Quick Meaningful Activities to Engage and Assess Student’s Individual Practice

Wendy K. Matthews
Wayne State University
What are some excuses you have heard from your students as to why they did NOT practice?
Now, think about your students who practice well, what things do they say or do that make them successful?
Presentation Overview

I. Theory of Self-Regulated Learning
   a. analyzing what needs to be improved
   b. decide how to improve
   c. determine if they were successful

II. Choosing Our Assessment “Tools”
Why is it hard for students to understand how to practice?

“

1. Students not empowered to develop self-regulation
2. Feedback is not easily understood by students
3. Motivation and student beliefs influence their understanding of feedback
Self-regulation: “Self-generated thoughts, feelings, and actions that are planned and cyclically adapted to the attainment of personal goals” (Zimmerman, 1998).
Forethought Sub-phases

Forethought
- Task Analysis:
  - Goal setting
  - Strategic planning
  - Self-Motivation Beliefs
  - Self-efficacy
  - Goal orientation

Performance

Self-Reflection
Performance Phase

**Performance**
- Self-observation
- Self-recording
- Self-monitoring
- Self-control
- Self-instruction / Imagery
- Attention Focusing

Forethought

Self-Reflection
Self-Reflection Phase

Performance

Forethought

Self-Reflection
- Self-judgment
- Self-evaluation
- Attributional beliefs
- Self-reaction
- Self-satisfaction/affect
- Adaptively/defensive
Stocking Your Tool Box: Formative Assessment to Develop Self-Regulation
Goal for the week: __________

Today’s Goal: __________

How I worked toward my goal:
•
•
•
Did I reach my goal for today? Yes  No

---


Timmins, John Packy (2014). Retrieved https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1sQJAE_fq64DugfUTL1dg_JJikD6o_P71wGNW81u6mBY/viewform?c=0&w=1
Phase: **Forethought**  
Subprocess: Strategic Planning  
Assessment: Strategy Plan, First Quarter—Concert Band

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicate Section Practice</th>
<th>List what musical elements that were your focus? (notes, rhythm, articulation, dynamics, musicality, etc.)</th>
<th>Strategy Used</th>
<th>How well did the strategy work?</th>
<th>Would you use this strategy again? (Circle one)</th>
<th>How can you modify this strategy for your next practice section?</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Matthews, W.K. (2014)

### First Quarter—Concert Band

**Music Goal**

Is my goal realistic? Is it measurable? Is it?

Steps to achieve this goal:

1.  
2.  
3.  

**Progress Log**

Progress made or obstacles encountered:

Date Progress
Date Progress
Date Progress
Date Progress

I ACHIEVED MY GOAL!!!

Date

What I’ve learned from striving toward this goal:

This is my best work.

(Student Signature)

O’Toole, P., (2003, October 30) *Shaping Sound Musicians: Teaching Comprehensive Musicianship through Performance.*  
Chicago: GIA Publications.
Phase: Forethought
Subprocess: Strategic Planning
Assessment: Music Goal

NAME __________________ Date __________________

What piece needs work? ____________________________
What measures? __________________________________
What is the problem? _____________________________
What is the goal (desired outcome)? _________________
Remember to write your minutes on your practice record.

Is your bow making a T with the string?

Count and tap foot.

What can you do to fix it?
Did you:
- Write in the counting
- Count out loud
- Clap the rhythm
- Air bow the rhythm
- Check the key signature
- Check the time signature
- Check for accidentals
- Check your posture
- Check your position

Can you play it?
YES!

Have you played it at least 10x correctly?
YES!

Move on!

NO?
Find the tough spot! Identify it exactly!

NO?

Practice those tiny chunks SLOWLY!

Play those tough spots 10x right!

Play it right 10 times!

Fan out

Start over!

Start over!

© 2008 P. Tambron www.mostlybass.com
Phase: **Forethought** Phase
Subprocess: Strategic Planning (practicing with the pianist) & Self-efficacy
Assessment: Solo & Ensemble Reflection Sheet, Self-Efficacy Questionnaire

**SOLO & ENSEMBLE REFLECTION SHEET**

1. How much time did you spend practicing for Solo & Ensemble?
   - a. How many times did you practice with your pianist?
     - b. 0 – 2
     - c. 3-4
     - d. 5 – 7
     - e. 8-9
   - c. What did you do to prepare for this performance?

2. Before this performance, what was your confidence level?
   - Low
   - Mid
   - High
Phase: **Performance**

**Subprocess:** Self-Observation by musical elements

**Assessment:** Practice Records, Sight Reading Assessment

---

**Playing Assessment**

Name ________________

What can you do well? What needs practice?

**DIRECTIONS:** Circle a face based on an assessment of your OWN playing.

---

**Rough Riders**

1. Notes
   - 😃
   - 😐
   - 😞
   - 😞
   - 😞

2. Rhythms
   - 😃
   - 😐
   - 😞
   - 😞
   - 😞

3. Articulations
   - 😃
   - 😐
   - 😞
   - 😞
   - 😞

4. Dynamics
   - 😃
   - 😐
   - 😞
   - 😞
   - 😞

5. Musicality (feeling, emotion)
   - 😃
   - 😐
   - 😞
   - 😞
   - 😞

---

Ozsvath, Keith *Practice Record.* (2013, February 20) Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/groups/banddirectors/429128160496737/
Phase: Performance
Subprocess: Observation by others
Assessment: Parent Assessment #2

PARENT ASSESSMENT #2
Beginning Band

Parents,
Your input on this assessment will help us to evaluate your child’s progress and practice time needs. Please answer the questions below, sign the form, and have your child return this form to class by Tuesday, October 13.

Your child should be able to demonstrate the following to you:

Can they show you how they play the first 6 notes they have learned?  

Yes  
No

Can they play one of the songs in Unit Two for you?  

Yes  
No

They are to play a long, steady sound on their instrument (using any note) for you. Please time how long they can hold the sound in one breath, and record the time here: _______ seconds

Upcoming calendar dates include: Booster meetings on October 7, November 11. AUHSD Band & Pageantry Spectacular on Nov. 4th, 7PM @ Glover Stadium in Anaheim. Also remember there is no school on October 12 or November 11.

If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to include them here:

Please sign and date below, and have your child return the form to class. Thank you for taking the time to participate in this assessment!

Parent Signature: ___________________________ Date: ____________________
Phase: **Performance**
Subprocess: Peer or Self-recording
Assessment: Bowing (4 examples)

**Outcome:** Students will perform Classical period bowing styles (spiccato, legato, etc.)

**Assessment Tool:** Excerpt Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>mm. 1-14</th>
<th>mm. 29-39</th>
<th>mm. 61-76</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Part marked correctly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Correct bowing executed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Proper bow hold</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Full use of bow</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Even/rhythmic spiccato stroke</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Effective legato style</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Numeric Rating Scales**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Part marked properly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Correct bowing executed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Proper bow hold</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Full use of bow</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Even/rhythmic spiccato stroke</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Effective legato style</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Descriptive Rating Scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Good tone quality</td>
<td>l-------I--------I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unruly, fuzzy</td>
<td>clear but</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>low energy</td>
<td>weak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Proper use of bow</td>
<td>l-------I--------I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uneven</td>
<td>fairly even</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>short stroke</td>
<td>medium stroke</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Graphic Rating Scales**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Great</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Part marked properly</td>
<td>I----</td>
<td>I----</td>
<td>I----</td>
<td>I----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Correct bowing executed</td>
<td>I----</td>
<td>I----</td>
<td>I----</td>
<td>I----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Proper bow hold</td>
<td>I----</td>
<td>I----</td>
<td>I----</td>
<td>I----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Full use of bow</td>
<td>I----</td>
<td>I----</td>
<td>I----</td>
<td>I----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Even/rhythmic spiccato stroke</td>
<td>I----</td>
<td>I----</td>
<td>I----</td>
<td>I----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Effective legato style</td>
<td>I----</td>
<td>I----</td>
<td>I----</td>
<td>I----</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Phase: **Performance**  
Subprocess: **Self-monitoring**  
Assessment: Left-hand Technique, Sight Reading

---

**Left-Hand Technique Checklist**

Students will record themselves playing selections from Allegro Gustoso and the following checklist is meant for the instructor to use during analysis of each student's video.

**Student Name:** ____________________________

**Song:** Allegro Gustoso

**Instrument (circle one):** violin  viola  cello  bass

**Check if task has been fulfilled:**

- Proper hand position is demonstrated.
- Tips of the fingers are utilized.
- Fingers are rounded and not flat.
- Finger tunnels are used when appropriate.
- Proper intonation is demonstrated.
- Proper vibrato technique is shown.

---

**Sightreading**

Sightreading means playing a musical piece for the first time. The key to sightreading success is to know what to look for before you play. Use the word S-T-A-R-S to remind yourself what to look for, and eventually your band will become sightreading STARS!

- **S** — Sharps or flats in the key signature
- **T** — Time signature and tempo markings
- **A** — Accidental not found in the key signature
- **R** — Rhythms, silently counting the more difficult notes and rests
- **S** — Signs, including dynamics, articulations, repeats and endings

---

Phase: **Performance**  
Subprocess: Attention focusing  
Assessment: Technique Evaluation  
(Alto Saxophone, OCMS Bi-weekly practice record)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technique Evaluation</th>
<th>Alto Saxophone</th>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### STUDENT SUCCESSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tone Production—Posture</th>
<th>Tone Production—Embouchure Formation</th>
<th>Tone Production—Breathing/Articulation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUCCESS STORIES!</strong></td>
<td><strong>SUCCESS STORIES!</strong></td>
<td><strong>SUCCESS STORIES!</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Success Dates</td>
<td>Success Dates</td>
<td>Success Dates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Feet are flat on the floor</td>
<td>1. Corners are firm</td>
<td>1. Mouth is open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Legs are straight and planted</td>
<td>2. Bottom lip is rolled in covering bottom teeth</td>
<td>2. Saying &quot;halp&quot; when you breath</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Back is off the back of the chair</td>
<td>3. Top lip is cemented to top teeth</td>
<td>3. Throat is open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Shoulders are rolled back and relaxed</td>
<td>4. Top teeth rest on top of the mouthpiece</td>
<td>4. &quot;Ah,&quot; like the doctor is looking down your throat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Upper body is tall, lungs are open</td>
<td>5. Lip pressure does not crush or collapse the reed into the mouthpiece</td>
<td>5. Breath is dark, deep, with the air going to your stomach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Neck is straight and forward</td>
<td>6. Bottom lip securely rests on flat part of the reed</td>
<td>6. Continuous, strong air stream</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**How's it Going?** (Use back of this sheet)  
What are you doing really well?

What problems are you running into while practicing?

Which practice strategies below might help improve your practice?

**Practice Strategies: Check off the ones you have used.**

- [ ] Scan the music for notes and rhythms before I play it.
- [ ] Practice small chunks of the difficult parts of the music.
- [ ] Play harder parts more slowly, and gradually speed up as I get better.
- [ ] Use a metronome and a tuner.
- [ ] Make my practice sessions: shorter/longer
- [ ] Record myself and listen to myself playing.
- [ ] Listen to a recording of the piece being played correctly. [JW Pepper is best, or youtube a high school or college performance]

**Journal Entry:** (Use back of this sheet)  
Did you meet your goals?

What practice strategies worked best for you?

On a scale from 1 to 10, how much did you improve over the last week? (circle)

Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 A lot

---

Julie Myer Yaeger “Band Director’s Group” File Repository

Kasper, Mike. “Band Director’s Group” File Repository
Phase: **Self-Reflection**  
Subprocess: **Self-Evaluation**  
Assessment: **Peer evaluations**

1. An excellent band always has good balance and blend.  
   - a. Each section could be heard (one section did not overpower another).  
   - b. Harmony was never louder than melody.  
   - c. No one player stood out.

2. An excellent band always plays on pitch.  
   - a. The entire band played in tune.  
   List specific spots in which the band was not in tune.

3. An excellent band always plays accurate rhythms precisely together.  
   - a. All rhythms were played correctly.  
   - b. All entrances and cut-offs were precisely together.

4. An excellent band always plays accurate pitches.  
   - a. All pitches were played correctly.  
   - b. Each section played their pitches correctly.

5. An excellent band always plays with dynamic contrasts.  
   - a. There were dynamic contrasts in the piece (louder and softer).  
   - b. The band followed the dynamic markings the composer wrote in the music.  
   - c. The band played at the appropriate tempo.  
   - d. The style the band played fit the style of the piece.

6. An excellent band always tries to improve. List specific ways in which this performance could have been better.
Phase: **Self-reflection**  
Subprocess: **Self-evaluation**  
Assessment: **Video/Audio Assessment**

- **Platforms:**  
  - SmartMusic, Google Voice, Evernote, Audacity, Audioboom  
- **Students** can record their performance multiple times.  
- Can be done outside or rehearsal  
- Directors can take more time with feedback  
- Most Students have a phone/computer  
- Alternative to practice records.  
- Some students are concerned with performing in front of peers.

One of the BEST things that I did last year was recording my bands, sharing the recordings with the bands via Google drive. From there, we used a live google document that the students wrote constructive feedback based on the recordings. All the students contributed and they could all see each other's comments. The days after this (they did this at home) I would bring up the comments (some of them were a page!!) and those comments-suggestions, compliments and what we need to do better, were the basis of our rehearsals. It was so effective-the bands immediately became more in-tune with their playing because they really listened in depth to the recordings.

-Sarah Minette (2014), ASU doctoral student
Phase: **Self-reflection**; Subprocess: Self-evaluation: Adaptive/defensive
Assessment: Dictation Quiz, Performance Scale, Practice Log

---

**Dictation Quiz**

**COMPLETE BEFORE THE QUIZ**
1. How confident are you that you will do the dictation correctly?
   - Not sure
   - Very sure

2. What grade do you expect you will receive in this **quiz**? __________

3. Do you have any strategies that you plan to use for this quiz? If so, list __________

**COMPLETE AFTER THE QUIZ**
1. How confident are you that you did the dictation correctly?
   - Not sure
   - Very sure

2. What grade do you expect you will receive in this **quiz**? __________

3. Were you able to use the strategies you intended to use? Why or why not?

4. Which strategies will you use on the next quiz? Why or why not?

5. Which strategies will you **NOT** use on the next quiz? Why or why not?

---

**Practice Log & Self-Assessment Journal Format**

Practice Log — (1) Fill in the left side with assignments from class and (2) reflect under the *Specific Goals* column.

**Today's Date:**

**Piece of Concentration:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCALES &amp; WARMUPS</th>
<th>SPECIFIC GOALS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ETUDES AND EXERCISES</th>
<th>SPECIFIC GOALS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEASURES</th>
<th>SPECIFIC GOALS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SPECIAL NOTES FOR THE WEEK**

Self-Assessment Journal — Be sure to include answers to the following in your journal after every time you practice and every rehearsal. Also answer additional questions assigned by your teacher:

- How did you feel before you played the piece? After?
- What would you do differently to make playing the piece more successful?
- Please draw an “assessment sandwich” (positive - something to fix - positive).
- What were the musical “tough spots” you had? The ensemble had?

---

W.K. Matthews (2014)  
Frakes, N. (2014)
Final Thoughts

1. Are you examining” how” as well as the “what”?
2. Are each of the self-regulatory phases included in your assessments throughout the unit?
3. Are the direction clear? Are you using words your students understand?
4. What are you testing? Do your assessments match your objectives.
5. Have you tested the same knowledge in variety of ways?
6. Are you providing quality feedback to help students become self-regulated learners.
Conclusions

- In today’s educational climate of accountability and high-stakes testing is more important than ever to demonstrate to stakeholders that profound learning takes place in music classrooms.

- Assessment can serve as a means of advocacy and is imperative for recruitment of lifelong musicians. It provides the opportunity to show parents, administrators, and fellow teachers that music teaches concepts, skills, attitudes, and appreciation for a basic form of human interaction.

- Assessment provides feedback to students that they are growing as musicians and that they possess the skills and knowledge to develop musically throughout their lives!
References


Frakes, N. (2014). *Student Teaching Assignment Unit Plan*. Wayne State University


Killian, J. *Concert Essay*. Department of Performing Arts Texas Woman's University Denton, Texas.


References


Minette, S. (2014), ASU doctoral student, retrieved from musingsofsminey.blogspot.com


Ozsvath, Keith *Practice Record*. (2013, February 20) Retrieved from https://www.facebook.com/groups/banddirectors/429128160496737/

