

Tips for Bridging the Gap: Career Focused Practice Techniques

University of Tennessee at Martin
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McKayla Phillips
Adjunct Professor of Percussion – Shaw University
www.mckaylaphillips.com

Music Education Undergraduates

- September 2022 Poll of 20 Percussionist Band Directors: 95% of directors polled stated that they felt either “fully unprepared” or “mostly unprepared” to teach woodwind & brass concepts to students going into their student teaching.
- August 2022 Poll of 1,500 Band Directors
 - Percussionist Band Directors are held more responsible for what they don't know about wind instruments than Wind Instrument Band Directors are for what they don't know about percussion.
 - 92% Agree
 - 8% Disagree
- Common Music Education Undergraduate coursework focusing on woodwind/brass/string/percussion teaching
 - Woodwind Methods
 - Brass Methods
 - Percussion Methods
 - String Methods
 - Lab Bands/Lab Teaching Courses
- Generally, there is a maximum of 5 semesters focusing on non-percussion pedagogy

Identifying the Gaps

- Wind/Brass students generally have 7+ years of experience in:
 - Breathing/Breath Support
 - Tonguing
 - Forming an embouchure
 - Differing articulations with the mouth and when to apply them
 - Performing and memorizing fingerings
 - Phrasing with air
 - Tone Production
 - Transposing
 - Intonation & Fine Tuning
- Assumed knowledge of all students – percussionists are at a disadvantage

Bridging the Gap

- Integrate the wind/string/vocal concepts your students are learning in their coursework directly into daily practice
- Remind students that their musical experiences should not separate, but combined and transferred from one area to another to maximize efficacy in learning

Bridging the Gap – Playing Examples

Example Exercises	Concepts Addressed
Play keyboard scales while speaking brass positions	Trombone, trumpet, euphonium positions
Articulating and tonguing non-pitched percussion music	Tonguing, articulations, use of articulation syllables (dah, tah, doo, dit, etc.)
Sight-reading melodies while speaking pitch transpositions	Sight transposition (brass & woodwind)
Breath support & phrasing work through 4-mallet chorales	Tizzling (combination of tonguing & air), breath/air support, use of air within phrasing (relate to roll speed/roll types), correct posture approach for breath (relate to grip/arm approach)
Singing (solfege, scale degrees, or vowel syllables) melodic lines while playing	Solfege identification, phrasing, breath/air support, vowel sound clarity, singing skills
Singing (solfege or scale degrees) timpani tuning intervals & tuning exercises	Intonation, singing skills, solfege/scale degree identification
Articulation focus: play short melodic lines with varying articulations (e.g., tenuto, staccato, accent) & describe how winds/brass/strings would execute them; how does this relate to effective articulations on percussion?	Articulations, air control & speed, bow speed, tonguing
Brass lip slur exercises & woodwind slurred scales on keyboard	How to imitate slurs on keyboard instruments with attack, dynamics, and articulation of successive notes

Bridging the Gap – Everything Else

- Percussion section set-up: what's wrong with this picture/video?
- Storage logistics
- Equipment moving and stage plots
- Planning rehearsals, part assignments, and more

If you have any additional questions, feel free to email/DM at the links below:

mckaylaphillipspercussion@gmail.com

www.mckaylaphillips.com

Instagram: @mckayla_p

Facebook: mckayla.phillips.9



McKayla Phillips is a percussionist and educator based out of Raleigh, North Carolina. They are currently an Adjunct Professor of Percussion at Shaw University. McKayla is currently pursuing a Doctor of Musical Arts (DMA) at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, where they serve as a graduate teaching assistant. They earned a Master of Music degree from the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music and received Bachelor of Music Education and Bachelor of Music Performance degrees from The University of North Carolina at Greensboro. McKayla Phillips proudly endorses Black Swamp Percussion and Innovative Percussion.

Performance Logistics Project - Example

Applied Percussion Lessons

The following project will assist you in coordinating and delegating logistics tasks for a chamber or large ensemble performance. You can complete this project using the repertoire and personnel from a “real” performance OR you can make a “fake” roster of personnel and repertoire – it’s up to you. We will discuss and work on these items together throughout the semester leading up to the performance date.

- Performance Name, Location, Date, & Rehearsal Dates
- Program (make sure to list title, date of composition, composer and/or arranger, composer date of birth)
- Equipment/Backline Needed by Piece (indicate equipment that is needed on more than one piece with an *)
- Stage Plots or Tech Riders for Concert (see example on next page)
- One Week of Rehearsal Plans
- Dress Rehearsal Schedule
- Concert Day Schedule
- Concert Program & Program Notes
- Mock Social Media Post & Concert Poster
- Delegation of Tasks
 - If you were the teacher and/or organizer of this event, how would you delegate these tasks to your students/parents/community/yourself? How would you go about selecting who completes each task?
- Part Assignments
 - How would you go about assigning performers to each piece on this concert? What considerations would you make in your part assignments?

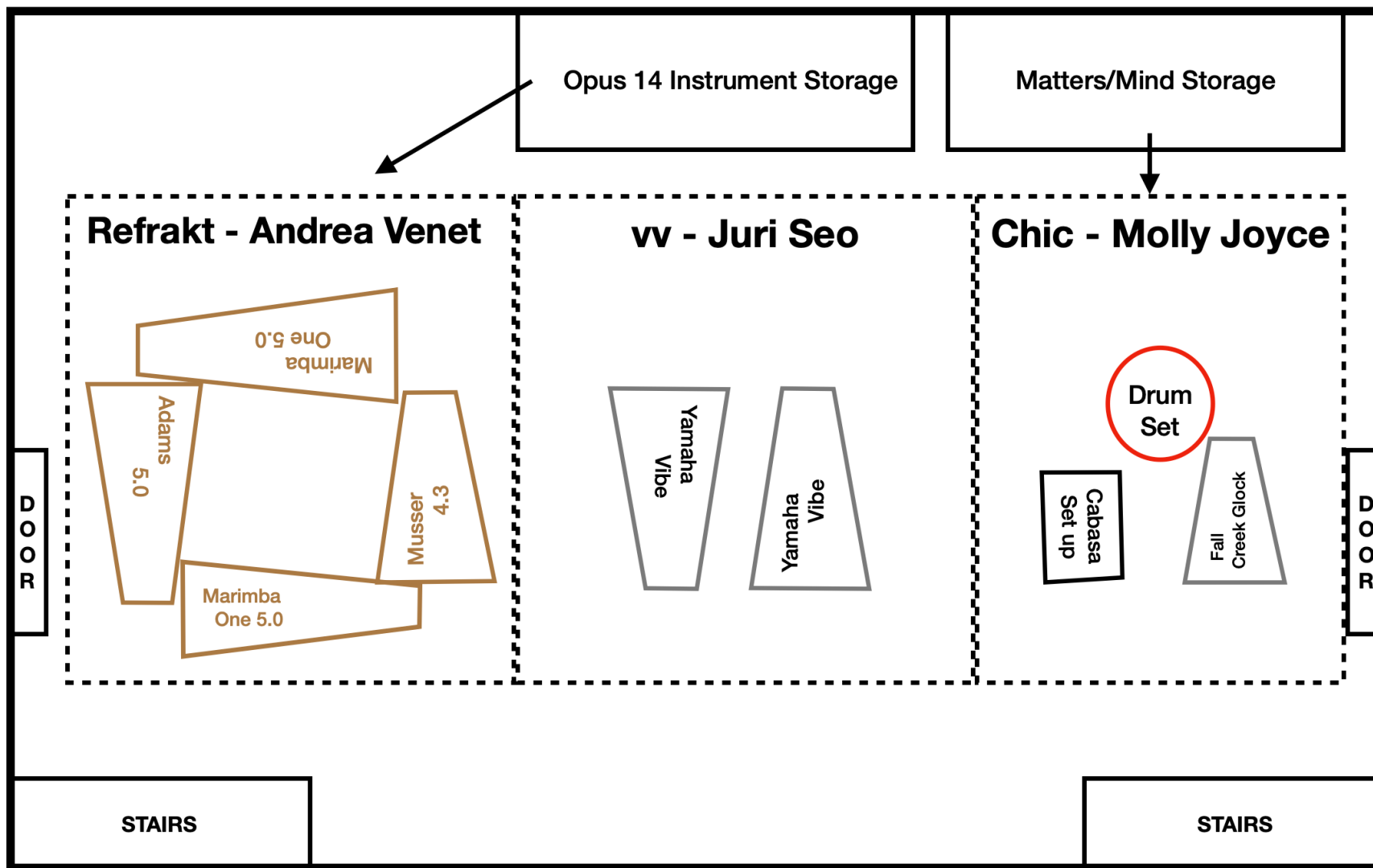
Example High School Percussion Part Assignments

Winter Concert 2022

	Madeline	Andrew	Elliot	Nick	Brandon	Wyatt	Gabi	Sarah	Ethan	Daniel	Collin	Seth	Lindsey	Emma	Joey
Concert Band															
Christmas Fantasia (9)	SD	Perc 3	Timpani	Bells	CC	SC	BD	Chimes	Vibes						
Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas (4)		Bells	Chimes & CC @ 40	SC		Timpani									
A Crazy Mixed-up Christmas Concert (6)		BD	SD & Whistle	Timpani	Perc 3	Bells/Xylo					Perc 2				
Jazz Band												Set		Piano	
PE - Shared Space	Player 3						Player 5	Player 1	Player 7	Player 2			Player 4		Player 6
Symphonic Band															
Overture to a Winter Celebration (7)		Timpani	Tom/Triangle	BD/TD	Bells/Crot	SD	Chimes				SC/CC/Finger Cym				
Silent Night (4)	SC				CC/Scrape			Timpani		Chimes/Bells					
Celtic Carol (7-8)	Timpani						Toms A2	SC	Bodhran	Cabasa	BD & Wind Chimes	Spoons	Toms	Toms	Spoons
JB												Set		Piano	
PE - Flow											Marimba (Player 2)	Djembe (Player 3)		Vibes (Player 1)	
Wind Ensemble															
Holiday Piece (everyone, 7 parts)	Bells	Sleigh	Bells	Sleigh	Timpani	Marimba (8vb)	Vibes	Marimba	Xylo	Set	Vibes	Bells/SC/Chimes	Triangle	Marimba	Marimba (8vb)
Greensleeves (4)							Timpani					Chimes		Bells	CC
PE - Samba	Surdo Reposta	Caixa	Caixa	Agogo	Repenique	Surdo Marcacao	Tamborim	Chocalo	Repenique	Caixa	Agogo	Surdo Cortador	Tamborim	Shekere	Surdo Marcacao
The Night Before Christmas (7)									Perc 1 Xylo	Perc 2	Timpani	Perc 3 Marimba	Perc 1 Bells	Perc 4	Perc 3 vibes
Sleigh Ride (6)	Bells/Xylo									Temple Blocks		BD	Whip	Sleigh Bells	SD/Ride

Blank part assignments template available at www.mckaylaphillips.com/clinics

Percussion Ensemble Concert – Example Stage Plot



○ ○ ○
1ST POSITION

○ ● ○
2ND POSITION

● ○ ○
3RD POSITION

● ● ○
4TH POSITION

○ ● ●
5TH POSITION

● ○ ●
6TH POSITION

● ● ●
7TH POSITION

Common Transpositions Cheat Sheet

C Instruments	Bb Instruments	Eb Instruments	F Instruments
Piano, Mallet Percussion, Timpani, Flute, Oboe, Bassoon, Strings, Trombone, Tuba	Trumpet, Clarinet, Bass Clarinet, TC Baritone, Soprano Sax, Tenor Sax (plus an octave)	Alto Sax, Baritone Sax (plus an octave)	English Horn, Horn
Concert Pitch	UP a Major 2nd (whole step)	UP a Major 6th	UP a Perfect 5th
C	D	A	G
C#/Db	D#/Eb	A#/Bb	G#/Ab
D	E	B	A
D#/Eb	F	C	A#/Bb
E	F#/Gb	C#/Db	B
F	G	D	C
F#/Gb	G#/Ab	D#/Eb	C#/Db
G	A	E	D
G#/Ab	A#/Bb	F	D#/Eb
A	B	F#/Gb	E
A#/Bb	C	G	F
B	C#/Db	G#/Ab	F#/Gb

Quick "In A Pinch" Sight Transposition Techniques

- Read Alto Sax (Eb) music part in bass clef to transpose to concert pitch
 - Remove 3 sharps from the key signature to get the correct pitch
 - 3 flats to key signature to get the correct concert pitch

