CCSD

CLARK COUNTY

SCHOOL DISTRICT

Curriculum Alignment Project

Advanced High School Monthly Plans and Suggestions

Teri Shade, Author

Sheri Manning, Project Facilitator Instrumental Music
Sarah Angeles
Len Hansen
Geoff Neuman

Secondary Fine Arts Programs

Marcia M. Neel
Coordinator
Secondary Fine Arts Programs
CPD Center
3950 S. Pecos-McLeod
Las Vegas, NV 89121
Phone: 702-799-8531
FAX: 702-799-1097
CCSDMusic@aol.com

"Knowing when to move ahead, when to consolidate, when to upgrade and refine is the essence of the art of teaching. Students too often reach an inappropriately difficult level because they were moved ahead too quickly. At the other extreme, teachers try to perfect every step before moving on, resulting in student loss of interest. Do we delay because it is difficult or is it difficult because we delay? " (Marvin Rabin)

Month 1, August-September

Concepts/skills taught this month: Open string rhythmic and bowing variations 1-14 (to be applied to scales later on), bow control relationships, harmonics and shifting.

Procedures:

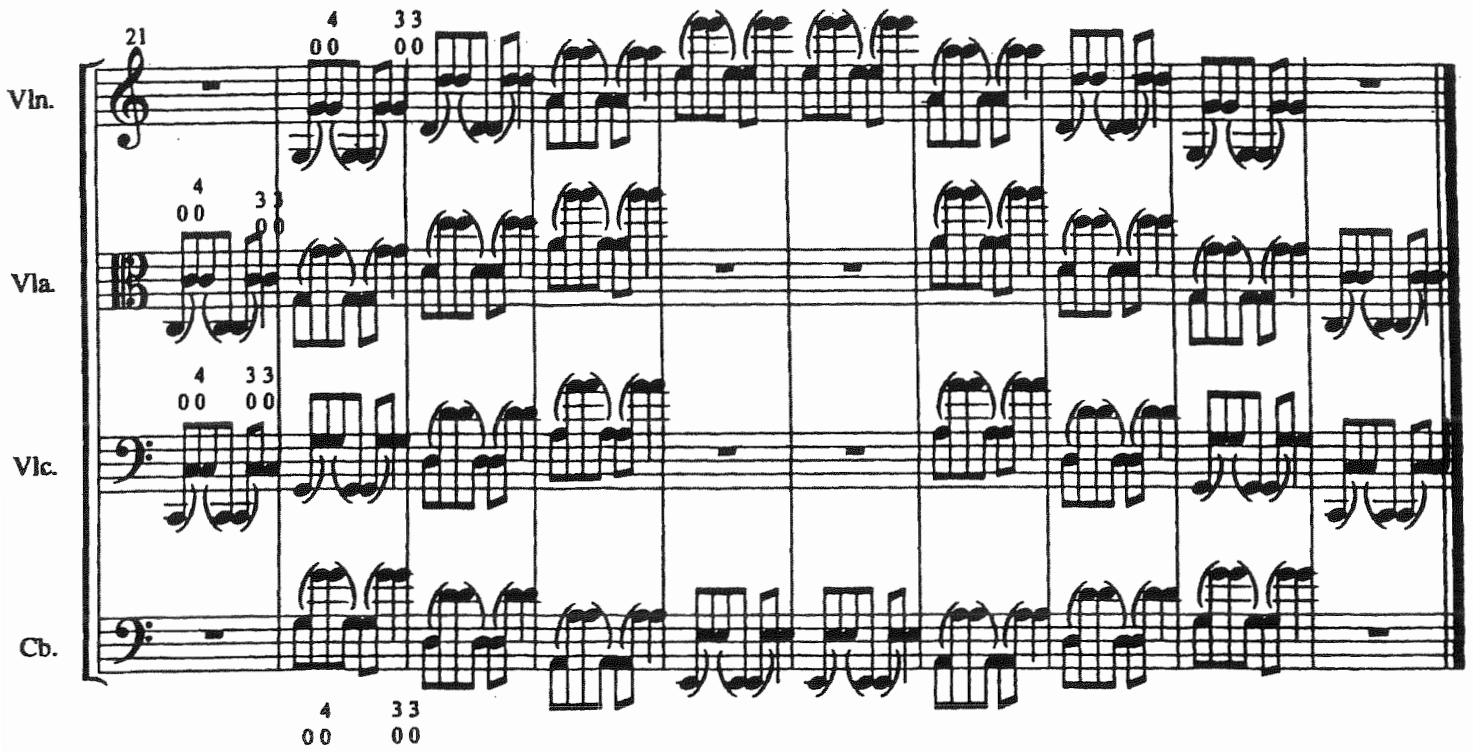
Many educational benefits result from early rote harmonics and shifting activities. They reinforce correct positioning on the instrument, "unlock" the left hand, and assist in the preparation of early vibrato movement. Each new technique is first taught by rote this month as a prelude to the written page. A great deal of manual assistance is required, and each skill should be repeated anywhere from three to five times.

The daily use of harmonics can be very beneficial at the beginning of a school year. These harmonics allow the students' left hands the freedom to move up and down the fingerboard eliminating tension. Their thumbs will not "grip" the neck of the instrument, which is a common tendency in young string players. Left elbows for violins and violas will be "forced" to stay under the instrument (where they belong), as well as allow fluidity of motion for all instruments. Working on the motion of harmonics will prepare the students for the many shifting techniques they will encounter in the advanced orchestra setting.

Non-verbal instruction is the most effective tool when demonstrating the following examples. Have the students memorize these exercises so that they may concentrate on the left hand/arm in conjunction with the bowing.

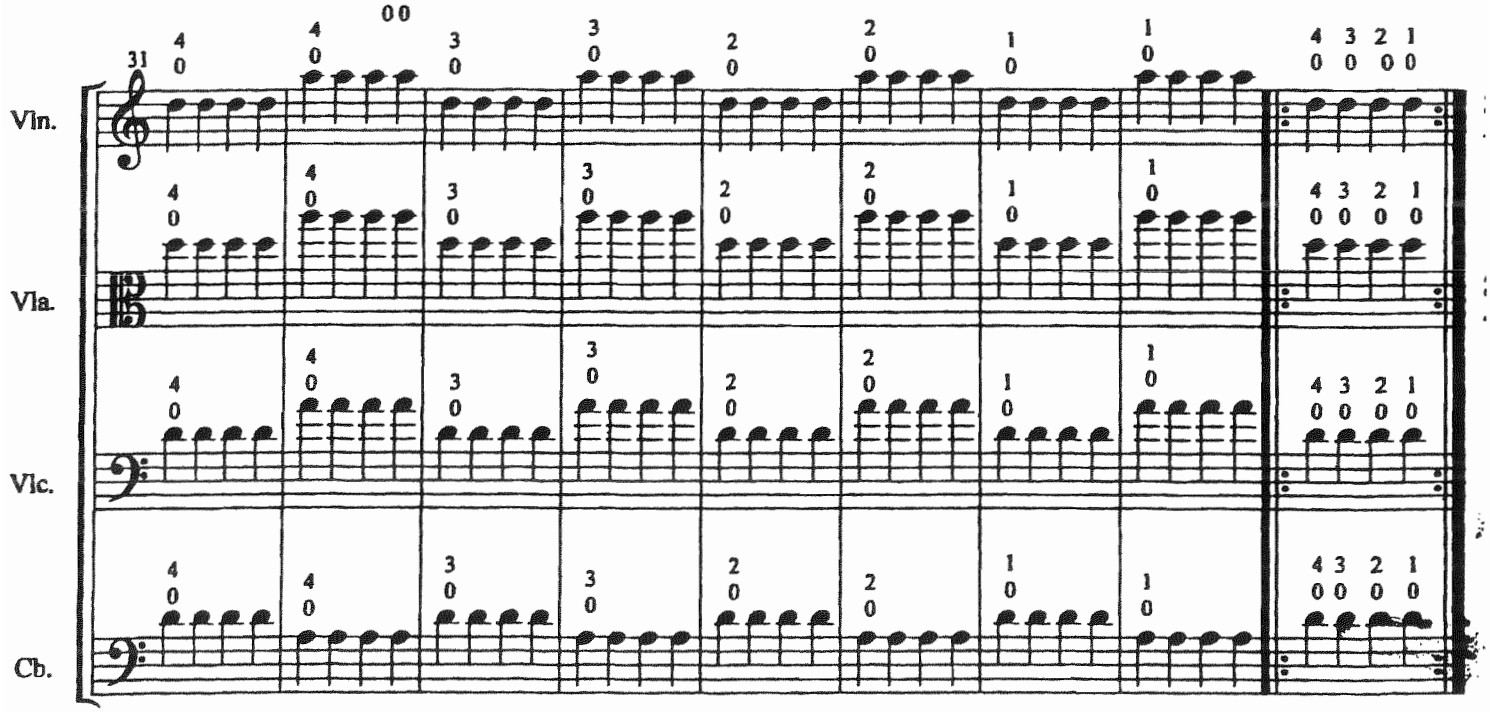
Please stress **tone production** when becoming proficient using harmonics. A full bow stroke with a slightly faster bow speed is preferred. Ask the students how much bow weight they feel is appropriate.

Return to 1st position for all open strings



*** 2nd time through use 3 2 / 0 0

*** 3rd time through use 2 1 / 0 0



**** Perform on D and A string only

Students will quickly become familiar with the harmonic exercises, which will be performed on each string in the following order: CCCC GGGG DDDD AAAA EEEE vla/c all all all vln/b

After harmonics techniques are proficient, apply these skills to some basic shifting exercises. Here are some suggestions. (*Please note:* Teacher demonstration first is important.)

Staying on the D string (in the key of D Major), shift up the scale using first finger only. Here is an example (Use a slur in this example, which will smooth out the shift as much as possible):

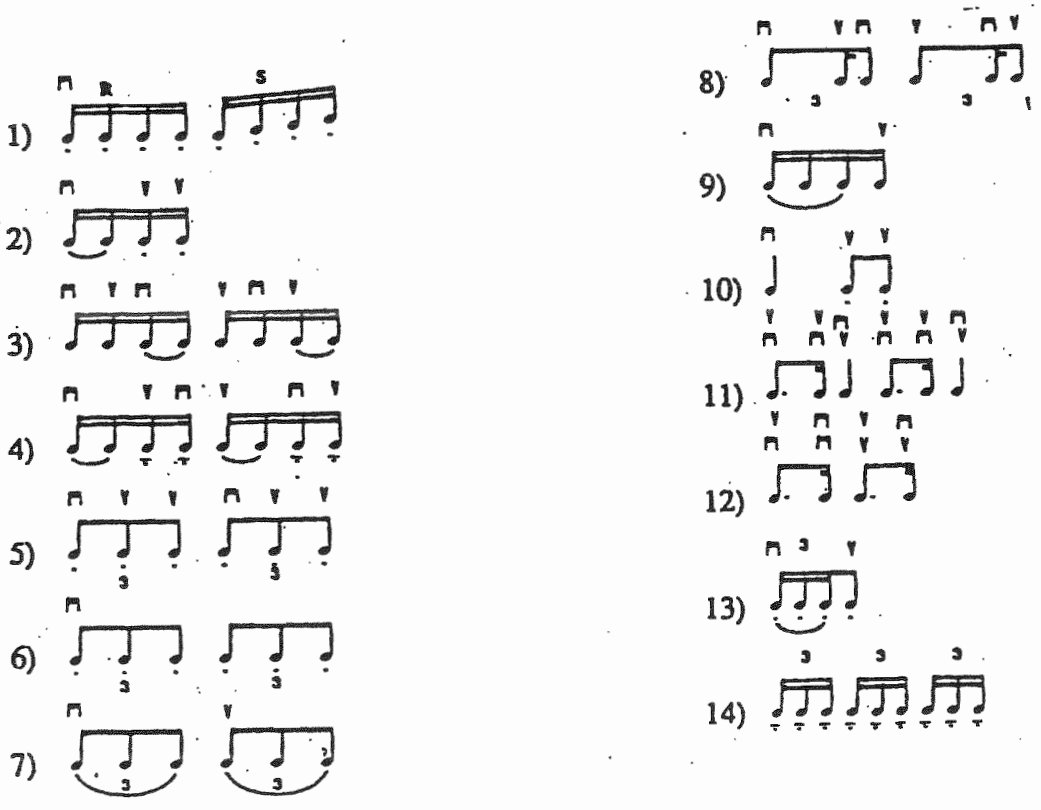
Example 1: D⌒E E E⌒F# F# F#⌒G G G⌒A A etc....
01 1 1-1 1 1-1 1 1-1 1

Ascend up the D string as far as you feel is appropriate. Please do not proceed to the descending shifts until the ascending ones are proficient. It is essential to provide manual assistance to each individual, adjusting one thing at a time, circulating throughout the room. Example one can be repeated as many times as you feel necessary.

Introduce the Rhythmic and Bowing Variations (no. 1-14) below. These rhythms should initially be taught on an open string with total focus on the following: bow distribution, bow speed, sound point and applied weight (feel free to write these on the board for the students).

Here are some suggested variations for the open string rhythms which will later be applied to scales: Choose from staying in lower half, upper half, middle of the bow, whole bow draw, distributing the bow, spiccato, detache, martele' and upper half ricochet.

When performing rhythms/bowings, repeat each one a minimum of four times with a full concentration on bow skill development.



Month 3, November

Concepts/skills taught this month: Single –string one-octave scales using parallel major/minor sequence, The Basic Scale Rhythm, applying previously learned rhythmic and bowing variations

Procedures:

When learning single string patterns, passing out a fingering chart will be necessary for the students. They should have a folder or binder in which to keep all of the materials given out in class for reference at home to practice. Demonstrate each finger pattern by rote section by section. Shifting will be one of the main focal points. Make sure that each left hand is moving as a unit. The thumb needs the most attention. It is a very common mistake among young players to leave their thumb behind in a shift. Please, remind the students that whatever the position on the fingerboard the hand position stays the same until up past the neck. Explain the motion of the shift getting past the neck and the relation of the thumb movement for each instrument (Cello/Bass bringing thumb over the fingerboard, and violin/viola sliding thumb underneath the neck). Have students practice shifting motions first without the bow. If students experience any difficulty refer back to reviewing the harmonic shifting exercises established in the previous month. Remind the students that the preparation of any shift involves some anticipation and movement in the left arm is much the same way a person prepares to jump or throw a ball.

Teaching techniques needed:

- The explanation of whole and half step patterns for each of the major and minor scales being studied below.
  wwh-wwwh- major scale
  whw-wwwh wwhw-whw- melodic minor
  whw-wh+h h+hw-whw- harmonic minor

- **The Basic Scale Rhythm of quarter six eighths** should be used when introducing each pattern.

Bass fingerings

Please refer to the following bass technique books:

- Bornnoff's finger patterns
- The Compass of the Contrabass in Pattern fingerings by Audrey Bush (Volumes 1 and 2)
- Vade Mecum for the double Bass by George Vance

Suggestions:

The class should average about four different scale patterns a week. Have students memorize the finger pattern for the scale being addressed and apply the different rhythmic and bowing variations on page six. At least two different patterns should be applied a day in order to expose the students to all 25 of them.

Daily Class Routine (how is the teacher going to divide the class period in a way that the pacing immediately engages the student without overburdening the student with redundant practice). Although repetition is a good reinforcement it is necessary to add or change at least one skill concept after each repetition keeping the students' attention level at its highest whether it be in rhythm, bow style, dynamics, unison, or rounds.

While addressing individual sections when demonstrating a new finger pattern and sequence, please have the other sections engaged in the rhythm work that is going to be applied to the scale that day (1-25 of rhythm sheet). Have students sight say the rhythm, pizzicato the rhythm on an open string, and finally bow the rhythm on an open string before applying to the scale pattern. This exercise should be done in time having the students saying four rests in between each example. This will allow the teacher time to specifically address one section at a time on the finger pattern concept while the rest of the class masters the rhythm and bowing style. Each of the skills should be taught by rote first. Then the fingering patterns and rhythm variations should be provided in a hand out form for each student as well as reinforced on the board each day.

Month 4 and 5: December and January

Concepts taught this month: Two Octave Scales with attention given to bow speed, distribution, dynamics, sound point and tempi.

Procedures:
Pass out the new two octave fingering charts for the students' folders. An initial teacher demonstration should include the basic scale rhythm on the tonic of whatever scale is being introduced. Secondly, the teacher will demonstrate the two octave finger pattern to each individual section, while the others continue working on the right hand skills already established at the beginning of class. The tonic rhythmic work will allow the teacher to work the sections individually on finger patterns while keeping others engaged. Please do not proceed from the basic scale rhythm until it is firmly established. Once finger patterns are proficient, proceed to vary the bowings to include proper bow distribution, slur techniques, adding dynamics, and various tempos. It is now time to coordinate variations of scale routine warm-ups with the literature chosen for the Winter Concert.

Encourage students to sing as they learn to play the scales. Teacher may use syllable of letter name systems.
Please note: The two-octave scale should not be confused with the one-octave scale exercises.
The two-octave study incorporates all of the strings. During the two-octave scale the violins/violas will have a stationary hand position (no shifting in the scale). Cello/bass will be shifting during the scale.

Strings	C	G	D	A
Keys				
A	1x24	01x24	0134-1x24o	
Bb	24	0124	012-124-123	
B	1x24	rb1x24	rb124-124-123	
C	0134	0134	0124	012
Db	1x24-1x24	rb124	rb124	rb134
D	1x24	01x24	0134	0134
Eb	124	0x124	0x12-124	rb134
E	1x24	1x24	rb124-124	rb134
F	4	0124	124	012-134
F#	1x24	rb1x24	rb124	rb124-134
G		0134	0134	0124-134

Bass fingerings

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- Bornnoff's finger patterns
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Suggestion:

Using Book I method books have students write in fingerings in different positions-have students figure in shifting: have them subdivide the rhythms, add dynamics, change tempos

Remember that the month of December and January will have the Winter Concert, holidays, and upon return, semester exams. Teachers should keep this time table in mind when planning lessons.

excellent heterogeneous method book to use as supplemental material to the scales and arpeggios.
Besides the scale studies in one, two, and three octaves it also includes rhythm, bowing and intonation exercises.

We begin the study of one and two octave arpeggios in the same sequence that we learned the scales, starting with the A Major scale, followed by the parallel melodic minor, harmonic minor and then the arpeggios (begin in single bows) in the following manner. First, minor, then Major, and followed by the Dominant Seventh. Keep the tempo slow and remember to stress tone production.

Teaching techniques needed:

- The playing of arpeggios will require the teacher to explain the physical makeup of an arpeggio.

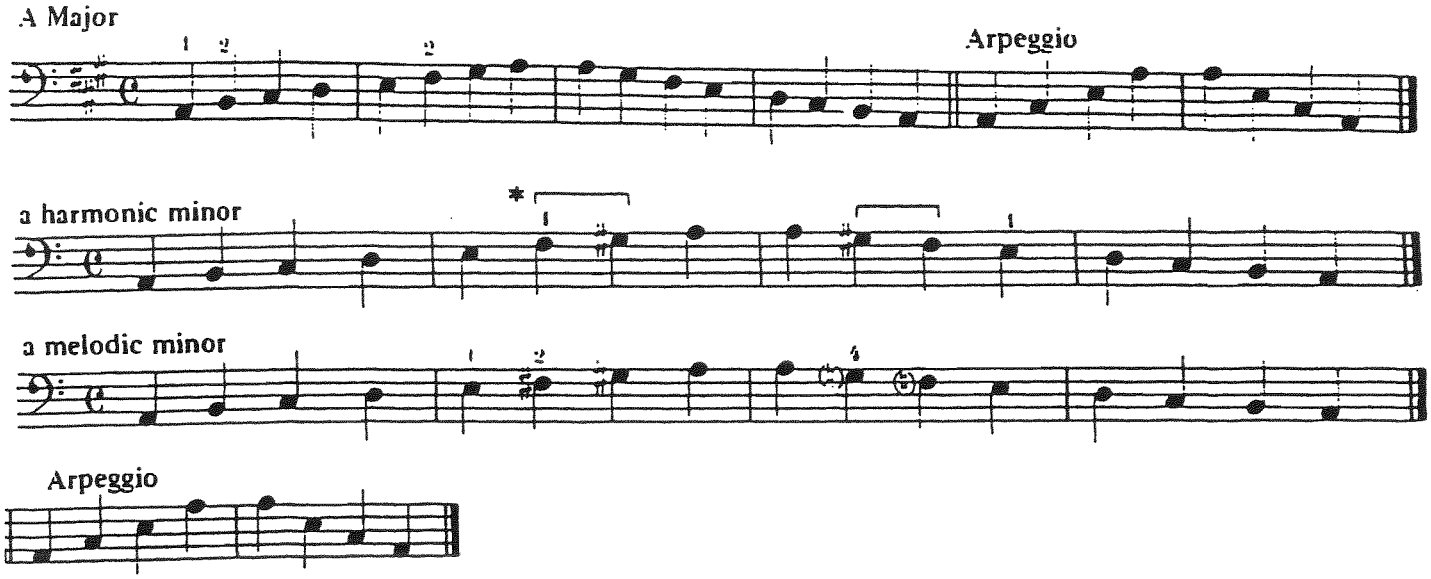
An arpeggio is comprised of the first, third, fifth, and eighth notes of any given major or minor scale.

- Avoid going into great theoretical detail about arpeggios. Keep the definition simple, and focus more on demonstrating the "how to" of playing. Use the major scale form in giving direction, making sure all students understand the concept. When this has been accomplished you can then apply it to the minor scale as well as the dominant seventh.

One Octave Scales are included in each of the examples of the arpeggios for review purposes. (again, use parallel major/minor sequence as previously taught)

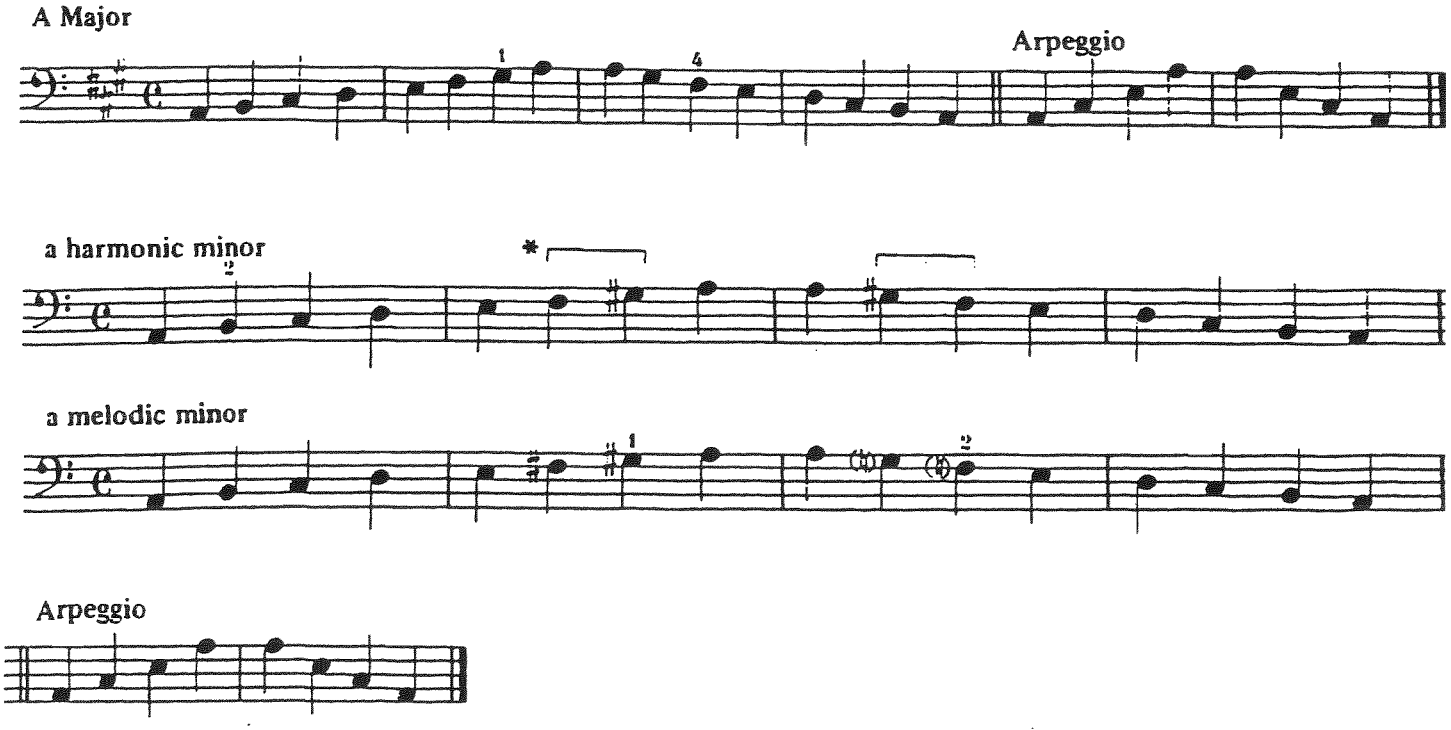
Example 1. One Octave
Cello arpeggio

A Major and a minor



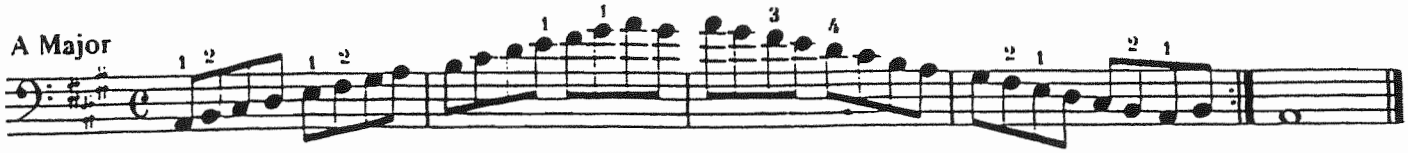
Bass arpeggio

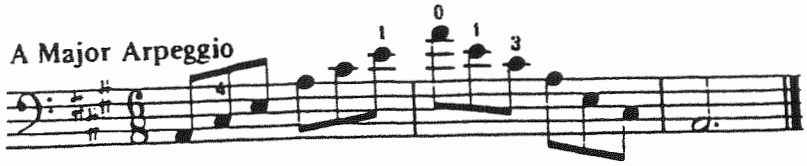
A Major and a minor

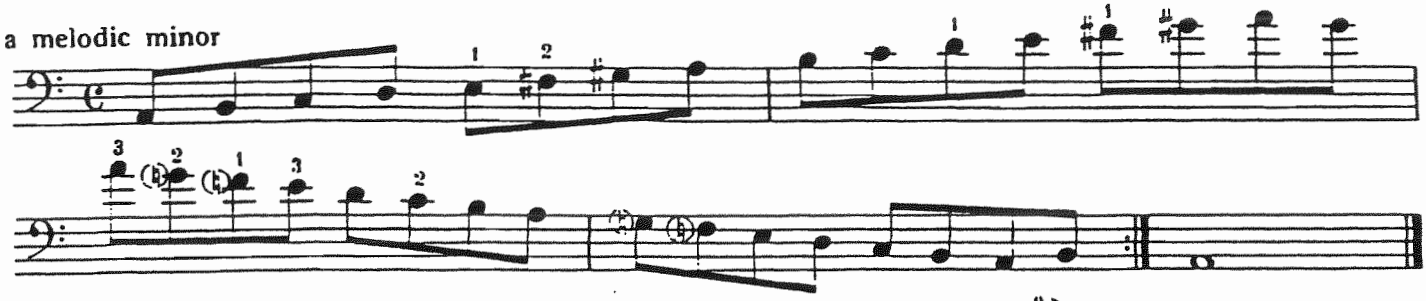


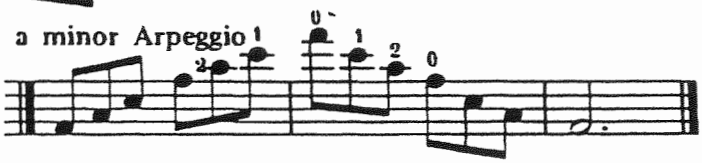
Example 2. Two Octave
Cello arpeggio

A Major and a minor



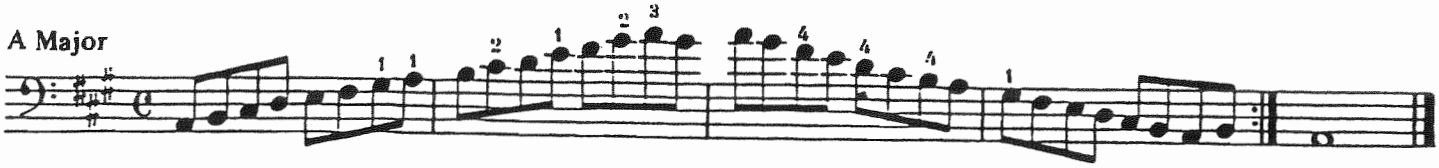


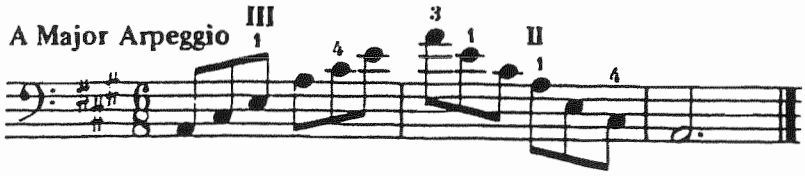


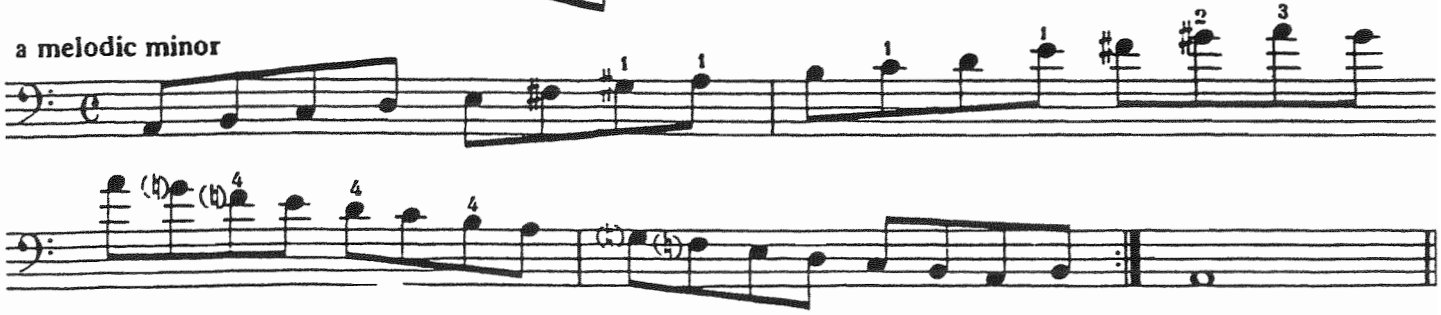


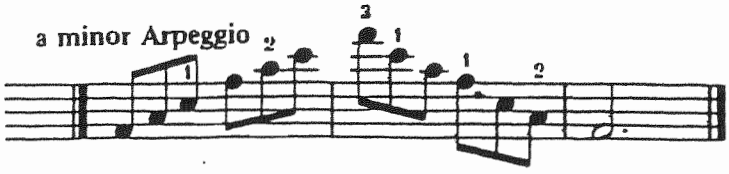
Bass arpeggio

A Major and a minor

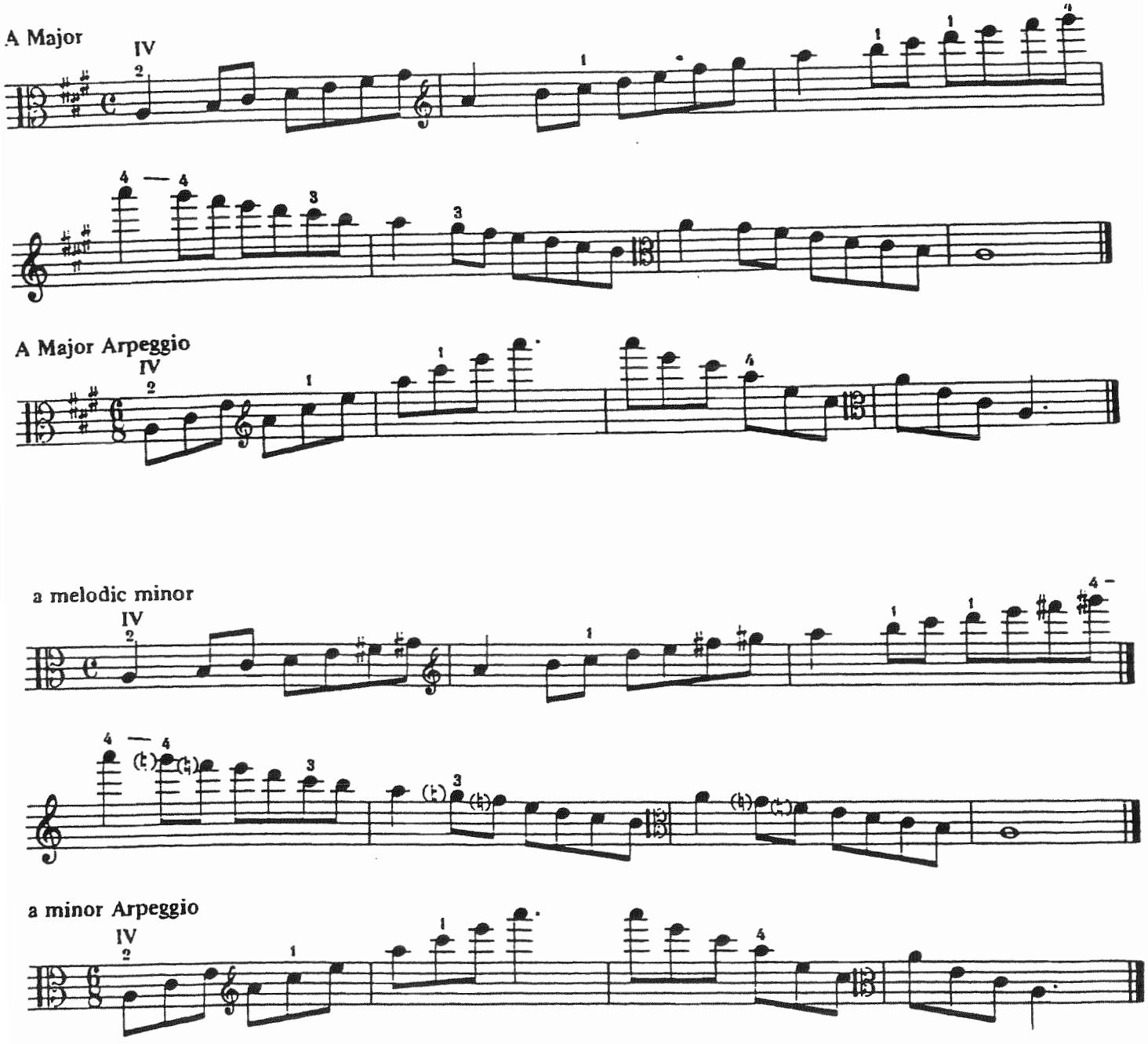






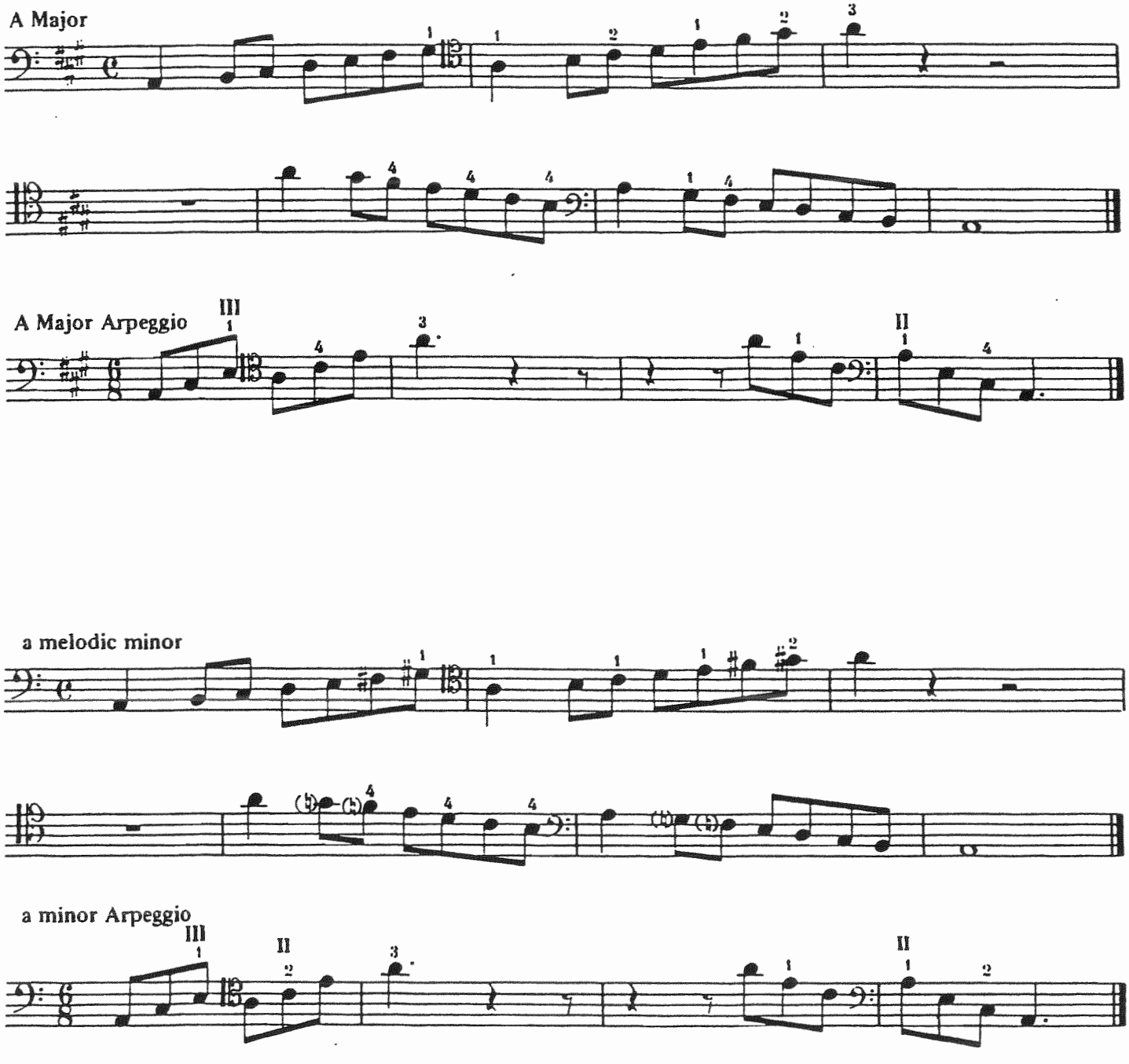


Example 3. Three Octave
Viola arpeggio
A Major and a minor



Example 3. Three Octave
Bass arpeggio

A Major and a minor



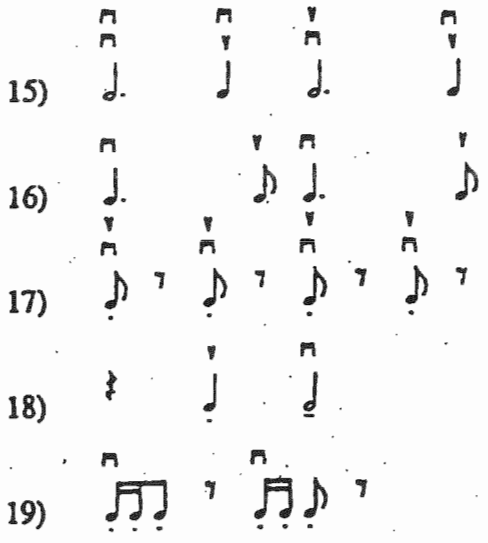
Two Octave Major and melodic minor scales are included in the arpeggios examples. It is assumed that the harmonic minor scales are to be taught also. They have been omitted only for the purpose of saving space.

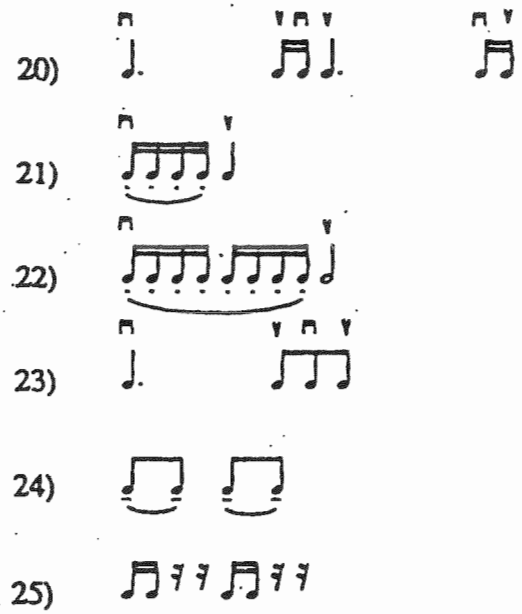
Reminder:

As mentioned in previous months, it is important to continue placing the students in rows with enough space between to allow the teacher to circulate through the class assisting students as needed. At this point in time it may not be necessary to use music stands if students have learned and understand the basic scale concepts taught.

Rhythm Patterns

Refer to the suggested 25 rhythmic patterns and go through at a pace such that all students are understanding them.





Terry Shade for recommendations of either the fingerings or a private teacher who works a lot with high school students.
You need to find what works for your situation. We have many great resources in CCSD whom we can turn to for help. Let's give our students every advantage we can by utilizing those resources.

The fingerings given in each of the examples are purely suggestions. Find something that works for you. If you have fingerings for three octave scales that you feel are "easier" for high school students, share them with your colleagues.

Obviously going through the key cycle is not practical, so it is recommended that you begin with the examples of A Major and a minor and then G Major, followed by C Major. It will also be helpful at this point to incorporate orchestral literature you are working on and focus on the scales of the keys the music is in. Not all your students study privately, so this is a great opportunity to strengthen the develop the upper position of those not in private study.

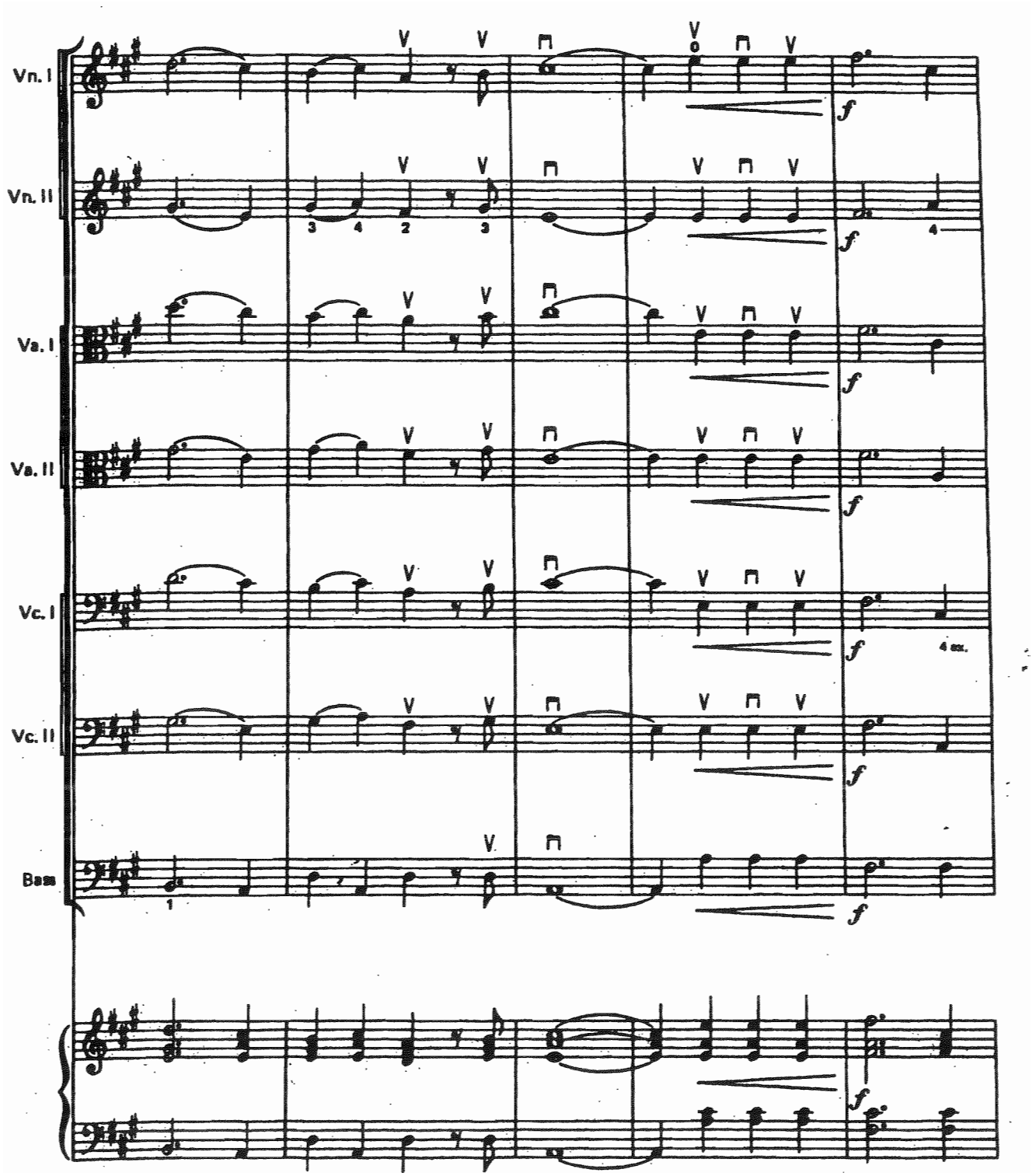
Suggestion:
Using a method book such as the one mentioned earlier, Essentials for Strings as supplemental material is a great resource in the development of the high school student. Besides dealing with the technical problems of the left and right hand it also includes additional rhythmic studies that can be used in conjunction with material in this resource.
Be mindful of the fact that as we enter in to March we have orchestral festival this month as well as All-State Festival. Also, the end of the third quarter is this month, so plan your lessons accordingly.

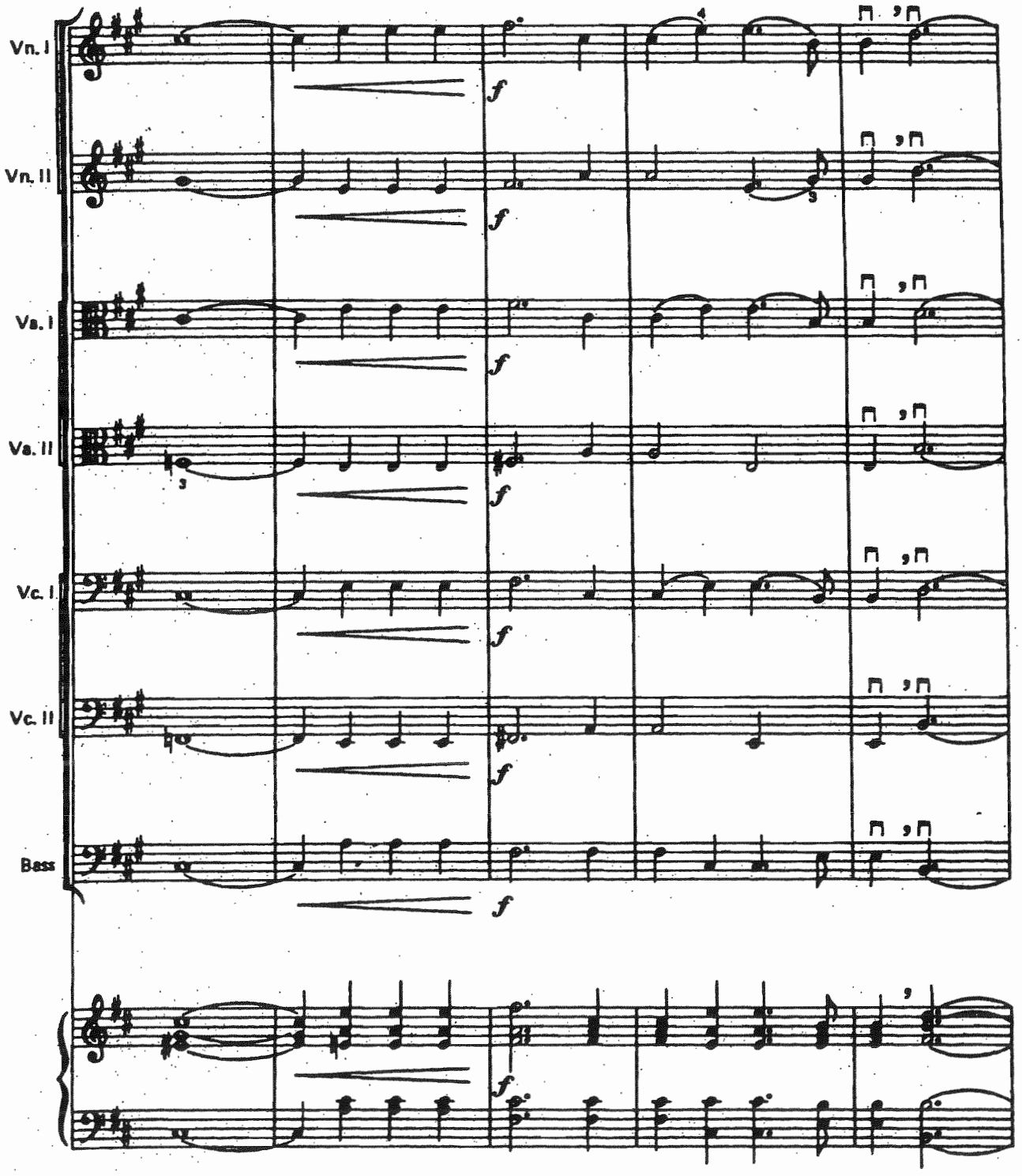
Here is a suggested procedure:

1. Play the piece all the way through and have everyone play the first part.
2. The second time, divide the class into first and second parts.
3. Switch parts the third time.

When performing have the students think about the following:

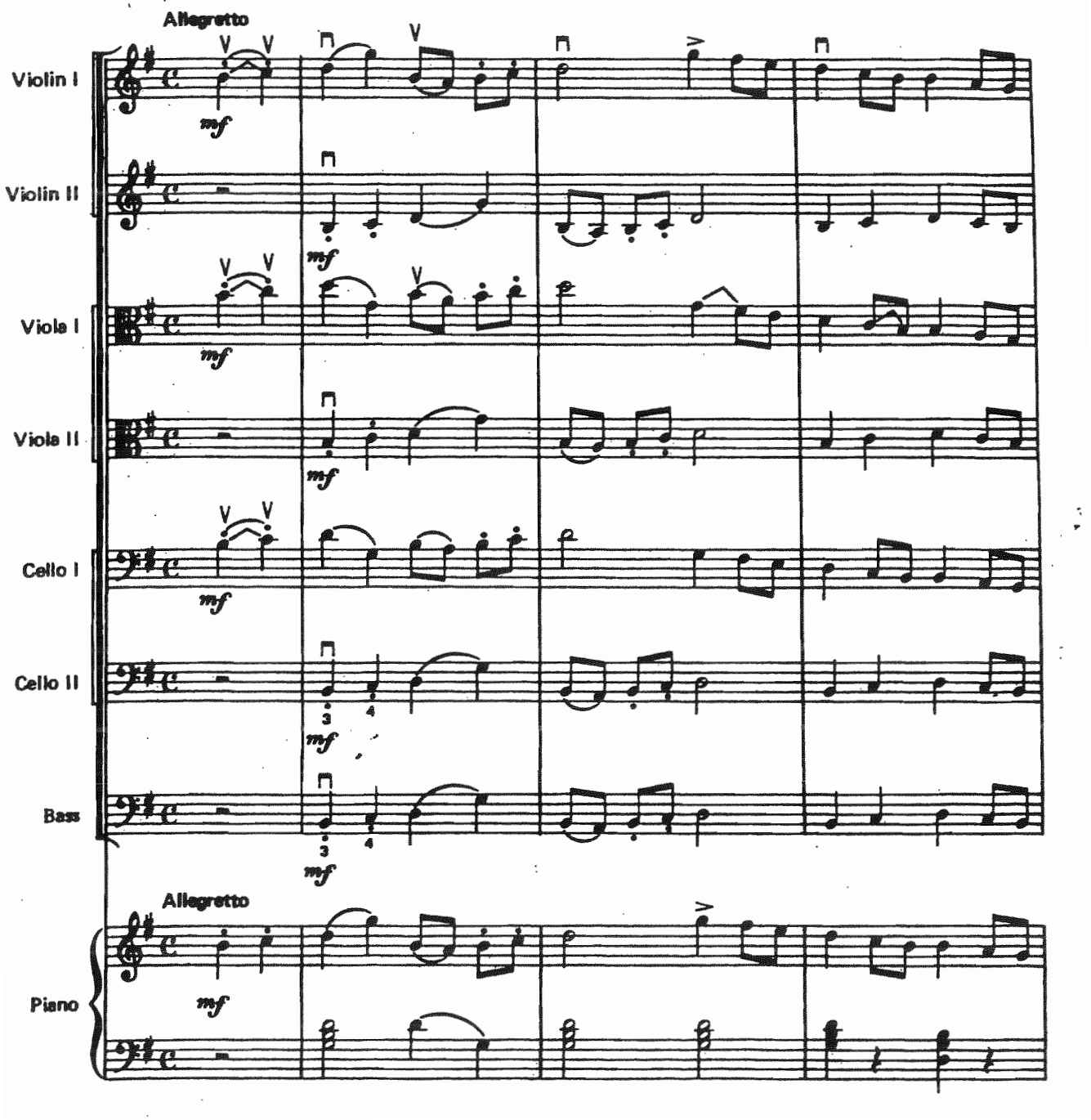
1. If you are playing the first part, can you hear the second part in all the instrument?
2. If you are playing the second part, can you hear the first part in instruments other than your own?
3. Are you observing the bowings as printed?


Vn. I
Vn. II
Va. I
Va. II
Vc. I
Vc. II
Bass
f
4 ms.


Vn. I
Vn. II
Va. I
Va. II
Vc. I
Vc. II
Bass
f

Gavotte

Padre Giovanni Battista Martini



Concepts/skills taught: The use of vibrato

Procedure: There are many techniques that assist in the process of learning vibrato. One will be discussed here. While you probably have been teaching vibrato to your students this is a good time reinforce it.

For violin or viola, one technique is to rest the instrument against a wall and with the left hand braced in third position, practice oscillating movements from wrist using eighth notes, triplets, sixteenth notes and thirty-second notes. Do this with each of the four fingers on various strings. When this exercise has been completed, move to first position and practice the same pattern but adding forearm to the movement. This combination of forearm and wrist provides the basic vibrato used.

Cello and bass players should use the same rhythmic patterns for vibrato using a shaking back and forth movement, with the wrist and are operating as a single unit, as opposed to the oscillating movement used for violin and viola. The cello and bass vibrato is best achieved by having the forearm and hand, from the elbow to fingertip, roll back and forth in a wide arc. This movement should be even and with as little effort as possible.

The fingers should not slide and should remain fixed. The rhythmic impulses should project through the finger. This is what causes the effect of the vibrato. Difficulties in producing a relaxed, even vibrato are usually caused by too much tension in the left hand. Too much squeezing of the thumb against the neck or gripping the instrument with the left hand rather than holding it with the jaw in the chin rest causes the tension.

In the exercise on the following page practice the etudes in third position on all four strings, varying the rhythm as indicated. Also, practice the same exercises in first position on all four strings varying the rhythm.