

Internalising a pulse

- 1 beat note, 7 beat rest. Each round a note replaces a rest until there are 8 notes in a row. Slow, fast, reverse, Jedi version (eyes closed).
- Play 4 bars then play on the first beat of bar 9. Then substitute singing for the first 4 bars.
- Conductor begins piece and band counts internally with their eyes open and raises their hand when a specific beat is reached. Then with eyes closed. *Paula Crider*.

Rubato

- Count beats aloud following the conductor's pattern.
- Sizzle the subdivision of a rallentando or accelerando (i.e. sizzling quavers to crotchet beat).
- No conducting! Have students try being responsible for pulse/entries in both straight rhythmic sections and rubato sections through more attentive listening. *Rob McWilliams*.

Entries and Cutoffs

- Sing line on 'doo' and add a 'yah' for cut-off. *Ed Fairlie*.
- Just play the front of each note, focusing attention on the articulation start and rhythmic placement.

BALANCE

Play in a trio with the two people sitting next to you and blend into one another's sound.

Play a section in slow motion, really listening in for balance/intonation.

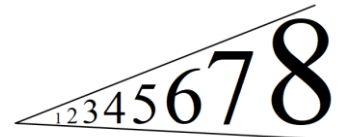
Chair scramble, moving away from people playing the same part. What is something new you noticed? How does your part relate to the players either side of you? *Paula Crider*.

Sizzle the airstream of a phrase.

Rather than telling them – record a short excerpt in rehearsal and play it back to the ensemble. What do they notice?

Dynamics

- Establish a *mf* dynamic level in the ensemble by having everyone play a unison note, adjusting their volume level so that they are able to hear themselves at a level equal to their fellow ensemble members.
- Map out the range of a crescendo using 1-8. Creates an agreement about levels of intensity (e.g. clarinets can be a 5 here while saxophones are a 3). *Monte Mumford*.



INTONATION

Intonation

- Demonstrate with trumpet tuning slides. Everyone closes their eyes and puts up their hand and shakes it in time with the beat tones until they believe it's in-tune and put their hand down. *Paula Crider*.
- Teach students to listen to the speed of the beats. Slower=closer, faster=adjust in opposite direction. Encourage experimentation, worst scenario is to do nothing at all. When in doubt, start flat and then eliminate the beats.

Adjusting

- On a unison pitch, when the conductor's index fingers are together play as in-tune as possible. When the fingers are apart bend the pitch either up or down without getting louder. *Roderick VanScoy*

- Tuning mechanisms just make it easier, they don't fix it. An 'ease of tuning' slide. *James Morrison.*

Tuning canon. Play in unison showing scale degrees with fingers. Then build from the bass voice up to sop voice, 1 bar canon. You can transpose the key.



OTHER IDEAS

"Rather than tell me what is written on your part, show me." *Ingrid Martin.*

Watching

- Conduct multi-meter patterns and have musicians only play on beat 1.
- Start and Stop. Fast and Slow. Loud and Soft. *Sue Arney.*

Rehearsal in the Round

- Rearrange the band room so that all the percussion is in the middle of the band room, in a circle facing out. Place the other band members in a circle around the percussion. Variations include SATB groupings like a choir, or rotating the first two rows to face the back two rows with the conductor in the middle. *Roderick VanScoy*

Mind's Ear Game

- Show scale degrees by holding up fingers while the students sing the appropriate pitch. Then hear the sounds in your head and sing the pitch when indicated. *Scott Jones*

Concert reflection

- Listen as a group to the recording of a recent performance and have each member of the ensemble fill in a piece of paper with responses to the three prompts: I Liked, I Wish, I Wonder. *Ingrid Martin.*

Silent rehearsal

- Preload the rehearsal by announcing a week in advance. Place a sign outside the rehearsal room stating it is a silent rehearsal. Display the rules of the rehearsal and piece order on a board. Mime all instructions with no talking by students or you! Break the silence at the end and debrief. *Jared Burch.*

Performer of the week

- Prepare a roster each term for weekly solo performances by individual students in the ensemble. They select a timeslot at least two weeks prior, prepare an introduction with two facts about the piece and rehearse with any accompaniment parts. Helpful to bring focus back in and reinforce appropriate performer and audience etiquette.

Further Resources

Cavitt, M. ed. (2012) *On Teaching Band: Notes from Eddie Green*. Milwaukee: Hal Leonard.
Martin, I. (2022) *Planning Effective Rehearsals*. Melbourne: Conducting Artistry.
Pilafian, S and Sheridan, P. (2002) *The Breathing Gym*. Mesa: Focus on Music Publishing.
Than, G. (2018) *Creative Struggle*. Kansas City: Andrews McMeel Publishing.
Wagner, S. (2016) *The Pursuit of Excellence*. Florida: Meredith Music.
Whaley, G. ed. (2005) *The Music Director's Cookbook*. Florida: Meredith Music.