

A pencil sketch of a marching band formation on a red and white striped background. The sketch shows several band members in various poses, some holding instruments like trumpets and trombones. The text "Beginning Band Basics" is overlaid on the sketch in a large, bold, black font.

# **Beginning Band Basics**

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# **Pedagogical Premises**



**It is much easier to teach  
correct playing habits  
from the very beginning  
than to correct bad habits  
“down the road.”**

**1.**

**2.**

**Musicality starts with the establishment of good tone and good technique.**

**Good tone and good technique are obtained through the development of good embouchure, posture, and playing position.**

**2a.**

**Repetition is Mastery**

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**3.**

**Keep it simple.**

**4.**

**Don't over complicate.**



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**Young students need to  
see things in black and  
white.**

**5.**

$$2 + 2 = 4$$





**6.**

**In order to establish  
correct playing habits the  
teacher must move  
slowly and deliberately.**

**The challenge of playing  
the instrument correctly  
will keep students from  
becoming bored**

**7.**

**OR**

**7a.**

**It is not necessary to play  
lots of notes to keep  
students interested in  
band.**

**8.**

**Teaching is not telling.**

**Covering is not teaching.**

**9.**

**Living in the world of  
“should” is not  
productive.**

**The teacher must  
maintain a steady pulse  
for the student at all  
times.**

**10.**

**STEADY  
BEAT  
SUPPLY**

**11.**

**The tongue should be introduced only after the embouchure is firm and stable.**



**12.**

**Note reading should not  
be a part of the first  
lesson.**



**As band directors' we are like "general practitioners."**

**Good private lesson teachers are the specialists; i.e., heart surgeons, podiatrists, etc.**



**With good pedagogy and persistence we  
have the skills and knowledge to keep our  
“patients” healthy at all levels.**

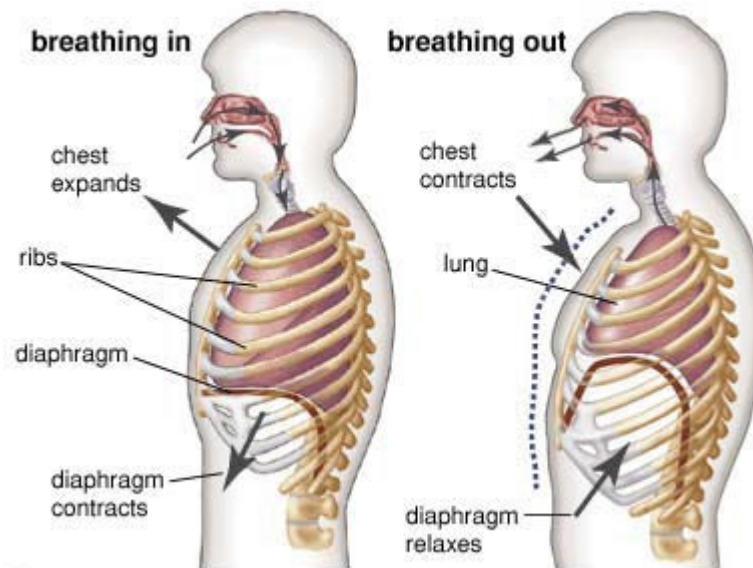


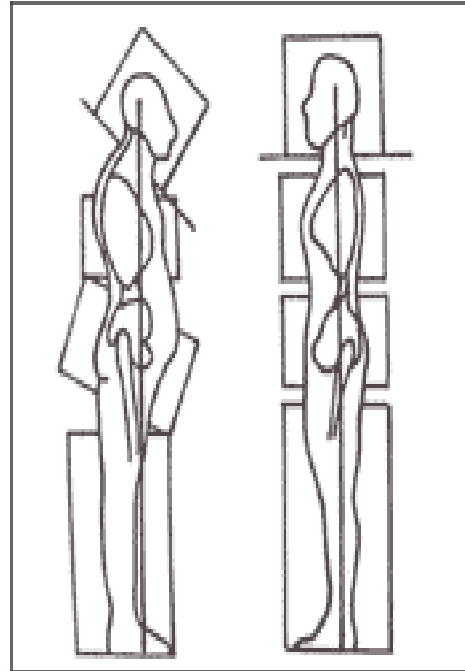
A pencil sketch of a band with saxophones and trumpets against a pink background. The sketch is centered and shows several instruments, including saxophones on the left and trumpets on the right. The background is a light pink color with some faint, circular patterns.

# “Commonalties”

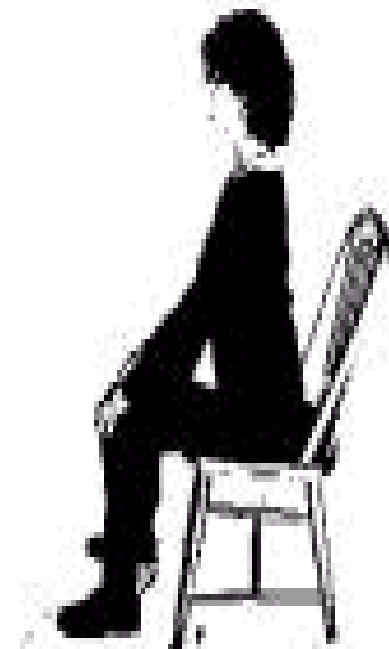
Beginning Band  
Basics

# Breathing

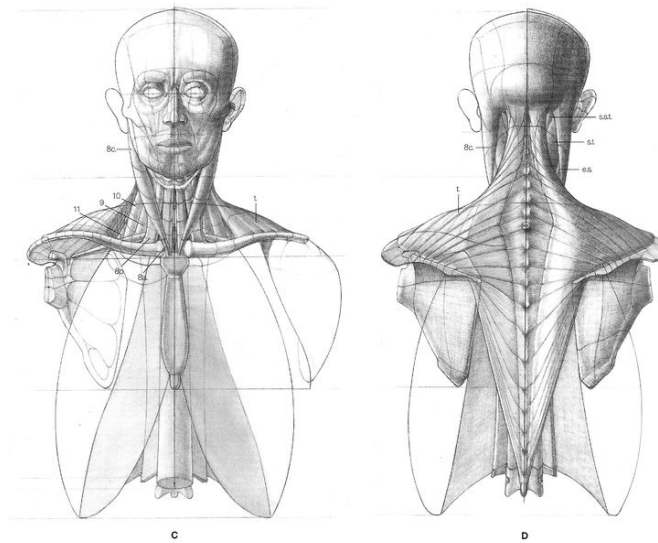




# Posture



# Relaxed Neck and Shoulders



# Head Alignment

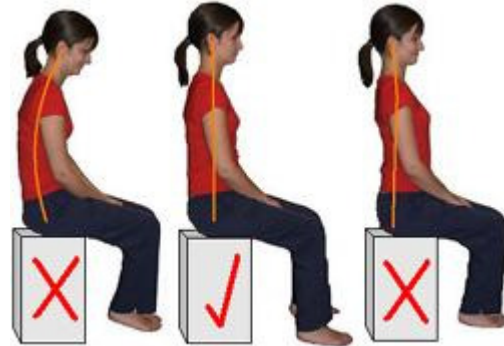


**Instrument  
brought to the  
student NOT the  
student  
to the instrument**





# Position must look comfortable





# Hand Position



# Straight Wrists

**Quick, firm, relaxed  
finger motion**



**Elbows away from  
the body**



**Rounded  
Embouchure  
Aperture in center  
of mouth**



**Flat, firm chin**  
**No puffed**  
**cheeks**



Beginning instruction should be thought of as a heavy train pulling out of the track.

At first progress is extremely slow and deliberate.

As proficiency is gained the student can begin to move ahead faster because of the solid foundation established in the beginning.





**Kids don't like what they can't play.**



**Quality attracts quality**



# **The First Day**

**This is a defining moment.**

# First Lesson

- Establish correct playing fundamentals

- Establish a serious but positive attitude toward band.

# First Lesson

- Establish structure and procedures

- Establish good classroom management

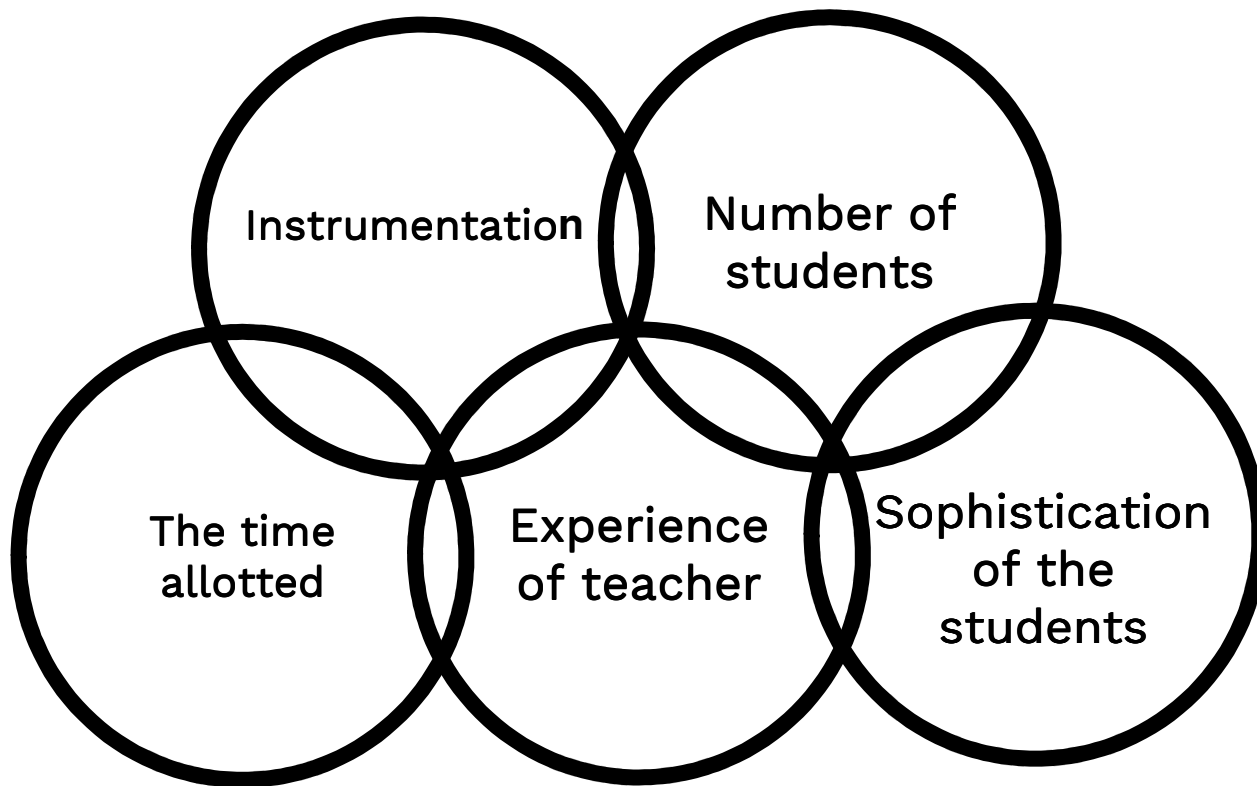
- Present technical information clearly and logically

# **Fun is doing something well**

- Not necessary to learn a melody at the first lesson.

- Students will appreciate a serious (but positive) environment in which to learn.

**The amount students can accomplish will vary from school to school and class to class and will depend on...**







**The goal of the first lesson  
is to get the students  
started correctly.**



Reinforce the importance of respecting the efforts of each student in the class.

Everyone needs to feel comfortable in order to do their best.



All students need to know that no one will ever laugh at them regardless of the sound they may produce. It is up to the teacher to create this “safe” environment for each student in the classroom.

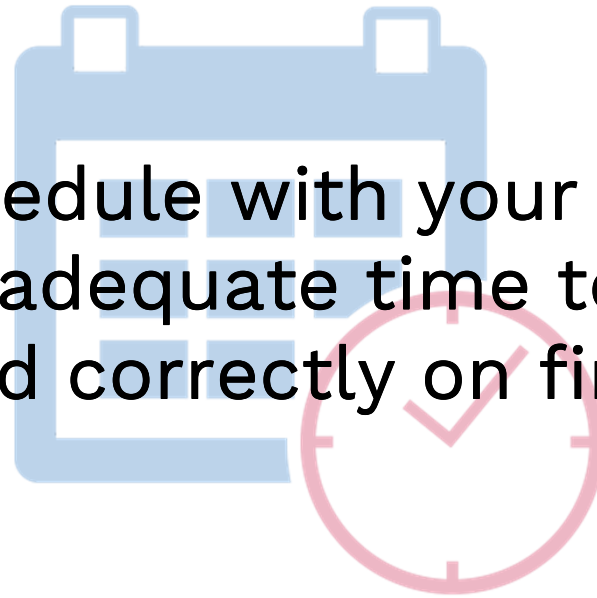
A wise teacher will guide the students through these first steps in a careful and thoughtful manner, teaching only what the students are able to learn in the time allotted and not simply “cover” the material to “get through the entire lesson.”



# **The First Day**


# First Day

Negotiate a schedule with your principal that allows for adequate time to get students started correctly on first day.



# First Day



Have the room and chairs organized with names on chairs (sticky tabs work well). 

Do not use music stands for the first several lessons.

# First Day

The students will be very excited.  
Your calm directed approach is essential.





# First Day

Assemble instruments with students sitting on the floor beside the instrument or with the instrument on a table.



# First Day

Once assembled, teach students how to carry the instrument to their seats.

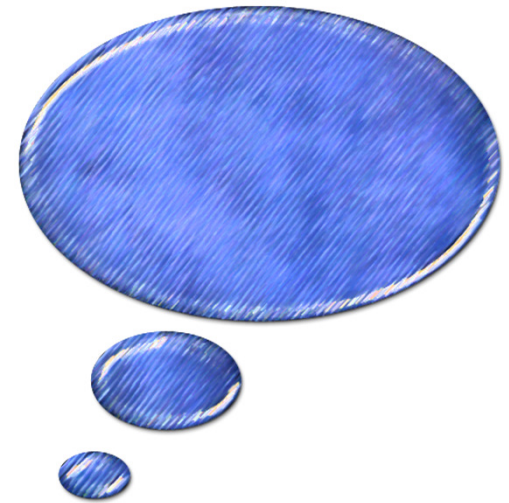


# **First Day Demonstration**

- Flute - Mae Strizich
- Clarinet - Troy Vaughn
- Bass Clarinet - Anne Baldwin
  - Alto Sax - Finn Berg
- Tenor Sax - Kaylie Monforton
- Trumpet - Osker Patterson
- Trombone - Aden Matosich
  - Baritone - Colter Lapp
- Percussion - Jake Adams

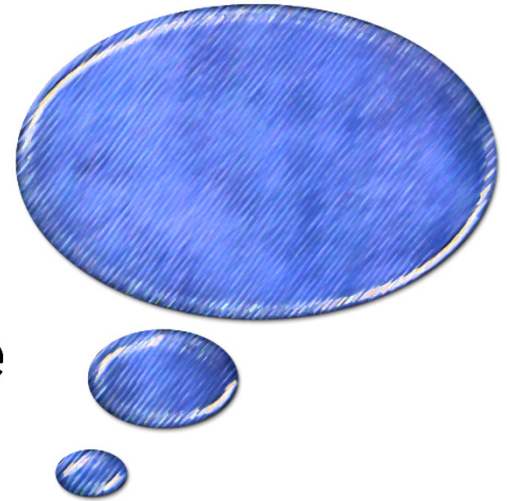
# Additional Thoughts

- ✓ Consider using a second 1st method book.
- ✓ In most cases it is not necessary or desirable to make it through an entire method book the first year.



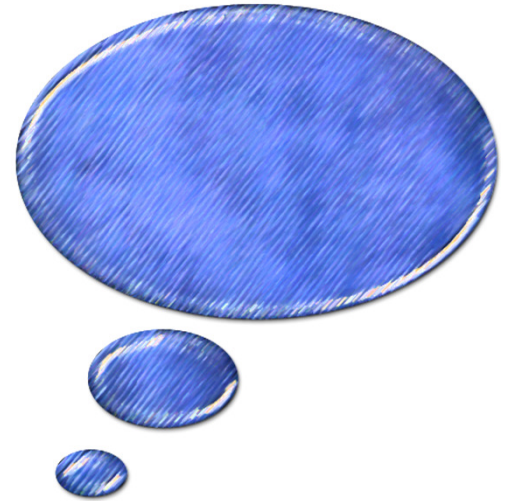
# Additional Thoughts

- ✓ Never allow students to write in note names and fingerings; however, writing in counts can be an effective tool for teaching rhythms.



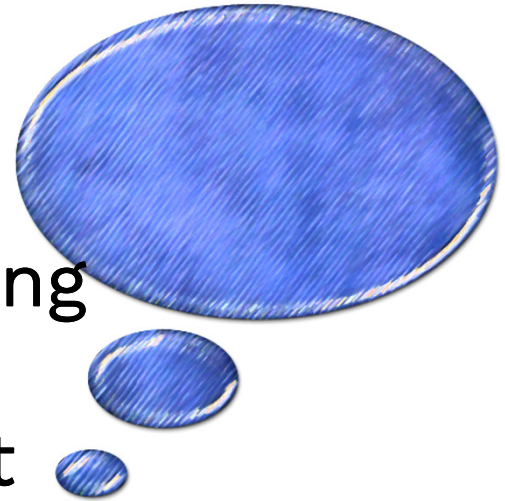
# Additional Thoughts

- ✓ Short written assignments done in class can help students understand concepts being taught.

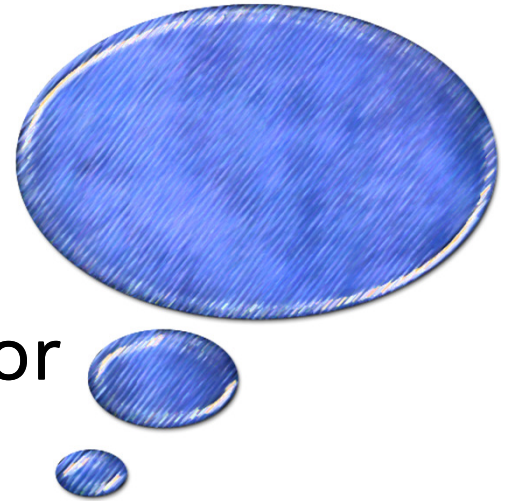


# Additional Thoughts

- ✓ Avoid continually playing along with students. This will cause students to become dependent on the teacher “showing the student “how it goes” AND it is impossible to really hear students when the teacher is playing along.



# Additional Thoughts



- ✓ Use Skype, FaceTime, etc. for enrichment opportunities.
- ✓ If you bring in guests to work with you high school be sure they work with your beginners as well.



**Thank you and thank you  
to the the 6<sup>th</sup> grade  
band students  
from Chief Joseph  
Middle School.**

