

April 10th Lesson Plan

Hello SMP musicians! We all recently got the news that school has been canceled for the remainder of the school year but our literature is still TERRIFIC! Let's continue to keep our *Eyes On The Prize* so we have a group-goal and focus to our lessons! As you'll learn in middle school, the tunes you work on in-class serve as "real world" lessons. It's true!...as you get older, you'll steer away from method books and rely on concert literature to learn the intricate details of becoming an accomplished musician. We have work to do!....

Beginning Band:

#78, Minuteman March. After focusing on the written dynamics (*forte* and *piano*) last week, let's take some time this week to make sure our "articulation" is accurate. This word, in the music world, refers to clean tonguing, slurring, and accents. For #78, we're not asked to slur anything and there are no accents. This means that EVERY NOTE must be tongued. Tonguing on all band instruments is crucial so make sure that the beginning of every tongued note sounds like it starts with the letter 'T'. If you're unable to do this (it is a strange concept!), search YouTube for your instrument and how to tongue properly.

#81, Frere Jacques. Of course, the toughest measures in this piece are 5 and 6 because of the speed of the 8th notes. This will be especially true for the flutes and trombones. Be patient and allow yourself to use slow tempos for now. Clarinets and trumpets will find these measures quite easy so you could focus on the accents in 7 and 8 instead. Be careful to not OVER-accent – especially trumpets. The note should still be pleasant!

New Orleans Strut. After measure 25, the "articulation" of this piece changes. You'll see slurs and ties sprinkled throughout (page 46 of your band book has handy definitions of these words). Remember, a *slur* is when you do tongue the first note but you don't tongue any of the other notes affected by the curved line. Sometimes, slurs only affect two notes but there are times in this piece there are four (you'd still tongue the first note of the four)! Trombones – you don't have any slurs in this piece but you do have ties.

Advanced Band:

Procession for a New Day. To play this piece accurately, we must all understand the *Key Signature* (look on page 46 of your band book for a quick definition and some pages to refer to). To be super clear, here's what your specific section has in the Key Signature: Flutes, bells, and trombones, you have three flats; they are Bb, Eb, and Ab. Clarinets and trumpets, you have one flat; it is Bb. Saxes = you have zero sharps (you usually have one or two) which means all notes are "natural". Now, scan your entire page and look for "accidentals". Saxes...look closely at measure 24! That bar will take some practice and you're the only section with it so it's super important.

Montego Bay. Here's an odd request...when you practice this piece, I'd like you to actually count through the empty measures! Yeah, it takes a little longer but then you won't

accidentally start playing in measure 1 (which should just be the percussionists)! Also, note the Key Signature. It's exactly the same as *Procession for a New Day* but more of you have accidentals in this piece. Circle the measures with accidentals so you see them ahead of time when you're playing (this is a common thing to do in music; just circling tough parts better prepares us while we're playing the piece!).

Beginning Strings:

#116, Song for Maria. We've spent time focusing on the slurs in this piece but if you need more work or review on this concept, use #112 which allows you to work on them with slower rhythms. As you play #112, try to increase the tempo so the quarter note slurs are a bit more challenging. That will help you play the 8th note slurs in *Song for Maria*!

#125, Jingli Nona. Again, you'll need to play C naturals in 9,11,13,15. Notice the tempo marking, "Allegro." Look on page 20 for a definition of this term. For now, we're hoping you can play this piece at a tempo around 76.

March of the Metro Gnome. Cellos, it'll be up to you to keep a VERY steady tempo so use a metronome (understand the title now?) set to around 80. All beginning violins should have the 2nd Violin part. Note all the bowing markings!

Advanced Orchestra:

#192, Simple Gifts. If you're getting pretty good at your line (violins = A, viola/cello = B), then I'd recommend trying the other line! To do this, you'll be responsible for something called *rhythmic independence*. This means that the two parts have different rhythms and you need to have the confidence to play the correct/different rhythm while you hear others playing the other rhythm! A fun way to practice this is to simply record your original line (at a SLOW tempo and with a metronome on the whole time) so you can play the other part with yourself!

Dragon Hunter. Last Friday, we described the "roadmap" of this piece. If you understood that detailed description, I have a mathematic challenge for you! Try to figure out how many measures long this piece REALLY is. Hint: The final measure has the number "62" but that's not the correct answer. I'll give y'all the real answer next Friday! In the meantime, it's time to start increasing the tempo of *Dragonhunter*. The tempo marking says, "Allegro" and that the quarter note = 112. For now, I'd like you to practice at a tempo of 80. If that's fairly clean and you're comfortable, increase your metronome speed to see if you can reach 100.