

Rehearsals

How to make them work!

Advice and ideas may come to you from many folk always examine:- That would work for me if

Remember what they (your ensemble performers) see from you is what will influence what you get back.

Set up:- Beginning the year.

1. Know your students and their capabilities before trying to put an ensemble together.
2. Plan seating on paper.
3. Explain the routine. Chairs, Stands, instrument cases, tuning, packing up.
 - a. Practice setting up and packing up without instruments
 - b. Give out the first piece(s) of music outside of a rehearsal.
4. Choose music and parts appropriate to the individual and the group – check with your instrumental teachers especially when in doubt.
5. Make sure the room is ready prior to the session and locate any portable equipment that will be required. At least do the tasks that you wouldn't expect the students to manage on their own.

Managing music

1. Store the originals carefully after stamping etc. Make use of the Music Secretary (Independent schools only.)
2. Copy parts:- The number of parts in a commercial pack almost never fits the reality in a classroom. It is considered 'fair' to copy these parts. These should be stamped and dated according to copyright.
3. Put all of the music for one ensemble together in one place.
4. Have a filing cabinet or compactus in the room or very close to the rehearsal room. Don't let students access original music.
5. Issue the student copies of the music. Students should own a plastic pocket folder. (display folder)

Rehearsal content

Warm ups appropriate to musical development and the technique requirements of your chosen repertoire.

- i. Scales
- ii. Dynamics
- iii. Articulation
- iv. Arpeggios & chords

Teaching. Plan what you are going to teach students about music and be ready to answer questions.

- i. Form
- ii. Rhythm
- iii. Texture
- iv. Roles – melody / accompaniment
- v. Balance
- vi. Style
- vii. Other as it relates to the theory concepts being studied.

Charts. Choose a selection of music that you might teach an ensemble well ahead of the first rehearsal. You will need to begin with at least 2 – 3 charts for the first rehearsal.

- Think of the capabilities of the members
- The personalities and interest of the students
- Choose a theme or a series of opportunities for learning when choosing music.
- Write individual parts for the lesser or more advanced player which ever is appropriate.
- Think about the key & range if you want to use singers.
- Currently popular music has a short shelf life if you are going to outlay considerable funds.
- Allow students to give the thumbs up or down to a chart. (majority only)
 - i. If it is good music and within members capabilities they will love playing it once they know it.
 - ii. Play through if possible the first time, stopping and starting each section. If not possible then listening to a performance helps.
 - iii. The beginning students will have difficulties if they don't have the melody or at least the rhythm of the melody or something simpler. Avoid giving beginners parts with multiple bars rest in odd places.