

Unit Plan: Ensemble Instrumentation

I. Basic Information

i. **Name of Course and Grade Level:** High School Band

ii. **Title of Unit/Learning Segment:** Ensemble Instrumentation/Programming Concerts

(Larger unit is built around flexible instrumentation and encouraging the improvement of students' musical abilities through performing in ensembles of various sizes, as well as in solo repertoire. Throughout the unit, students will plan a benefit concert to perform their solo/small ensemble works, which means students will learn about quality programming, artistic intent, and the work necessary to create and promote a benefit concert, to give students a sense of what conductors and teachers do for the concerts for the ensembles the students are in. This particular learning segment is on programming and creating a program that will later be performed.)

iii. **Five Day Unit Schedule/Calendar:**

Day	Lesson Title/Topic Schedule
0	Diagnostic assessment of student understanding on programming.
1	Lesson presented on programming/choosing of quality repertoire with specific emphasis on the importance of knowing the audience/setting. Students begin research on need in community and receive their small ensemble/solo repertoire.
2	Presentations on need in community, discussion and vote on need for benefit concert. Continued discussion on artistic intent with emphasis on pieces chosen for concert.
3	Small ensemble rehearsals begin. Ensembles also begin work on programming and creation of programs as a group.
4	Small ensemble rehearsals continue. Check-ins with groups on their programs.
5	Students present programs created within their ensembles. Students vote on the final program for the benefit concert.

II. Priming

i. Central Focus: The central focus of this unit is to build on students' musical knowledge and skills in terms of their technical proficiency, their contextual understanding of music through personal reflection on performances and programming, and their artistic expression through creativity and interpretation in performance opportunities with flex instrumentation, meaning in both small and large ensembles. This specific learning segment focuses on increasing students' contextual understanding of music through the creation of a concert program based upon music chosen because of its artistic merit. Additionally, students will continue to improve their musical abilities through rehearsals with their small ensembles in preparation for the benefit concert at the end of the unit. By the end of the unit, students will hold a benefit concert for a performance of their small ensemble/solo repertoire, in which the program they create will be featured.

ii. Standard(s):

- a: 9.3.1.3.1: Rehearse and perform an existing single complex work or multiple works of music from a variety of contexts and styles alone and within small or large groups.
- b: 9.1.2.3.2: Sing alone and in small and large groups (multipart), or play an instrument alone and in small and large groups, a variety of music using characteristic tone, technique and expression.
- c: 9.3.1.3.3 3. Justify artistic intent, including how audience and occasion influence performance choices.

iii. Learning Objectives: The students will:

- a. Demonstrate improvement on performance of solo/ensemble literature in categories of technical proficiency and musicality.
- b. Explain the importance of programming a concert and the reasoning behind artistic choices, such as audience and purpose.
- c. Begin to plan a benefit concert, including determining a need in the community, programming the concert, and creating the physical program document.

iv. Summative Assessment:

- a. The creation of a successful, appropriate program, with program notes.
- b. Students will participate in a performance assessment "check-in" completed by the teacher to demonstrate their growth as both solo musicians and as a small ensemble from the beginning of the unit/learning segment.

v. Vocabulary: Solo, ensemble, program, repertoire, composer, audience, benefit concert, concert, musicality, technical proficiency.

vi. Strategies for Teaching Vocabulary:

- a. Word Wall: Vocabulary words with definitions displayed on notecards on the word wall in front of the room.
- b. Creation of concert program: real world application of vocabulary words.
- c. YouTube/video performances: visual and aural examples of vocabulary words.

vii. Language Function: To build their understanding of musical contexts and the importance of artistic intent, students will *create* a concert program for their upcoming benefit concert.

viii. Knowledge of Students:

- a. As high schoolers, the students will have likely had musical experiences in large ensembles and in lessons. This means that they will have prior knowledge of how to read music in terms of both note names and basic rhythms.
- b. While students may have had performance experience, it is unlikely that their conductors/teachers have explained the artistic process in choosing repertoire for a concert and how concert programs are created.

III. Processing

i. Text or Resources Used

- a. Chamber music repertoire appropriate for young, high school musicians.
- b. Videos/recordings from YouTube, SPCO app, Spotify, Naxos for visual/aural examples of performances.
- c. Articles on concert programming and benefit concerts.

ii. Instructional Strategies

- a. Real world examples/applications (through creation of concert program and planning of benefit concert): Constructivism
- b. Cooperative learning activities (learning/working together in small ensembles/groups): Cooperative Learning Theory (Johnson and Johnson)
- c. Present information both verbally and visually: Information Processing Theory (Dual Coding Theory)
- d. Make information meaningful for students (responsibility for the program and benefit concert): Information Processing Theory

iii. Formal and Informal Assessments

- a. Formal:
 - 1) Diagnostic: Students will complete a diagnostic assessment in terms of a quick write/journal response on their understanding of how music is selected for a concert and how concert programs are created. Questions on these topics will be listed out for students to respond to, and they are free to write additional thoughts on the topic after responding to the questions.
 - 2) Formative: Mid-unit check on ensemble performance through recordings on SmartMusic, as well as observations and check-ins during rehearsals.
 - 3) Formative Quick Writes: Ideas for benefit concert, programming concepts, draft program ideas, and responses to the progress in small ensemble rehearsals and group work on the program.
 - 4) Summative: The creation of a successful, appropriate program, with program notes, for the benefit concert.

b. Informal:

- 1) Observations of student participation in discussion.
- 2) Thumbs up/thumbs down
- 3) Observation of student participation and performance in small ensemble rehearsals during check-ins.

iv. Technology

- a. Students will use either Google Docs, Pages, Word, or some other processing application to create concert programs.
- b. Students will experience various sizes of ensembles in concert settings through videos and audio recordings in lessons on programming, artistic intent, and importance of audience/setting.

IV. Retaining for Mastery: The central focus of this unit requires both musical and nonmusical products, which is already a variation on summative assessments. However, assessments can be further varied within the program for the benefit concert and performance assessment check-ins.

a. Benefit Concert Program:

- 1) Allow for students to verbally explain, or write their ideas for programs if access to technology is limited.
- 2) Allow for students to work independently or in groups based on their socialization/learning preferences.

b. Performance Assessment:

- 1) Journaling assignments on practice times and practice techniques to assist in students' demonstration of growth.
- 2) Allow for students to schedule additional times for performance assessment, whether in person or over SmartMusic recording - based on nerves and time availability.