Unit 01: Tone Production High School Orchestra 9-12

Content Area: **Music**
Course(s):
Time Period:
Length: **ongoing**
Status: **Published**

Brief Summary of Unit - Revision June 2021

The Tone Production Unit will explore right-hand skills, bow mechanics and musical articulation. Students will study and develop techniques for proper bow distribution with a focus on bowing at the sounding point (parallel to the bridge). Students will identify bow distribution concepts as applied to common rhythmic patterns while incorporating various articulations and styles. By the end of the unit, students will apply their knowledge of right-hand bow mechanics to compare, differentiate, and analyze appropriate techniques for tone production. An understanding of bowing concepts and mechanics will enhance the student's ability to interpret, perform and respond to a range of expressive musical idioms.

Transfer

- Apply technology as a tool
- Critique the role of tone production, articulations, and style in musical expression
- Employ the elements of effective bow technique, including bow placement, speed, pressure, direction, and distribution in new music.
- Listen and identify how articulations contribute to aesthetic qualities in ensemble performance
- Listen and identify how tone production affects the aesthetic qualities of ensemble performance

Essential Questions

- How are bow speed, placement, and pressure related? Does altering one aspect of bow usage necessitate altering another?
- How do different bow patterns (slurs, hooked bows) affect the style and playability of different rhythmic patterns?
- How do different bowing techniques shape the tone and musical style in an ensemble performance? (e.g., detache, martele, spiccato, legato)
- How do individuals choose music to experience? How does understanding the structure and context of music inform a response?
- How do musicians improve the quality of their performance?
- How do performers select repertoire?
- How do we interpret and perform articulations in an ensemble?

- How do we interpret and perform with an awareness of bow direction, bow speed, and bow pressure?
- How do we interpret and perform with an awareness of bow distribution?
- How does bow placement affect tone production in an ensemble?
- How does bow placement and technique create musical expression in an ensemble? (e.g., rhythm, tone, dynamics, timbre, texture)
- How does the sounding point contribute to shaping the tone in an ensemble?
- When is a performance judged ready to present? How do context and the manner in which musical work is presented influence audience response?

Essential Understandings

- Different musical styles require specific articulations and bow placements.
- Individuals' selection of musical works is influenced by their interests, experiences, understandings, and purposes. Response to music is informed by analyzing context (i.e., social, cultural, historical) and how creator(s) or performer(s) manipulate the elements of music.
- Musicians judge performance based on criteria that vary across time, place, and cultures. The context and how a work is presented influence the audience response.
- Performers' interest in and knowledge of musical works, understanding of their own technical skill, and the context for a performance influence the selection of repertoire.
- Successful ensemble performance relies on a shared interpretation of bowing and stylistic elements.
- Technology can be applied to reflect upon and improve performance.
- The audience/listener experiences and responds to the sound landscape that is a result of articulation and bow technique.
- To express their musical ideas, musicians analyze, evaluate, and refine their performance over time through openness to new ideas, persistence, and the application of appropriate criteria.
- Tone production in an ensemble relies on every individual musician's right hand technique and awareness of bow distribution, placement, pressure, and speed.
- Tone production is a function of bow usage, including bow placement, speed, and pressure. Bow distribution actualizes the most effective balance of the aspects of bow usage.
- Tone production is a key component of string ensemble performance.

Students Will Know

- Bow placement, speed, pressure, distribution, and articulation shape the musical expression of the ensemble performance.
- Bowing placement imparts the performance with a unique quality.
- Changes in bow location create differences that will affect individual and ensemble tone production.
- Changes in bow speed, pressure, placement, and distribution create tonal, timbral and stylistic musical differences.
- Every articulation creates a unique stylistic element.

Students Will Be Skilled At

- Affecting the dynamics of the performance through bow technique
- Applying a bow lift (retake) when appropriate
- Bowing near the fingerboard (sul tasto), in the middle, and near the bridge (sul ponticello)
- Bowing near the middle, tip, and frog to produce different tone and timbre
- Bowing using the back of the bow (col legno)
- Bowing with an awareness of up and down direction, speed, and pressure
- Hearing the differences of tone and timbre produced by bow technique
- Performing various articulations to produce different stylistic elements
- Performing with good bow technique, parallel to the bridge, with a consistent tone and quality
- Placing their bow at the sounding (contact) point
- Staccato, tenuto, slurs, slurred-staccato, and various hooked bowing articulations
- Using technology to capture their performances

Evidence/Performance Tasks

- Apply knowledge of bow technique concepts in exercises and concert literature
- Assess understanding of articulation types and bow patterns
- Assessments of proper bow technique
- Interpret and perform musical passages with the bowings and articulations indicated

Learning Plan

- Analyze and perform method book exercises that introduce and reinforce tone production
- Demonstrate ability to perform passages with multiple approaches to tone production. Students will compare, contrast, and evaluate the musical effect of tone production
- Listen and critique recordings discussing the effect of articulation, bowing types, bow placement, and tone production on stylistic expression.
- Listen and critique recordings to analyze the way elements of tone production function in music
- Partner pairing of students to discuss approaches to tone production in a musical excerpt
- Perform a scale applying a particular articulation/use of tone of their choosing.
- Perform and critique the effects of altering a bowing pattern, bowing articulation, and bow distribution
- Perform and critique the effects of changing the tone when altering bowing direction, bowing speed, bow pressure and sounding point
- Perform exercises applying different sounding points

Materials

MATERIALS -

The materials used in this course allow for integration of a variety of instructional, supplemental, and intervention materials that support student learners at all levels in the school and home environments.

Associated web content and media sources are infused into the unit as applicable and available.

- Method books and concert music repertoire
- Instrument supplies (tuners, metronome, rosin, cello straps, shoulder rests, strings, music stands)
- Technology resources (computer, recording devices)

Suggested Strategies for Modifications

This link includes content specific accommodations and modifications for all populations:

Performing Arts Accommodations & Modifications

- Students will be paired with partners for support and interaction
- Students will be provided notes describing the elements of tone production
- Students will receive preferential seating
- Visual aids will be used