

Beginning Strings: The First Two Years Are Critical!!!

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Handouts at phillipsfiddlers.com

Bob's Background

1. Taught elementary, ms/hs strings for 28 years.
2. Beginning (5th grade) classes as large as 160.
3. 90% - 100% retention by 7th grade.
4. Resulted in a nationally known HS orchestra and fiddle program.

What Is the Mission?

To get students to fall in LOVE with music
and want to CONTINUE!!! (forever)

Everything should serve that MISSION.

You can't teach (IMPACT) an empty chair.

“If they don't LOOK good and SOUND good
nothing else matters.” – Bob Culver

Why Do Kids Join Orchestra!

1. A leader (YOU) stands up and says “follow me” and it looks FUN!!! (REALLY Fun!!!)
2. They want to play a TUNE!!!
3. They fall in love with the SOUND of the instrument.
4. They want to find out if they might be GOOD at this.
5. They want to be part of SOMETHING.
(bigger than themselves)

Why Do Kids Stay In Orchestra?

1. I am feeling successful. (I SOUND good)
2. I am learning/progressing. (I am IMPROVING)
3. I have friends in orchestra. (It's SOCIAL)
4. The group is good. (They SOUND good)
5. I like it. (It's FUN!!!)

Why Do Kids Drop Out?

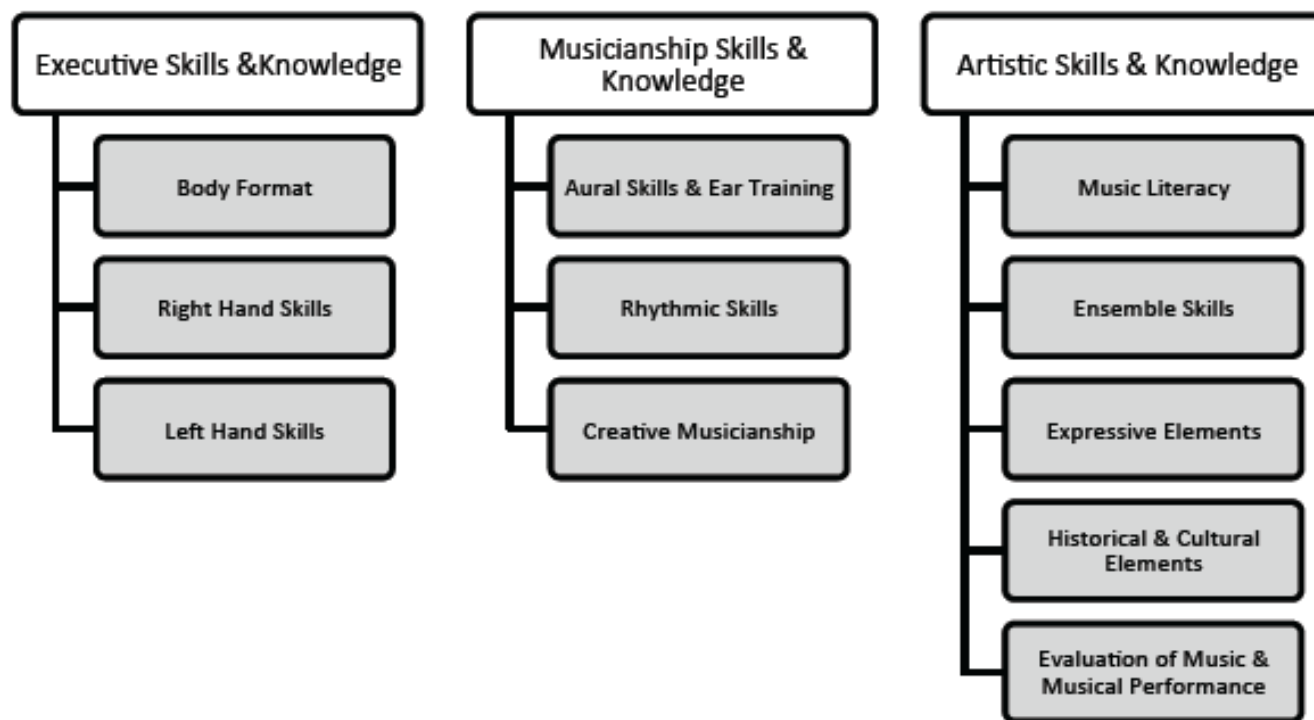
1. I don't sound good. (TONE and RHYTHM)
2. I am not successful. (TECHNIQUE)
3. The class is being taught by note and I am struggling with READING.
4. My friends are dropping out. (it's not SOCIAL)

Students/Year	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total loss rate over 8 years
At 5% loss	100	95	90	86	81	77	73	70	30%
At 10% loss	100	90	81	73	65	59	53	48	52%
At 20% loss	100	80	64	51	41	33	26	21	79%

What About Books?

1. They're a TOOL, not a religion. Choose a comprehensive book to enhance your CURRICULUM. (ASTA)

ASTA Curricular Categories, Skills & Knowledge



What About Books?

2. VIDEO is the message so jump in and use it.
Video can be a virtual private lesson teacher,
late start helper, or switch instrument helper.
3. AUDIO can be the key to great intonation
and rhythm. Give them the context immediately.
Make music as quickly as you can.
4. ONLINE video/audio/resources are the BEST!

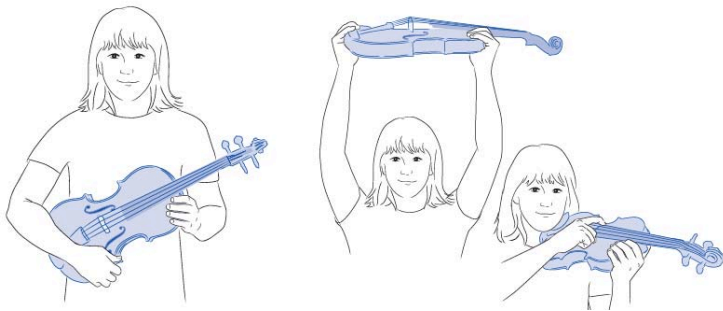
Successful Recruiting

1. ATTITUDE development
(you/El. music teachers/department, staff, admin).
2. A great (well-planned) recruiting DEMO.
3. Guide their CHOICES (hands on with instruments).
4. Create a DECISION making moment.
5. FOLLOW UP, follow up, follow up. Never say die.

Successful Set-Up: Holding the Instrument

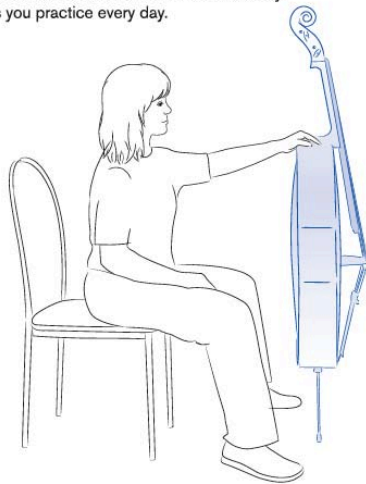
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Holding the Instrument and First Sounds



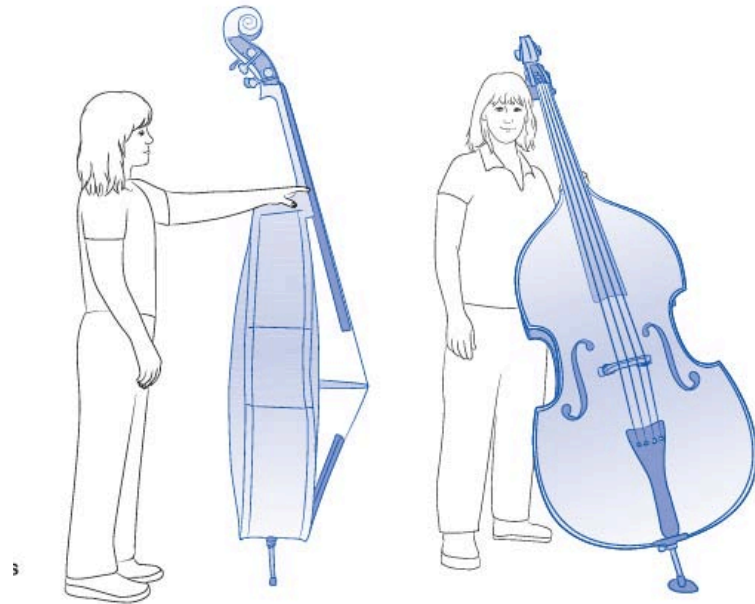
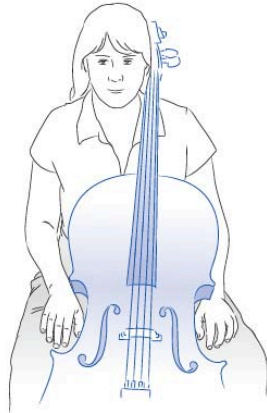
HOW TO HOLD THE INSTRUMENT

Listen carefully as your teacher explains how to hold the instrument. Using a good sitting posture, remember to hold the instrument correctly as you practice every day.



ADJUSTING THE END PIN

Hold the cello in your lap. Loosen the endpin screw and pull the endpin out until it is as long as the width of your fully stretched hand span, plus an inch, and then tighten the endpin screw. The top of the scroll should be about chin height when standing. Your teacher will help you adjust the endpin height.



HOLDING THE CELLO

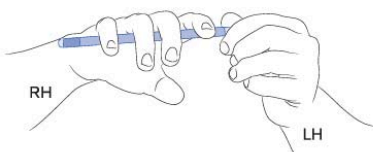
Successful Set-Up Holding the Bow:

1. When to start BOWING? (pizz. vs arco start)
2. FINGER function
3. Release of TENSION (using hands)
4. FLUID arms, wrists, fingers

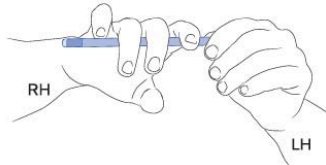
Successful Set-Up Holding the Bow

SETTING UP THE RIGHT HAND WITH A PENCIL DVD

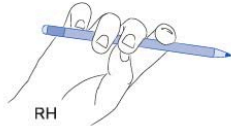
1. Hold a pencil in your left hand, with the pencil point facing toward the left. Let the fingers of your right hand hang over the pencil.



2. Let the tip of your 4th finger rest on top of the pencil by the eraser.



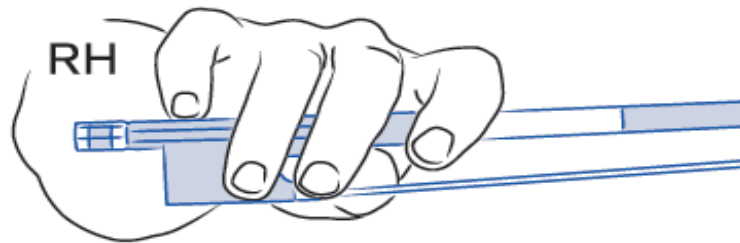
3. Curve or hook your right thumb and place the tip of the thumb on the pencil underneath your right-hand 2nd finger.



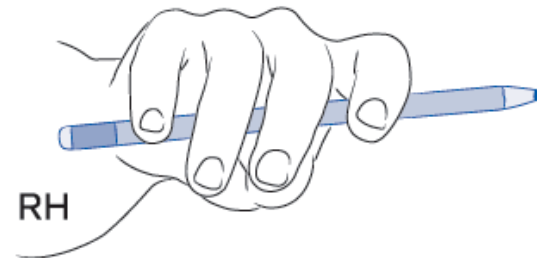
4. Let go with your left hand and rock the pencil back and forth by using your 1st finger and 4th finger.



Bass-German



Violin / Viola



Cello / Bass-French

Bow Hands We Like

VIOLIN



CELLO



BASS

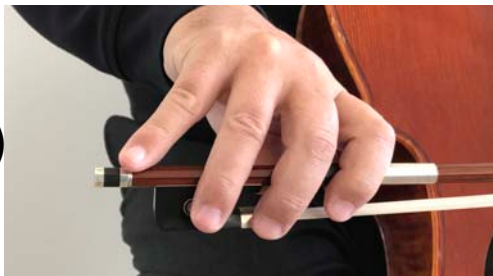


Bow Hands Problems

VIOLIN/
VIOLA



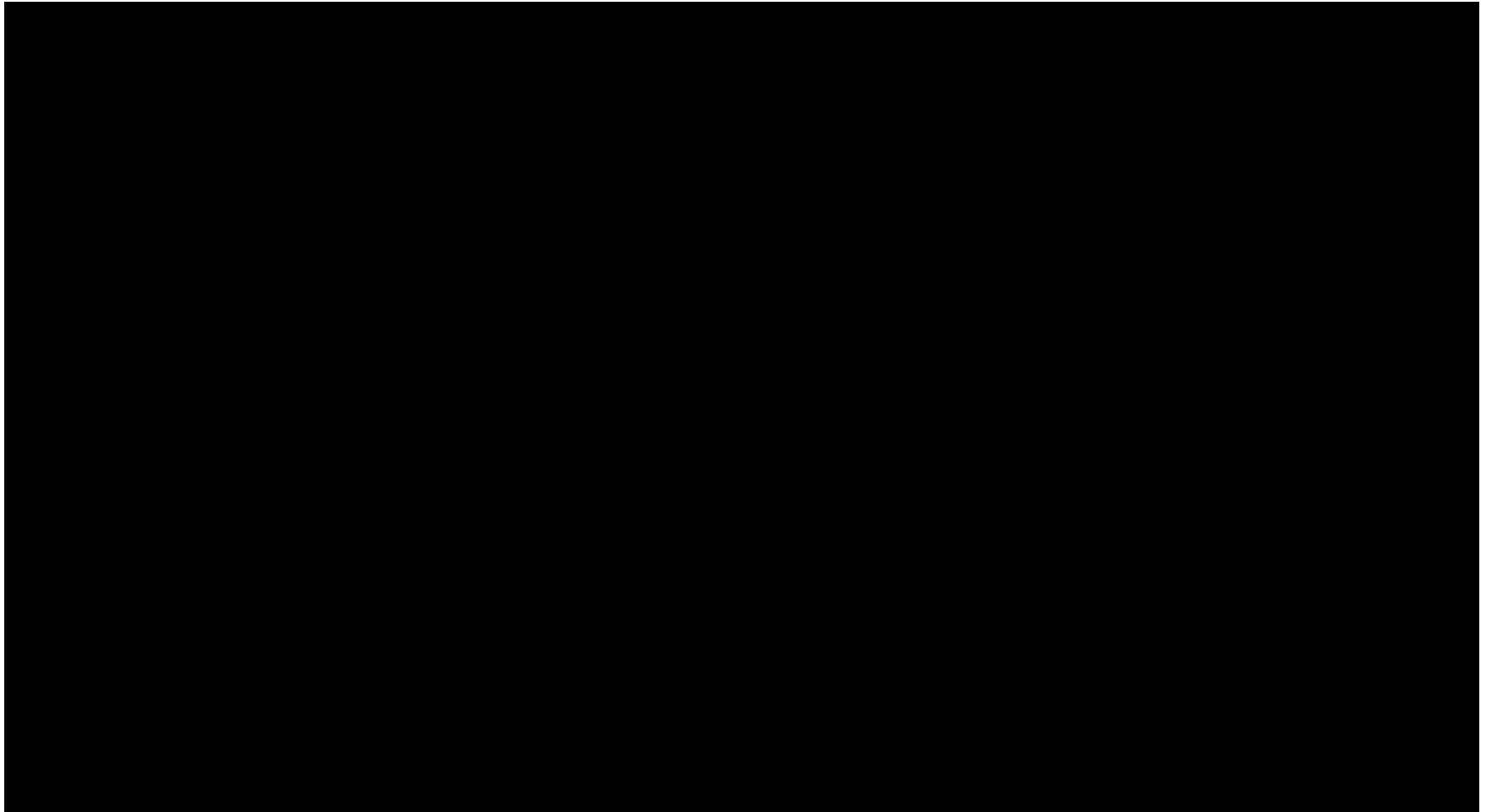
CELLO/
BASS (Fr)



BASS (Gr)




Placing the Bow (Bowling Lanes)



Moving the Bow

MOVING THE BOW DVD




1. Air-Bowing—With the tip pointing toward the ceiling, hold your bow in the air and move it up and down.
2. Place your left-hand 1st finger on the inside of your right elbow. Fold (close) and unfold (open) your right arm.
3. Using a well-formed bow hold, gently pick up the bow and place the tip on your left shoulder. While keeping the bow hair on your shoulder, fold and unfold your right arm.




MOVING THE BOW DVD

FRENCH BOW



GERMAN BOW



1. Air-Bowing—With the tip pointing toward the left, hold your bow with both hands and move it left and right.
2. Place your left-hand 1st finger on the inside of your right elbow. Fold (close) and unfold (open) your right arm.
3. Using a well-formed bow hold, gently pick up the bow and hold it in front of you in the air. Fold and unfold your right arm.

Tone – Variables of Sound

Your LEFT Hand Is What You Know,
Your RIGHT Hand Is Who You Are!

<u>Bowing Lanes</u>	<u>Bow Weight</u>	<u>Bow Speed</u>
Mezzo-Forte	Medium-Heavy	Medium-Slow
Forte	Heavy	Slow
Fortissimo	Very-Heavy	Very-Slow
Mezzo-Piano	Medium-Light	Medium-Fast
Piano	Light	Fast
Pianissimo	Very-Light	Very-Fast

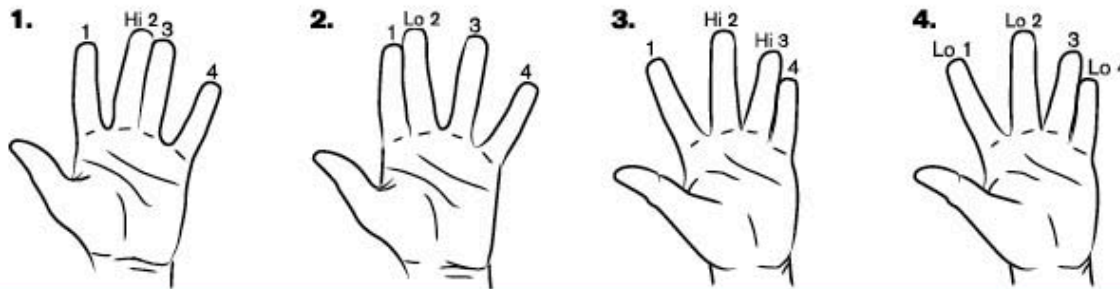
Forming the Left-Hand

1. Establish finger patterns – physical
2. Establish finger patterns – aural
3. Mentally map the fingerboard
4. Learn to read finger patterns



FINGER PATTERNS

Violin, viola and cello use different **FINGER PATTERNS** when playing on different strings or in different keys. Basses use the same **FINGER PATTERN** but in different positions.



NEW NOTE



NEW NOTE C# ON THE G STRING—Violins, violas and cellos use Finger Pattern 3. Basses review C# on the A string.



Teaching Aurally (by Rote)

What Are the Benefits of Going from Sound to Sight?

1. This is the fastest way to ENGAGE students – it keeps you focused on them and more importantly they are focused on you, your modeling, and teaching.
2. This is the best way to develop their AURAL skills which leads to musicianship.
3. It separates PLAYING skills from READING skills and makes literacy easier. They need to have a REASON to want to become literate. Would you teach a 1 year old how to talk via reading?
4. Orff, Kodaly, Suzuki, Roland, Culver, Gordon, Froseth, etc. got it RIGHT.
5. Literacy is a means to an end. If they can read Shakespeare but don't understand it who cares. We don't want musical typists, we want creators.

Teaching Aurally (By Rote) Strategies

1. MODEL, MODEL, MODEL. Use your voice and instrument as much as possible.
2. Use TUNES to teach. Break them down, memorize, keep playing them.
3. Start with pizz. and add the bow in small bursts. The quicker you get them using the bow the quicker they get excited about SOUND.

Teaching Aurally (Rhythm)

1. MOVING to music.



Teaching Aurally (Rhythm)

1. ECHOING rhythmic syllables or numbers.

2. ECHOING rhythms, bowings, and articulations.



Teaching Aurally (By Rote)

Tunes / Music

1. TUNES – note at a time, patterns (Boil Them Cabbage Down).
2. CHORDS - I, IV, V by ear.
3. BASS lines – from the chords.
4. HARMONY parts – using chord tones.
5. TRANSPOSING – start on a new note.

Going from Rote to Note

Teaching LITERACY

1. Can start anywhere from 1st day to 2nd year, as long as the focus is on SOUNDS/TUNES (aural skills).
2. PROCESS - by ear to rote notation to rhythmic notation to pitched notation using flashcards.
3. LEARN the tunes/exercises by ear then by note.

Rhythm Flash Cards

1. Echo response seeing cards (syllables)
2. Ready, now, look, and say (syllables)
3. Ready, now, look, and play (instruments)
4. Non-stop (instruments)

Flashcard 1



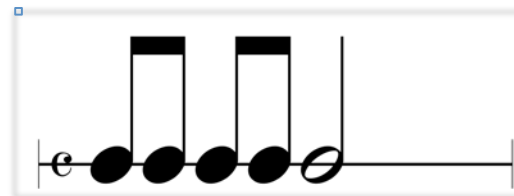
Flashcard 2



Flashcard 3



Flashcard 4



Bridging the Gap to Pitched Notation

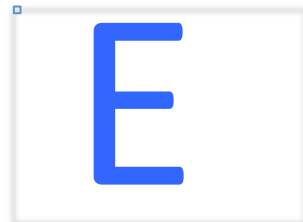
Each Letter is a Flashcard

1. Pluck/bow the pitch as fast as you can. Pluck/bow by the count of ??
2. Pluck/bow the pitch in time. Ready, now, look, and play
3. Echo my rhythm on this pitch. 1+, 2+, 3, 4

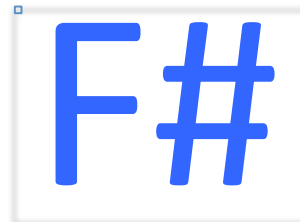
Flashcard 1



Flashcard 2



Flashcard 3



Flashcard 4



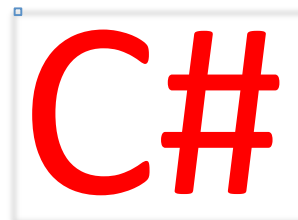
Flashcard 5



Flashcard 6



Flashcard 7



Flashcard 8



Learn Tunes With Rote Notation

1. By ear first, then by flashcards.
2. Mix up the order of the cards to make sure they are reading.

Flashcard 1

F# F# F# F#

Flashcard 2

G— G—

Flashcard 3

F# F# F# F#

Flashcard 4

E— E—

Flashcard 5

F# F# F# F#

Flashcard 6

G— G—

Flashcard 7

F# F# E E

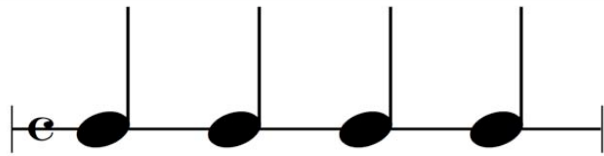
Flashcard 8

D— D—

Learn Tunes With Rote Notation

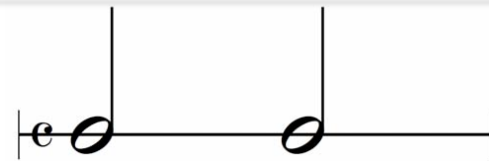
1. Add rhythm and pitches

Flashcard 1



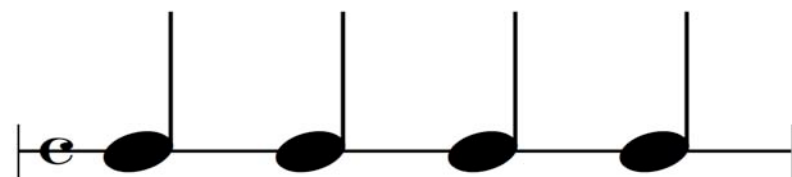
F# F# F# F#

Flashcard 2



G— G—

Flashcard 3



F# F# F# F#

Flashcard 4



E— E—

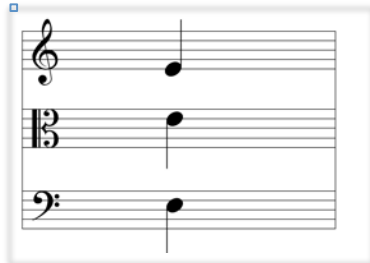
Learning Traditional Notation

Learning D Scale Pitches – Find the note in 4,3,2,1 beats.

Flashcard 1 – D



Flashcard 2 – E



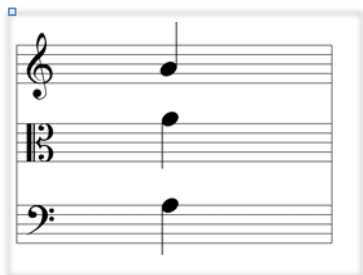
Flashcard 3 – F#



Flashcard 4 - G



Flashcard 5 – A



Flashcard 6 – B



Flashcard 7 – C#



Flashcard 8 - D



Learning Traditional Notation

Learning D Scale Pitches – Reading tetra-chord patterns.

Flashcard 1 - D Tetra-chord

Flashcard 1 displays the D Tetra-chord in 4/4 time, featuring a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The notation is presented in three staves: Treble, Alto, and Bass. Each staff contains four quarter notes, all with stems pointing upwards. The notes are D4 (first line), E4 (first space), F#4 (second line), and G#4 (second space) in the Treble staff; D4 (first line), E4 (first space), F#4 (second line), and G#4 (second space) in the Alto staff; and D3 (first space), E3 (first line), F#3 (first space), and G#3 (first space) in the Bass staff.

Flashcard 2 - A Tetra-chord

Flashcard 2 displays the A Tetra-chord in 4/4 time, featuring a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The notation is presented in three staves: Treble, Alto, and Bass. Each staff contains four quarter notes, all with stems pointing upwards. The notes are A4 (second line), B4 (second space), C#5 (third line), and D5 (third space) in the Treble staff; A4 (first space), B4 (second line), C#5 (second space), and D5 (third line) in the Alto staff; and A3 (first space), B3 (first line), C#4 (first space), and D4 (first space) in the Bass staff.

Learning Traditional Notation

Rote to Note Tunes– Reading tunes previously learned by ear in sequence then out of order.

Boil Them Cabbage Down

Flashcard 1



Flashcard 2



Flashcard 3



Flashcard 4



Flashcard 5



Flashcard 6



Flashcard 7



Flashcard 8



Learning Traditional Notation

Learning Symbols

Flashcard 1
Sharp



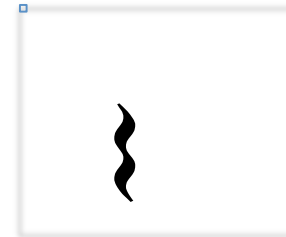
Flashcard 2
Flat



Flashcard 3
Quarter Note



Flashcard 4
Quarter Rest



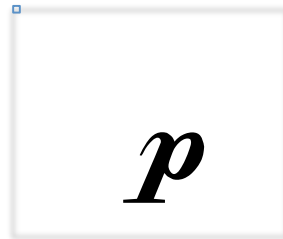
Flashcard 5
Forte



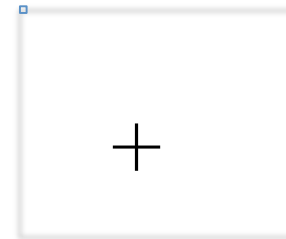
Flashcard 6
Natural



Flashcard 7
Piano



Flashcard 8
Left Hand Pizz.



Learning Traditional Notation

Reading the Tunes

Boil Them Cabbage Down

The image displays a musical score for the tune "Boil Them Cabbage Down". The score is organized into two systems, each containing three staves. The first system consists of a treble staff, a second treble staff, and a bass staff. The second system follows the same layout. All staves are in 4/4 time and use a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The melody is primarily composed of quarter notes, with some eighth notes in the first system. The bass line is mostly composed of quarter notes. The score is presented within a white rectangular frame with a blue border.

Repertoire

Learn by Reading or Aurally

1. Play unison tunes with accompaniment – audio, piano, guitar.
2. Play duets and trios.
3. Play string orchestra repertoire they can play and sound good on.
4. Everything can't be a challenge/technique builder. Challenge them in class.
5. Play some tunes from memory.
6. Every concert needs to have some “goose bump” moments.
7. Perform, perform, perform – create opportunities.

Developing Creativity

1. Develop by ear using rhythms, pitches, patterns/riffs.
2. Use literacy as a memory aid and for theory post aural.

Frere Rocka

TUNE



BASS LINE



Chord progression for the bass line:

9 Dm C Bb C Dm C Bb C

13 Dm C Bb C Dm C Bb C

Chord Pattern - Dm C / Bb C / Dm C / Bb C /

Chords - Dm=D, F, A C=C, E, G Bb=Bb, D, F

Scale - D, E, F, G, A, Bb, C, D



The Saline 5th Grade Orchestra

TEACH like someone
left the gate open



Live like someone left the
gate open!