



Second Year Orchestra Monthly Plans and Suggestions

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Curriculum Alignment Project

This CAP document contains the following: A teaching sequence for year two, a detailed review of fundamentals, monthly concepts to be taught, weekly lesson plans, drill sequences, examples for the board, suggestions for “working pieces,” teaching tips and good teaching practices.

CAP Level 2 Monthly Outline:

Month 1: August-September

- Review of fundamentals
- Vln/vla fourth finger review/study
- Dotted quarter-eighth note rhythm

Month 2: October

- 3/4 time signature review/study
- Chromatic study
- Low 1 unit

Month 3: November

- G Major and E minor
- “Breaking down” a piece
- Consolidation of skills

Month 4: December

- Dynamics unit
- Artistic skills in repertoire

Month 5: January

- Consolidation of skills
- A Major unit

Month 6: February

- Legato, staccato, spiccato, martele unit
- Prepare for Festival

Month 7: March

- Consolidation of skills
- Prepare for Festival
- Concert etiquette review

Month 8: April

- Sixteenth note unit
- Prepare for Spring Concert

Month 9: May

- Prepare for Spring Concert

Example Key for this document:

DDDD=four quarters

D2D4=two half notes

D234=one whole note

RRRR=four quarter rests

1 ta 2 ta 3 ta 4 ta=a measure of eighth notes

1 tah ta tah 2 tah ta tah 3 tah ta tah 4 tah ta tah- a measure of sixteenth notes

Pieces referred to in this document:
(in order)

“Moonlight Tango” by R. Meyer

“Shadow Dance” by R. Meyer

“Minor Variations” by Shapiro

“British Grenadiers” arr. Caponegro

“Fiddling a-Round” by Caponegro

“Accents” by R. Frost

“Classic Sinfonia” by DelBorgo

“Fiddles on Fire” by M. Williams

“March Heroic” by DelBorgo

“St. Anthony Chorale” arr. Dakow

“Salisbury Overture” by McQuilken

Month 1: August-September

Curriculum Performance Objectives (265) 1.3, 1.5, 1.6
State Standards 1, 2, 5

Concepts taught this month: Review of fundamentals from year one, review violin/viola fourth finger study, counting the dotted quarter- eighth rhythm.

Weeks One and Two: The student will ...

- Review posture and position
- Review bow hold and bow arm
- Review variable bow speeds and correct bow distributions
- Review exact left hand position
- Review three key signatures: D Major, G Major, and C Major
- Review the “sad scale” (DEFGABCD)
- Verbalize and sight sing

Procedures: At the beginning of the year, the first two to five days will be spent doing “housekeeping” items and going over the rules, regulations, concert dates, handbook and explanation of events for the coming year. Once the class begins playing instruments, your review lesson plans should include classes that stress necessary fundamental skills. In the first two weeks, rote work should be the main focus as a prelude to the written page. It is suggested that students should be seated in rows (spreading out to allow manual assistance) with no music stands for the first 3-5 days or so.

Instrument position is first. Many students grow over the summer, therefore cello and bass students will need to be re-positioned as if they have started playing for the first time! Please check and adjust the length of the students’ endpin. Step back and take a good look at the length of their arms, and where the cello/bass is resting against their body. Each violin/viola student should start the year out with a shoulder pad/rest that works with his or her particular anatomy. They will need assistance with proper instrument position, and daily follow through is a must!! Now is the time to fix every single position!!

In the beginning two weeks, put your emphasis on the bow arm to establish the basis for what performance is all about: TONE. Begin by working on the bow hand; making sure the thumb is bent. Perform the finger calisthenics daily, building strength.

It is a great idea to work on bowing skills using open strings and double stops. Emphasis should be put on BOW SPEED from day one!! Here is a two and four-bar sequence which works nicely when concentrating on variable bow speeds and tone quality.

Example 1: HAVE THE STUDENTS PLACE THE BOW AT THE THUMB!!!

1. Half notes first: D2D4 A2A4 RRRR
2. D2D4 A2A4 D2D4 A2A4 RRRR
3. D2D4 A2A4 D2D4 G2G4 RRRR (watch wrist for violins on G string level)
4. Whole notes: D234 D234 RRRR
5. D234 D234 D234 D234 RRRR
6. D234 A234 D234 A234 RRRR
7. D234 A234 D234 G234 RRRR (watch wrist for violins on G-string level)
8. Dotted half -quarter note: D23 D D23 D RRRR (the up-bow should be swift and ALL THE WAY BACK TO THE THUMB!! Try not to accent the up-bow...)
9. Quarter notes: DDDD AAAA RRRR
10. DDAA DDAA RRRR
11. DDDD AAAA DDDD GGGG RRRR

Repetition is essential, tone quality is crucial. After a long summer break, many students will be “rusty” and bows will slide toward the fingerboard. Simply point this out and use manual assistance. Definitely have the kids sing the patterns as they play, as well as speaking the rests out loud. This will enable the group to function as their own metronomes. It also allows you the freedom to give the important manual assistance to the individuals who have crooked bows. Keep giving verbal reminders about using frog to tip bowing.

Please note: Try the above sequence using open string double stops. Young students enjoy playing double stops and more importantly, the bow is “forced” in a straight direction when played on two strings!! Include listening to individuals during this drill, as well as going by rows, instruments, boys/girls, etc. to keep the drill interesting. When students are not bowing, they can pizzicato the pulse on an open string, keeping them engaged and active.

The next step would be to incorporate eighth note bow distribution into the mix (still on open strings). *Please note: Review the counting involved by breaking down this concept.* Here is the eighth note sequence from week twenty-one of the beginning orchestra CAP which you may add to or change around as you see fit.

Example 2:

1. Students speak the line several times
2. Students pizzicato the line on open D, students “air bow” each line
3. Students bow each line using small bows for eighth notes
4. Add string crossings for further enrichment.

Example 3: Two-measure eighth note learning sequence (from beginning CAP)

1. 1 2ta 3 4/ 1 2ta 3 4
2. 1ta 2ta 3 4/1ta 2ta 3 4
3. 1 2 3ta 4ta/1 2 3ta 4ta
4. 1 2ta 3 4ta/1 2ta 3 4ta
5. 1 2ta 3ta 4/1 2ta 3ta 4

Feel free to use “and” instead of “ta” if you prefer. These two syllables mean the same thing.

If taught thoroughly, these open string studies will take at least half of the period. Proceed to left hand review after sufficient class time has been spent on the bow.

The next step would be to have a daily review of the left hand finger patterns for all instruments in the keys of D, G, C and the “sad scale.” Have a finger pattern discussion often, before you play the various scales. Without a sound in the room, “check” and review EACH left hand position on the instrument, teaching this as if it has never been taught before. Use lots of positive reinforcement, pointing out the students who have wonderful left hand position. Please make sure the violin/viola elbows are way under the instrument!!

At this time, begin working in D major, using the tonic pitch simultaneously in a section or two. Use slow scales with tonic, and use broken thirds with tonic, all taught and demonstrated by rote. After the tonic drills are finished, perform scales in rounds. I would also suggest using scales in rounds with different rhythms going in different sections of the orchestra as a further enrichment

Example 4:

1. Violins start on 4 quarter notes
2. Followed by the viola entrance on two half notes
3. With the cello/bass sections coming in last on a whole note
4. Repeat these scales/broken thirds procedures for the key of G (violins should switch back and forth from the lower octave to the upper octave in G Major) and C Major as well as the “sad scale.”

Follow up lessons for the first two weeks: For ear training purposes, have the students play the tonic pitch open string on a slow quarter note, while singing the scale/thirds. The students will hear the sympathetic vibrations right under their ears!! A teacher demonstration of this is crucial.

Finally, teach the students by rote, the tune “Are You Sleeping” starting on open D. They will learn this best in two bar “chunks.” After the tune is proficient, have the class perform this in a two part round, followed by a 3 and 4 part round. Remember that students will learn this by ear, without the burden of the written page!

Week Three: The student will...

- Perform/Review patterns using fourth finger (violin and viola)
- Perform review lessons out of the method book

Procedures: It is crucial that the violins and violas review and continue to implement the fourth finger usages in their method books and their pieces throughout their second year (also included in the beginning CAP, week 28).

On the board write the following six examples:

Example 1: DEF#G A2A4 AGF#E D2D4
0 1 2 3 4- 4- 4 3 2 1 0- 0- Play 3-5 times!

This simple fourth finger pattern is for the violin/viola sections only (see below for ideas to keep cello/bass busy). *Please note: These patterns must be played very SLOWLY! The students need time to place their fingers very carefully on the fingerboard. Refer to this as a TWO-THREE finger pattern (2nd and 3rd fingers touching).*

Example 2: DEF#G AAAA RRRR
0 1 2 3 4 0 4 0

Example 3: DEF#G AGF#E D2D4 D23 Lift!
0 1 2 3 4 3 2 1 0- 0- 0---- Lift!

Have the students hold up their left hands in a ONE-TWO pattern (1st and 2nd fingers touching). The below patterns use the F-natural: Please continue to choose slow tempos for the students, and use 3-5 repetitions.

Example 4: DEFG A2A4 , AGFE D2D4
0 1 2 3 4- 4- 4 3 2 1 0- 0-

Example 5: DEFG AGFE , D2D4 D23 Lift!
0123 4 3 2 1 4- 4- 4---- Lift!

Bonus Pattern! (difficult)

Example 6: DEFG A2G4, AGAG AGFE, DEFG A2G4, AGFE D23 Lift!
0123 4- 3- 4 3 4 3 4 3 2 1 0123 4- 3- 4 3 2 1 0--- Lift!

Teach these patterns by rote, stressing the TWO-THREE and ONE-TWO finger patterns.

Next, locate a line or two from a method book, which includes fourth finger application. Have pencils handy to mark 4's in their parts!!

Please note: Here are some suggestions to keep the cello/bass involved in this crucial lesson/review:

1. Cello/bass “drone” either the open A string or the open D string
2. Cello/bass play the open string with a half note or quarter note pulse continuously (pizzicato or arco)
3. Cello/bass play the actual notes along with the violin/viola
4. Cello/bass help the teacher “listen” and watch for accurate finger patterns and good intonation

Continue these patterns throughout the week, add various slurs to increase difficulty.

By the third week of school the students should have purchased their new Volume II method books. For the second half of the period, have the students work out of their method books utilizing lines in the book to coincide with the concepts and keys reviewed in the last two weeks of instruction. Look toward the end of Volume I methods, or the beginning of Volume II methods for lines that will benefit the students. Students will need to begin reading at this point. Please remember to “break down” the book using teaching steps, which include singing the line, speaking the rhythm of the line, pizzicato the line, bowing the line on an open string, and playing what is written.

Please note: When teaching skill development, place the students in rows, with a single stand per student and enough space between the students to allow for full movement and teacher manual assistance. The teacher must circulate, correcting one thing at a time, giving attention to each individual.

Follow up: On Friday, evaluate the students by giving a performance test on skills taught from the previous three weeks. Criterion should include tone, correct bow speeds/bow distribution, straight bow direction, finger patterns/keys, and a line or two from a Volume II method book tying these concepts together. Students can play for you in rows, or if time allows, individually with other students keeping pulse with pizzicato.

Week Four: The student will...

- Count and perform patterns and exercises using the dotted quarter eighth note rhythm
- Count and perform the syncopated pattern eighth quarter eighth

Dotted Quarter Eighth:

Procedures: Using non-verbal modeling, (most effective) demonstrate the dotted quarter eighth note rhythm followed by two-quarter notes. Demonstrate this two ways: Arco open D and pizzicato open D. Let the kids hear what the rhythm sounds like being played several times in a row. This is followed by an explanation of the math behind the rhythm. Using the board, have the following combinations written:

Example 1:

1. Dotted quarter-eighth-two quarters
2. Two quarters-dotted quarter-eighth
3. Dotted quarter-eighth-dotted quarter-eighth
4. Dotted quarter-eighth-half note
5. Half note-dotted quarter-eighth

Begin breaking down this concept by instructing the students to “sight say” the above rhythms. Syllables, which work well for the above rhythms, are as follows:

1. “Quar-ter-dot ta three- four” (spoken rhythmically)
2. “One-two quar-ter-dot ta”
3. “Quar-ter-dot ta quar-ter-dot ta”
4. “Quar-ter-dot ta three-----”
5. “One-----quar-ter-dot ta”

It is a good idea to have the students speak rhythmically in a forte voice, and repeat each line several times. *Please note: When students are counting, have them sitting on the edge of their seats, tapping their right toe for pulse!*

Continuing with this, have the class pizzicato the rhythm of line one on open D (while counting). Use repetition. Once the rhythm of line one is mastered using pizzicato, transfer to the bow, again on open D. Use repetition. Proceed to line two, using the same steps used for line one.

Scales and method book exercises should be implemented after the board work is proficient. Please don't rush the teaching of dotted-quarter eighth note. A concept will not “stick” unless thoroughly taught for a week or more. As a result, you will have to re-teach this again and again!!

Follow up: “Moonlight Tango” by Richard Meyer is an excellent teaching piece for dotted figures. If you have time, spend two weeks on this piece!

General Suggestions for this month: Bow concentration is the main focus for the first month of school. Please set the students in rows with no music stands for the first 3-5 days of playing. During this time, do a lot of modeling/demonstrating for your students, (non-verbal teaching is the most effective way) and insist that they use the correct bow speeds and bow distributions (for eighth notes) to reach optimum tone. Please don't rush through the open string study, and listen to individuals play double stops. Manual assistance daily will be necessary! Many students are not aware that their bows are slightly crooked, or are too close to the fingerboard, and it is our job to help the individual fix the problem!

If you are teaching effectively, the student should always know what bow speed, bow amount and bow distribution they should be using at any given time. Students should be solid in the key signatures for this month in order to progress to the study of low one.

Eighth Quarter Eighth:

Procedures: Follow the same procedures used above for dotted quarter eighth rhythm. Using the board, have the following rhythmic combinations written:

- Example 1:
1. Eighth quarter eighth eighth quarter eighth
 2. Eighth quarter eighth quarter quarter
 3. Eighth quarter eighth eighth eighth eighth eighth
 4. Quarter quarter eighth quarter eighth

Month 2: October

Curriculum Performance Objectives: 1.6, 1.7

State Standards: 1, 2, 5, 6

Concepts taught this month: 3/4 time signature review, chromatic half steps, low one study.

Week Five: The student will...

- Review/Perform 3/4 time signature

Please note: When reviewing a previously taught concept, teach it as if it has not been taught before (also included in the beginning CAP week 19). Middle school students need constant repetition and reinforcement.

Procedures: Divide the class period into three parts:

- A. Double stops/open strings/scales (all in 3/4)
- B. Method book study-3/4 time
- C. Teaching piece in 3/4 time

Have students count out loud 1-2-3 several times, feeling the strong beat. Use the following rhythmic sequence this week for your open string warm ups and your scales.

Example 1:

1. Dotted half note
2. Three quarter notes
3. Alternate the above two rhythms (D23 EEE ...)
4. Half note followed by a quarter note
5. Half note followed by a quarter note-slurred together
6. Include some eighth note patterns in 3/4 time
7. Three quarter notes “minuet bowing” (down-up-up)

Remember to utilize some double stops when warming up the students at the beginning of the period. Emphasize tone production!

Proceed to the method book. Find 3/4 exercises that include eighth notes if possible. *Please note: There is a Minuet by Bach toward the back of the Essential Elements Volume I, which would work beautifully at this time.*

Passing out a piece in 3/4 time would be beneficial for the class at this time (not necessarily to perform, just to study in class). “Shadow Dance” by Richard Meyer is wonderful and teaches many of the bowings/rhythms in Example 1.

A performance test evaluating the students on the materials studied this week is highly recommended.

Week Six: The student will...

- Learn low 1 finger pattern on the instrument
- Perform a D minor one octave scale
- Study the key of F Major

Procedures: Discuss the placement of the low one with the class. In order to have successful intonation using low one, the students must know exactly how to place the first finger on the fingerboard. Violins and violas must move the first finger back from the bottom knuckle, whereas cellos and basses should move the finger back slightly on its' side. Demonstrate this first finger movement for the class while having students watch you slide from first position to low 1 several times. Have the class do this activity, silently sliding their first fingers 5-8 times in a row. If the kids do this sliding activity each day, their low ones will have some independence.

Using non-verbal modeling, demonstrate (on the A-string) a simple pattern for the students. Two half notes- A2 A4 Bb2 Bb4 RRRR , several times. Have students echo this pattern. Please use an open D drone along with the pattern being practiced. Several repetitions using the echo application will be necessary at this time. Continue this by increasing the difficulty of the patterns. *Please note: initial patterns should only include open A and B-flat.* Begin adding one note at a time to these rote applications.

Example 1: AAAA BbBbBbBb CCCC RRRR

Patterns should be as simple as possible to allow the students ample time to correctly place their fingers. Instruct the cellos on their very first backwards extension! Thumb must be behind second finger at all times!! Basses will now be working in half position while violins and violas are learning whole step spacing between B-flat and C. Most importantly, please use manual assistance, during the patterns. Quickly and efficiently go from student to student moving fingers!!

After learning A, Bb and C, the high D should be added. A backwards extension for the cellos will need a great deal of attention from the teacher. Violins and violas will work on whole step-whole step spacing. During this, keep changing the patterns (simple, please!) to keep the lesson interesting. (Please note: maintaining a tonic open A or tonic open D throughout the rote study in a section or two of the orchestra does wonders for the intonation!!)

After A, Bb, C and D is proficient, proceed to demonstrate the D natural minor scale for your students (DEFGABbCD). Have a cello or bass play the open D with you during the demonstration. Students will sing the scale before playing it.

It would be a good idea to open the method book at this time, studying certain lines that correlate with the above patterns. Initially choose exercises from the book that are simple and playable, skipping the ones that contain tricky bowings or rhythms.

The introduction of F major will come AFTER D minor is mastered. The notes in D minor are much easier for the students to grasp, allowing them to concentrate on low first finger pitch. Test on Friday.

Week Seven: The student will...

- Continue to study in D minor and F Major
- Perform a piece in D minor

Procedures: Re-teach last week's lesson as if it had not been taught before. Repetition and reinforcement is essential for the young musician! Expand the study of F Major, working carefully with the violins on the e-string. This week will include the introduction of a working piece: "Minor Variations" by Shapiro.

Week Eight: The student will...

- Learn and perform ascending and descending half steps on the instrument.

Procedures: Using non-verbal modeling, slowly demonstrate for the students ascending half steps from open D through the next octave high D (D-D#-E-F-F#-G-G#-A-A#-B-C-C#-D). While demonstrating this application, have a cellist or a bassist play the open D tonic along with you.

Next, have a discussion on the notes and the fingerings for each instrument (ascending only). Following this, have the students play their open D strings on a slow quarter note, while singing the half steps. Once again, the sympathetic vibrations under their ears are so valuable for ear training!! Violins/violas will then play the pitches on their instruments D-D#-E-F-F#-G-G#-A (use open!)-A#-B-C-C#D ascending chromatic sequence on a very slow quarter note (or a half note) while the cellos and basses play the open D tonic. Switch parts. Use repetition, eventually performing this without the tonic pitch going in the room. Please give constant reminders of nice big tone. Do not proceed with the descending chromatic notes until the ascending notes and are nicely in tune.

Follow up: Choose two students who play in tune and are sitting next to each other. Have them demonstrate the entire half-step sequence in front of the class. If they successfully "sound like one player instead of two" reward them with lots praise (Jolly Ranchers also work well!). Challenge the rest of the students to pick a partner this week

and match each half-step pitch with their partner. This "pairs" activity can be challenging, beneficial, and fun for your second year students.

Try to locate a line or two out of the method book, which uses half step applications. Performance test on Friday, which includes the above half-step sequence, and some exercises from the method book. Please set the expectation extremely high for excellent intonation and big tone.

Month 3: November

Curriculum Performance Objectives: 1.5,1.6,1.8,1.10

State Standards 1,2,5,6

Concepts taught this month: G Major and E minor, “breaking down” a piece, consolidation of performance skills through additional repertoire.

Weeks Nine and Ten: The student will...

- Perform exercises using G Major and E minor.
- Perform “British Grenadiers” and “Fiddling A-Round”

Procedures: Divide the class period into three parts. A. scales/patterns in G Major
B. method book/exercises in G Major C. working piece in G Major.

Spend time for the next two weeks working on the concept of F# and C-natural. Each day, have the students (silently) “show” you the jump from F# on D string to C-natural on A string with their left hands. For the cello and bass students this is not difficult. More careful attention will be spent with the violin and viola sections. One inherent problem in the violin and viola sections is the second finger moving straight across, rather than diagonally on the fingerboard. Don’t let them get away with it!! Use scales with tonic pitch, scales in rounds, etc.

Introduce the working piece “British Grenadiers” arr. John Caponegro that contains the above concept.

E natural minor (EF#GABCDE) can be easily implemented at this time. *Please note: Simply have your cello/bass sections drop the octave on the last two notes playing open D and 1st finger E. “Fiddling A-Round” also by John Caponegro is a wonderful piece to study during these two weeks of instruction. Please note: begin by teaching the main melody of the piece to all parts simultaneously. Once the unison melody is established, proceed to the round.*

The following are some suggested steps on how to “break-down” a piece of literature:

Example 1:

1. “Sight-say” the rhythm/establish the group pulse
2. Pizzicato the rhythm on an open string
3. Bow the first few lines on an open string (this will not work if the piece contains a lot of slurs).
4. Teach the piece in two or four bar “chunks”
5. Give the students the “two minute noisy step” letting them all practice a spot individually.

Try to implement as many teaching steps as possible to ensure student success when learning new material.

Follow up: The melody to the Folk Song “Old Joe Clark” contains the C-natural, F# concept and can easily be taught by rote this week for a warm up exercise.

Weeks Eleven and Twelve: The student will...

- Continue to execute previously learned applications
- Learn additional level two literature

Procedures: For the rest of the month of November, students will continue to repeat/reinforce concepts from September and October. Additional repertoire will be utilized to further develop and consolidate skills. Here is a short list of additional pieces that work well for the first half of the year, and could possibly be performed for a December concert.

“Accents” Frost
“Classic Sinfonia” Del Borgo
“Fiddles on Fire” Williams
“March Heroic” Del Borgo
“St. Anthony Chorale” arr. Dakow

Try not to program music that is too hard for the students. There are many artistic skills that the students should learn while studying literature. Often, if the students are struggling with notes, an enriched musical experience will not be achieved.

General Suggestions for this month: Continue to work diligently on the fundamentals with your students. Try to include method bookwork to reinforce concepts each day. Use creative applications when working in the book, such as adding a simple half note harmony part to a very dry exercise. When you are introducing new literature, break the piece down to make it very simple and understandable for the student. Please try to choose pieces that teach the applications that you are working on!

Month 4: December

Curriculum Performance objectives: 1.3, 1.5, 1.6, 1.8, 1.10, 1.12, 2.1

State Standards: 1, 2, 5, 6, 7

Concepts to be taught this month: Dynamics, artistic skills in repertoire

Week Thirteen: The student will...

- Perform dynamics in December concert literature

Procedures: December is a perfect time to work on effective dynamics in concert repertoire. Consider having a concentrated study for a week or more, referring to a unit in the beginning CAP week thirty-one for ideas.

Many students know what the dynamics are, and what the definitions mean, but are not certain how to achieve the optimum sound while performing the dynamic. How do you achieve the best crescendo on one whole note? Do you use more bow or less bow when performing piano dynamics? What bow speed and how much weight should be used for fortissimo? All of these questions need to be addressed at this time. *Please note: dynamics in sheet music should be “put in” AFTER the notes and rhythm are firmly established.* Re-teach dynamics to the class, as if they have never been taught before. At the beginning of the period, choose scales and warm ups conducive to adding dynamics. Remember to demonstrate the skill for the students.

After dynamics are secure on scales and warm ups, begin to apply this to the piece you are working on. In this piece, isolate the dynamic passage first and teach it on an open string!!!! Have them perform the dynamic passage several times on the open string until the students are proficient. Proceed to put in the left hand, again using repetition for proficiency. In creating the sound, make sure students know how much bow to use, how fast the bow speed should be, and how much weight to use. Once again, non-verbal modeling works best. Have the kids watch YOU and tell YOU what they are seeing and hearing.

Are there enough dynamics printed in the music, or is there a place where you can add more? Ask the students if they know of some places. Also, tell the kids to exaggerate their dynamic contrasts, so the audience can be sure what musical effect is being created. Continue this concentrated study throughout the week.

Weeks Fourteen and Fifteen: The student will...

- Continue the concentrated dynamics study
- Add other artistic skills to repertoire

For these two weeks, it is a great idea to continue warming up the students with dynamics in their scales and patterns. Immediately apply to the pieces, and see if you are getting the dynamic contrasts that you want.

It is now time to add other artistic skills to the pieces you are working on for the December performance. Below are some suggested skills that could be easily implemented.

Example 1:

1. All lift bows are done in tempo, with students lifting at the same time.
(This is a nice visual effect)
2. All bow placements are the same from section to section. If a section needs to start in the middle, ALL bows in the section are to be placed in the middle.
3. All sections use the same bow distributions during eighth note passages.
4. Uniform bowings throughout the piece!
5. Individual students are aware of which section has the melody at any given time.
(This is a listening skill!!!!)
6. Sections know when to “bring out” the main melody.
7. Students are constantly looking up at the conductor (especially at an entrance).

General Suggestions for the month: Around two or three weeks before the performance, you may want to change the chairs around to the traditional semi-circle from the rows. This invites eye contact and group listening skills!!
(Return to rows in January!)

Month 5: January

Curriculum Performance Objectives: 1.3, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.10, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3

State Standards: 1, 2, 5, 6, 7

Concepts taught this month: A Major, consolidation of previously learned applications

Week Sixteen: The student will (*after Winter break*)

- Perform the first tetra chord in A Major (ABC#D)
- Perform the second tetra chord in A Major (EF#G#A)
- Learn exercises from the method book in A Major

Procedures: Teach A Major using tetra chords. Begin the concentrated study of A major with very simple rote patterns starting with low A on the G-string (Open A-bass players).

Using non-verbal modeling, teach the following sequence with tonic pitch going in the room (Violins and violas play the tetra chord; cello and bass play A tonic on the G-string. Please switch).

Follow the demonstration with a detailed discussion of stretch 3's and cello extensions. Explain THREE-FOUR finger pattern to the violins and violas and forward extensions to the cellos.

Example 1: (A major tetra-chord only!!!)

1. AAAA BBBB C#C#C# RRRR
2. AAAA BBBB C#C#C# BBBB RRRR
3. AAAA BBBB C#C#C# DDDD RRRR
4. A2A4 B2B4 C#2C#4 C#2C#4 RRRR
5. A2A4 C#2C#4 A2A4 C#2C#4 RRRR -Difficult pattern! Please vln/vla don't use middle finger!!!!
6. ABC#D ABC#D RRRR
7. ABC#B AAAA RRRR
8. AAC#C# AAC#C# RRRR

Feel free to add more combinations. Students can reverse these lines as well to keep this drill interesting.

Proceed to the second tetra chord: (EF#G#A) Use the above sequence again!!! It's the same finger patterns!!

Next, locate simple exercises from the method book to correlate with the rote patterns.

Learning the entire scale will occur after the tetra chords are mastered. Evaluate the students on Friday.

Weeks Seventeen and Eighteen: The student will...

- Become proficient in A Major
- Study a piece of literature with stretch 3's and cello extensions

Procedures: For the next two weeks, divide the class into three parts:

A Major patterns/scale study
A Major exercises in the method book
A Major working piece

Spend these two weeks working on a piece that correlates the concepts from the previous week. "Salisbury Overture" by T. McQuilken uses stretch three frequently in the violin/viola sections, and has quite a few extensions in the cello part. Bass players share melody parts with the cello players, so all parts are kept busy with this piece.

Evaluate the students at the end of week eighteen.

Week Nineteen: The student will..

- Consolidate all of the keys/scales learned from September to January

Procedures: The following is a list of scales/keys executed so far in second year orchestra (in order):

D Major
G Major
C Major
"Sad scale"
Chromatic study
D minor
F Major
E minor
A Major

Students should be proficient in each one of these applications. If they are deficient in areas, know that not enough follow through has been given. Back up and re-teach the concept if necessary. Evaluate the students on Friday, listing concepts and criterion for the kids to prepare.

General suggestions for this month: A Major is a primary focus this month, with a combination of previously learned applications at the end of week nineteen. Student chairs should be in rows again.

Month 6: February

Curriculum Performance Objectives:1.3,1.4,1.6,1.8,1.9,1.10,1.12,2.1,2.5,2.6,3.0-3.12
State Standards: 1,2,5,6,7

Concepts taught this month: A unit on legato, staccato, spiccato, and martele', prepare for festival.

Week Twenty: The student will...

- Perform a unit on legato, staccato, spiccato and martele' bow strokes.

Procedures: In preparation for district festival, students should study four types of bow strokes to broaden skill level.

Begin with legato. Using non-verbal modeling, demonstrate legato on an instrument, asking the students to describe the sound in one word. Pick a short tune for the students to play, which can be easily memorized. French Folk Song would be appropriate for this. Use words like "smooth" and "connected" when perfecting this stroke.

Staccato will be next. Once again, begin the teaching with non-verbal modeling, asking the students to describe the sound in one word or a short phrase. Words such as "short," "separation between notes," "silence between the notes," should come out during the discussion. Delve deeper, asking the kids "how did I achieve this sound?" Begin the staccato study on an open string, followed by a simple pattern. Try having the students find a simple line from the method book, which could be played in the staccato style.

Spiccato ("brush stroke") will be demonstrated on the open string first, bouncing at the balance point area of the bow. Students need to find their "spot" where they have some control. Have them play four open D's, followed by four rests. *Please note: Make sure you choose a bright tempo for this activity. If the tempo is too slow, the students will not achieve a controlled bounce at the balance point.* After the four D pattern is clean, increase to eight D's and four rests in-between. Check to make sure that the bow hand is nice and loose, and the fingers on the bow are flexible and moving. Tell the students to experiment at balance point area, trying to locate the exact spot at which works best for them. After eight bounces, gradually incorporate open string crossings. Demonstrate throughout the lesson! Progress to a scale, with 4 bounces per pitch, followed by something simple from the method book.

Martele' stroke should also be demonstrated by the teacher on an open string. Students should describe the sound as being "powerful" with extremely fast bow speed. Have the students start at the thumb and pull one very fast and powerful stroke all the way to the tip. Have them freeze!! Proceed to "push" the up- bow with the same power and speed. An initial pattern that works well is as follows; D RRR (down) DRRR(up) at a very slow tempo. The class will benefit from this stroke in many ways, especially on accented spots and the last note/measure of a big piece.

Test on Friday with specific criteria from the unit taught.

Follow up: Plan on sight-reading some pieces for the district festival during week twenty!

Week Twenty-One: The student will...

- Begin learning repertoire for district orchestra festival
- Become proficient performing the four previous bow strokes

Procedures: Continue the study of legato, staccato, spiccato and martele' bow strokes.

Sight-read a few pieces this week that are being considered for festival performance in March. (Refer to the Orchestra List, Level Two, for festival selections!)

Weeks Twenty-Two and Twenty- Three: The student will...

- Continue consolidating previously learned skills
- Continue learning repertoire for district orchestra festival
- Concentrate in keys D, G and C Major

Procedures: After the four-bow stroke unit is solid, there will be no introduction of new skills/concepts during the rest of February and March. Focus on three keys only during these months: D Major, G Major and C Major. *Please note: Your students will be performing one of these scales at the orchestra festival.* During this time, teach your lessons straight out of the chosen festival repertoire.

Month 7: March

Curriculum Performance Objectives: 1.7,1.8,1.9,1.12,2.1,2.4,2.5,2.6,3.1,3.9

State Standards: 1, 2, 5, 6, 7

Weeks Twenty-Four through Twenty-Seven: The student will...

- Continue consolidation previously learned skills
- Continue learning repertoire for district orchestra festival
- Review concert etiquette and correct performance practices

Procedures: During March, there will be no introduction of new skills/concepts. Rehearse the three festival selections during this time. Refer to Month 4 for the implementation of dynamics and other artistic skills in repertoire.

General Suggestions for this month: Two weeks prior to festival, have the notes and rhythms to all three pieces firmly established. Work on polishing the pieces and putting in artistic skills at this point.

Two weeks prior to festival review and rehearse all aspects of the Festival Program to include: Appropriate uniform, equipment to bring, behavior on the bus, behavior when entering the facility, where to put the cases, the warm up/tuning room, walking on stage in an organized fashion, lighting on stage, standing up at the end of the performance and bus back to the school.

Month 8: April

Curriculum Performance Objectives: 1.7, 1.8, 1.9, 1.12, 2.1, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 3.1, 3.9
State Standards: 1, 2, 5, 6, 7

Concepts taught this month: Sixteenth note combinations, Spring concert literature.

Week Twenty-Eight: The student will...

- “Sight say” sixteenth note rhythm combinations
- Perform sixteenth notes on the instrument
- Introduce Spring Concert selections

Procedures: Using non-verbal modeling, demonstrate sixteenth note rhythms on an open string for the class. Ask the class “How much bow am I using on the sixteenth notes?” Discuss the math behind the music as you write simple rhythms on the board containing quarter notes and sixteenth notes only. *Please note: for verbalization, feel free to use “1-e-and-a” instead of “1-tah-ta-tah” for sixteenth notes. These syllables mean the same thing.*

The steps to sixteenth note success are as follows: (also included in week twenty-one of the beginning CAP)

Example 1: board work (SLOW TEMPO, PLEASE)

1. Students speak line one: Several times is best
2. Students pizzicato line one on open D WHILE SPEAKING THE RHYTHM
Repeat as necessary
3. Students “air bow” (vertically) the rhythm, while speaking. Also have them “say” the bow directions
4. Students bow line one on an open D string. Repeat as necessary.
5. Students play a tetra-chord or a scale using the rhythm of line one.

As the week progresses, change the rhythms, increasing the difficulty. Try having the class perform some of the lines consecutively. Add some eighth notes to the mix!

The next step would be to find exercises out of the method book that include the quarter note/eighth note/sixteenth note rhythms you have been studying on the board. (Please note: “Artistry in Strings” Volume II by Frost/Fischbach has a thorough sixteenth note lesson on student pages 16 and 17.) Evaluate the students on Friday.

Sight-read Spring Concert literature. Try to incorporate a piece of music, which will utilize previously learned concepts and skills.

Week Twenty-Nine: The student will...

- Become proficient using sixteenth note rhythms
- Perform an eighth- and two-sixteenths
- Rehearse Spring Concert Literature

Procedures: Using non-verbal modeling, demonstrate the following rhythm for the class on an open string:

“one—ta-tah two---ta-tah three---ta-tah four---ta-tah” RRRR making a separation after the eighth note.

After verbalization, have the violins and violas play the above rhythm on open D, while the cellos and basses pizzicato the pulse. Switch parts. Following the open string, use tetra chords and scales for this rhythmic application. Change the rhythms to increase the difficulty.

Proceed to the method book, again referring to “Artistry in Strings” Volume II (student page 20) Also, “Strictly Strings” Volume II (student page 20) contains appropriate written exercises to correlate with this concept.

Continue rehearsing Spring Concert Literature.

Week Thirty: The student will...

- Continue to rehearse Spring concert literature

General Suggestions for this month: During April, spend half of the period on sixteenth note concepts and the other half rehearsing sheet music. Consider programming some Pop music in the spring!!

Month 9: May

Curriculum Performance Objectives: 1.12, 2.4, 2.6, 2.7, 2.8

State Standards: 1, 2, 5, 6, 7

Weeks Thirty-One through Thirty-Four: The student will...

- Rehearse Spring concert selections

General Suggestions for the end of the year: If you have extra teaching time in May, here are some ideas to prepare the students for third year study:

1. A unit on harmonics
2. A unit on shifting
3. A unit on vibrato
4. A unit on composition
5. A unit on improvisation