

Teacher Guide for

THE BOOK BEFORE THE BOOK

Welcome to The Book Before the Book! Here you'll find a carefully crafted list of all the things that I teach my students *before* we begin in The Book of Band. Yes, it takes time, but all of this frontloading pays off in the long run educationally, musically, and with classroom management. Here's the sequence:

The Book Before The Book → First Sounds → Songs by Rote → The Book of Band

I print the Student Packet of **The Book Before The Book** for every student. We go through each section, sometimes in order, sometimes not, but we cover everything. Returning students go through it faster than new students, and that's okay. For the new students, it feels like a *big* achievement to complete the packet, make their first sounds, learn songs by rote, then finally get to The Book of Band!

Here's some wisdom from Brené Brown that I return to every year:

Disappointment & frustration come from unmet expectations. AND Clear is kind.

I may be preaching to the choir here but...clearly established expectations, structures, and routines in the band room, starting on day one, develop the foundation of a safe learning environment where students can thrive. In this environment students can be brave, make their first sounds, and learn to be excellent musicians.

Concepts & Skills in The Book Before the Book:

The concepts & skills here do not come as an instruction manual or a lesson plan. I trust that you have a variety of ways to teach the concepts & skills listed here. Likewise, The Book of Band provides structure & content, but it is up to you to teach it *in your own way*. That's part of the beauty - you get to make the magic happen in your class!

Systems:

My rules, procedures, & systems work for me. Do what works for you. Make any and all adjustments as needed that best serve the needs of your students.

I hope that you find this helpful for your & your students! - Don Neptun

Band Fundamentals - The Book Before the Book

1 EXPECTATIONS & PROCEDURES:

Rule #1 = BE KIND. DON'T BE A JERK.

Rule #2 = MAKE GOOD CHOICES. DON'T DO DUMB STUFF.

Rule #3 = BE PRESENT. DON'T ZONE OUT.

Rule #4 = WORK HARD. DON'T BE LAZY.

Rule #5 = HAVE FUN. DON'T BE TOO COOL TO HAVE FUN.

Be in your seat, assembled & ready within 3 MINUTES of the start of class.

Hand Signs & ASL:

If you have a question, RAISE YOUR HAND

and WAIT TO BE CALLED ON

Demonstrate the following ASL hand signs:

- ☐ Restroom
- ☐ Water
- ☐ Counting 1-10
- ☐ Thank you

2 BATTLE OF THE BANDS:

At the beginning of class...

7 points = All students have INSTRUMENTS ready in the first 3 MINUTES of class.

3 points = All students have their BAND BINDER & PENCIL on their music stand.

5 BONUS points = All students ENTER & SET UP QUIETLY.

During class...

How can you **LOSE** points? BREAK THE RULES

How can you **GAIN** points? FOLLOW THE RULES & BE AWESOME

If you earn enough points within a 4-week cycle, you can earn a **CLASS PARTY!**

How many points are needed? Multiply the number of days in the 4-week cycle by 10.

Example: if there are 20 school days in the 4-week cycle → $20 \times 10 = 200$. You need 200 points!

3 CONCEPT OF SOUND:

What is music? ORGANIZED SOUND & SILENCE

We aim for a consistent beginning, middle, & end of our sound...

Beginning = ATTACK

Middle = SUSTAIN

End = CUTOFF

Guillotine Cutoff = SOUND STOPS SUDDENLY AT THE EXACT SAME TIME

4 RHYTHM:

Beat = A UNIT OF MEASUREMENT FOR TIME

Pulse = A DIVISION OF THE BEAT

Tempo = THE SPEED OF THE MUSIC, measured in beats per minute (BPM)

Metronome = A DEVICE THAT MAINTAINS A STEADY BEAT

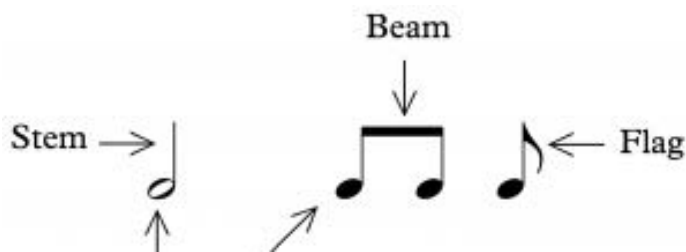
Counting System = EACH COUNT GETS 1 PULSE...

1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +

Notes = SOUND

Rests = SILENCE

Notes Anatomy =



5 RHYTHM CHART:

Name	Symbol	Beats	Pulses	Counts	Symbol	Name
WHOLE NOTE		4	8	1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +		WHOLE REST
DOTTED HALF NOTE		3	6	1 + 2 + 3 +		HALF REST & QUARTER REST
HALF NOTE		2	4	1 + 2 +		HALF REST
DOTTED QUARTER NOTE		1 ½	3	1 + 2		DOTTED QUARTER REST
QUARTER NOTE		1	2	1 +		QUARTER REST
EIGHTH NOTE		½	1	1		EIGHTH REST
SIXTEENTH NOTE		¼	½	SIXTEENTH COUNTING SYSTEM = 1 e + a		SIXTEENTH REST

6 ORGANIZATION OF TIME:

Bar Lines / Measure Lines = A VERTICAL LINE THAT DIVIDES THE STAFF INTO MEASURES (BARS) TO ORGANIZE TIME



Bar / Measure = A SEGMENT OF TIME WITH A SPECIFIC NUMBER OF BEATS & PULSES

Time Signature = TELLS US HOW MANY BEATS PER MEASURE & WHAT GETS THE BEAT

Top Number = HOW MANY BEATS PER MEASURE

Bottom Number = WHAT GETS THE BEAT

4 ON BOTTOM =  NOTE GETS THE BEAT

8 ON BOTTOM = EIGHTH NOTE GETS THE BEAT

4 ← 4 BEATS

4 ←  GETS THE BEAT

3 ← 3 BEATS

4 ←  GETS THE BEAT

2 ← 2 BEATS

4 ←  GETS THE BEAT

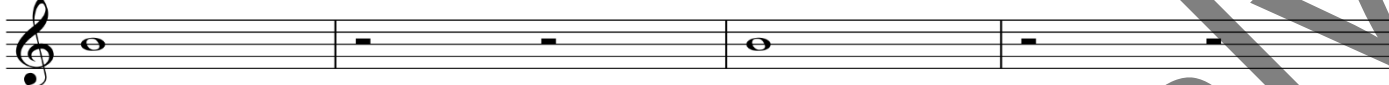
6 ← 6 BEATS

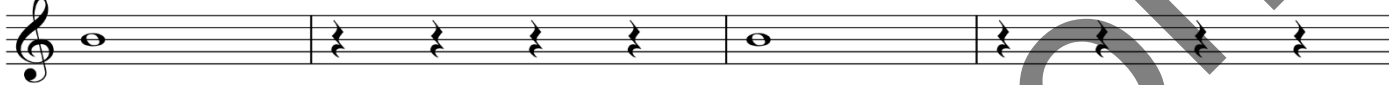
8 ←  GETS THE BEAT

Instructions: write the counts below the rhythms. Then clap & count, hum, or sing the rhythms.

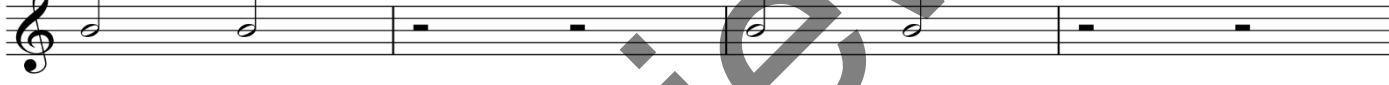
Rhythm Sheet 1 (with lines)

1 

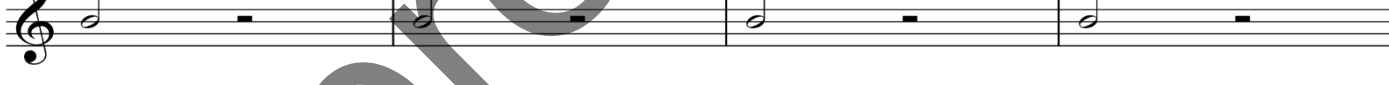
2 

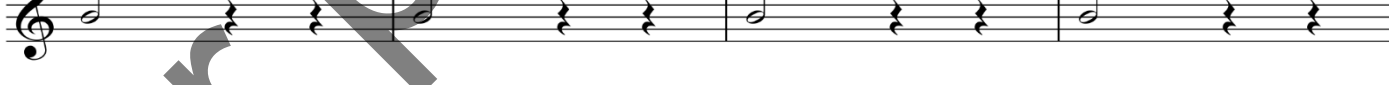
3 

4 

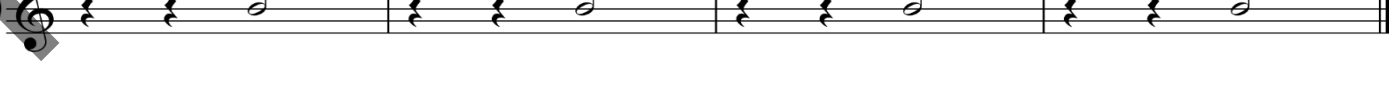
5 

6 

7 

8 

9 

10 

Rhythm Sheet 2

1 

2 

3 

4 

5 

6 

7 

8 

9 

10 

7 CONDUCTING:

Conducting = DIRECTING MUSIC WITH VISIBLE GESTURES

Prep Beat = SHOWS WHEN TO BREATHE. CONDUCTOR GOES UP

Down Beat = SHOWS THE BEAT

Sustain = KEEP PLAYING

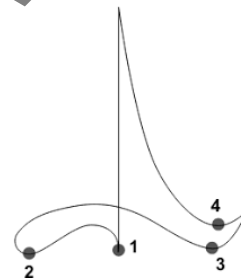
Cutoff = STOP PLAYING

Dynamics = VOLUME & CHARACTER OF THE MUSIC

Articulation = *HOW* NOTES ARE PLAYED

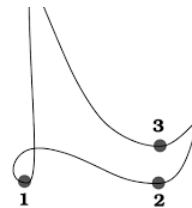
4
4

DOWN IN OUT UP



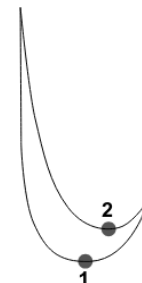
3
4

DOWN OUT UP



2
4

DOWN & OUT UP

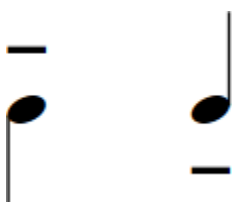


8 MUSICIANSHIP:

Phrase = A COMPLETE MUSICAL THOUGHT
(DON'T BREATHE DURING A PHRASE)

Articulation= HOW THE MUSIC IS PLAYED

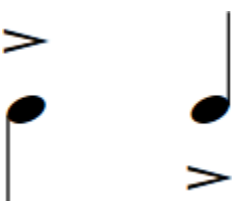
Legato = LONG & CONNECTED (HELD FOR FULL VALUE)



Staccato = SHORT & SEPARATED (DETACHED FROM NEXT BEAT)



Accent = STRONG & CONNECTED (EMPHASIZED)



Marcato = STRONG & SEPARATED (MARKED)



Dynamics =

THE VOLUME AND CHARACTER OF THE MUSIC

Dynamics Chart:

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Symbol	<i>pp</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>mp</i>	<i>mf</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>ff</i>
Italian	PIANISSIMO	PIANO	MEZZO PIANO	MEZZO FORTE	FORTE	FORTISSIMO
Meaning (in English)	VERY SOFT	SOFT	MEDIUM SOFT	MEDIUM LOUD	LOUD	VERY LOUD

	7	8
Symbol		
Italian	CRESCENDO	DECRESCENDO DIMINUENDO
Meaning (in English)	GRADUALLY LOUDER	GRADUALLY SOFTER

9 NOTATION:

Musical Alphabet = A B C D E F G (AND CONTINUES FOREVER)

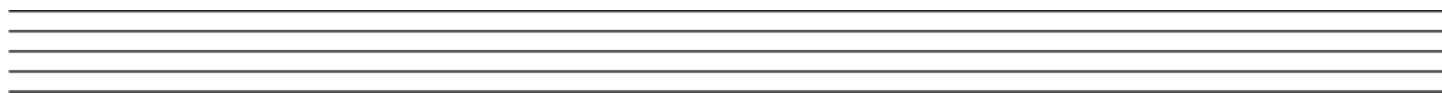
Upper Neighbor = THE NEXT NOTE UP

Lower Neighbor = THE NEXT NOTE DOWN

For preview only

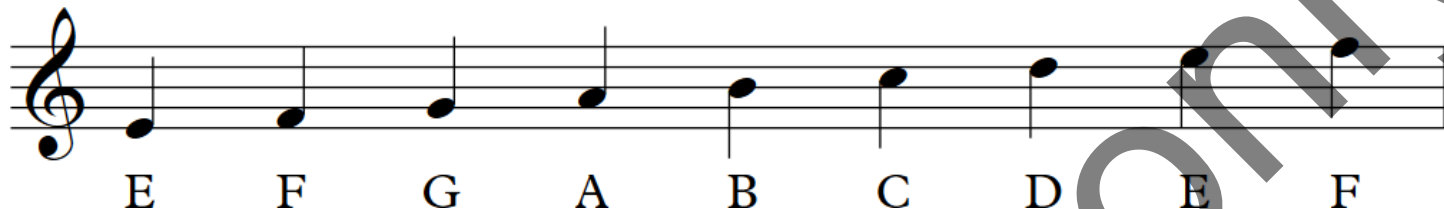
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	A
B	C	D	E	F	G	A	B
C	D	E	F	G	A	B	C
D	E	F	G	A	B	C	D
E	F	G	A	B	C	D	E
F	G	A	B	C	D	E	F
G	A	B	C	D	E	F	G

Staff = 5 LINES & 4 SPACES



Treble Clef = G CLEF 2ND LINE IS G

Instructions: Draw a treble clef. Next, write all the notes on the staff, then label the notes.



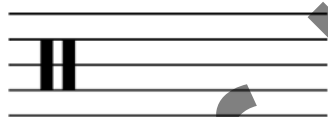
Bass Clef = F CLEF 4TH LINE IS F

Instructions: Draw a bass clef. Next, write all the notes on the staff, then label the note



Percussion Clef = CLEF FOR UNPITCHED INSTRUMENTS

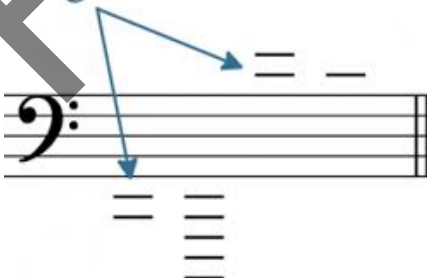
Instructions: Draw a percussion clef.



Ledger Lines = EXTEND THE MUSICAL STAFF

Instructions: Draw evenly-spaced ledger lines above & below the staff.

ledger lines

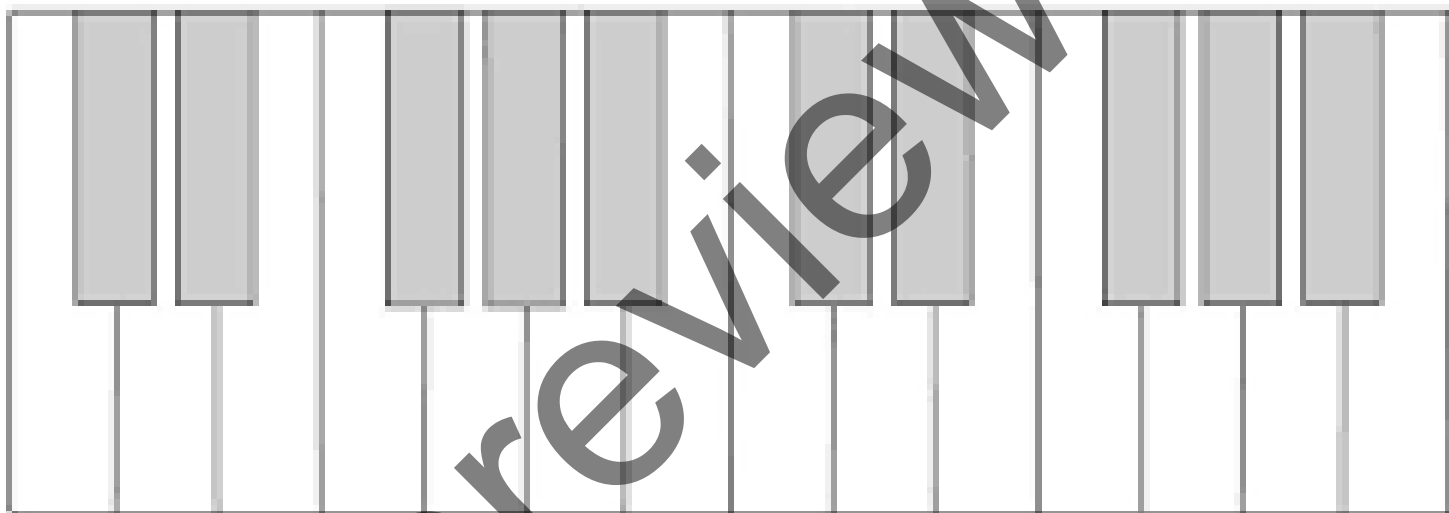


= SHARP = UP A HALF STEP
(THE BLACK KEYS ON A PIANO)

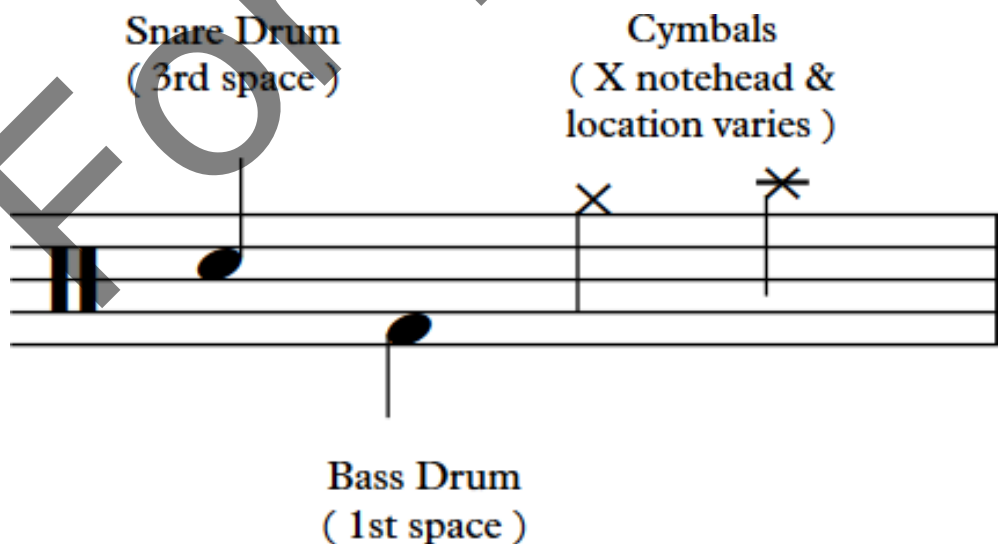
b = FLAT = DOWN A HALF STEP
(THE BLACK KEYS ON A PIANO)

♮ = NATURAL = A B C D E F or G (without b OR #)
(THE WHITE KEYS ON A PIANO)

Instructions = Label the notes on the piano keyboard...



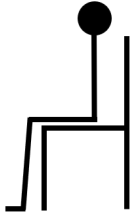
Percussion Notation:



10 PHYSICAL

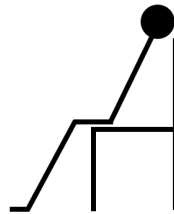
Posture = HOW YOU SIT OR STAND

Good Posture =

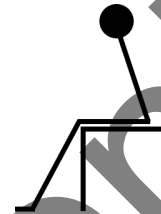


Yes.

Bad Posture =



No.



No.

Breathing in Band =

RELAXED INHALE (SILENT + OPEN MOUTH)

ENERGIZED EXHALE (GUSHED, CONTROLLED AIR + EMBOUCHRE)

Sizzle =

HISSING SOUND

ssssssss.....

Tongue Shape / Tongue Elevator =

HOW WE SHAPE OUR TONGUE

Shape

Tongue Location

Amount of Space in Mouth

<i>aah</i>	LOW	MAXIMUM SPACE
<i>eh</i>	MID-LOW	MODERATE SPACE
<i>ih</i>	MID-HIGH	LITTLE BIT
<i>eee</i>	HIGH	VERY LITTLE

11 TONE PRODUCTION

Tone Production = HOW WE MAKE SOUND

Embouchure = THE SHAPE OF OUR MOUTH TO PLAY OUR INSTRUMENT

Grip = HOW WE HOLD STICKS, MALLETS, & INSTRUMENTS

Woodwinds & Brass combine air, tongue, & embouchure to produce sound.

Percussionists combine grip, velocity, & location of impact to produce sound.

Tone Quality = THE QUALITY OF OUR SOUND

Good Tone Quality = PLEASANT RESONANT VIBRANT FULL

Bad Tone Quality = UNPLEASANT THIN DULL EMPTY

Articulation = HOW A NOTE IS PLAYED

Woodwinds & Brass typically use the tip of the tongue. The tongue moves quickly & lightly.

Types of Articulation = Ta Too Dah Doo

Reeds = articulate on the TIP OF THE REED

Flutes & Brass = articulate where the UPPER TEETH MEET THE GUMS

Percussionists hands move quickly & lightly.

Use the TIP of the stick or the ROUND END of the mallet.

12 INSTRUMENT ANATOMY

Flute

HEAD JOINT

BODY

FOOT JOINT



LIP PLATE &
TONE HOLE

KEYS

Clarinet

MOUTHPIECE
& LIGATURE

UPPER JOINT

LOWER JOINT

BELL



BARREL

Saxophone

BODY

BELL

NECK

MOUTHPIECE
& LIGATURE



Trumpet

VALVES

BELL

MOUTHPIECE



VALVE SLIDES

TUNING SLIDE & WATER KEY

Trombone

TUNING SLIDE

BELL



MOUTHPIECE

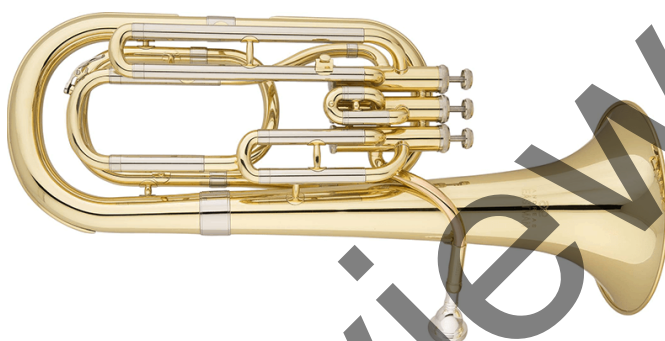
SLIDE

WATER KEY

Baritone / Euphonium

VALVES

WATER KEY



BELL

MOUTHPIECE

Snare Drum

BATTER HEAD

HOOP

LUGS

SHELL



SNARE
THROW

SNARE HEAD
& SNARES