

JENNIFER AIKEY

K-12 TEACHING VIDEO

BACKGROUND

- Students tuned themselves using a drone 440 Hz A before the video began.
- This is an 8th Grade group (2nd year players)
- I had a co-teacher for this class of 57 students. There are a total of 100 students in our 8th Grade Orchestra total.
- There is middle aisle between the 2nd violins and violas. The camera is placed at the end of that aisle, just in front of the basses.
- There were a couple of students back in the practice rooms working on an upcoming All State audition.
- We regularly rotated seats and violin sections.
- We also had a high school intern assisting some students behind the camera.

WARM UP

- Students began with playing open D, and I made sure they had a set tone quality before they played their D Major Scale and arpeggio.
- After the D Major scale, students were asked to practice the fingerings of the second octave of the two octave G Major scale before playing it.
- After they played through the two octave G Major scale, they played the scale using a drone method.
- Drone scale: the lower strings play the G drone as the violins ascend through the first octave, then the violins hold the G drone as the lower strings ascend. They repeat this for the upper octave. Once both the violins and the lower string reach the top G, they descend together. The continuous drone allows them to check and adjust their intonation as they play the scale.
- I have the violins shifting to third position for the upper octave to reinforce shifting skills taught earlier in the year.

TEACHING A NEW SKILL

- Teaching the second octave of the G Major arpeggio: I first begin by showing all of the students where they are placing their left hand on their instrument in order to play their arpeggio.
- I have students play each pitch one at a time, reinforcing the new fingerings. I go over to the cello and bass sections to help them.
- I remind students that they already know the first octave arpeggio and show them where to shift for the second octave.
- We then play the arpeggio slowly, each note twice in half notes.
- After the arpeggio, I remind students of important instrument position and technique needed to shift.
- This is a new skill that has been introduced; therefore, more sectionals and individual help will be utilized in the future to.

REHEARSAL ON REPERTOIRE

- Students are rehearsing “Colors of the Wind” (arr. Higgins) for our TV/Movie Fall Concert with our neighboring high schools. The concert is about 3 weeks away from the date this video was filmed.
- Before they begin rehearsing, students are reminded of style, articulation, bow strokes, and phrasing.
- As students begin playing the piece, I remind them about balance. and making sure the melody can be heard. We have strong violas and cellos, but they are still learning to scale it back when they do not have the melody. We are continuing to build confidence in some of the 1st Violins. 😊
- The biggest focus on the piece that day was balance and phrasing.

REFLECTION

- The two octave G Major scale and arpeggio will continue to be reviewed both aurally and visually with scale sheets that reinforce where they should shift/their fingerings. My co-teacher and I will continue to walk around the room and fix posture/position issues, along with reinforcement of shifting skills.
- We will continue to work on balance, intonation, beauty, blend, dynamics, and phrasing in Colors of the Wind.
- Positive reinforcement and praise are helping many of them to build confidence. Modeling is something I use frequently. I can focus on making my feedback more concise and succinct.