

BROOKINGS ELEMENTARY INSTRUMENTAL

Curriculum Guide - 2008

Philosophy

It is the goal of the elementary band program to enable each participating student to achieve his/her own individual musical potential on the instrument being studied.

- Develop knowledge of specific instrumental techniques.
- Teach basic musical concepts such as pitch, rhythm, meter and note reading.
- Develop an understanding of the care and handling of specific instruments.

Concepts

- I. Fundamentals of Music
 - A. Know names of the lines and spaces of the music staff
 - B. Learn basic time signatures (4/4, 2/4, 3/4)
 - C. Learn note values (whole note, dotted half note, half note, quarter note)
 - D. Percussion-basic and intermediate rhythms using sixteenth notes on bells and snare drum (Previous piano background required-see attached document.)
 - E. Know basic music terms introduced in method book
 - F. Introduction to Bb major scale
- II. Develop proper technique
 - A. Embouchure
 - B. Hand Position
 - C. Articulation (tonguing and slurring)
 - D. Breathing
 - E. Tone Production
 - F. Intonation
- III. Care and Handling of Instruments
 - A. Proper assembly of the individual instrument.
 - B. Proper cleaning of the instrument
 - C. Practice regular maintenance of the instrument
- IV. Responsibility and Self-Discipline
 - A. Students are expected to practice 120 minutes per week. Practice records are provided to the students so that a record can be kept.
 - B. Evaluation forms will be sent home at the end of every 9-week period with the classroom report card.
 - C. Students will be given worksheets to reinforce the knowledge of notes and terms.

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Lessons/Rehearsals/Performances

Any 5th grade student who is interested in participating in band may do so. With the exception of percussionists (please see attached sheet), no previous musical experience is needed to participate in band. Each student will receive an individual or small group (limit of 4 per group) lesson once per week in 20-minute time slots. These lessons will begin approximately the last week of September.

Large ensemble rehearsals will begin after 5 lessons, or approximately the beginning of November. Each school's ensemble will rehearse twice a week in approximately 30-minute time slots.

There will be three performances per year. A concert will be given in December at each school to demonstrate what students have learned the first 12 weeks of playing an instrument. All three elementary bands will combine into one large band to perform at the concerts given in March and May.

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PERCUSSION REQUIREMENTS

The Brookings band program requires that students interested in starting percussion successfully complete 2 full years of piano experience or achieve level 2 competencies on the piano. The students will take a quiz at the start of their 5th grade year to determine that they can count basic rhythms, name notes and play a simple melody on a bell set. Each student's piano teacher will also be requested to fill out a questionnaire stating various facts and abilities about their student. The reasons and justifications behind acquiring necessary piano skills are as follows:

1. Piano skills have been needed in the past in the Brookings School District, as well as school districts that are comparable in size to the Brookings School District.
2. The same coordination skills are needed to play the piano with both hands as it is to play percussion with both hands.
3. The percussion books introduce new concepts at a faster rate than the other band instruments.
4. Unlike other instrument choices (clarinet, trumpet, etc.) where one specific instrument is concentrated on, the percussion family includes many different types of instruments (snare drum, bass drum, bells, timpani, triangle, claves etc.). The students without previous piano skills seem to become easily frustrated and quickly fall behind because of the lack of knowledge needed to adequately play the above-mentioned instruments.
5. Percussion parts are generally limited to the number of players that are needed on a given piece of music. Therefore, the level of participation could be greatly reduced depending on the number of students in the section and the level of their playing ability.
6. Basic skills must be mastered in order to move on to learning the full drum set. This is introduced in the 7th or 8th grade year. If the student wants to gain further knowledge on the set, lessons outside of the school day are encouraged.

We want all students that join band to excel on their chosen instrument and have a positive learning experience. Therefore, percussion students greatly enhance their learning experience as well as improve their

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rate of success by acquiring 2 years of piano or achieving a level 2 competency on piano prior to the 5th grade.