

Klerrisa Custom Music

May E-News



Latest News....

Hello everyone,

I hope you all survived the ANZAC Day Ceremonies and I am sure your students made you proud. We have some exciting new additions to the newsletter this month. We have had an overwhelming call for more helpful hints in a whole range of areas. So we are going to add more of this style of content.

We are also working on a few new packages due for release in July—A practical Acapella package designed for use with classes as well as choirs of all sizes, another fabulous package on film music, and some brand new arrangements for small ensembles.

We hope that you enjoy the next instalment of the E-News and we look forward to providing you with fantastic resources for you and your students. Until next month,

*We now have available:
CREDIT CARD FACILITY
For those wishing to pay
by credit card, you can
do so either via phone,
fax or email.*

Cheers
Kerri

NEW ONLINE STORE

OPEN

What's New at the ACCESS AREA!



With the release of AVATAR on DVD this week, we thought we might just give you some wonderful worksheets to tie in with some of the music written by the amazing James Horner. Now, don't worry if you don't have the DVD or the recording. The worksheets are aural and practical based with a small compositional activity, and all you need is the audio, which believe it or not, you can find on YouTube. I have taken the liberty of pasting the YouTube video into the ACCESS AREA for ease. The beauty of a copy being here is that you don't get all the other distractions of the other videos on the page so the students are only focused on the music not the screen.

You will find a link to the PDF for the worksheets and these worksheets are going to be a part of the new film music package being written at the moment. This series of activities are a great to insert into your normal class programs or of course as a special event because of the release of the film.

I do hope that you like these worksheets and find them useful.

Here is the direct link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tw1NjwKiEaE>

SOME TIPS FOR TEACHERS!!

According to Arthur Chickering and Zelda Gramson from the American Association for Higher Education, there are seven principles for good teaching practice. I thought we might look into these practice suggestions and see how they relate to Australian Teachers. Their seven principles are:

1. Encourage contact between students and teachers
2. Develop cooperation among students
3. Encourage ACTIVE learning
4. Give prompt feedback
5. Emphasize time on task
6. Communicate high expectations
7. Respect and teach to the diverse talents and ways of leaning.

So far so good. All of these suggestions are items that I would consider important. I will discuss some of these from my teaching perspective.

1. Encourage contact: - in and around the music staffroom, it is not unusual to find students either engaged in conversation with teachers regarding all sorts of topics, from performance strategies to teaching assistance. It is usually one of the most welcoming staffrooms in the school. As a head teacher, I always found it important to separate the students who were in "trouble" from those who were engaged in positive conversations. I didn't want those students who were reporting for misdemeanours to be put on show to the other "good" kids. The key is to have a system for both types of communication and be consistent.
2. Develop cooperation: - easier said than done at times. There are lots of strategies that I am sure you already use in this area. The best strategy is to show by doing. Make sure in the view of students, you are seen to be cooperative. I have seen many teachers in the past, complain to students about "so and so". This is not the best role modelling and lets face it, Music teachers are massive role models within a school. They are always on show, whether they like it or not.
3. Encourage ACTIVE learning: - the Music classroom is one of the most active in a school because of the practical component. Sometimes, this can be a downfall because students and parents can see it as a "bird course". Naturally we know it isn't, but you do need to keep a balance between writing and playing, Make sure you use tactile resources to assist with the written learning aspect.
4. Give prompt feedback: - I have seen many interpretations of this term "feedback". In most Australian schools, it is part of our curriculum to give the students written feedback. Teachers are always careful to make sure that anything in writing is backed up by processes. I have seen many situations where the processes have not been structured and organised, and the teacher finds themselves having to justify their comments to a panel. Make sure you have a system for feedback to students and be able to explain that system to anyone who asks. Feedback usually exists in a music classroom in a number of ways: stickers/comments/stamps in books, verbal discussions after performances, written reports from performances, marked tests, using videos of the students to discuss their performances, etc. Over the years, the one that some music teachers struggle with is the written form of feedback. To address this issue, some over enthusiastic teachers would right monthly reports to parents in the hopes of being able to justify a high level of communication. I am not saying that this is what you must do, but make sure you do have a system that is clear to your, your head of department and your students.
5. Emphasize time on task: - "Time + Energy = learning", or if you read Tony Robbins, "where the focus goes, energy flows". One great method that I am sure you all use is to count down the task time. With only a small amount of time devoted to some compositional, discussion or practical tasks, students need to learn to manage their time. By placing the countdown on the board and announcing it, the students will learn time management. For a 20 minute task, I would place the numbers 15, 10, 5,4,3,2,1 on the board and cross them off as we got to that time.
6. Communicate high expectations:- your students are going to aim for the stars if you do. Expect more and you will get more as long as you give the students belief and structure. All students have the ability to understand music but it is usually the belief that stops them. Believing in the students becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.
7. Respect and teach to the diverse talents and ways of learning: - There are many roads to learning and great teachers know them well. They can recognise the signs in their students. When you are talking, the student who plays with their pen or looks out the window, needs know that they are going to get up and do real soon. Great teachers recognise this and communicate it to these individual students without making the others in the class aware of it. How? By simply starting the lesson with a simple statement:

In this lesson, we are going to....and stick to it!

TIP OF THE MONTH: LEARNING STYLES

In the 2000's, Teaching styles became all the rage. We were told about them, probably personally tested to see what style we were and then we were asked to identify these descriptors in our students. All in the attempt to make us better teachers. Well, for one who went through all of this, I can honestly say, it definitely made me a better teacher. I became so obsessed with this, that I was able to identify students teaching styles and personalities after spending 30 minutes with them. It is valuable to know how you learn and how your students learn. If you have never taken a learning styles test, here is a simple one.

Go to : <http://www.personal.psu.edu/bxb11/LSI/LSI.htm>

And follow the online instructions. The questions are somewhat predictable but try not to think too much about it. Try to complete the answers quickly and go with your first impression. Once you hit the "determine style" button, you will be categorised into your strongest area. This test places you into three areas and issues suggestions on techniques for you to use:

If you are an AUDITORY learner, you may wish to use tapes. Tape lectures to help you fill in the gaps in your notes. But do listen and take notes, reviewing notes frequently. Sit in the lecture hall or classroom where you can hear well. After you have read something, summarize it and recite it aloud.

If you are a VISUAL learner, then by all means be sure that you look at all study materials. Use charts, maps, filmstrips, notes and flashcards. Practice visualizing or picturing words/concepts in your head. Write out everything for frequent and quick visual review.

If you are a TACTILE learner, trace words as you are saying them. Facts that must be learned should be written several times. Keep a supply of scratch paper for this purpose. Taking and keeping lecture notes will be very important. Make study sheets.

The fascinating thing about this information, is that it usually identifies how you prepare your resources for your students. For example: whilst I have an evenness in my operational and behavioural style, my preferred learning style is VISUAL. This is why you tend to see a lot of visual aides in my resources, such as flashcards, spelling lists with pictures, etc. You might find a similar structure to your teaching style. Whilst this is not a bad thing, it is good to note where your strength is, so that you can develop the other areas.

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