 2010-2011 Houghton College Excellence in Teaching Award.

He has authored numerous articles and penned chapters for the *Conductors Anthology*, *The Drum and Percussion Cookbook*, and served as Consulting Editor for a compilation entitled *Classic Beginning Solos for the Complete Percussionist* published by Kendor Music, Inc. He is also author of the widely acclaimed texts *Score & Rehearsal Preparation: A Realistic Approach for Instrumental Conductors* and *The Conductor's Companion: 100 Rehearsal Techniques, Imaginative Ideas, Quotes and Facts* both published by Meredith Music Publications.

The Conductor's Companion:
100 Rehearsal Techniques, Imaginative Ideas,
Quotes and Facts
Compiled and Edited by Gary Stith \$19.99

100 powerful rehearsal techniques and cutting-edge program ideas are passionately and candidly shared by some of the most innovative middle and high school, university and professional band and orchestra conductors in the country. Also included in this concise and inspirational volume are fascinating historical facts and anecdotes about famous composers and conductors as well as powerful quotes ideal for motivating students and advocating for music programs. It's an excellent university supplemental text and a "go-to" resource for veteran directors at all levels.

Topics include:

- Learning It Right by Playing It Wrong!
 Wrong Is Right!
- Silent of "Monk" Rehearsals
- Playing By Ear
- The Beauty of A to Z Rehearsing
- To Beat of Not to Beat...That is the
 Question!
- Conducting LESS
- Effective Initial Ensemble Tuning
- Establishing a Chamber Music Program
- Keeping Rehearsals Fresh
- The Power and Importance of Good
 Posture
- *Imprinting* to Reinforce Student Learning
- Internalizing Ensemble Pulse & Rhythm
- Teaching Ear Training using Solfege in
 Rehearsal
- Techniques for Enhancing Tonal Literacy
- The Counting Game
- iPad Rehearsals
- The Six Words
- Rehearsing with the Mistake
 Bucket
- The Plus and Minus System
- Solving Rhythm Problems
- Every Piece Tells a Story
- Using Vocalizations to Teach
 Style
- Square vs. Musical Phrasing
- Toneful Tuning Toss
- Effective Singing Strategies
- Teaching Composition in
 Rehearsal
- Creative Rehearsal Seating
- We Are Family
- Giving Thanks

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"This is a book you will want to keep close by so you can access it at all times. It truly represents the "crème-del-a-crème" of the collective years of each of the writer's pathway-to-excellence. *The Conductor's Companion* is an idea WHOSE TIME HAS COME, and we are fortunate recipients of this bountiful harvest spotlighting the best...of the best...from the best! BRAVO, BRAVO, BRAVO!

Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser