

SO, WHAT'S THE PLAN?

WE KNOW WHAT WE WANT TO REHEARSE,
BUT WHAT ARE WE SUPPOSED TO TEACH?

A PATH FOR FIGURING OUT WHAT TO TEACH
TO UPPER LEVEL STRING PLAYERS AND WHEN TO TEACH IT

CHRISTOPHER R. SELBY

The Goal of this Session is to help attendees answer “the three questions.”

The Three Questions:

1. What do I want my students to learn by the end of the year?
2. What is my pedagogical plan for reaching these end-of-year goals?
3. How does my plan for today help students reach these goals?

The Eight Steps to Creating a Useful Long-Range Plan

- Step 1. Select the review and new objectives for each level you teach
- Step 2. Create the Unit Assessments that describe skill mastery.
- Step 3. Select Materials for developing these skills
- Step 4. Create Strategies Activities for developing these skills
- Step 5. Create a Timeline for each unit.
- Step 6. Organize the units into a Long-Range Plan.
- Step 7. Create weekly and daily plans that fit into your long-range plan
- Step 8. Pay attention to the realities; and make adjustments to improve your plan for next year.



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Orchestra Units are Different than Academic Units

Our units do not run chronologically like they do in other classes. In History, for example:

September: Civil War
October: Reconstruction
November: Industrial Revolution
December: World War I



Orchestra units go all year long. We introduce them separately, and then we use exercises and music to teach students how they overlap.

Orchestra Units: Tone/Articulation Patterns/Positions Rhythmic/Tonal Literacy

September

October

November

December

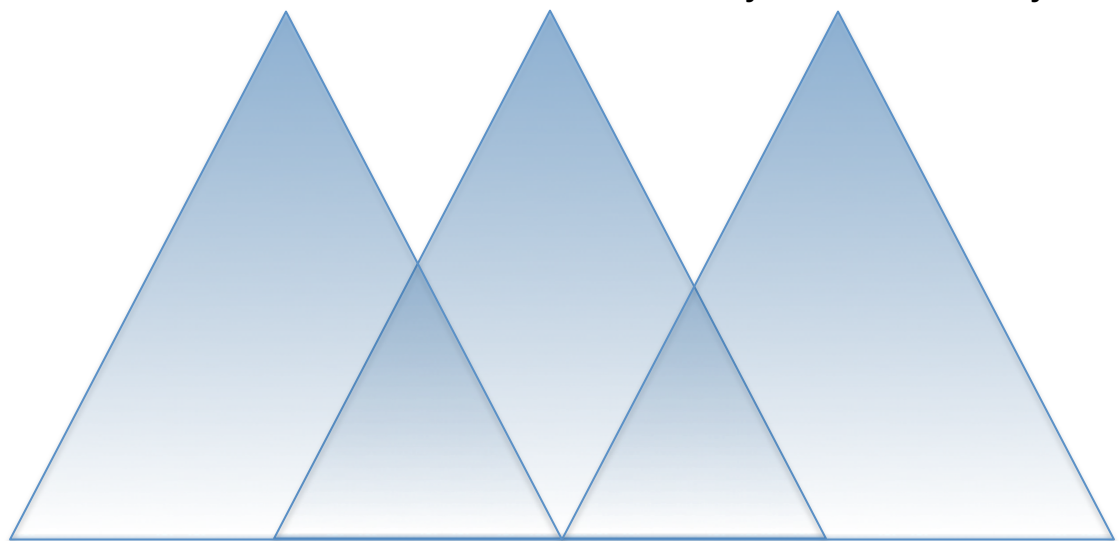
January

February

March

April

May

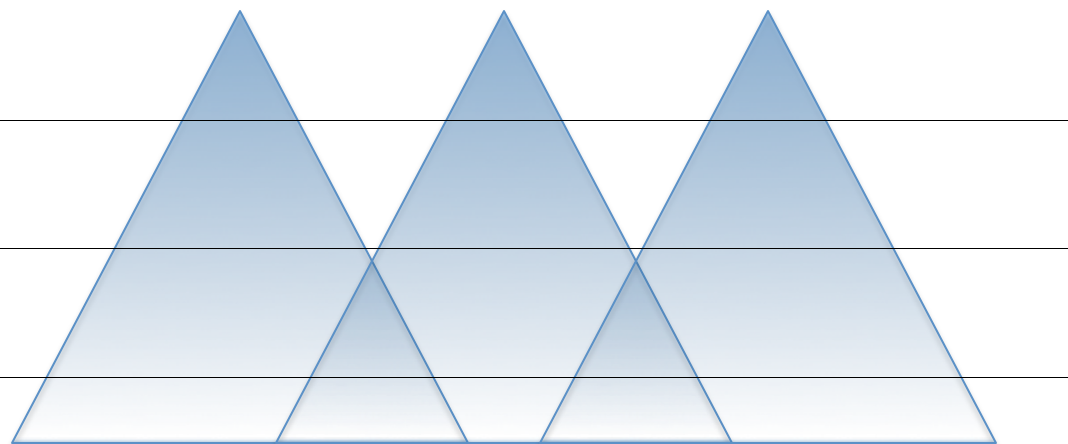


Orchestra units also last longer than a year. (Hopefully, they last a lifetime.)

Level 1

Level 2

Level 3



Examples of Orchestra Units

1. Tone and Articulation
 - a. Right Hand Position and Technique: Shape, balance, relaxed motion
 - b. Tone Production: Mechanics and Terms
 - c. Rhythmic Articulations
2. Left Hand Patterns, Positions and Fine Tuning
 - a. Position Review: Instrument and LH Position
 - b. First Position Finger Patterns and Velocity
 - c. Vibrato
 - d. Shifting (Beginning, Intermediate and Advanced)
 - e. Upper Positions (6th and Higher): Technique, Thumb position, and Alternate Clefs
3. Scales, Arpeggios and Thirds—Putting Left and Right Together: Studying the patterns in different keys (Left Hand) & Producing beautiful tone in all parts of the instrument
 - a. Major and minor scales
 - b. One, two and three octaves
 - c. Arpeggios, dominant arpeggios and thirds
4. Literacy and Creativity
 - a. Writing Familiar Melodies to study time signatures, key signatures, and other mechanics of music writing
 - b. Deciphering and Performing Rhythms Independently
 - c. Deciphering key signatures and performing correct finger patterns
 - d. Writing original melodies, creating arrangements
5. Concert Music
 - a. Performing Music Together: Cuing, Breathing, Moving, Blending
 - b. Musical Context: Historical and Cultural
 - c. The rehearsal process
 - d. Self evaluation, group evaluation, problem solving

Step 1. Select the Review and New Objectives for each level

1. Write all of the objectives that you plan to review and introduce through your entire program, in the order that you think they should be taught.
2. Include just a few of the objectives that are too remedial for your students and a few more that are too difficult. It's important to remember where your students are coming from and where they are going.
3. Focus on one unit at a time, and keep in mind that the list may not be as long as you think
4. Think about the skills first, and then write them as objectives. For example
 - a. Skill: Backward Extension
 - b. Objective: The student will recognize and perform backward extensions with relaxed technique and the correct half/whole step spacing.

Be aware of the New Material mentality and pressures that exist in our schools, and be able to articulate the importance of review through practice that is unique to the arts

Plan a thoughtful well-sequenced Review

- Remind students the material that was introduced in previous years
- Give clear descriptions of how “learned/polished” looks and sounds
- Catch up students who missed this material in previous years

New Material

- Plan a logical pedagogical sequence for teaching new skills; teaching skills as they appear in the music is neither logical nor pedagogical
- Do not introduce new skills through concert music; give students time to learn the skills before requiring them to be polished in a concert performance

Step 2. Create Unit Assessments

Teach with the end in mind

Know what the end is supposed to look like before you begin teaching a lesson. When we clearly articulate we want students to be able to do by the end of the lesson, then the strategies we will need and use during the lesson will become much more clear. So, create the rubric first, and then teach the lesson. Other benefits of creating rubrics first include:

- Easier for teachers: Though the material being tested in each class level may change, the unit assessment does not change much from one level to the next.
- Easier for students: Help students understand what is going to be on the test by creating the test first, and then giving students the rubric
- As units overlap, they can be easily added as categories on rubrics

“Checklist Rubrics” are good for quickly identifying and underlining problems

Category	Few correct 3-4	Some correct 5-6	Most correct 7-8	All correct 9-10	Score
Instrument And Hand Position	<input type="checkbox"/> Body and Instrument position are correct, relaxed and well-aligned <input type="checkbox"/> Left hand , elbow, wrist, thumb and finger shape and placement are correct <input type="checkbox"/> Right hand , thumb, pinky, fingers, knuckles and wrist are fluid and placed correctly <input type="checkbox"/> _____				
Rhythm, Tempo and Fluency	<input type="checkbox"/> Tempos are correct and consistent; no rushing <input type="checkbox"/> Rhythms are correct ; notes and rests are counted and subdivided correctly. <input type="checkbox"/> Fluency : No stopping, stumbling, or dragging				
Intonation	<input type="checkbox"/> Notes are consistently correct and in tune. <input type="checkbox"/> Left Hand is placed correctly, not sharp or flat <input type="checkbox"/> Fingerings are correct. <input type="checkbox"/> Shifting (if any) : Relaxed, fluid, and accurate <input type="checkbox"/> Finger Patterns, half and whole step distances are correct. <input type="checkbox"/> Fingertips adjust quickly , refining the pitch after finger placement.				
Tone and Articulation	<input type="checkbox"/> Bow Speed and Weight are balanced and produce an excellent tone that projects well. <input type="checkbox"/> Contact Point is the correct distance between the bridge and fingerboard <input type="checkbox"/> The Bow Angle is perpendicular to the string and rotated correctly <input type="checkbox"/> Slurs and articulations are correct, and all notes are performed in the correct part of the bow .				

Step 3. Select Materials

Select the material that will teach the students the skills you want them to learn. This will include the exercises, etudes, scales and arpeggios, concert music organized into their respective units: Tone, Left Hand Skills, Rhythm, Scales, Concert Music.

- Keep it simple; address only one unit at a time.
- Organize the material in the order that you will introduce and teach it.

Step 4. Create Strategies and Activities

Create strategies and Activities that will teach the students the skills you want them to learn. Take into account the material described above. This section does not have to be “full sentences.” For example:

- **Bow Hand Games:** Windshield wipers, stirring the soup, rockets, push-ups
- **Scale Activities:** Finger pattern worksheet, partner performances/assessments, one octave at a time, use a pedal tone, slow to fast, rhythmic patterns, on/off string,

Step 5. Create a Time Line

☐ Timeline

Quarter 1

Quarter 2

Quarter 3

Quarter 4

Unit Template

Unit Title:

☐ Standards

☐ Objectives. In this unit, the student will learn and be able to:

☐ Material

☐ Assessments. In this unit, student mastery will be assessed with the following assessment tools

☐ Teaching Strategies

☐ Timeline

Quarter 1

Quarter 2

Quarter 3

Quarter 4

Step 6. Organize Units Into A Long Range Plan

Quarter 1: Overview

1. Tone and Articulation:
2. Left Hand Skills
3. Scales, Arpeggios and Thirds:
4. Creativity:
5. Literacy
6. Repertoire:

Week 1

1. Tone and Articulation:
2. Left Hand Skills
3. Scales, Arpeggios and Thirds:
4. Creativity:
5. Literacy
6. Repertoire:

Week 2

1. Tone and Articulation:
2. Left Hand Skills
3. Scales, Arpeggios and Thirds:
4. Creativity:
5. Literacy
6. Repertoire:

Quarter 2

1. Tone and Articulation:
2. Left Hand Skills
3. Scales, Arpeggios and Thirds:
4. Creativity:
5. Literacy
6. Repertoire:

Week 1

1. Tone and Articulation:
2. Left Hand Skills
3. Scales, Arpeggios and Thirds:
4. Creativity:
5. Literacy
6. Repertoire:

Example:

Quarter 1 Overview

1. Tone and Articulation:

- a. Review Right Hand Technique (1 week)
- b. Basic Tone Production Review; Terms and Open String Exercises 1-4, (1 week)
- c. Basic Strokes, Full tone: Bowing Variations 5 A-N (2 weeks)
 - i. Detache, Staccato, Legato, Marcato. Slur (11a - 11d)
- d. Full Bow Skills, Tip to Frog with good bow angle: Exercises: 6-G (1 week)
 - i. Portato/loure, up-bow staccato, Slur (11e – 11h)
- e. Dotted Rhythms and Syncopated Patterns (3 week)
- f. Chorales 1 & 2

2. Left Hand Skills:

- a. Left Hand Position: Let Go of the Instrument
- b. Extensions—Backward and Forward
- c. Tetrachord Etude
- d. Velocity Etude
- e. Trills

3. Scales, Arpeggios and Thirds: C Major & G Major

4. Creativity: The Cover Project

5. Literacy

- a. **Writing Familiar Melodies: Twinkle and Mary**
- b. **Rhythmic Literacy** Quarter Notes and Rests; Ties, Dotted Quarters and 8th rests
 - i. Exercises: Charts A and B from Habits Book Sections 7 and 8

6. Repertoire: Allegro for Strings from Op. 3 No. 1 by Handel/Frackenpohl, Orange Jam

WEEK 6

Tone and Articulation:

Warm Up with Baroque style quarters, 8ths and 16ths: Ex. 5a-5d

Continue learning spiccato skills with exercises 9a-9c

Left Hand Skills

Review All Finger Patterns with the Tetrachord Etude

Shifting Exercises 26-28. TEST #28 for a grade.

G Major Three-Octave Scale, Arpeggio and Thirds

Musicianship (Theory, Creativity, Literacy, Sight Reading)

Sight Reading Syncopated rhythms: Ex. 214-216

Concert Repertoire: Brandenburg 3, mm. 1-32

Fun Finish: Chorale #2 or Orange Jam

Final Thoughts: Pay attention to the realities; and make adjustments to improve your plan for next year. Your long-range plan will evolve and improve each year.

Notes

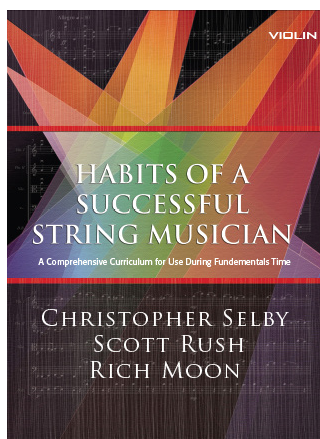
Notes



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

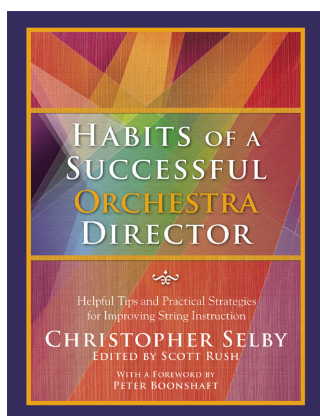
Christopher Selby • Scott Rush • Rich Moon

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.

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Helpful Tips and Practical Strategies for Improving String Instruction

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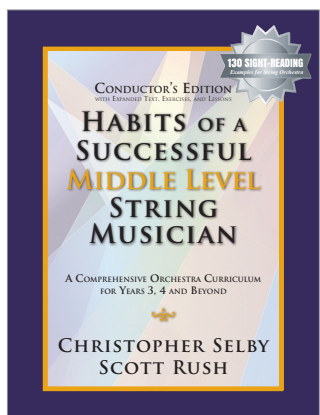
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