

Unlocking the Mystery of Musical Mastery

NMMEA All-State Conference 2015

Donna Schmidt & Amy Williams

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- What do we want our students to know and be able to do?
- How will we know when they have learned it?
- What is musical mastery?
- How do we motivate students to be successful?

WHAT IS THE QUARTERLY MASTERY SKILLS CHECKLIST?

- Planned practice focus
- Focus on mastery rather than time spent practicing
- Students work at their own pace/level
- Includes skills you deem essential for your students to know and be able to do.
 - Resources can include: method books, Smart Music exercises, scales, repertoire, songs by ear, etc.
 - Be realistic. Start slow - LESS IS MORE!
 - Tailor checklist to individual student needs (ie. Special Education students)
- Places accountability on the student.

HOW DO YOU IMPLEMENT THE CHECKLIST?

- Determine the frequency (Quarterly works well)
- Determine how you are going to use it
 - In lieu of final exam
 - Assessment grade (determine weight)
- Determine how you are going to listen to excerpts (It takes A LOT of time!)
 - Smart Music
 - Email audio attachments
 - Lunch & Learns
 - Class time (set parameters – once a week or a few minutes a day)
 - Before/After School (“mini lessons”)
- Give timely feedback (the quicker the better) to ensure progress.
 - Include positive and encouraging comments
 - Provide constructive feedback
- Offer incentives for early completion
 - Reduced practice time
 - Recognition
- Offer extensions for extra credit
 - Additional solos/etudes
 - Songs by ear
 - Compositions/Projects (Holiday CD)

WHAT WERE THE RESULTS?

- Observed
 - More students were motivated to practice.
 - Students practiced more effectively and efficiently.
 - Students practiced what we intended for them to practice.
 - Students demonstrated connections within repertoire.
 - Students worked harder than the teacher.
 - Personality and relationships were discovered.
 - Individualized feedback was given. Ability to assist more students effectively.
 - Information guided daily rehearsal.
 - Students were motivated to do another activity in order to not do a checklist.
- Student Written Reflection
 - Students were able to identify strengths and weaknesses.
 - Procrastination was the largest factor.
 - Students were able to verbalize the importance of the checklist.
 - Students made real-world connections.
 - Students were able to set goals for the next time.

IN CONCLUSION

- Teacher must be willing to be flexible.
- More knowledge of what students know and are able to do (or not) than ever will be gained.
- Use that knowledge to guide daily lessons and goal setting.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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NAME _____ PERIOD _____ FOLIO _____ SLOT _____

SAMPLE QUARTERLY SKILLS CHECKLIST - Quarter 2

Complete these at your own pace. All skills must be completed no later than December 15.

BONUS: *Once all skills are mastered, required weekly practice time is reduced to 60 min. per week for the remainder of the current quarter.*

VOCABULARY Define the following musical terms & draw the symbol (where applicable).

Staff -

Treble Clef -

Bass Clef -

Time Signature -

Key Signature -

Sharp -

Flat -

Natural -

Duet -

Fermata -

Pick-up notes -

RHYTHM Write in the counts to the following rhythmical exercises and perform on a concert F.

PERFORMANCE

Scales for Winds/Mallets mm. = 100:

_____ *F Concert Scale (2 octaves if possible)*

_____ *Bb Concert Scale (2 octaves if possible)*

_____ *Concert Bb Chromatic Scale (1 octave)*

Foundations for Superior Performance Exercises for Winds/Mallets:

_____ p. 7 Warm-up set 1 Option 1

_____ p. 10 Bb Mini-Scale & Tonic Arpeggio

_____ p. 10 Bb Major Scale Pattern 1 (all tongued, slur 4, slur 2/tongue 2)

_____ p. 11 Bb Major Scale Pattern 2 (all tongued, slur 4, slur 2/tongue 2)

_____ p. 12 F Mini-Scale & Tonic Arpeggio

_____ p. 12 F Major Scale Pattern 1 (all tongued, slur 4, slur 2/tongue 2)

_____ p. 12 F Major Scale Pattern 2 (all tongued, slur 4, slur 2/tongue 2)

Essential Elements Exercises for Winds/Mallets:

_____ #89 - Chorale

_____ #155 - Technique Trax

_____ #156- Chorale

Foundations for Superior Performance Percussion Snare Exercises:

_____ p. 63 Exercise 1 for Mini-Scales

_____ p. 64 Exercise 2 for Scale Patterns 1 & 2

_____ p. 65 Exercise 3 for Scales in Thirds

Songs by Ear for Winds/Mallets:

_____ *Hot Cross Buns* in concert F

_____ *Happy Birthday* starting on concert Bb

_____ *Frere Jacques* starting on concert Bb

EXTENSION

_____ Select & perform an etude or solo (at least 16 measures) from Essential Elements or SmartMusic

Name of Selection: _____

Name _____ Class _____

SKILLS CHECKLIST REFLECTION

Give a brief description of the activity that you have completed.	What was important about this assignment? Why is it important?
Where could I use this again?	What was my process for completing this assignment?
How well did I do? Why?	What did I learn about myself? What should I do next?

SAMPLE January 2015

Dear Band Parents,

We are writing to let you know about some exciting changes that we have recently made to how we use the Smart Music software. We have set up skills mastery units in Smart Music that students are to complete at their own pace. The objective is for students to focus on the concept of mastery as opposed to focusing on the amount of time spent practicing. Smart Music provides structure and feedback to help students achieve the appropriate level of mastery more efficiently and provides a simple way for them to submit the exercises to us. It makes it easy for us to then listen and provide feedback regarding the students' progress. We have listened to over 200 submissions so far and are very impressed with how well the students are doing!

Students using Smart Music at home can receive the practice time "discount" as follows:

- **90 Minutes/week for an A** - Submit at least 2 checklist items through Smart Music as well as the weekly playing test. Don't forget to check the SM box on your practice record to receive the discount.
- **60 Minutes/week for an A** – Have we lost our minds? No, this is an incentive for those students that complete the checklist early. They will only be required to practice 60 minutes per week to receive an A for the remainder of the quarter if they choose. It is the gift of time!

In addition, we will be providing students with extension activities that they can complete using Smart Music. One of those activities is for them to create their own CDs which make great gifts for friends and family!

Students that are not enrolled in Smart Music may complete their mastery checklist by recording each exercise at home and emailing it to us. We will then provide feedback and confirm whether or not it has been mastered and they can come get our initials on their checklist. Students can also play their exercises during class time either live or in a practice room using Smart Music. **All checklists are due on Monday, December 15.**

Also new to Smart Music is the ability to have students without a Smart Music subscription set up an account free of charge and use Smart Music during school on one of our practice room computers. This enables us to have all of the students perform some of their weekly playing tests through Smart Music so that we do not lose rehearsal time. We currently have 1 computer available, but are working toward eventually creating several practice room labs using iPads.

If they have not yet done so, students can enroll in the Smart Music class using the following link:

<https://gradebook.smartmusic.com/enroll/class/107527>

There is no fee unless you choose to purchase the \$40 subscription in order to access the program from home.

Thank you for your continued support of your child's music education!

Sincerely,

Donna Schmidt, DRMS Band Director