

THOUGHTS ABOUT
TEACHING

PRINCIPLES FOR TEACHING
MUSIC PERFORMANCE ENSEMBLES

We are in the business of creating quality people and do this through music. Shirley
Lemon

Every child has greatness inside. Shirley
Lemon and Shinichi Suzuki

Have high standards but treat students as human beings. Shirley Lemon

Have high standards but treat students as human beings. You can't create great art through intimidation. Shirley Lemon

Work more for quality than quantity. Quality starts with beginners. Shirley Lemon

Students must like you and respect you or they will not learn as much as they can. You are not their friend but you are friendly.

Melissa Meyers

Modeling on your instrument may be the most important teaching tool you use. One demonstration of a sound may be worth a thousand words. Melissa Meyers

RESEARCH-BASED

- Schleuter, S. (1997). *A Sound Approach to Teaching Instrumentalists*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- He reviews a wide selection of the research on teaching musical performance and comes up with the following commonalities. Here are twelve of them:

1. Stress the importance of quality and quantity of repetition.
2. Teach tonal and rhythm pattern vocabularies aurally followed by labeling and notation, regardless of age level.
3. Provide specific feedback regularly to students about performance results.
4. Provide live or recorded models of good sound.
5. Help students *audiate* music notation when practicing and performing.
6. Have students practice difficult technical sections at slower tempi and gradually increase speed to develop technique.
7. Encourage short distributed practice sessions rather than a few long sessions.
8. Motivate younger students with “extrinsic” rewards.
9. Aid memorization of music by increasing awareness of patterns and form and a “whole-part-whole” approach.
10. Present instruction in small ordered steps.
11. Expect students to commit time, effort, and self-responsibility to achieve high levels of performance through years of preparation.
12. Adjust content and experiences as children progress through levels of abilities.

YOUR EXPERIENCES

- Which of the 12 have you observed to be most successful and why?
 - Elementary
 - Middle School
 - High School