

How to use the ALL HANDS Percussion Curriculum

For the teacher

This curriculum is designed to help your percussion students improve their musicianship, knowledge, and skills by providing:

- 1) A clearly defined set of tasks that are sequential, logical, achievable, and are designed to enhance musical growth. These tasks should be treated like goals and/or benchmarks for student achievement.
- 2) A tracking chart that will provide you and your students with an easy-to-understand visualization of their progress. You'll find an empty box next to every task on the chart. That is a place for you to sign/initial/date when the student passes that particular task.
- 3) Seven areas of percussive musicianship, each with 8 sequential tasks, to ensure that students maintain a balanced music education. The seven areas are: Snare, Timpani, Mallets, Auxiliary, Drumset, Hand Drums, & Self.
- 4) Written tests to ensure that your students can not only play the music, but that they understand the theory too.
- 5) Etudes, exercises, and excerpts. All included music was composed and carefully chosen to be in this curriculum.
- 6) Bonus material for your percussion class: warm-ups, rudiment-based exercises, drumline warmups, and a drumline cadence.

To keep your students' percussive music education balanced it is recommended that you require that your students follow a 'rule of two' while using this curriculum. That means: don't let a student get more than two tasks ahead in any one area. For example, your classic "I play the snare drum" student will likely want to finish all of the snare tasks before they touch mallet task number one. Make sure that their least-completed area on the chart is no more than two tasks behind their most-completed area. So, the classic "snare only" student could be on snare task 5, but every other area needs to be at least at task 3.

The level system was designed with average high school percussion students in mind. Level One A would suit most high school freshmen percussionists. Level Three B would suit most high school juniors. But, because all students & music programs are different, the term Level is used instead of grade level. That way advanced middle school/junior high musicians can start the program. While this program can work for new band members, it uses the assumption that your students know the basics of how to read standard musical notation and that they can properly hold two sticks or mallets.

Consider tying this curriculum to each student's grade. For example, if you are on semesters, you could require that a student must complete all tasks for Level One A to pass your class for that semester. I recommend that you stay away from doing percentage points for each task. That becomes rather subjective and takes up a lot of your time. The all-or-none method holds students accountable and is easier for you to track progress and manage your grade book.

Students will focus on these instruments at each level:

All Levels:

Snare Drum
Timpani
Mallets
Drumset
Hand Drums
Body Coordination

Level 1:

Bass Drum
Tom-Toms
Gong
Temple Blocks
Triangle
Suspended Cymbals
Crash Cymbals
Congas
Bongos
Quad Drums

Level 2:

Claves
Maracas
Tambourine
Woodblock
Shaker
Whip
Quad Drums

Level 3:

Guiro
Bell Tree
Wind Chimes
Sand Blocks
Ratchet
Cowbell
Samba whistle

Level 4:

Cabasa
Castanets
Sleigh Bells
Shekere
Flex-a-tone
Vibra-Slap
Slide Whistle