Teaching Repertoire

Classroom Management

- Classroom Set-up
- Use of Proximity
- Use of Transitions
- Have students Move to different areas of classroom
- Sing Instructions or Post Instructions as a visual
- Dynamic Contrast in Speech
- Use of Attention Getters/Lead with Action
- Use Names of Students
- Build healthy positive relationships with students
- Incorporate Student Interests in Lesson
- Praising students individually and as a group
- Treating mistakes as learning opportunities

- Creating a supportive environment
- Using Leadership in the classroom
- Lesson Planning
- Clear Objectives and plan
- Story Telling

Classroom Set-up

I observed a middle school choir director who set up his classroom in a horseshoe with each section separated with an isle to walk through.   The horseshoe with isles made it easier for   the choir director to access different areas easily. Instead of standing at the podium, he walked around the room observing the students. The set-up of a classroom can aid with classroom management. I personally prefer circles or horseshoes because they make it so that no student is sitting or hiding behind other students.

Here is a link to a blog that explains the advantages and disadvantages of several classroom setups

http://blog.ampli.com/2014/03/classroom-layouts-seating-arrangements-for-effective-learning.html

There are many ideas on pinterest for setting up classrooms as well.

Use of Proximity

The use of proximity can be useful with classroom management. Teachers can move towards students, or stand in front of the students. Students are more likely to exhibit good behavior when they have a teacher standing next to them.

Transitions

In one class I took at the University of Wyoming, one student did a project in which she found tools to help students that had anxiety. One tool I recall was transitions. Transitions help any student mentally prepare for what they are going to do next. Transitions are commonly used in preschools and less as students go through elementary. In a music classroom, transitions can include a welcome song and a goodbye song. In the first two weeks I taught preschool music, I was having trouble maintaining engagement. One teacher suggested that I use transition songs that the students could become familiar with over time. I rotated through three different "Hello" songs to welcome students to their time with me and used the same "Goodbye" song. Once I started using transitions, I noticed that students had better behavior and were able to pay attention longer.

https://www.smartclassroommanagement.com/2015/01/17/the-secret-to-perfect-transitions-in-5-simple-steps/

https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/smooth-transitions-in-classroom

Move to different areas of the classroom

I watched a video of an elementary music teacher, Mrs. Garner, on routledgetextbooks.com. Mrs. Garner had different areas of the classroom that she asked her students to move to for each segment of the lesson. For example, she started them off in the middle of the floor, and had them move to the white board to view rhythms, later the students went back to the center of the carpet to use manipulatives to re-create the rhythms their teacher was clapping for them. Having the students stand up and move alleviated boredom. I believe this strategy would be effective with any age group.

Sing Instructions/Post Instructions as visual

I watched an elementary music teacher sing instructions to her students. Instead of using her speaking voice she would sing "move to the white-board" or "take out the bells." The students responded well to the sung instruction, there was no confusion and the students did what they were asked to do. This tool can be used to reinforce the "universal interval" sol to mi, as well as other melodic material, and as a positive way to gain the students' attention. I believe this worked because the students hear teachers speak instructions throughout the day and hearing the directions sung increased the students' focus. This would most likely work best with younger elementary students.

Posting instructions as a visual and referring to them can also re-enforce the instructions.
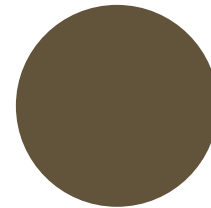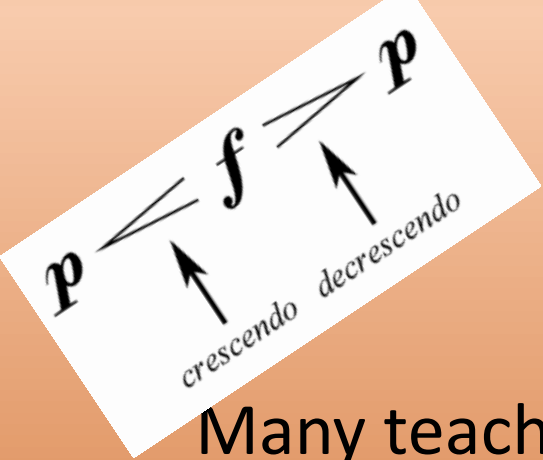
Dynamic Contrast in speech

Many teachers I've observed use dynamic contrast when speaking to their class. They get quiet or loud to emphasize points. I've also seen teachers use this to keep the students focus and either calm or energize a class. A teacher speaking in a monotone gets boring for students. Speaking with inflection and using dynamic contrast in speech can make a class fun and can be used in a variety of classes for any age group.

Use of Attention Getters/Lead with Action

I've observed preschool teachers and summer camp counselors use attention getters and have used them myself in both settings. Some effective attention getters include: Starting a familiar short song that the students can sing along with; clapping a rhythm and having the repeat the rhythm; saying "if you can hear me clap 3 times," or "if you can hear me tap your shoulders to the beat"; saying "peanut butter," and having the students respond with "jelly!" Attention getters are a positive and fun way to gain students attention and are effective in elementary, middle school, and high school.

Build Healthy Relationships with students (MANDT)

Using student's names, finding out who they are and what they are interested in helps with classroom management. Building rapport with students helps them feel connected and therefore helps keep them engaged. I mentioned MANDT because I was trained in the MANDT system when I worked with adults with disabilities. MANDT explains what to do in a crisis situation, but building healthy relationships was at the core of the system. Building rapport included realizing the interests of the people we worked at and what their baseline behavior looked like. MANDT explains that recognizing when people shifted from their baseline behavior was the key to de-escalating crisis. The goal of MANDT was to distract the person, using their interests, back to their baseline behavior.

MANDT can be useful in any setting with people.

In my practicum experience, I watched MR. Thompson shake hands and converse with his students as they walked in the door. He asked them how they were, and about their interests i.e. whether or not their favorite basketball team won. The student's felt welcomed and this was a great way to build rapport with the students.

http://www.mandtsystem.com/

Incorporate Student Interests in Lesson

Building upon the idea of finding out what students are interested in, incorporating student interests in lessons can act as a tool in classroom management. For example, if elementary students are interested in race cars, they can pretend to be race cars in a lesson about tempo. This helps keep students emotionally engaged.

Praise the Group & Individuals

When I worked as a summer camp counselor for the Girl Scouts of Oregon and Southwest Washington our goal as counselors was to recognize each girl as an individual and tell her something that she was good at- not talents, but attributes such as: persistency, helpfulness, thoroughness, or patience. I've taken this into other positions in which I've worked with people- children and adults. This shows people that they are being listened to on a level that goes deeper than conversation, and they feel important. Too often, children are receiving negative feedback, sadly, I see this in many of the preschools I've worked in. Students, receive negative feedback from early stages of life and I believe it affects them throughout their lives- especially those that struggle more than others in behavioral aspects because that is something recognized first.

Praise can help keep students motivated, and engaged.

Treating Mistakes as Learning Opportunities

Mike Morgan spoke at the Wyoming Music Educators conference in 2016, and I recall him talking about how he will ask students to look up when they've played a wrong note or rhythm. Morgan stated that about 90% of the time students know when they've played something incorrectly. Rather than embarrass or single out students, Morgan simply has the students look up to acknowledge they know they've made an error. He'll ask the player for a of signal, i.e. a thumbs-up, to check whether the student knows what was incorrect and how to fix it. This method of not turning mistakes into a big deal creates a positive environment and develops problem solving skills because the students are given a chance to fix the mistake on their own or ask for help. I believe this strategy would work well for older students.

My practicum teacher also used this strategy of having students raise their hands when they knew they had made a mistake.

Supportive Environment

I took an improv comedy and sketch writing intensive with Guy Stevenson who teaches at the Groundlings School for improv. Some of the big names he taught include Melissa McCarthy, Will Ferrell, Maya Rudolph, Jimmy Fallon, Conan O'Brien, and Flo from progressive. After every exercise, game, or scene Guy would enthusiastically cheer and asked us to do the same. Cheering for each other fostered an environment in which everyone felt confident enough to open their minds and create improv. The feeling of confidence permitted for some excellent scenes. Because of the positive and encouraging environment that Guy helped to foster, everyone involved in the theatre had great working relationships and were supportive of each other. This is something I want to bring to every class I teach. I believe an encouraging environment helps students gain confidence in their abilities and creates a sense of community.

https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/establish-classroom-culture

https://learningforward.org/docs/leading-teacher/march10_killion.pdf?sfvrsn=2

https://seniorsecondary.tki.org.nz/English/Pedagogy/Supportive-learning-environment

http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/sept08/vol66/num01/Seven-Strategies-for-Building-Positive-Classrooms.aspx

Leadership

At the Wyoming Music Educators Conference in 2016 Dr. David Branson spoke about ways he established leadership in his music classes. Dr. Branson taught middle school and high school band- he asked students to write timelines on the board, pass out papers, and set up the classroom. Dr. Branson created a student council that consisted of a president, vice president, secretary, and representatives and delegated doable tasks to his council. Aside from delegating tasks to students Dr. Branson would divide his students into groups and give each group one section of music. Each group had a job to make decisions and teach their section of music to the rest of the band. Not only did this allow every student to lead, it also allowed the students to develop critical thinking skills and be creative in their work as musicians. Developing leadership is important for many reasons: it helps the teacher to recognize strengths and give praise, it can help in making the teacher's job easier by delegating tasks such as handing out papers or sticks, it helps students to recognize their own strengths and that they are capable of being leaders. I believe this can be used for any age group. I've used it in my preschool music classes- the students enjoy being helpful and appreciate the recognition.

https://nafme.org/about/2016-nafme-elections/david-g-branson-biography/

http://www.theleaderinmeblog.org/leadership-in-music/

https://people.smu.edu/snpark/files/2014/09/Learning-and-Leadership-in-Music.pdf

http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/sept08/vol66/num01/The-Music-Connection.aspx

Story Telling

Many teachers incorporate story- telling and humor into their lessons to enforce content. This is important and beneficial in a music classroom because it shows a form of expression and enables the students to relate in some way to their teacher. Story telling can engage students on a emotional and cognitive levels One pitfall is that story-telling takes away music or playing time from the students.

Communicating Objectives

- State Objective
- Ask students to repeat objective
- Post objective as a visual
- Entrance/Exit Tickets

State Objectives

It appears that a large percentage of teachers will tell the class what they are going to learn at the beginning. This is important in a music classroom because it prepares students for what they are going to learn. The benefit of this strategy is that students focus on the material related to the objective. One pitfall is that students are only focusing on a portion of the lesson rather than receiving all of the information as a whole. By telling the students what they are going to learn creates another pitfall because students might have a difficult time committing what they are told to memory.

Ask Students to to define what they have learned (the backwards approach)

Fewer teachers will use this method of first teaching a lesson and asking the students to define what they learned at the end. One pitfall of this strategy is that students might not fully understand the objective. However, if the lesson is delivered well, benefits are that students create their own learning experiences and will better commit the objective to memory. This is important in a music classroom because it allows freedom for the students and they therefore may have a deeper understanding of the lesson in its entirety.

Delivery of Content

- Learning Centers
- Think Pair Share
- Elimination of Speaking (Monk Rehearsals)
- Movement/Games/Play
- Incorporate Technology
- Dressing up/acting

Learning Centers

In preschools and sometimes in elementary schools students are asked to go around to different stations or learning centers. The teacher usually sets a timer and when the timer rings the students switch stations. Each station reinforces the objective in a different way. For example, if students are learning about the violin, a teacher might set up a listening station, a coloring station, a station in which the students see and play the violin, and a movie station in which students learn how a violin is made. Stations create opportunities for peer teaching and help to reach every type of learner. Because students work together in small groups it gives the students more time with the teacher. Stations can be used for any age group and help create a positive and fun learning environment.

I've included two links: the first explains how learning centers can be included in the music education classroom; the second link provides strategies for setting up learning centers

https://nafme.org/centers-music-class-yes/

https://www.teachthought.com/pedagogy/4-strategies-implementing-learning-stations-classroom/

Think, Pair, Share

Think, pair, share is a method that helps reinforce the objective. Students are asked to reflect on their own. Thinking about the information gives students time to answer questions. Some teachers include the word write after think so that students can reflect about what they have learned on paper. After students are given a chance to think about the content, they share their information with a group or another peer. Reflecting with a peer can create a deeper understanding of the objective and help students define areas of weakness in their understanding.

I came across one blog from a teacher who used this in her own music classroom with second graders-

http://kodalycorner.blogspot.com/2014/09/thinkpairshare-in-music-room.html

Elimination of Speaking (Non-Verbal or Monk Lessons)

I discovered non-verbal lessons after finding Robert Achmin's youtube channel. Robert Achmin teaches music education at the University of Louisville and uploads videos of himself teaching and some of his music education students. Non-verbal lessons engage students on multiple levels. Students have to pay attention to eye contact, facial expression, and movement. I tried to use this as a preschool music teacher and found the method to be highly effective. This is one of my personal goals as I think I talk too much and students learn more by doing rather than listening.

Below is a link to one of Robert Achmin's non-verbal lessons:

https://youtu.be/MrsbwrQO6BI

Movement/Games/Play

My last two music lessons that I taught my preschoolers. in Laramie, were two of the most successful lessons that I taught. I discovered that children love to play and move. In one of the lessons, I read a story called *Fast and Slow.* The book had animals that were fast, and animals that were slow. Rather than asking the preschoolers to sit "criss-cross" and listen to the book, I asked them to move like the animal I showed them. Not only did the preschoolers learn about animals that were fast and slow, they were able to feel the difference between the two through movement. The students had their own creative ideas about how each animal moved. They had a lot of fun with the lesson and asked me to read another story!

Creative movement, and play or games (for older students) are important because they engage students physically, cognitively, and emotionally. Play gives students permission to be creative. Students learn problem solving skills, they learn to listen to each other, they learn about empathy, and to express themselves in different ways. Because of development, this could extend up to about 2nd or 3rd graders. However, older students can play organized games that would teach similar concepts.

Here are several links that explain why play is important:

https://www.brighthorizons.com/family-resources/e-family-news/importance-of-play-for-school-age-children

https://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/17/opinion/sunday/let-the-kids-learn-through-play.html

https://www.education.com/reference/article/importance-play--social-emotional/

Technology

Students have cell phones, ipads, laptops, and many other useful devices. Apps on ipads such as garage band, pitch improver, ear master, or theta are free and can aid in learning. Students can use their phones to research information, and students can take notes on their laptops or ipads. Allowing students to use technology engages students emotionally and cognitively because it's a fun way to learn. Teachers can engage students by having students race to google information. In the real world jobs, workers have their cell phones on them throughout the day to look up information. Asking students to put away their cell phones is contradictory, making students feel less powerful. Why not embrace the cell phone and ask students to use the resources they have available.

Dressing Up/Acting

There was a history professor at the University of Montana who would dress up like historical figures and speak in accents to present the lessons, another science professor dressed up as a wizard and nicknamed himself GeeWiz. Dressing up and presenting the lesson as someone else is not only fun, but helps engage students emotionally and cognitively. I've used this to present content as a preschool teacher a few times. Once, I dressed up as a pirate and presented the entire lesson in a pirate accent. I sent the students to different "islands" aka stations to explore sounds of different instruments. After they came back from the islands we sang a pirate song using a treasure map (notated music) and searched the room for treasure which included stickers and kazoos. The lesson was effective because the students seemed engaged. Younger students enjoy using their imaginations through play and science proves that meaningful play helps children learn.

Assessment in the Music Classroom

- Self-Assessment
- Peer Assessment
- Entrance/Exit Tickets
- Worksheets
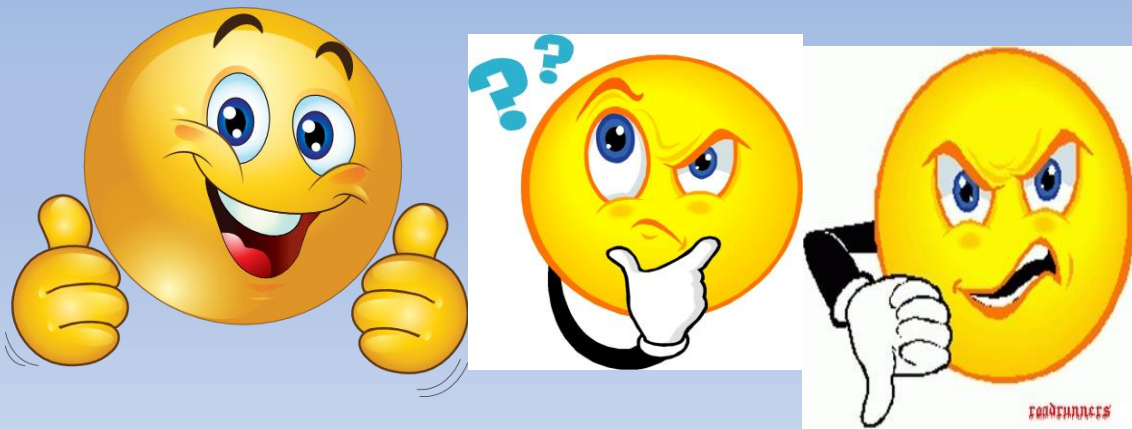-Turn Assessment into a game!

Self-Assessment

Self Assessment tells is a form of formative assessment. Students can rate their understanding using thumbs –up, thumbs-middle, or thumbs down, or scales from 1-5. Younger students can use emojis to rate their understanding. Self- assessment is a fast way for a teacher to obtain information on how their students are doing and it alleviates pressure for the students.

Here are several links that explain why self-assessment is good for students and one that shows self-assessment being used

https://youtu.be/CkFWbC91PXQ

https://youtu.be/-XJ8f9yLteQ

https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/peer-teaching--2

Peer-Assessment

Asking students to evaluate and critique each other is a type of formative assessment. Peer- assessment lets the teacher know whether or not the students are understanding the information. Students can use rubrics to evaluate each other. Peer-assessment helps students develop self-regulation skills and communication skills.

Article regarding peer assessment in the music classroom-

http://apps.texasbandmasters.org/archives/pdfs/bmr/2008-09-cavitt.pdf

discussion forum how to use peer assessment in the music classroom-https://nafme.org/forums/topic/peer-assessment-music/

Entrance/Exit Tickets

In the article listed below, Keenan-Takagi talks about how she uses assessment in her Choral ensembles. Keenan-Takagi mentioned that she uses something similar to exit tickets- she has her students write down several things they learned from the lesson. By having her students write and reflect on what they learned, Keenan-Takagi stated the students recall what they went over in their next lesson. I believe that entrance and exit tickets can help reinforce the objectives and show what the students learned.

https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbnxjc3VtdTI4NnxneDoxMjQzODRmODIwNjM4YWU1

Worksheets

Worksheets can be used to provide a teacher with information on what the students understand and don't understand. They can be used for diagnostic assessment, formative assessment, or summative assessment. I personally, haven't ever used worksheets and the thought hadn't crossed my mind until this class. However, I can many benefits of including worksheets, even in ensembles. Not only can they give teachers an idea of how much their students understand, worksheets can also be used as feedback for the teacher. Taking the mean or average of the graded worksheets lets the teacher know how the lesson can be improved.

Turn Assessment into a game!

There are a million games that can be copied and used as diagnostic, or formative, or even summative assessment. Games take pressure off students becaue they are fun. *Jeopardy* could be turned into a playing test in which small groups of students could play phrases for points. *Family Feud* could be into a sectional feud in which students are tested on their understanding of theory or something in the music. Anything can be made into a game to check for understanding.

Other

- Back-up Plans & improvisation skills

- Technology & Resources for students with cognitive & physical disabilities

Have back up plans
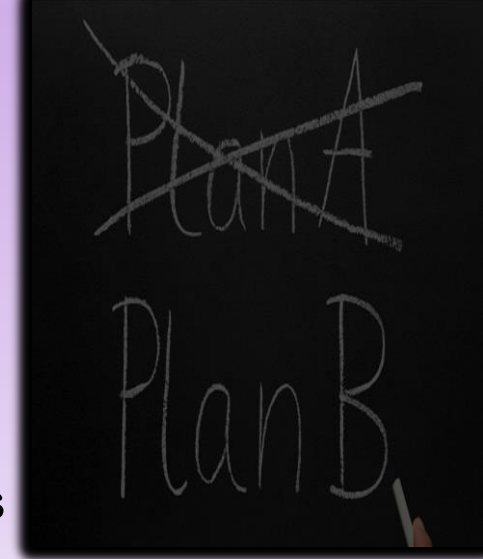
I learned through peer teaching, teaching my practicum students, and teaching preschoolers the importance of back-up plans. There are several back-up plans that I have labeled. Trouble-shooting or problem solving plans can be put into an initial lesson plan. As musicians we know that reading a piece of music may not go perfectly the first time, or the second time. Having back up plans shows students that mistakes are learning opportunities and that it is ok to fix things. Trouble-shooting plans also help students develop their own techniques and strategies to be able to problem solve on their own. The second type of back-up plan is Plan B. If plan A doesn't work at all, and moving back a step in the lesson doesn't work than we as teachers need to be ready for a plan B. I recently was in the middle of teaching a lesson to my pre-kindergarten class when one student became violent with some of the other children. Because I was the only teacher in the classroom at the time and didn't have the support I needed with the student, I had to scratch the lesson and find something to engage all of the students- we ended up going outside. As a teacher it is important to either have back-up plans or be ready to improvise. It is equally important to know that back-up plans and improvising don't mean that we've failed in carrying out a lesson, they mean that we care about our students and their education.

I've included a few links for Back-up plans incase things don't go as Planned-

http://blog.discoveryeducation.com/blog/2011/05/18/backup-plans-some-tips-for-teachers/

https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/teacher-backup-plans (this shows back-up plans for common core math, but can be easily adapted to music)

Use of technology to create an inclusive environment!

As a supporter of people with disabilities, I find it important to incorporate all learners into the music classroom. My aunt is cognitively disabled and sings in a choir in Missoula, MT. I also worked with several clients that participated in the choir. I cannot begin to explain what choir does for my aunt and for the clients I helped support. I watched their concerts and saw them transform. Choir brought my aunt the ability to express herself, it gave her confidence. I worked with a client that was autistic. He wasn't able to participate in every day activities such as walking, shopping, watching TV or cooking for more than ten minutes without escalating and becoming upset, or becoming distracted. When my client performed with the choir, he was able to focus for an ninety minutes on stage.
I've included several links below that have information on adaptive instruments -

- https://www.iesa.org/documents/activities/IESA-MU_Disabilities.pdf
- http://specialneedsgeneralmusic.weebly.com/adaptive-music-instruments.html
- http://mybreathmymusic.com/en/magic-flute
- https://newatlas.com/jamboxx-hands-free-breath-driven-digital-instrument/24683/
- http://www.ohmi.org.uk/
- http://skoogmusic.com/
- http://www.soundbeam.co.uk/
- https://sites.google.com/site/exceptionalitiessrig/home/resources/adaptive-instruments