

Powerful Instructional Resources for Middle School Band

Bands of America Summer Symposium 2007

Erin Cole

1. Method Books - always research and spend time finding the correct method book for your program. There are many great ones out there:

Examples:

Essential Elements, Standard of Excellence, Band Expressions, Best in Class, Belwin 21st Century Band Method, Yamaha Band Student, A Fresh Approach to Mallet Percussion (percussion supplement book), etc....

2. Warm-up/Technique Books and Music

Examples:

Foundations for Superior Performance - Richard Williams, Jeff King

- Sound (tone production).
- Articulation (styles and concepts).
- Greater flexibility, agility and, endurance.
- Individual and ensemble listening skills.
- Technique in all twelve major and minor keys.
- Basic understanding of music theory.

Daily Routine for Band - Gino Cipriani

A comprehensive, timed systematic approach to the warm-up procedure. Every exercise has a stop watch at the top informing the director of the time it takes to play each exercise. Three levels - elementary, intermediate, and advanced!

- *Breathing Chorale
- *Tone Production
- *Articulation
- *Buzzing/Embouchure Build-Up Exercise
- *Flexibility Strengthening Exercise
- *Scales
- *Chorales

10 Chorales for Intermediate Band - Quincy Hilliard

10 wonderful chorales suitable for middle school bands. Some instrument sections even include elementary and advanced parts.

Chorale Suite - James Swearingen

Three great chorales for middle school band!

3. Recordings from publishing companies - Spend time listening to the recordings of the publishing companies new releases each year. It can be time consuming, but beneficial for finding the new hot pieces out there!

4. Books

Examples:

Teaching Music Through Performance - book and cds

Volumes 1-6 - Each book includes analyses of select pieces and insights from national leaders in the field with recordings by top ensembles

The Creative Director Series - Ed Lisk

Beginning and Intermediate Levels - In this volume, Lisk presents beginning and intermediate level band directors with teaching strategies to use with today's band methods. Using a natural learning sequence, these concepts provide a foundation for achieving State and National Music Standards helping students to:

- Play with beautiful tone quality
- Develop technical skills
- Understand and play rhythms correctly
- Play in tune and maintain a consistent pitch center
- Develop a knowledge of scales that can be applied to improvisation
- Play with expression
- Make positive decisions about balance, blend and intonation
- Play with imagination, interpretation and correct style
- Become an effective (contributing) ensemble member

Alternative Rehearsal Techniques (also has a dvd) - Ed Lisk - Addresses improving rehearsal efficiency through a more effective learning environment with access to the students' fullest musical potential. Provides new concepts, graphic illustrations and instructional procedures to enhance and accelerate student skills.

Leadership: Vision, Commitment, Action - Tim Lautzenheiser

Music Advocacy and Student Leadership - Tim Lautzenheiser

Master clinician Tim Lautzenheiser strongly believes everyone has the capacity to develop effective leadership skills. These books are so fantastic to read to restore the motivation we all have within!

5. Periodicals

Examples:

The Instrumentalist

MENC News

Band World

State music association magazine

6. Clinics and Conferences - Attend as many clinics/conferences as often as possible. The Midwest Clinic, State Conferences, MENC Conference, BOA Summer Symposium, etc.... Go to the band performances and clinics. Talk to composers, other band directors and clinicians.

7. Attend other band's rehearsals and concerts - Listening and watching other band directors rehearse their ensembles and perform concerts can be so educational. This is a great way to pick up new ideas, rehearsal techniques, concert literature, etc.... When the band is wonderful, this can also be very motivating!

8. Purchase Japanese Band dvds and cds - There are many Japanese band dvds and cds available to purchase. Some of them are rehearsal techniques and some are performances of many bands. If you have never seen one of these dvds it is a must! Many of the bands that perform on the dvds are very young elementary school aged children performing at an extremely high level. AMAZING....and very motivating!

9. Recordings - Fill your music listening library with cds of armed forces bands, university bands, and community bands. These are great resources to hear recordings of band literature and a great teaching tool for your students. Play these recordings for your students. Many armed forces bands and university bands also have dvds available. These are wonderful to show your students!

10. Field Trips - Take your band students on trips. Getting your students out of the bandroom and exposed to symphony concerts or even just hearing other bands perform can be so beneficial. If you are near a big city, take the band to a symphony or chamber ensemble concert. When you take your band to festivals, make sure you allow time for the students to hear other bands perform. This is so important to their musical development.

11. Technology - There is so much wonderful technology out there right now. Take the time to take staff development classes and/ or learn how to use the software. Students get a kick out of this new software that is out there. In fact, they can teach us things!

Examples:

Garage Band
Alfred Theory
Smart Music
Finale

12. Theory Books/Software - Educating your band student thoroughly includes teaching theory. It is so important that your band students are not just learning the performance of the instrument but also understand and learn music theory.

Examples:

Alfred Essentials of Music Theory - Book and Music Software

Practical Theory - Sandy Feldstein

Master Theory - Charles Peters and Paul Yoeder

Standard of Excellence - Music Theory and History Workbook - Chuck Elledge, Jane Yarbrough, Bruce Pearson

bandfolio.com - free downloads of flash cards, rhythms, etc...

13. Curriculum - Make sure you are familiar with your own state/district's curriculum. It can also be beneficial to check out other state/district's curriculums.

14. College instrument method books - Keep your college instrument method books handy in your office at school. These can be very helpful for looking up the specifics of instruments that may not be your own primary instrument. It is important to be knowledgeable about what you are teaching and having your resources at your disposal is key. Use them to look up trills, fingerings, embouchure set up, etc...

15. ASK OTHER DIRECTORS! - One of the most useful resources we have in our profession is communicating with successful band directors. Asking questions and learning from colleagues is our best resource. So, BE RESOURCEFUL! Search out the best directors and learn from them.

16. Armed Forces Bands and University Bands- Many armed forces bands and University bands and teachers are so great about offering help and reaching out to the schools. Use this as a valuable resource. Have these groups come to your school and perform for your students. Ask these musicians to teach master classes and private lessons for you. They also offer cds (usually for free) and dvds. These are some examples of dvds I found on the Army Band web site that are available:

- Understanding the Oboe •Improving your Clarinet Section
- Bassoon Basics •Horn Playing: Past and Present
- The Trumpeter's Resource •Tuba Euphonium
- The Complete Percussionist •Jazz Band Rhythm Section

17. Sight-reading books - These books are fantastic to use with your students to prepare for the sight-reading experience. These books have excerpts of past all-state audition sight-reading exercises.

Example:

Music services unlimited - <http://home.att.net/~l.mclure/>

18. Wall Posters - Hang posters in your room that educate and motivate your students. Make your room a positive learning environment.

Examples:

Music Symbols and Terms
Professional Musicians
Charts - Rudiments, Fingering Charts, etc..
Motivational expressions
Awards and Plaques achieved by the band

19. Motivational - It is important that you, the teacher, stay motivated in your own teaching. In order to be a successful teacher you need to always be searching and looking for the best ways to teach your students and improve your program. You as a motivated teacher will then infect your students with that same motivation.

Examples:

212 degrees - The Extra Degree - Sam Parker and Mac Anderson
This is a great book and dvd not only for you, but it is also great to show your students. GET THIS! www.simpletruths.com

Leadership: Vision, Commitment, Action - Tim Lautzenheiser
Music Advocacy and Student Leadership - Tim Lautzenheiser
Master clinician Tim Lautzenheiser strongly believes everyone has the capacity to develop effective leadership skills. These books are so fantastic to read to restore the motivation we all have within! GO TO HIS CLINICS EVERY CHANCE YOU GET!

