

Teaching Terrific Tone: Creating a Beautiful Sounding Orchestra!

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Goal: Great music and artistry for beginner through advanced ensembles!

Posture/Position

1. Room Factors

- Room set up, chair spacing, and cases
- Music stand height and sharing a stand

2. Body Posture

- Centered, grounded, relaxed (motion/lack of tension)
- Symptom vs. problem
- Strategies:
 - Standing or stands/sit by phrase
 - Grow an inch
 - Swaying
 - March while playing
 - Talk, sing, ex-hale or hiss while playing

3. Right Arm

- Shoulder, arm, elbow, wrist
- Fingers:
 - Contact points
 - Symptom vs. problem
- Strategies:
 - The Wave - arm, wrist, fingers
 - Wall practice
 - Bow with two hands
 - Crossings (all 4 strings, arm level)

Right Hand Variables of Sound

1. Bow Placement

- Lanes: mf, f, p lanes
- Part of bow: upper, middle, and lower third
- Bow distribution
- Strategies:
 - Play on wrong side of bridge
 - Follow director or student
 - Paper clip or clothespin

2. Bow Weight

- Arm weight: medium-heavy bow, heavy bow, light bow
- Strategies:
 - 0 - 10lbs
 - Arm drop
 - Backwards bow

3. Bow Speed

- Speed: medium-slow, slow, fast
- Core sound - adapt for lower strings
- Strategies:
 - 0 - 65mph
 - Use entire bow - frog and tip, faster bow
 - Competition by section, they are the judge

4. Smooth Bow Changes
5. Separated Bow Strokes - detaché, staccato, martelé, spiccato, etc.
6. Pizzicato
 - Plucking finger over fingerboard or closer to bridge
 - Specific part of finger
 - Low strings pull sound like arco

Left Hand Variables of Sound

1. Vibrato
 - Fast/Slow speed - rhythms with metronome
 - Narrow/Wide
 - Arm and wrist
 - Continuous over bow changes
2. Firm Fingers
 - Pizzicato and soft passages
3. Intonation

Musical/Artistic Aspects

1. Dynamics
 - Technical aspects
 - Reverse each dynamic for entire piece
 - Backwards bow
 - Hide the Bow
2. Style and Phrasing
 - Unified speed, weight, placement, attack and length of note
 - Bow distribution
3. Color of Sound
 - Descriptive words or analogies (taffy, sunset, cotton candy)

Additional Considerations:

1. Balance
 - Louder lower parts or octave
 - Change seating
 - Rotate 1st/2nd violins
2. Blend
 - Throughout sections and orchestra
 - Circle facing in with basses in the middle
3. Every Student - section leaders in back
4. Programming Repertoire
 - Diverse for all sections
 - Manageable notes and adapt bowings as necessary