

HABITS OF A SUCCESSFUL STRING ORCHESTRA

TEACHING CONCERT MUSIC AND
ACHIEVING MUSICAL ARTISTRY
WITH YOUNG STRING ENSEMBLES

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Chicago

Think about your last concert or festival performance. List some of the musical elements with which your students continually struggle.

Our Biggest Mistake

One of the most common and detrimental mistakes orchestra teachers make is programming music that is too difficult for their students to learn and polish in the 8-10 weeks they have before the concert.

Our Biggest Mistake is the Result of three smaller, but still big mistakes:

1. We tend to plan with our eyes and we fail to plan for all of the musical components that we cannot see. We must remember to plan for the following:

2. String teachers often program music to challenge their students. Instead we should

3. Teaching students how to play notes and rhythms is not making music. Instead of trying to teach new notes, rhythms, articulations and other skills in the concert music, we should

The Goal and Objectives of the Concert Music Unit

The goal of teach concert music is not to teach students how to read and perform notes and rhythms, or play one's instrument "in tune" with a good tone and the right articulations; the goal of teaching concert music is to teach students how to perform all of these individualized skills ***with other players to convey a clear musical idea, to make music together with their instruments as an ensemble.***

Goal: Students express clear musical ideas and styles as an ensemble through the performance of orchestral music.

Ensemble Objectives: Students must make the necessary adjustments in their individual performance to:

- Breathe, move, cue and **perform together in synchrony** with other musicians.
- Perform accurate **rhythms** together within a synchronized **pulse** and a musically convincing **tempo**.
- Use the same bow weight, speed and contact point as the other members of the section to create a well-blended ensemble **tone** and **timbre**.
- Finely tune one's own notes to be **in tune** with other musicians.
- Perform the same **bowings, articulations and styles** in the same part of the bow as other members of one's section.
- Use a **volume** that blends with the section, that **balances** the importance of one's own part with respect to the parts of other sections of the ensemble, and that agrees with other players through the peaks, valleys and points in between of all **dynamics** and **phrasing**.
- Convey clear and **musically expressive ideas** that go beyond the notes on the page; these musical concepts include character, style, interpretation, beauty, intensity, mood and emotion.

What Questions or Strategies could be effective for teaching ensemble RHYTHM?

What Questions or Strategies could be effective for teaching ensemble ARTICULATION?

What Questions or Strategies could be effective for teaching ensemble TONE?

What Questions or Strategies could be effective for teaching ensemble INTONATION?

What Questions or Strategies could be effective for teaching ensemble Dynamics, Balance and Phrasing?

What Questions or Strategies could be effective for teaching ensemble TECHNIQUE?

What Questions or Strategies could be effective for teaching ensemble MUSICAL EXPRESSION?

Of the Seven Conducting Tips, list four that are most important to you

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Strategies for Teaching Ensemble Skills

List 3 Strategies for Improving Ensemble Skills

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Selecting Concert Music

What level of music is appropriate for my students?

What are two indicators that the music is too difficult for my students?

1. _____

2. _____

Concert Festival Do's and Don'ts

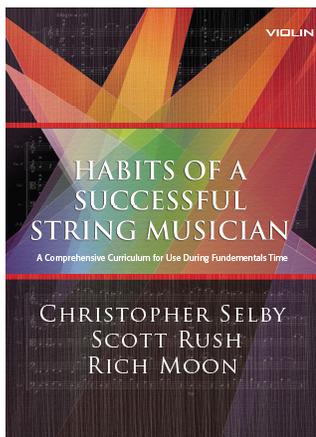
Reflect on the Concert Festival Do's and Don'ts; which stand out to you?



Dr. Christopher Selby is the author of *Habits of a Successful Orchestra Director*, and co-author of the *Habits of a Successful String Musician* series, a collection string method books for middle and upper level orchestras published by GIA. He is an active clinician and conductor, and he has presented sessions at the Midwest Clinic, the 2016 NAfME National Conference, four American String Teacher Association (ASTA) National Conferences, and numerous state conferences across America. He currently directs the high school orchestras at the School of the Arts in Charleston, SC, where he led the school's Symphony Orchestra to win the 2016 ASTA National Orchestra Festival's top award of Grand Champion in the competitive public school division.

Dr. Selby earned his music education degree from the Hartt School of Music in Connecticut, and Masters and Doctorate of Musical Arts degrees in Orchestral Conducting from the University of South Carolina. Before taking his current job at the Charleston School of the Arts, Dr. Selby taught orchestra in traditional elementary, middle and high schools for eighteen years. He was the Orchestra Coordinator in Richland School District Two from 2001 to 2012, where he taught high school and supervised the district's orchestra curriculum and instruction.

Dr. Selby guest conducts at Regional and All-State Orchestras, and he currently serves on the Council for Orchestral Education in the National Association for Music Education (NAfME). From 2012-2014, he was the Chair of the ASTA Committee on School Orchestras and Strings. Dr. Selby was the Executive Board President of the South Carolina Music Educators Association (SCMEA) from 2011-2013, and he is currently serving a second term as the President of the state's Orchestra Division. He was named the SC ASTA Orchestra Teacher of the Year in 2009, and has written articles for NAfME and in ASTA's *American String Teacher*.



Habits of a Successful String Musician

A Comprehensive Curriculum for Use During Fundamentals Time

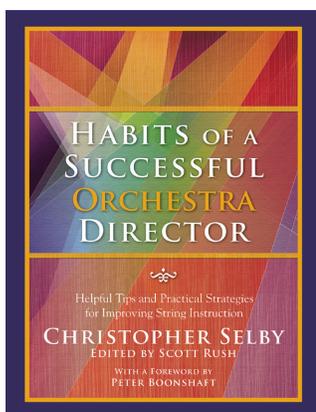
Christopher Selby • Scott Rush • Rich Moon

Habits of a Successful String Musician is a field-tested, vital, and - most important - musical collection of almost 400 sequenced exercises for building fundamentals.

Perfect to use with the entire string orchestra or solo player at virtually any skill level, this series contains carefully sequenced warm-ups, sight-reading etudes, rhythm vocabulary studies, chorales, tuning canons, and much more. In one place, this series collects everything an aspiring player needs to build fundamental musicianship skills and then be able to transfer those skills directly into the performance of great literature.

- Creates a method for teaching scales, arpeggios and thirds that simultaneously accommodates students of different ability levels.
- Organizes tone, rhythm and articulation patterns into a flexible and sequential series.
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- Creates exercises for learning alternate clefs and higher positions.
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- Presents rhythm charts in a new format that allows transfer from timing and rhythm to pitches in a musical context.
- Provides audition sight-reading in a classroom “full ensemble” format that is well planned in scope and sequence. There are over 130 sight-reading examples in this book.
- Promotes the idea

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Habits of a Successful Orchestra Director

Helpful Tips and Practical Strategies for Improving String Instruction

Christopher Selby • Scott Rush

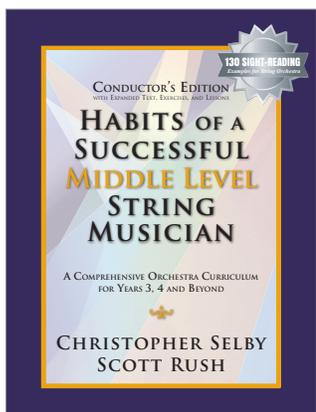
Christopher Selby and his team have created a resource that is rich with practical strategies for developing a successful orchestra program. This book will inspire young and veteran orchestra directors looking for fresh ideas about teaching orchestra students of all ages to:

- Perform with refined intonation, expressive musicianship, and a beautiful tone
- Develop advanced performance technique, rhythmic precision, and ensemble skills
- Sight-read better, rehearse more efficiently in class, and practice better at home
- Become orchestra leaders and take greater pride and ownership in your ensemble

Additional sections address rehearsal strategies, classroom policies, long-range planning, assessment, tips for building an orchestra program, and suggestions for communicating with parents and principals to better support the orchestra.

Habits of a Successful Orchestra Director is a comprehensive book designed to exponentially inspire as teaching skills grow. It will be a constant and essential companion throughout the career of any orchestra director.

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