

BEGINNING BAND FUNDAMENTALS THAT WORK THROUGH HIGH SCHOOL

**Presented by: Julie Capps
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Tan-Tar-A Resort**

An abstract background featuring a dark, almost black, upper half. From the right side, several bright, white, diagonal light rays or beams of light extend towards the left, creating a sense of depth and movement. The lower half of the image is a solid, dark gray.

**“Every teacher needs an
approach and a system.”**

Chuck Appleton

Establish routines and procedures in order to utilize your rehearsal time to the maximum.

You must have a system for every aspect of your teaching and use it every single time you teach that objective.

**Have a routine and stick to it,
not only does this let the
students know what they are
supposed to do each day when
they enter the classroom and
what is expected of them, but it
saves time.**

**The students should know the
warm up routine and be ready
to do that as soon as they sit
down. Put your agenda for the
day on the board.**

Be particular about how you set up your chairs and stands.

Take the time to teach the student show to safely take the instrument out of the case and put it away properly, and teach proper care and maintenance of the instruments. It will save you much time and trouble later.

THE METHOD BOOK

Select your beginning band method book carefully. Then, later, make sure the music is an extension of your teaching. Don't just teach the concert. Don't be afraid to continue using a method book.

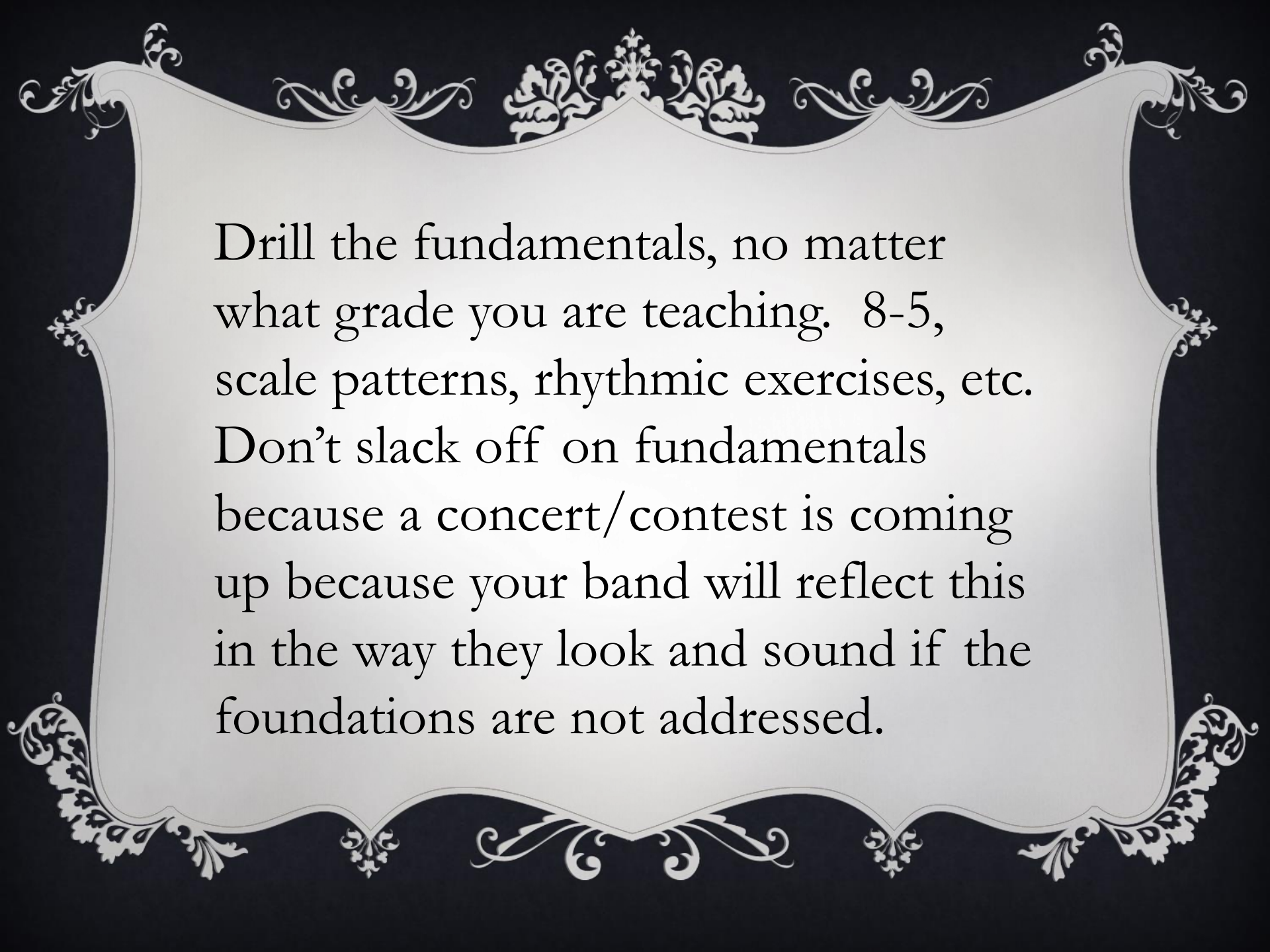
“All Learning Takes
Place as a result of
an applicable set
of fundamentals.”

Wm. G. Mack

You must start with the basics.
You can assume nothing. What
is your goal for the first year?

The more time you spend on
fundamentals, the better. You
will reap the benefits of this for
years to come.

Tomatoes. 😊



Drill the fundamentals, no matter what grade you are teaching. 8-5, scale patterns, rhythmic exercises, etc. Don't slack off on fundamentals because a concert/contest is coming up because your band will reflect this in the way they look and sound if the foundations are not addressed.

Air is the lifeblood of the sound.

Most band method books do not emphasize the importance of breathing. (Breath impulse) Make this an essential part of your teaching and consistently emphasize the importance of breath control.

Teach diaphragmatic breathing. Don't just assume it will happen. 10% vs. 100%

If students aren't breathing correctly, it is possible that other bad habits will develop in trying to create a sound.

Windjammer!

No one can play an instrument without good
breath support.

Students don't really practice deep breathing.
You must discuss this, demonstrate it and then
constantly monitor it. We don't just naturally
breathe this way.

Nearly all problems with tone can be fixed with
simply
more air.

Fast, cold air vs. warm air

THE PRELIMINARY LESSON

Don't move too quickly. Stay on this lesson as long as it takes.

Modeling—Suzuki kind of approach

Trial and Error- MUCH Repetition

Articulation:

Start the tone with the tongue, but release with the air stream.

Establishing a solid embouchure and producing a characteristic tone quality on the instrument should be the #1 goal of the beginning band teacher.

Mouthpieces ONLY-tuning pitches.

Flutes, closed mouthpiece-A

Clarinets, mouthpiece & barrel-F sharp

Alto Saxes, mouthpiece & neck A flat

Brass-Humming and buzzing pitches

**GOOD POSTURE IS AN
ACQUIRED HABIT AND THE
TIME TO START IS THE FIRST
DAY.**

Monitor hand positions and posture constantly.

Acquired good habits as opposed to bad habits.

Insist on good posture and hand position. Never falter
from this.

Do not allow the students to develop bad habits.

Good posture and hand position are acquired habits and
the time to start is the first day. Then, when you go to
contest, your ensemble LOOKS like they're going to be
great!

Have a counting system. I use the Eastman system of counting because of the “t” syllables. Use this always, even in the sight-reading room.

Start with the pyramid of notes and rests.

You must teach the student to sub-divide the beat. Teaching the students to count and subdivide should be one of the most important goals in beginning band because that will carry over in every aspect of junior high and high school band.

Diagram rhythms.

Which is more important, playing a right note or a right rhythm?

Have the students count every day.
(Sizzle, clap, sing, etc.)

If you can't count it, you can't play it!

Don't dismiss rhythmic exercises:
Rhythm Master, Division of Beat, 101
Rhythms and Rests, Sight-reading, etc.

The most successful bands in the
sight-reading rooms are those with a
system of counting the rhythms.

An abstract background featuring a dark, textured surface with bright, diagonal light rays emanating from the right side, creating a sense of depth and movement.

MUSIC IS THE COMBINATION OF SOUND AND SILENCE

Lecture 999

Rests are just as important as the notes in music.

Students must learn to observe musical silences now and then things like such as caesuras, grand pauses, etc. will make more sense later.

Silence can have a dramatic impact in a performance. Teach the students to respect that silence.

I do not let beginning band students put their horns down in the rests.
(Method book)

Keep tapping the foot and counting through the rests, even if it is at the end of a line.

Consider how importance counting rests are in the sight-reading room!
(whole rests in 3/4 time)

Making sounds in rests.....

TEACH YOUR BAND REHEARSAL LIKE IT'S A PRIVATE LESSON

Thomas J. Price

Cindy Price Svehla

MODEL FOR YOUR STUDENTS

This is so important in Beginner Band, but is still as valuable later, too.

Play for your students! Demonstrate good tone, phrasing, articulation and style. Show them what it is to be a musician. They need to know what a good supported resonant tone sounds like. Help them develop their inner ear by modeling.

Note: This is NOT rote teaching....

STUDENTS ARE A REFLECTION OF THEIR TEACHER

You don't have to play the trombone...play on what
you're good at!

We ask our students to practice. As teachers, we
should show the students we are also active in
playing. Practice your craft!

We are also life long learners! Let your students
know that you are still actively involved in your craft!

UTILIZE YOUR
REHEARSAL
TIME TO THE
FULLEST
EXTENT

Be organized and prepared.

Know exactly what you are setting out to accomplish in each rehearsal.

Have an efficient way to take care of attendance, etc. in a way that won't take away from rehearsal time.

Have a plan to handle student questions, music requests, repair problems, etc. in a way that won't rob from your rehearsal time. I just will not fix instruments during class. I may be able to identify a problem, but I won't stop the flow of the rehearsal to correct the problem. Often, I can't fix it anyway.....

If you lose ten minutes in a rehearsal every day, that's about 35 rehearsals per school year, or 20% of your time.

As a conductor, you must be able to identify mistakes that will correct themselves and the ones that need to be immediately identified and corrected.

Know what you are going to say when you stop and how you plan to improve it.

Comments must be made for a reason.

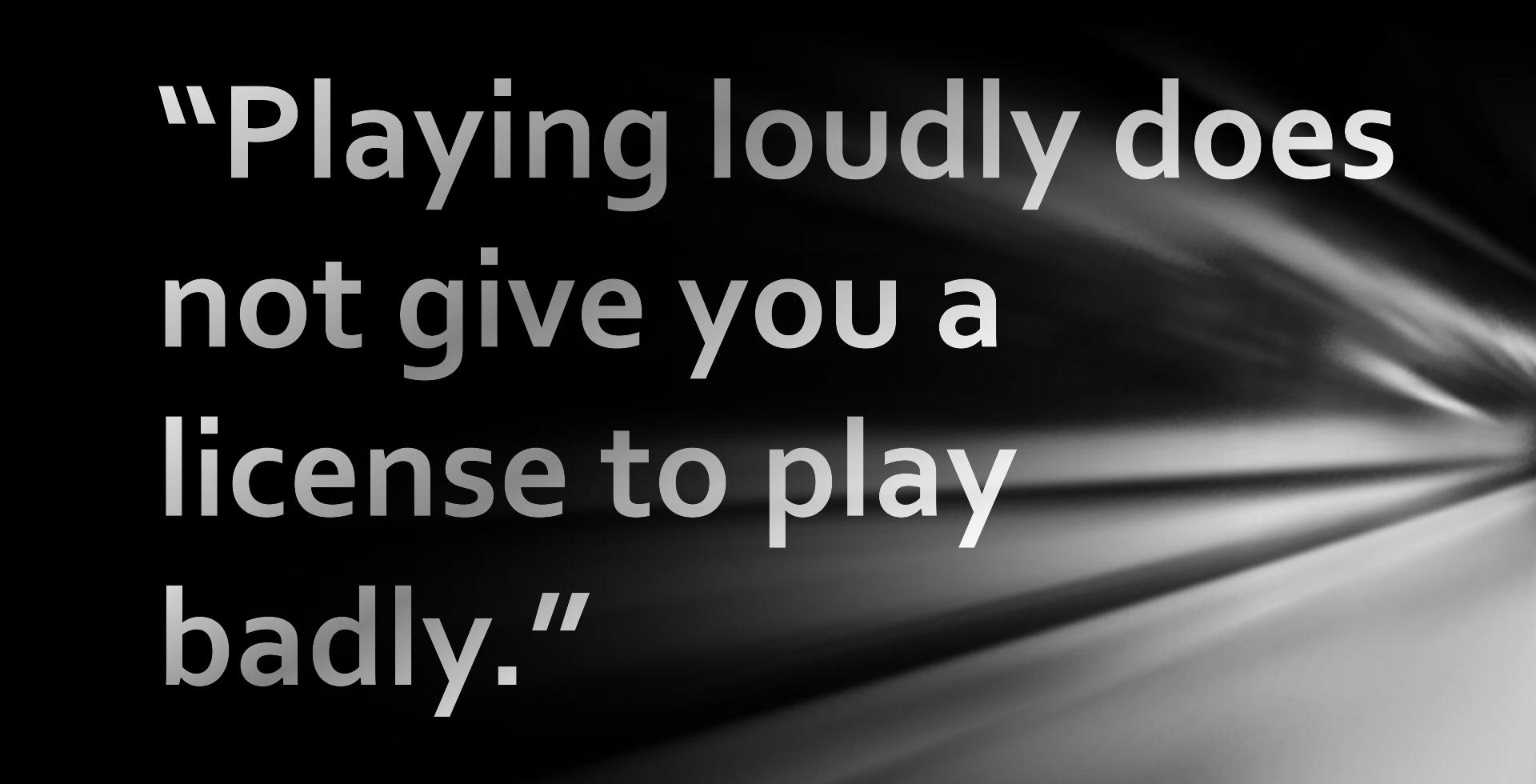
Don't just stop in rehearsal to talk about something that needs fixed.

Know how to fix it and have a plan to do so.

Stop for a reason, identify it and drill it. Solve it!

Make it clear why you have stopped.

Know the score before you go to the podium.

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“Playing loudly does
not give you a
license to play
badly.”

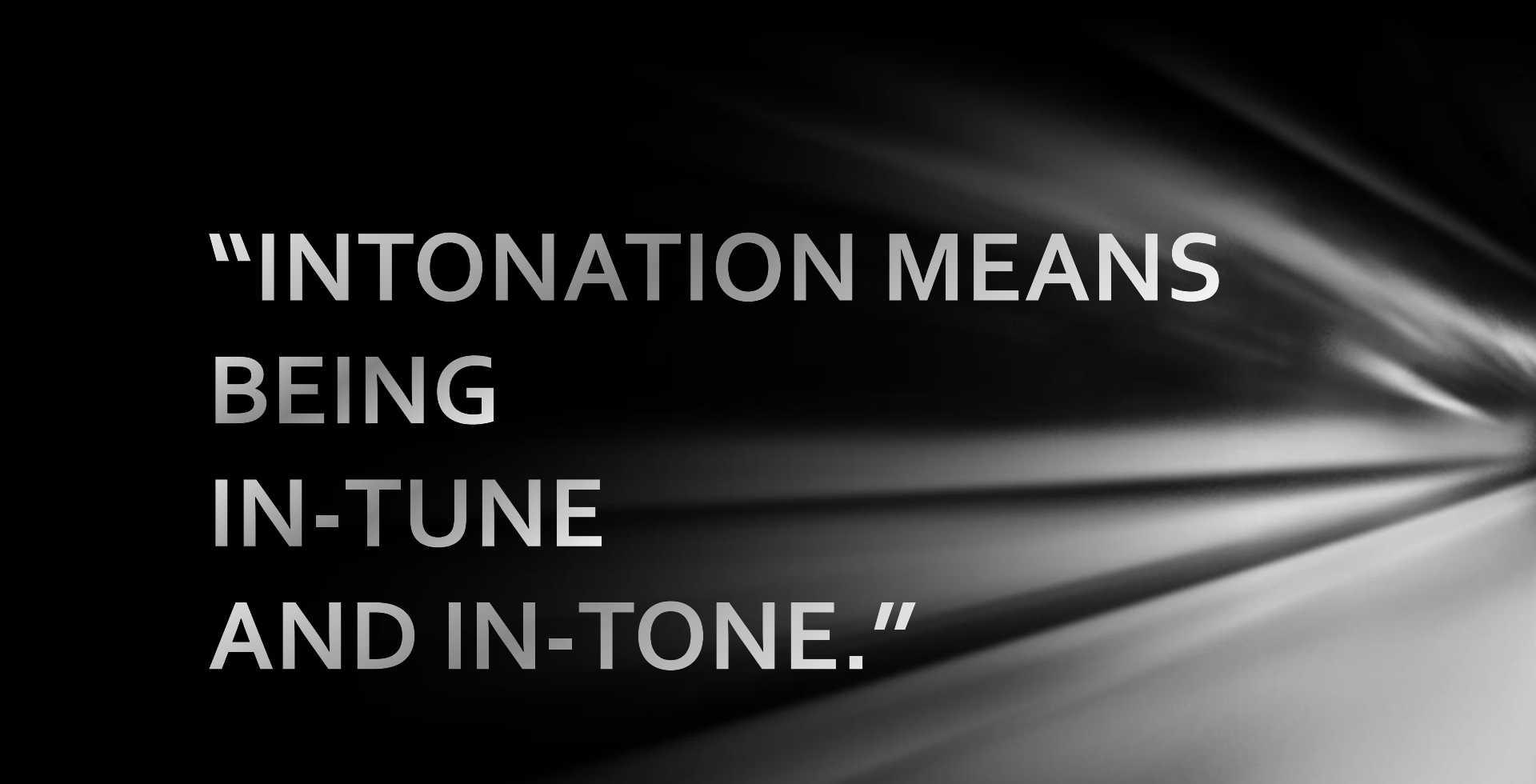
Wm. G. Mack

- A beautiful, resonant tone quality must be “burned into their minds.” The sooner, the better.
- Recommend listening to professional recordings. That’s so easy now!
- Long tones, warm-ups, lip slurs. (Like brushing your teeth)! Explain to the students that even professional musicians still play long tones and warm ups. If nothing else, use this time to walk around and monitor hand positions, slide positions posture, etc.
- Don Hanna Daily Warm Ups

**TONE,
TONE,
TONE**

T O N E

- **Teach HOW to practice. Practice makes awesome! Teaching the students how to practice effectively at home on their own should be a goal. (Ownership)**
- **Don't practice until you get it right, practice until you can't get it wrong!!!**
- **Again, monitor embouchures and breath support.**
- **Later on, play chorales, small ensembles, work on tone across the registers, use scales, chromatic scale.**
- **NEVER sacrifice tone for volume!**

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**“INTONATION MEANS
BEING
IN-TUNE
AND IN-TONE.”**

Wm. G. Mack

You can never over listen in regards to intonation.

It is just about impossible to tune a bad tone quality. Again, this goes back to the applicable set of fundamentals. You must start working on this on Day One!

You must tune every day in band. The students need to know that's how important it is!

Tuning takes practice. It is an acquired skill.

Tuners, to use them or not to use them? That is the question.

You must train your students at some point to take some responsibility for their pitch. (Ownership)

Flutes don't play in tune. Flute players do.

Anchor your pitch to the bass line and balance that way.

Students must play in tune within the section as well as across the band.

Students must be taught to listen across the band. Not only does this help intonation, but also blend.

Mix it up sometimes. (Instrumentation/seating)

They must play in tune within the section, as well as across the band.

Students need to know the tuning tendencies of their instruments and how to adjust for those.

Just because the band starts out tuned, doesn't mean that at some point, small adjustments might not need to be made. Students need to learn to listen for these moments and know what to do to "fix" them.

TEACHING
BEGINNING BAND
WHEN IT'S JUST
ME, MYSELF & I

Motivation is The Key

Set high expectations!

10 second daily playing test....a must in my book.

Chair order....make first chair a big deal

Incentive charts

Spark plug, Brownie points

Practice charts...you decide..

Invite “judges” or clinicians to your classroom.

The best way to motivate students is through performance. Look for these opportunities.

Middle School Contest

Make your band students feel like they are the most important people in the school.

Funding...Boxtops for Education, Lids for Kids, Best Choice, Prairie Farms, Campbell's, PTO

ON RECRUITING

This should be an ongoing process, not just a once a year thing.

Start band in 5th or 6th grade? Time is more important than the grade level.

Don't be afraid to start tubas, French horn...

Pyramid of sound

Mexican Hat Dance routine.

Instrument Testing~Special Thanks to the Staff at Palen Music Company for preparing and sharing the document that is in your packet today.

YBNB&

Tell the advantages of being in band.....test scores, etc.

Don't hide the fact that you want the students in your program, but accept gracefully that not everyone will want to be in band. (That's hard for me).



Be particular about the equipment you want, unfortunately you may not always get it!

Band kids are my favorite kids. They'll remember!

Use your older kids, especially the quarterbacks or cheerleaders, etc. Show the diversity of your group.

Discuss sports, cheerleading, etc.

No one sits on the bench in band!

Don't do something because your friends are! But, yes, do!!!

Everyone gets to sing, or draw or cook at home. Band is the one chance to learn an instrument without paying for private lessons, so give it a try!

They're not signing their lives away. Just try an instrument!

Certificates & Medals...which brings me to contest....They learn more in that one month than all year: solos, small ensembles.

Ownership, pride, teamwork, a sense of accomplishment



SPECIAL THANKS TO:

❖ Scott Kuhlman

❖ Chuck Appleton

❖ Palen Music Company

❖ Liza Zumbrummen

❖ Jim Oliver

❖ William G. Mack

❖ Rob Goade

Julie Capps

band2@hotmail.com

◊ Resources:

- ◊ *Rhythm Master Books 1 & 2*
 - ◊ JR McEntyre & Harry Haines
 - ◊ *Division of Beat, Books 1A, 1B & 2*
 - ◊ JR McEntyre & Harry Haines
 - ◊ Sight Reading For Band, Vol. 1 & 2
 - ◊ B.G. Evans & Norman J. Nelson
- ◊ Please feel free to contact me for more information or for any documents in email form.

Thanks to Hal Leonard
and
Southern Music Company.

- Hal Leonard for allowing my request to use and print parts of the Rhythm Master Band Book 1 during this clinic this January. Southern Music Company owns the rights to this publication. Permission was granted.
- “Used by permission of Southern Music Company”