

Music Rehearsal Hacks to Energize Your Ensemble

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Teach Procedures

1. Entering room, start and end rehearsals - on/off podium, packing up
2. Rehearsal procedures - instruments ready quickly, practice cut offs, set expectation throughout the year

Posture/Position

3. Model - "Do what I do", nonverbal
4. Incorrect/Correct - couch potato position to perfect position
5. Body - swaying ensemble, stand and play
6. Position Games - grow an inch, starbursts, pencil

Learning Notes

7. Slow it down!
8. Separate Skills/Simplify Passage: sing it, clap it, remove slurs, finger along
9. Echoes by measure in a tempo
10. Change rhythms - swing it, reverse dotted rhythms, change slurs, etc.
11. Finger coordination - grow an inch, march and play, play it forte, stand on accidental
12. Disguised repetition - one point and one play, play it in a different moods
13. In class playing check - one row or stand or person at a time
14. Write in fingerings, shifting, reminders
15. Walk and Teach - get off the podium!
16. Staff Wars and Staff Wars Live apps

Intonation

17. Drones and long tones
18. Chorales
19. Practice manipulating pitch
20. Scales in different octaves by section, eyes closed
21. Play pizz. sections arco to listen for intonation

Rhythm and Tempo

22. Flashcards - teach rhythm before introducing the piece, review in warm ups on scales, SmartMusic Sight Reading Builder
23. Subdivision - one section play repeated notes while rest of group plays their rhythm, play passage with all eighth notes and no slurs
24. Separate the Skill - Clap it, march it, say it, sing it, play it
25. Practice with accompaniment or rhythmic beat - use different tempos, Drum Beat +, Beat Maker Go, YouTube rhythmic loops

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Musical and Artistic Aspects

- 26. Dynamics - technical aspects, play wrong dynamics for whole piece, reverse the dynamics
- 27. Style and phrasing - descriptive words, demonstrate and match each other or a leader, scales with emotions, demonstrate phrasing with speaking, storytelling
- 28. Balance - change seating, one person play “solo” and everyone else must accompany
- 29. Video record/Audio record - students make lesson plan for next day, start with positives
- 30. Crazy conductor - change tempo, dynamics, beat patterns on warm ups, conduct the passage wrong, student conductors for the group or each section
- 31. Follow leader - leaders from around the room
- 32. Listening skills - mystery detective, try to mess them up, change seats: move with stand partner, spread out in room, circle facing in and out, section leaders in back.

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