

Swingin' From The Start: How To Start A Jazz Band From Scratch

West Texas A&M University

Band Director's Workshop

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Starting Up

Anyone can start (or supercharge) a jazz band. All it takes is persistence, a willingness to try, and a willingness to learn. These qualities are paramount for the student and the teacher(s).

The Start Of The Morton Ranch Junior High Jazz All Stars

- Started Small, By Invite Only
- Jazz Is A Style, Not An Instrumentation

My "Rules" or Tenets of Jazz Band

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____

#1 Fundamentals Are Key

- Long Tones
 - Utilize Your Concert Band Remington (add Rhythm Section)
- Articulation
 - "Leonard Articulation"
- Using The 12 Bar Blues As A Vehicle To Success
 - Write It Out For The Rhythm Section
 - Allows Students To Improvise With Rhythm Section

#2 How To Develop Your Rhythm Section

- Recruiting!
- 6th Graders
- Two Drum Sets...

- **Bass:**

- **Drums**

- **Piano**

Improvisation

Improvisation is a necessary element to your jazz band. Improv stems from rhythm, first. Students are required to solo in rehearsal, but are not required to improvise at the gig/performance. Teaching students to appreciate each other's solos is a key point to making soloing not so daunting.

Swing and Standards!

- Play swing tunes with your kids FIRST. They will not get bored.
- Playing Jazz Standards will serve as a great benefit to you and your 4th part kazoo player
- You already learned the blues in your warm up!
- "Heads" Can be an entire song for a big band

Starter Tune Suggestions:

Masterclasses One Time Per Month

- Instrument Pedagogy Based

- Inspiration

Perform One Time Per Month

- Gigs/Performances are Everywhere
- No gig is too small
- You only need 2 tunes

Ask For Help

- You **MUST.**

To all of the people who have helped us get to this point, THANK YOU.