1940

The use and improvement of class methods for beginning school band instruction

Alfred P. Sessions
University of the Pacific

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THE USE AND IMPROVEMENT OF CLASS METHODS FOR BEGINNING SCHOOL BAND INSTRUCTION

By

Alfred P. Sessions

June 2, 1940
A Thesis
Submitted to the Conservatory of Music
College of the Pacific

In partial fulfillment
of the
Requirements for the
Degree of Master of Arts

APPROVED                              Chairman of the Thesis Committee
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Introduction.

The purpose of this thesis is the (1) study of the band class methods in use, (2) a discussion of their effectiveness, (3) an original attempt to show how many of the problems of band methods can be solved.

It should be noted that a class of instrumental students may be a group of several or all different kinds of band instruments together. This study, however, will be concerned mainly with group instruction which combines all of the band instruments together. The term "method" as used herein designates a book of music material for class instruction in all band instruments. The term "instructor" is used to denote an instruction book written for only one instrument, for example, "trombone instructor".

Procedure.

First, a general survey of band class methods now in use will be made, with a study of the aims of this type of material. Secondly, the results accomplished from the use of band class methods will be discussed, with comparison made throughout of class methods with individual instructors. The last part of the thesis will deal with specific weaknesses of the different class methods, and will be composed
partly of written exercises and studies which would help to improve class methods.

There is very little written information dealing with the use, description, and comparisons of class methods for band instruments. Because of the nature of the study, references to other writings will be few, although the opinions of other music teachers will be incorporated as far as practicable.

The bibliography will consist of the names of methods most commonly used in California schools. This list of methods would be nearly the same as a list compiled from other parts of the United States, owing to the fact that publishers operate on a nation-wide scale. There are only about twenty different methods which are widely used, but when it is remembered that most of the methods have over twenty different instrument parts, a formidable compilation of material is available for comparison and reference.

The writer has sent out a questionnaire to representative elementary, junior, and senior high schools of California, the purpose of which was to gather information from music teachers on important questions which bear upon the use of class methods. The chapters dealing with criticisms of class methods will be based mainly upon the data which has been obtained from these teachers.
CHAPTER I

THE STATUS OF BAND MUSIC IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The problem of starting and developing band players in the public schools has been subject to a great deal of study in recent years. The attention given to music in the gradual liberalizing of the curriculum has brought about improved music teaching and music specialization in most of our public schools.

Instrumental music, except in the large schools, has been slower to develop than vocal music. In small schools and rural communities, the music teacher usually has neither the time nor the special training necessary to teach the different instruments. Social demand and increased facilities, however, now demand better instruction, better organization, and better adaptations to the needs of school life. School curriculums have gradually changed to include music and many other subjects as well as grammar, mathematics, and foreign language. This change is probably the most important single aid to music advancement in the public schools. At first, music was taught during free periods or extra time. Band practice was an activity which had to be carried on outside of school hours, if at all. Teachers' and pupils' time could not be wasted during the regular class periods in such trivial study as learning to play a musical instrument. In the cities where the pupils lived
close to school, and where their mode of living did not require that they be at home to do chores, some success could be obtained by a good leader out of school hours. In rural schools a large percentage of the pupils are transported to school by bus. The busses arrive about fifteen minutes before school, and leave just as soon after the final period. This eliminated any possibility of conducting music rehearsals before or after school.

School administrators are meeting the problem of scheduling music practices in different ways. Activity periods, double lunch periods, and special music periods are among the solutions which administrators are using to further the musical activities of their students. The general trend seems to be toward the realization that adequate time and scheduling must be made during school hours. Credit also should be given for music study. In cases where credit is not given, the student feels that he is taking time from his academic subjects which count in the office records, and putting it on something which will not help him to graduate or gain admission to college.

When the writer attended high school, band practice was held three days a week, after school. This kept many students out who went home on the busses. Credit was given for the first two years only, so that after playing in the band for two years, players dropped out because they would

1Hanford Union High School, 1927-1930, enrollment 850
receive no credit. Their attendance was irregular, if they continued to play, because a low mark would not count against their record. Many students were interested in other activities after school. Some worked; others were active in sports.

Schools that have not remedied the situation of adequate scheduling have a decided disadvantage in regard to music study.

Many counties have added to their school supervisory staff an instrumental music supervisor, whose work is to visit the rural schools, especially those not large enough to employ their own supervisors. The instrumental music supervisor's work is the organizing of instrument classes in the small schools. He does as much actual teaching as he can, and shows the regular music teacher how to carry on the daily class work. Many schools need only a little leadership in the matter of organizing instrumental work. Many of the teachers who do not feel qualified to carry on instrumental classes and small orchestras or bands by themselves can do fairly good work after the "treacherous" first stage has been passed. Anyone who has taught beginning instruments to young students can realize how discouraging the first few weeks can be. The teacher who is unaccustomed to the problems thus encountered may not relish the instrumental work unless outside help and advice is given.

The supervisor can do much actual teaching if he does
not have too many schools to visit, or have to travel too far.

A half hour is an ideal amount of time for practice with an average group. This must be a full half hour of practice, and not be cut down by time spent putting up music stands, passing out music, tuning instruments, and waiting for slow pupils to get their instruments out. However, if the supervisor is due at a school at a certain time, there is no reason why the class can not be ready for him, so that there is no unnecessary loss of time. In a six-hour day, the supervisor can easily take 6 to 8 classes if the schools visited are close together. He can take more, however, by following a longer day's schedule. This means 30 to 40 classes per week. If he supervises 15 schools, he can spend a half-hour at each school twice a week, or spend two half-hour periods at each school once a week.

The system of instrumental supervision as followed by Fresno county, permits a county program and standardization of methods. The impetus given to instrumental work probably will show unusually fine results during the coming years. The small schools furnish as high a grade of musicians as the larger ones, the differences in accomplishments of the individual students lying in the better opportunities which the students of the larger school and community have over the students of the small community.
Hiring of specialized teachers.

It is a proven fact that teachers who have several special abilities have an easier time in obtaining positions than do teachers who are prepared for only the minimum classroom teaching. The Bakersfield city school system has a teachers' orchestra, formed of teachers who teach classroom subjects other than music. There are history, arithmetic, physical education, and science teachers in the orchestra as well as music teachers. This orchestra is developed by hiring teachers who have had some musical training, and can play a musical instrument. The superintendent of schools and board of education are strong music supporters and are especially proud of their teachers' orchestra.

In the teacher-training colleges, more attention is being given to instrumental training than formerly was the case. Voice and piano students are urged to get as much experience with the band and orchestra as possible.

One should not misconstrue this to indicate that a teacher should teach several branches of music because, as far as possible, a teacher should teach only the music subjects for which he is best prepared. Many of our schools are too small to hire two or more music teachers, and to have a broad program they find it necessary to employ a teacher who is less of a specialist but has a rather general background of preparation. Often-times several schools that are located closely together
can cooperate in hiring music teachers, by hiring one teacher to take care of the instrumental work in all of the schools, and a teacher to take care of the special voice work.

**Purchase of school instruments.**

Most of the schools have increased the budget allowances for instrument purchases. The policy of free education and opportunity for all means also money for instruments and music. Instrument manufacturers have increased their attention to the manufacture of lower priced instruments for school use. The prices on many instruments have decreased as much as 60% owing to competition between the manufacturers for the large amount of school business. This fact in itself has meant a larger amount of sales to schools as well as to individual buyers. Many children, whose parents are poor, have thus benefited by the use of school instruments. It has been my experience that many of the most desirable students are those who were not sufficiently interested at first to obtain instruments from their parents, or whose finances did not permit the buying of an instrument.

**Use of aptitude tests.**

The matter of determining the student's fitness for musical success is one of the greatest importance. The success of music teaching lies almost wholly in the talent of the student for instrument work. Musical talent can be
measured quite accurately by one of the many reliable aptitude tests which are widely used today. The Seashore, Kwalwasser-Dykema, and others can be obtained for a fairly reasonable sum. These tests require no previous musical training or coaching of the student, and test musical aptitude rather than musical education. In this way, the student who has had previous piano lessons or private tutoring does not have an advantage over the beginning student. One of the more recent developments in music education is the use of pre-orchestra instruments, the Tonette, Song-Flute, and others. These are inexpensive to buy and can be used by children from the first grade on up to older children.

The results of a musical test should not be the only guide in determining the student's qualifications for instrumental work. His interest should be weighed, as this will be a guide as to whether or not the pupil will be apt to do sufficient practicing. The pupil's general intelligence is also an important factor. Unless the pupil is intelligent, many of the elements such as memorizing the names of notes, fingerings, and understanding of time values will not be readily learned.

1 In September, 1939, the writer offered classes in Tonette to fourth and fifth grade students of the Wasco Union Elementary School. 90 students purchased Tonettes and instruction books at a cost of one dollar each. At the end of four months, pupils who received grades of A or B were recommended for band and orchestra work. The number receiving recommending grades from the original group was twenty-five. Nearly all of the latter number changed to band and orchestra instruments in February. This group of young but talented students was an interesting group with which to work. The progress of the class was exceptionally good, considerably better than that of an average group of fourth and fifth graders.
The grade teacher should be questioned with reference to the pupil's working ability. A student who does well in his school work is apt to do well in music because playing an instrument involves many of the factors necessary for success in ordinary class-room study. The elements of concentration, leadership, mental and muscular coordination, and ability to follow directions, are all factors which are evidenced in musical work.

Even the psychological make-up of the pupil has a bearing upon his qualifications. A student who is extremely bashful often-times is afraid to play his instrument because someone might hear him. Such students, although musical, seldom make good soloists, unless they can overcome timidity and self-consciousness.

Use of instrumental groups for entertainments.

Most schools provide many entertainments and public programs during the year. The musical groups are usually called upon to furnish a large share of the entertainment.

The band can probably play more different types of programs than can the orchestra as it is more of a mobile unit. The band can be used for concerts, games, parades, and is suitable for many open-air performances where an orchestra is not suitable.

In a small community, the school band is probably more of an asset than the school band in a large community because of the fact that a large town supports professional
musicians who, to some extent, take the place of school entertainment.

Besides the programs furnished by the school instrumental groups, the school is the nucleus for numerous other groups outside of school. Many churches and non-school organizations have little orchestras. It usually will be found that the players in these organizations have been trained in school.

As an illustration of the importance of the school band, I will present some figures from my own community, Wasco, California. The school band played the following programs during the 1937-1938 school year:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Music for</th>
<th>4 Plays</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 Assembly programs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Football games</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Basketball games</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Street parades, several other invitations declined</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Band concert</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1 County band festival</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Fashion show</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Education week program</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Agriculture fair program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Graduation program</td>
<td></td>
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Soloists, quartets, and numerous other small groups were furnished for programs in addition to the above list.

1 This number is probably higher than it would be for many schools because of the fact that there is no orchestra in the school at present.
CHAPTER II
PRESENT DAY USE OF CLASS METHODS
FOR BAND INSTRUMENT INSTRUCTION

Modern methods of instrument instruction have proved that class instruction is as efficient as class methods in the teaching of academic subjects. When the music teacher works with large classes, he justifies his work by being of service to a large number of students.

The use of class methods was first tried in England. From there it was introduced to this country and used on a large scale. All teachers do not agree upon the number of students that can be efficiently accommodated in an instrument class, but any number up to thirty seems to be the usual size for band classes in California schools. Supposing that the students learn only one-half as fast by class methods as they would through private instruction, the teacher of a 30-pupil class has accomplished fifteen times as much by teaching through class work.

An interesting series of radio programs was recently given by Joseph Maddy, one of the nation's leading advocates of class methods. He attempted to give instrument lessons over the radio by working with a method in the hand of the pupil, then having studio musicians play the tones while the pupils played and followed the directions given over the radio. The merits and demerits of this experiment in class teaching will not be discussed here,
but, inasmuch as the teacher can not hear and correct the pupil, little progress could be made by this system, except by exceptional pupils. Taking instrument lessons by radio would be comparable to studying dancing by correspondence.

Let us suppose that a teacher has a half-hour each day that he can devote to a class of ten beginners, that being an easy number with which to work. With individual lessons, each student would receive a lesson once every two weeks, while a class of ten would meet every school day for one-half an hour. There are many advantages and disadvantages of class teaching which must be considered, and which leave room for differences of opinion.

One advantage of class teaching is the opportunity for the beginner to play his instrument at school every day. The supervised practice, to which class work of this kind actually amounts, allows the student to progress faster than he probably would through self-help and individual practice. He can realize more improvement this way, and is less likely to lag in enthusiasm. The social and psychological aspect of class work is one of great importance.

The individual method of teaching requires a student who is an exceedingly good worker, or one who is genuinely musical and desirous of learning. In other words, the individual student must be partly his own teacher. Most good musicians, when questioned, will admit that they
learned to a great extent by themselves. If they were not capable of learning by themselves, they would not have attained much playing ability. Learning consists largely of a trial, error, and correction method, and the student, under the individual instruction must be conscious of his errors, and must be able to diagnose them. In the case of the unmusical or careless student, the teacher attempts to diagnose his errors for him. It is my belief that students working by themselves, in order to make good musical progress, must have a higher degree of musical sense than must a student who is working in a class under teacher supervision every day.

Much depends upon the teacher. The teacher must listen to each player as closely as possible. The group must not be allowed to progress so rapidly that the slower pupils will drop farther and farther behind, and finally lose out. The understanding and technique of the slow students will not keep pace with that of the quick students, and gradually the teacher will find the slower ones watching the music and wondering where the place is, instead of playing.

The unequal ability of students is one of the most difficult problems with which the teacher is confronted in class work.

In the public schools nearly all teachers have students in their musical groups that probably can never learn to play well. There are two sides to the question of whether
or not students should be required to come up to a certain standard of musical ability in order to qualify for music work. The musician probably feels that it is a mistake for students who do not have special talent to take music and waste their time when they might be accomplishing more in some other field. Also to be considered is the waste of the teacher's time as well as that of the other members of the class. Every band has players who learn quickly, and players who learn slowly. If the music is gauged for the slow pupils, the more musical ones suffer; if the music is gauged for the quicker pupils, the slow ones cannot play the music, and the quality of the band's performance is apt to be poor.

Some parents are glad to have their children take music, even though they know that the children will not become good players. They feel that the social and recreational benefits that are received from playing an instrument are worth the time and effort.

A poor music student can enjoy playing an instrument just as much as a genius. If this were not true, only talented music students would study music. Talented music students are often discouraged easily because they realize that their playing does not come up to professional standards. Rather than work to achieve the quality of playing which they admire, they give up and refuse to practice. Their musical enjoyment may come from listening to others.
who can really play well, rather than from going through the slow, painstaking processes of learning to play. This situation is one which the teacher should guard against. The best solution to this problem is to start the students when they are young, while they are still enthusiastic about playing an instrument. If instruction is begun early, the student will be a good player by the time he becomes of high school age; and, if he is truly appreciative of music, and the school can offer him an organization worth playing in, there will be little danger of his "dropping" the instrument.

Public school teachers are paid to teach students rather than to develop musicians. Most teachers are expected to take the students that come to them for instruction. They are expected to do their best with them, even though the students are low in intelligence or aptitude for the special subject offered. However, an elective subject like band provides more opportunity for both discouragement and encouragement of students than do the required subjects.

In a large school system, students can be segregated according to their age or musical ability. In this way, the large school has a distinct advantage over the small school. There are just as distinct grades of instrumental playing as there are grades of arithmetic. The proper grading of methods, (which will be taken up later), will help to remedy the situation of teaching students of
unequal musical abilities.

I have proved to my own satisfaction that students with low musical ability can learn with an instruction book which progresses slowly and simply. As far as I am able to ascertain, poor music students learn in exactly the same manner as good music students. Usually, in the progression from easy exercises to more difficult ones, the slow student gradually drops behind in technique, understanding of some particular time problem, etc., and eventually his independence is broken down. When this happens, he begins playing by ear, or following the good student who sits next to him. When asked to play a piece by himself, he can not do it.

Even though the nature of the subject material in music instruction is much different from that of arithmetic or other subjects, the steps of learning are much the same. Consequently, most of the problems of teaching music by class methods are not inherently faults in the use of class methods, but ones concerning the grading of materials and pupils, and the use of proper instructional techniques.

Advantages of class methods.

The psychological and social aspects of group playing are exceedingly important. I have noticed many times that, after a band group has been organized, it usually is not long before the players who play in the same organization
become friendly. Many times life-long friends are made by students meeting each other, and being thrown together in the band. The students, as a rule, are of similar nature, have common interests, and are approximately of the same age. In such circumstances, the students enjoy coming to band practice because their friends are there. A knowledge of these facts helps in building a good organization. Students many times bring their friends to me and ask about starting them on an instrument. They may even interest their friends and their parents sufficiently to induce them to buy musical instruments.

In dividing the students into groups, the teacher should endeavor to place them, as far as possible, in groups that will be congenial. Girls, particularly, associate in cliques. One or two girls who are enthusiastic about their band work can often interest the others of their clique in joining.

Three years ago I had an interesting experience of this kind. The high school band was weak in clarinets, so three were purchased and given to girls in the eighth grade at the elementary school. Others in the same class were interested through these girls, and in a few weeks there were eight in the room playing clarinets instead of the three originally selected to play school instruments. The additional five purchased their own clarinets. Sometimes a group of girls decide that they do not like band instruments, or that it is "tom-boyish". In a case of
this kind, it is very difficult to induce these adolescents to take up an instrument. If one or two of the group decide to take up an instrument and play in the band, the result may be their eventual separation from the other girls and the finding of new friends—all of which may be for the best.

The weaker students are stimulated by the better students in class work. Many players who play the 2nd and 3rd parts in the band would find little enjoyment in playing or practicing by themselves. Their parts are important in the band, but not so satisfactory for home use.

The group work tends to develop the players at the same rate of speed. They have the same amount of practice during school time, work through the same materials, and have the same explanations, instructions, etc. If players have not had this common experience, there is considerable difficulty in adjusting all the players to conditions when forming the band. The first few months of the school year are difficult because the bands are not adjusted. The group will be weak in one section and strong in another, and music that will be easy for the players left from the preceding year, will be entirely too hard for the new members.

In actual operation, all students who wish to take band instruction in the beginning classes, do not come to school with instruments ready to start their work at the
same time. They straggle in, one by one, as their parents are able to obtain instruments. In spite of all efforts the teacher may make to start the class at the same time, a few will come in late. This creates the necessity for individual help in order to bring the late students up to the level of the other beginners.

One advantage of teaching beginners by class method is that a quicker preparation for band playing can be made by selecting only materials necessary to develop technique and reading essential to the playing of the first band pieces. If each player is taught by a different method and teacher, there is no assurance that they will be ready to start out together on a given set of marches, or whatever type of music is to be played.

This is often the case when the players are taught by private teachers. The pupils may have had a year or more of lessons and are able to play many different pieces, exercises and studies, but may not have had the exercises which lead up directly to the band work. The school teacher must give the student extra instruction in reading and counting of time, in order to fit him for the group work.

The problem of teaching young players how to count time, and how to keep the rhythm with other players is one of the hardest that befalls the music teacher. The teaching of time can be done as easily by class methods as by individual methods. Although the teaching of new
rhythms must be presented through the ear, the method used must contain enough different exercises dealing with each rhythmic problem, to prevent the student's playing the rhythm by ear instead of reading it. By this, I mean that a new lesson--such as dotted quarter notes followed by eighth notes--should be so written that the first line or example can be presented through the ear. Then the succeeding exercises should contain enough of the same rhythms, but mixed with other notes, such as quarters and halves, in such a manner that the student can take advantage of what he has learned by ear while being required to read accurately what is written.

Aims.

The aim of a class method should be to acquaint the beginner with the time values, notes, keys, musical terms, skills, and technique which he will be called upon to use in the elementary music which will follow the class method. This attitude of constructing the beginning method according to the music material to follow is a sort of "cart-before-the-horse" procedure, but nevertheless important. This is one of the chief faults of individual instruction books. Most of them have the vague aim of developing artistic skill and technique. Few of them are based upon sound educational pedagogy which makes them of value for school work.

Most of the standard instructors that are used today
are not laid out progressively in units. To be of school use, this is a fundamental requirement of a class method. Much material found in the instruction books would be useless in a class method, even though there were space for it.

Obviously, all teachers do not follow a beginners' method with the same music. This fact need not hinder the writing of an efficient and useful beginners' method. There needs to be a more standardized system of grading beginning band music in order that the objectives for class methods can be determined.

For this thesis, the results of the tabulation of the questionnaires sent to the band instructors will be the determining factor as to what should constitute a beginners' method.

It is generally known that there is a great difference between orchestra playing and band playing. The main difference lies in the keys in which the two different organizations play. In beginning band work, the clarinets and cornets need to know only the first sharp key, and the first two or three flat keys, while in beginning orchestra playing it is essential to know many more sharp keys. There are differences of time and range, also, which are important. From this, it will be concluded that a beginners' method in order to be as efficient as possible, should be either a band method or an orchestra method, not
a combination of both, as is frequently the case.

Class methods are generally written as a combination of exercises and pieces, or purely as a melodic method. Few methods of recent publication are composed solely of exercises, as the trend is away from exercises and towards melodic material. I believe that a beginners' method should consist of both. Each has its advantages. Students enjoy playing pieces more than they do exercises, but there is a tendency to play pieces by ear, which often is detrimental. Occasionally a piece can be used to present a new rhythmic problem to good advantage. Certain technical phases of playing should not be avoided just because they cannot be written in a piece.

E. C. Moore, in describing his band course, says, "In planning these books, a survey was made of the easy band pieces and of the student's requirements to play them. Exercises and pieces were then arranged to prepare the student for playing this grade of music correctly."

1 E. C. Moore, The Moore Band Course, Bb Cornet part, p. 2
CHAPTER III
SURVEY OF CLASS METHODS USED IN CALIFORNIA SCHOOLS

In a survey by A. C. Forsblad of band class methods used in Fresno county, it was found that sixteen county high school had used fourteen different methods. The frequency of use of each method was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>No. of Schools Using</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foundation to Band Playing</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modern Way</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal Teacher</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groundwork of Orchestral Playing</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ascher's Beginners' Band Book</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epperson's Band and Orchestra Folio</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenkin's Beginners' Band Book and Instructor</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building the Band</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fox Progressive Elementary Series</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundamentals of Orchestra Playing</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake's Elementary Band Method</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Moore Band Course</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stuber's Melody Method</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Educator</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The full titles and author's names will be found in the bibliography.
The following general criticisms of the band methods were made by band teachers of Fresno county. These were collected in the survey by A. C. Forsblad:

1. Ascher's Beginners' Band Book with Orchestra Combinations, by Emil Ascher.
   a. Progresses too fast; technic lacking melodic material.
   b. Material not graded.
   c. Not good for beginners, more adapted to intermediate use.

2. Building the Band, by Ed Chenette.
   b. Lacks melody somewhat.

   a. Rather uninteresting in places (classical).

   b. Progresses by keys rather than rhythmic or technical problems, no rhythmic problem is followed through. Good charts.
c. Brass parts too high, many mistakes in editing, not complete, better used for supplementary material.

d. No illustrative material, too difficult melodic material, uninteresting.

e. Good material for unison work, pieces poor, very good for beginners.

f. Editing poor, charts satisfactory, violin bowing are very poor, brass books in awkward keys.

g. Poorly edited, not carefully proof-read, mistakes in notes and fingerings.

5. Epperson's Band and Orchestra Folio, by Emery G. Epperson.

a. Good for band instruments, not enough key variation. Fair for strings.

b. Interesting material, many mistakes in fingerings.

c. Very fine, interesting.


a. Starts beginner on easiest tones. Progresses from unison to harmonization.

b. Material adaptable for beginners to learn fingerings (rudiments), but prefer supplementary material rather than pieces as suggested by the book.

c. Easy natural progression, good explanations.
d. Not enough drill material, relies too much on melodic pull. Contains misleading statements for brass; tendency to create pressure system.

e. Based on best professional methods, complete; best use is with the "Universal Teacher" for beginners.

f. Material develops ear players rather than ability to read music as printed.

g. I believe "Foundation to Band Playing" to be quite satisfactory in that there are many more melodies taken up than in some of the simpler methods. It also covers a longer period than some.

h. Very fine for brass instruments, strings poor.

   a. Material progressively graded.
   b. Melodic material progressively arranged.

   a. Material not interesting to the individual, pieces better suited for ensembles of intermediate grade.
   b. Best used as supplementary material.
   c. Fingerings not well explained, pieces fair, better used for intermediate grade.
a. Material good.

a. Holds interest in beginning for supplementary material. Tendency is to create ear players. Brass parts too low.
b. Brass parts too low and never extends the range. Fair if used only at the very beginning.
c. Teaches players to play by ear rather than by notation, pieces out of range for beginners.
d. Material develops ear players rather than ability to read as printed.
e. Too much folk tune playing.
f. Simple, uses folk tunes, progresses to three part harmony.

a. Interesting folk tunes.

a. Needs more playable pieces.

Note.
The foregoing criticisms and comments are taken exactly as the teachers submitted them. It is very probable that the teachers did not answer a definite question, but were free to make any statement which they wished. There is a wide divergence of opinions, as well as much agreement on
the merits and demerits of the methods. By glancing at the table on page 22 it will be seen that the methods most frequently used have the most comments—each statement represents the comment from each teacher that had used the method. There are several criticisms which are commonly stated about most of the methods. Significant statements taken from the summary of the above survey by A. C. Forsblad are:

"The majority of schools use more than one method."

"There exists a variance of opinion as to the relative value of methods by different band instructors."

"Criticisms of teachers show that there is a need for improvement in the materials of instruction."

**Questionnaire.**

A questionnaire was sent by the writer to 70 schools of elementary, junior high, and senior high grade throughout California. Most of the questionnaires were sent to San Joaquin valley schools. There were 47 questionnaires signed and returned. 3 of these were not filled out owing to the fact that there was no band work in these schools. This left a total of 44 questionnaires from which results were tabulated. As questions asked were rather general, the teachers were urged to write in their own opinions and to add any enlightening material they wished.
The questions asked were these:

1. Do you use any class methods for band instruments in your school?

2. Do you start all band instruments together?

3. If not, state which instruments are not placed with the main group, (or how otherwise you divide them).

4. What method (or methods) do you use for beginners? (Name in order of progress)

5. What type of musical selection do you take up first, after your band is ready to play pieces?

6. What is the first march collection that you use after working through a beginning method?

7. What are the next two collections that you use, if any?

8. What type of exercise should class methods stress in order to prepare players better for band work, in your opinion?

9. Do you find any particular instruments that are hard to develop? If so, please name, and state the difficulty.

10. In order to develop a band quickly, please check which method you favor:

   (a) Thorough mastery of a small number of pieces,
   (b) Playing of a large amount of music, more musical experience, but less emphasis on perfection.
11. In what grades do you favor starting band instruction?

12. Do instrumental pupils seem to learn as easily in the middle elementary grades as they do when beginning high school?

Practically all the schools which answered the questionnaire used some class methods for band instruction. 43 answered "yes" to question No. 1, while one school used a band and orchestra method.

To the question whether or not all instruments were started together in one class,

17 answered "yes"
20 answered "no"
7 answered "yes and no"

The group which stated "yes and no" probably meant that as far as possible, all instruments were included in one group. Some of these teachers qualified this answer, while others did not.

16 did not answer the question as to how the instruments were divided. 9 stated that instruments of one kind only were placed together at first. Most of these answers came from large schools, or from instructors who apparently had plenty of time to work with beginners, and whose teaching was rather specialized. One stated that individual work was used for the first year entirely. 7 answered that the beginners were started by sections.
The brass and woodwinds were taught separately, and the percussion added to the brass or taught separately. 7 stated that most of the group was started together with private lessons for the following instruments: oboe, bassoon, French horn, clarinets, and flute. One gave private instruction on each instrument for three lessons. One made the following division: clarinets separate, cornets and alto horns together, trombones and baritones together, basses together. One divided the beginners according to ability. One divided into a "heterogeneous" group, reeds and brasses separate, or Eb and Bb instruments separate. One teacher used both types of teaching—sometimes all instruments together, sometimes only instruments of one kind together.

The division of beginners for class work is one of great variety among different teachers. One conclusion of this tabulation is to show that no absolutely workable method seems to have been found by the teachers for all instruments together.

The following beginners' methods were listed by the teachers. The number after each method shows the frequency of usage.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Sales Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mancini-Bartlett Method</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewell Band Builder</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Melody Band Book (Rubank)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Instruction Books</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation to Band Playing</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step by Step</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dippolito Modern Way Method</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Band and Orchestra)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barnhouse Unison Method</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lockhart</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chenette</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allen Class Method</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Universal Teacher</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridging the Gap, by Cheyette</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Band Fundamentals, by Webber</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moore Band Course</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Fun</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenkins Beginners Band Book</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building the Band, by Jewell</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition Band Book</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ditson Community Band Series</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rubank Group Method</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introductory Course, by Dr. Chas. Lampe</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. The writer is in receipt of a letter from Frank R. Godwin of Morse M. Freeman, Inc., music sellers. His letter is dated May 4, 1940. He says, "According to our survey, the Smith-Yoder-Bachman Method is the No. 1 seller, the Van Deusen Elementary Band Course published by Rubank is the No. 2 seller, the World of Music by William Revelli
No. 3, the Victor Method Book the No. 4 seller, the Short-Cut Band Method of Metcalf No. 5. The balance of the methods are more or less slow sellers, and sell spasmodically in various parts of the country, depending upon the section and the amount of promotion work that has been done."

These five methods are all recent publications, which shows the quick moving trends in band methods. Schools are trying new methods from year to year in an effort to find one which will satisfy their needs. The Smith-Yoder-Bachman method was copyrighted in 1939, the World of Music band course in 1937, the Victor method revised in 1936, the Short-Cut band method in 1936, and the Van Deusen Elementary Band Course in 1939.

In answer to the question, "What type of musical selection do you take up first, after your band is ready to play pieces?" 26 had no particular choice, but used marches, waltzes, songs, and easy overtures together. 18 limited their choice of selection to marches and waltzes. Of the latter group, 7 used only marches at first. Since overtures require the use of both march, waltz, and song rhythms, the aim of most instructors seemed to be to teach all different types of rhythm right from the first, rather than choose one particular type of rhythm for a period of time.
The following march collections were named as being the first used:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collection</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Douglass</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bennett Band Books</td>
<td>13 (there are four books of this series)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vandercook</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contest Band Folio</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our First Band Book</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brockton Band Book</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Star Band Book</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assembly Hour Orchestra Collection</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion Band Book</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridging the Gap</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fulton Folio</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenkins Beginner Band Bk.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ascher Beginner Band Bk.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenkins Advanced No. 2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Bennett band books were overwhelmingly the favorite beginner march collection. There are four band books written by Bennett. Some of the teachers named specific books of the Bennett series, while some did not state which book they used. Sixteen did not use any particular march collection for beginning work. As some teachers did not favor the use of marches exclusively, they used loose-leaf material, while other teachers started their players on orchestra methods and changed to band work later on.
Since most of the teachers did not have a definite choice for their second and third band books, no tabulation could be made on this question. The writer has used a definite progression of band books with success, and it was assumed that other teachers would probably have a definite program of band instruction. Some of the answers given to this question were:

"I work some in Senior Band on Ed Chenette's Advanced Technique". This teacher moved the beginners in with the advanced players early in the school year, where loose-leaf music of mixed nature is played.

Another statement was, "I use Jenkins Introduction to the Classics now". From this, it is assumed that the teacher changes methods and materials frequently--possibly experimenting to find better band books.

An instructor from a large junior high school said he used "Evergreen Collection, Jacobs", and "Bach Chorales". The strange part of his answer to question No. 6 was his statement that "Fulton Folio of Melody Marches" was the first band book used. Some parts of the Fulton march books are easy, and others are very difficult. The clarinet books contain a great amount of obligatetto playing, especially the trios, while the brass parts are relatively easy. Books that are constructed like this are not usually good instruction books for beginning bands.

"On Parade" band book was one instructor's choice, "Bennett Band Books I and III" another's.
In answer to the question, "What types of exercise should class methods stress in order to prepare players better for band work?" the results were as follows:

- Scales: 25
- Chords: 7
- Intonation: 5
- Rhythmic Exercises: 19
- Long Tones: 12
- Attack: 2
- Interval Studies: 11
- Slurring: 3
- Knowledge of Keys: 3
- Accompaniment parts for Bass and Horn: 1

The above recommendations for better exercises reflect the particular weaknesses which the various teachers find in their beginning bands. The main types of exercises listed in order of importance were Scales, Rhythmic exercises, Long tones, Interval studies. Two of these, scales and interval studies, show a need for technique on the part of the students. Long tones show a need for better tone, and rhythmic exercises bring out the fact that students do not read well enough. Paradoxically enough, all of these elements of playing are such that they may all be developed by means other than exercises.
Technique improves vastly with better coordination and maturation. The playing of marches gives a great deal of practice in scale work and tongueing. Tone is largely a result of better appreciation. Most players do not have a good tone because of the fact that they do not listen to their own playing and evaluate it in a musicianly sense. Practice, of course, plays a large part in developing a good tone, but the fact that one player develops a good tone in one year's time while another takes five years, shows that in developing a good tone there is more than practice. Good reading is mostly the result of experience. As has been stated before, explanations and elementary exercises of rhythms and time values are not enough to make the student a good reader. Considerable experience is necessary.

In the survey, teachers were asked to name which instruments were difficult to teach. These are listed below, and several reasons given.

- Clarinet: 2 reasons - Poor mouthpieces, poor metal instruments
- Trombone: 2 reasons - Reach for small students
- Flute: 9 reasons - Embouchure, cost
- Oboe: 16 reasons - Reed, control of tone, interest
- Bassoon: 10 reasons - " "
- Bass Clarinet: 1 reason - Embouchure
- French horn: 10 reasons - Interest
- Mellophones: 7 reasons - Uninteresting, range in method, poor students
- Basses: 3 reasons - Size, cost
- Cornet: 1 reason - Embouchure
One well known band director made the significant statement, "One instrument is as easy as the other, providing teacher and student know what they are doing". Then he remarked that, "French horn is about the hardest". My experience bears out the above statements that success with any instrument depends largely upon student ability and teacher instruction.

In answer to the question whether better results were obtained from playing a small fundamental repertoire, or from playing a wide repertoire with less emphasis on perfection, twenty-one voted for the former, and fifteen teachers preferred the latter. Probably a combination of the two is the ideal system and the method followed by most teachers. The wording of this particular question was somewhat misleading, as the phrase "less emphasis on perfection" gave the impression that careful or finished playing was not an objective.

In answer to the question, "In what grades do you favor starting band instruction?" the following results were obtained:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3rd grade</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th grade</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th grade</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6th grade</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7th grade</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th grade</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th grade</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10th grade</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically ready</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
One city music supervisor cryptically stated that band instruction should start in grade X. He said that orchestra instrument instruction should begin in grade IV "because this keeps the balance of both organizations, and gives the string players the necessary advanced ground work". Needless to say, this supervisor favors orchestras over bands in his school system.

In answer to the question, "Do instrumental pupils learn as easily in the middle elementary grades as they do when beginning high school?" eighteen teachers said "yes"; sixteen said "no". Six teachers said that the elementary pupils learned more slowly but progressed farther in the long run.

Many teachers made notations to the effect that they believed the students would not progress as quickly in the grades as in high school, but the average would go much farther.

This question was misleading as there are several ways to regard it. In teaching down to the level of the student's age, there seems to be a majority of opinion that intermediate grade children can learn instruments easily if they are physically mature. On the other hand, a smaller majority of teachers likewise agree that the intermediate children will not progress as fast as high school students. The two aspects of the question, (1) learning easily, and (2) learning quickly, are thus
confused, owing to improper wording of the question. The results of this question will have to be discounted; however, it is interesting to note that practically all teachers agree that it is better to start the players young if possible. Many teachers were not able to give an adequate answer to this problem because they had taught at only one grade level.
Grading of material.

One of the most outstanding failures of both class methods and individual "instructors" is the poor grading of material. The necessity for grading is not so important for an individual instructor as for a class method because the teacher can "skip around" and assign the various pages for study and practice which will best suit the pupil's needs. This procedure is in reality a way of assembling the music so as to grade it properly. A class method is used somewhat in the nature of a reader. It should progress step by step, from one level of difficulty to the next. To illustrate the poor grading of such famous individual instructors as Arban, St. Jacome, Langey tutors, Carl Fischer, Goldman cornet methods, etc., imagine trying to use them with a beginning grade school cornet class. The high notes, rhythmic problems, and introduction of new keys suddenly, makes them of little use. Many inexperienced music teachers struggle along with methods that have this faulty construction and wonder why their teaching is not more successful—why the pupils lose interest and do not practice.

¹The term "instructor" is used in the sense of an individual instruction book, paralleling the use of the term "method".
The grading of a method should be based upon the four following points:

1. Age and musical ability of pupils
2. Keys to be learned
3. Rhythms to be learned
4. Range of playing to be learned

The grading of a class method will depend to some extent upon the group with which the method will be used. A group of high school students can progress much faster than can an elementary school group. For young students, it is necessary to use a method which progresses slowly and carefully. The development of lip muscles is slower, as a rule, with young students than with older. Young students do not have as large fingers with which to cover the holes of the clarinet, or to span the reach of a saxophone as do older students. Young cornet players do not have powerful lungs and can not progress to the high notes as quickly as older students. The comparison of a quick and a slow method would be comparable to the study of arithmetic. Even though a high school student had never studied arithmetic whatsoever, he would undoubtedly learn his arithmetic more quickly than would a fourth grader of equal intelligence and willingness to learn. Instead of spending a year on several simple drills, a month or two might be sufficient. The high school student
would know his work more thoroughly if he did take the time to go through all the slow and painstaking mechanics that the fourth grader went through, but it might be a waste of time. He would be spending time on a foundation that could be applied to more advanced work. The young student faces the reverse situation more frequently than not. He is rushed through his elementary exercises into the playing of band music before he is ready for it. He is playing in an advanced group and trying to play sixteenth notes when he does not know how to count quarter notes properly. The chances are that the fault will not lie wholly with the teacher because of the lack of material that is interesting and instructive.

One of the best answers to the lack of beginner's instructors and supplementary instructors is the set developed and published by Rubank, Inc. There are elementary books for beginners of each instrument, and several studies to supplement the beginner's books on the most popular instruments. These books sell for $.75 and less, and give a much better background for band playing than do any of the class methods. They are laid out in units, progressively, and develop all the technique necessary to play from the easier march books. The procedure followed in these books is one that I approve generally, and one which should be followed in making a new class method if possible. Most class
methods should contain more easy music. It never hurts a good player to play through easy music. Very frequently I find it necessary to get one of the Rubank instructors, and let some student who has worked through a class method and missed half of his work, start in again and get a better foundation.

The grading in regard to the keys to be learned should follow the keys necessary for grade one music. Supposing that a class method contains twenty-five written pages, I would suggest a plan as follows:

Pages 1-10 Key of Bb (concert)
10-15 Key of Eb and Bb
15-18 Keys of Ab, Eb, and Bb
18-20 Key of F, with keys previous learned
20-25 Use all keys given above and also introduce the key of Db.

After the student has thoroughly learned the above keys, the addition of one or two new tones in the scale is a relatively simple matter. One of the most important points in learning to play the various scales is learning the names of the notes. I find that invariably the student who knows the lines and spaces will play the sharps or flats of the key signature better than the student who does not know them. It is obvious why the beginning clarinetist will play E-flat for the higher tone and E-natural for the lower in the example given below.
If he knows the names of the notes and is accustomed to think in terms of them, he will realize that the key signature calls for E-flat, instead of merely flattening the top space. There seems to be a little more difficulty in teaching key signatures to the bass clef instruments than to the treble clef instruments because of the fact that the bass clef trombones, baritones, and basses play so much music that is written off the staff, whereas the sharps and flats of the signature are placed on the staff. The music of these instruments is usually harmony rather than melody, and the students do not notice their mistakes as readily as they would if playing the melody. Because of these facts, a beginning class method should contain explanations and reminders that not only the note where the sharp or flat is placed is affected, but also any note of the same name. With this also should be explanations, (of only a sentence or two) concerning the use of naturals and the rule for carrying an accidental through the measure only. The use of the repeat sign, double bar, and endings should be briefly explained, as they are introduced in the music. Most teachers explain these things to the class, but many students are better readers than listeners. The Rubank individual instructors are very good in this respect. Explanations can be overdone, however; too much written information, pictures, and diagrams will take up space which should be allotted to musical exercises. However, such explanations as are consistent with the simplification of teaching are excellent.
A worksheet requiring the student to write down the names of notes as well as the fingerings would be a very useful help in learning keys. For a small cost a detachable, supplementary section could be included in the class method. Several short work-sheets occurring at several different places during the course of the method would systematize the "fingering problem". These could be fixed as follows: Write the name of the note above the staff, in the parenthesis provided, and the fingerings or number of fingers below.

\[
\text{(A) (Eb) (G)}
\]

Young players may as well start learning their fingerings right from the start as to play for several months with the fingerings marked for them. The Ascher beginner band books are notable examples of the marked fingering method. In my opinion, learning of the most frequently used fingerings is not a major problem.

The various accidentals complicate the fingering problem. If beginning band music would use only one way of writing each tone instead of using enharmonic tones, one-half of the accidentals would be eliminated. As this is not the case, the beginner must learn the following
I follow the practice of marking accidental fingerings in the beginning, as I do not follow a class method long enough for a student to learn the chromatic scales.

It is a strange fact that second or harmony parts call for more accidentals than do the melody parts. The various accidentals can not be listed in the order of their occurrence as can the scales. The only thing that can be done is to teach them as they come up in the music, or have a section of the music method devoted to chromatic scales.

The grading of a class method should be based mainly upon the rhythmic problem. The logical place to start is with 4/4 time, whole notes and whole rests. The method
should then progress to half notes and rests; then to quarter notes and rests. All previously learned notes and rests should reoccur frequently for reading and time-count practice. Either eighth notes and rests, or 3/4 time should follow. Considerable time should be spent on these fundamental time values, inserting melodies in with the exercises as far as practicable.

Although 2/4 is played exactly the same as 4/4 except that the measure is shorter and the accents slightly different, this time signature should also be used. 6/4 rhythm could be introduced without any great difficulty; however, it is not necessary and probably should be omitted from a beginner method, as it might be confused with 6/8 rhythm.

After eighth notes have been studied, 6/8 can be taken up. Dotted quarter notes and quarter and eighth rests together should probably be introduced before the 6/8. An adequate explanation of 6/8 is very necessary if the pupil is to understand how 6/8 is counted, both as to six beats in a measure, and two beats in a measure. After a pupil has been grounded in the fact that a quarter note receives one beat, it is difficult to make him understand that it is possible for an eighth note to receive one beat, as well as a dotted quarter.

Some methods introduce 6/8 before alla breve; others introduce the alla breve, or "cut-time" first. I believe that 6/8 is used in beginning band music more than "cut-time".
2/4 is usually substituted for "cut-time" until the student is fairly advanced.

The teaching of sixteenth notes should not be delayed too long, as they are used a great deal, especially in 2/4 and 4/4 measure, and some in 6/8.

Playing range.

The range of playing for each instrument depends, of course, on the range which the players will be called upon to use in beginning band books. Here, a good deal of discrimination will have to be made, since some so-called "beginning" band books use an entirely unreasonable range. The main difficulty for brasses is the continued use of high notes, which exert an undue strain on the young player's lips. This is apt to bring about playing with pressure and temporary paralysis of the lip, as well as a strained tone and inability to tongue easily and rapidly. The playing range for beginning cornetists should be

They should learn to play two notes higher, (F, G) and at least one note lower, (Bb), but these extremes of range should not be in general use for the first few months. The same range holds also for the beginning baritone, alto horn, and trombone. The baritone employs more of a running part than the other brass instruments, and its range should be one note higher.

The range for the basses should be:

\[ \text{BBb} \quad \text{Eb} \]
In order that both kinds of basses may play the same part, the BBb bass will have to practice his higher register, and the Eb bass player will have to practice his extreme low register.

Clarinet parts often times are written too high for beginners. Practically all teachers advocate that "high C" be the top note until a fairly good embouchure has been formed.

The playing register of the woodwinds should extend from as low to as high as can easily be played, even though the major part of the music does not call for use of the low notes. Occasionally they will read music which calls for on the clarinet, on the oboe, or on the flute. Unless the beginning exercises for these instruments contain these notes, they will not have learned them, and the music which they play in the intermediate band does not contain enough of the lower register for the student to learn it, without practicing outside of band on these notes.

For general band playing, the following ranges are suggested for beginning woodwind instruments:

clarinet saxophone flute
piccolo oboe bassoon
Starting point.

One of the first questions a teacher asks when he picks up a class method for inspection is, "How does it start out each instrument?" The starting point, in my opinion, is not so important as some writers would lead one to believe. Producing the first tones on an instrument, even with young students, is only two or three weeks' work at most.

The brasses do not have a great deal of difficulty in getting started. They have some trouble at first placing the correct tones, but that is to be expected. Most of the woodwinds do not have much trouble starting their tones. The flute has trouble in producing a tone, but, like the saxophone, oboe, and bassoon, it makes little difference which notes are learned first. The clarinet has a problem of its own, for which few methods make proper allowances. The lower register should be learned first and considerable control of the lower tones gained before attempting the register change. It should be possible, however, to write a method in which the clarinet could work in the lower register for the first six weeks or two months. The lower register has a range of an octave and a half, which is more than enough to match the range the brasses would use in any beginners' method. The change of octaves in an exercise or piece necessitated by reaching the upper or lower end of the range would not be as serious
a handicap to a clarinetist as the shifting of octaves would be to a beginning brass player.

Part of the brasses are pitched in Bb, while part of them are pitched in Eb. This is a serious problem in making up the first part of a beginners' method because the beginning unison work may place one section or the other in a difficult part of the range, either too high or too low.

The brass family, in regard to the starting tone, is governed first by the easiest tone to blow, secondly, by the fingering or slide position. Most teachers agree that the open G (concert F) is the easiest tone to blow and sustain, (second line of treble clef). Higher notes require a great deal of lip tension for one who has not developed his lip muscles. Lower notes require the ability to produce proper lip vibration while relaxed. E, F, and A are also good starting tones on the cornet and other closely related instruments. The ideal situation would be to place the beginning cornets, trombones, baritones, and Bb basses together, and let them play in their middle register, extending their register gradually from middle G to the C's at either end. The Eb horns and basses should likewise be placed together and worked on the same exercises.¹

¹ It is necessary, of course, to transpose the parts correctly for the different instruments. The bass clef instruments play in concert key, the treble clef instruments transpose, according to the key in which they are pitched.
To divide the brasses, however, would be to defeat the idea of a class method, the developing together of all the band instruments. If the exercises are written carefully, it will be possible to combine the brasses without working too much hardship on any one group. One of the first exercises commonly found in class methods is the playing in unison of the Bb concert scale, (C for cornet and other Bb treble clef instruments). This is natural because the C scale is not hard for cornet, baritones, trombones, and most of the woodwinds. This takes up a major part of the band instruments. The cornet is usually favored when a class method is written because most bandsmen think in terms of the cornet, (the conductor part is often-times identical with the solo cornet part).

To illustrate the hardship worked upon the Eb instruments by writing the method for the Bb instruments, note what happens when the C scale is written for the treble clef Bb instruments.

\[ \text{The Eb horn has to play the scale starting either on his middle G and going way up to the top of the register, notes which many advanced players do not play easily, or start at the extreme bottom of the register.} \]

Since it is obvious that a beginner cannot play the extremes of the register after a week or two of playing,
the writers of class methods are obliged to employ the system of shifting octaves. Since most brass players require about two months or more of playing before they can make intervals of fifths and sixths correctly, considerable trouble is experienced in making the seventh interval successfully. Thus:

\[ \text{\includegraphics{music.png}} \]

The chances are that a beginner will play A (1-2), four times out of five instead of playing E, which is also (1-2). This problem is one that requires most careful planning. The writer of a class method must be as conscious of the relatively unimportant Eb alto horn as he is of the important solo Bb cornet.

In band music the Eb bass and Bb bass play from the same part, so it is a good idea to write the music in octaves whenever it goes out of the middle register of either instrument. This method is used in advanced bass parts, so it is well to let the players become accustomed to the use of divided parts. The bass player can be told that the lower notes are easier for the big bass, and the higher notes easier for the small bass, but that each player has the option of playing either part, whichever he prefers.

Some writers have the mistaken idea that each instrument should be started in the key of C. This idea can not be used for the writing of a class method. A class method
should start in the key which is most commonly used—either Bb or Eb. An instrument can be successfully started in any key. Young children seem to be able to learn the key of four sharps as easily as the key of one flat, if one key has not been previously learned; so the theory that each instrument should begin in the key of C and progress from there is broken down to my satisfaction. If we start in the key of Eb concert, the woodwinds will begin in the following keys:

- **Eb instruments**  
  Key of C
- **Bb instruments**  
  Key of F
- **C flute, oboe**  
  Key of Eb
- **Db piccolo**  
  Key of D (two sharps)
- **Bass clef instruments**  
  Key of Eb

To an advanced musician who has not worked with beginners, it seems strange that a player who learns to play first in several sharps or flats, (for instance, the Db piccolo, which plays two, three, and four sharps mainly), finds it difficult to play in the key of C, until used to that key. F-natural and C-natural, easy fingerings on the piccolo, will be stumbling-blocks after being accustomed to sharpening these tones.

Material based on music to follow method.

In organizing the class method, the writer should survey the field of beginning band music in order to ascertain
what is to be required of the beginning student. The band publishers attempt to meet the demands of the school band directors by assembling music which will be playable by students who have learned by class methods. As yet, the perfect link between method and music has not been made, and probably can never be perfected, on account of the varieties of opinion of teachers as to what constitutes good teaching material. Some teachers aim to develop a smooth toned, soft, band which will feature the woodwinds, play waltzes, serenades, etc., while others use marches and overtures and allow the brasses to predominate. Since directors develop their bands with different aims, it naturally follows that different kinds of teaching material will be desired. The questionnaire showed that there was a great variance of opinion as to the best methods for developing bands.

If a given band were to be directed and analyzed by ten different directors for the purpose of diagnosing and correcting the weaknesses of the band, it is a probability that each would pick out different problems. One might emphasize intonation. To correct this, he would prescribe tuning-up exercises, chords, chorales, slow harmonious selections. If various phases of technique were found to be lacking, exercises for tongueing, fingering, and scales might be selected. Marches probably would be used, emphasizing staccato tongueing, and precision playing.
If the tone quality of the band needed improvement, slow, melodic pieces would be used. As in securing a proper balance, the building up of a good sense of appreciation of music in each student is necessary. Unless the student knows how the selections should sound, he surely will not play them musically.

The teacher might then claim that the playing of the band is very good except that the players were poorly trained in the matter of playing with expression. In this case, the need of the band would be better conducting, rather than the use of certain materials.

If sight-reading is determined as the main need, the use of more unfamiliar music would be prescribed, and also the use of rhythm studies.

Often times, directors correctly analyze the weaknesses of their bands, but through a lack of musicianship, or understanding of the learning processes, they do not use materials which will best remedy the weakness.

In starting a beginner class, the teacher looks ahead and thinks of the elements of playing which need to be stressed in order to better fit the students for advanced work. Since different kinds of exercises serve to develop the different elements of playing—tone quality, reading ability, technique, expression, intonation, the differences of opinion between teachers regarding band development are fundamental in constructing a class method.
The rhythmic problem.

The first question which the teacher should ask, when a pupil has trouble of rhythmic nature is: "Does he know the time values of the various notes and rests?" It is surprising to find how many advanced players do not know how many counts the various notes should receive when playing in all the common time-signatures. In giving the student a thorough understanding of time values and counting, the teacher using a system of private lessons has a distinct advantage. Since class technique tends to teach the student to gain his knowledge of time values by listening to others instead of figuring the counts and rhythms for himself, young players go along for years, often-times, before learning the relationship of one kind of note to another.

With young students the writer attempted, in the past, to explain time values in detail. I soon discovered that even though they learned how many beats to give to a particular kind of note, they were unable to count correctly. Gradually, I reverted to the system used in vocal teaching—the rote, or ear method. The result is that my classes make three times the progress formerly made by having the students attempt to read independently from the start. Students become adept at learning through the ear rather than the eye, and when they are making good progress—learning to play in the different keys, developing
better tones, adapting their playing to fit that of the other students, and gaining technique—it seems a waste of time to stop to explain time values. This process may go on for several years. Then the players find themselves playing more advanced music, and still dependent upon the teacher to play over a tricky phrase for them, when they should be old enough and experienced enough to figure the time out for themselves. An excellent remedy for this situation would be to prepare a work-sheet on time values and give this to the students repeatedly until each student understands it perfectly. Several lectures or written explanations on rhythm would be necessary before each student would be able to score 100% on the worksheet.

The writer has prepared a worksheet of "minimum" length to be used by 8th to 12th grade students. It is not intended for students below junior high school age, although exceptional students of intermediate grade could benefit from its use. Many of the terms used are technical and would be beyond the knowledge of the average high school student taking it as a test for the first time; however, after the teacher has gone through the questions and explained them, the student should answer them correctly, as well as other similar exercises which the teacher might make up. Following are the exercises which compose the worksheet:
1. What is meant by "key signature"?
2. What is meant by "time signature"?
3. Give as complete an explanation as you can of the term "4/4".
4. What is the relationship between "C" and "4/4"?
5. In what kind of rhythm does a whole note take up the whole measure?
6. How does a dot placed after a note affect its time value?
7. What is the difference between 4/4 and 2/4 time?
8. Does a half note receive the same number of beats in both 4/4 and 2/4?
9. What is the difference between 2/4 and 6/8?
10. Write the symbol which stands for "cut-time".
11. If the above time signature were written with numbers it would be written _____.
12. What is a good way to count your time correctly?
13. What are the two ways that 6/8 time can be counted?
16. Why does a quarter note receive one beat in 4/4, while a dotted quarter receives a beat in fast 6/8?
17. Does a half note equal four eighth notes in all time signatures?

18. How many eighth notes does a dotted quarter equal, a dotted half, a whole, a dotted eighth rest, a half rest?

19. In the following exercises, mark the beats of the measure above the note on which the beat falls. Study the example given and note the beats are marked according to the note that would be played when the director's baton set the time, or when the beating of one's foot occurred. If a beat comes in the middle of a note, as the 2nd and 4th beats in the 3rd measure, place an "X" in front of the beat to show that the beat does not fall right on the beginning of the note.

Example.

20. 4/4

21. (6 beats)

22. (2 beats)

23. €
24. $\frac{3}{4}$

25. $\frac{12}{8}$

26. $\frac{6}{8}$

Tell what kind of notes the following are, and how many beats each receives in the various time signatures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kind</th>
<th>4/4</th>
<th>2/4</th>
<th>$\frac{6}{8}$</th>
<th>$\frac{6}{8}$</th>
<th>$\frac{12}{8}$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(half-note)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 $\frac{1}{3}$</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After the student thoroughly understands time values in all the common rhythms, all that remains is practice and application of this knowledge. A series of unison exercises for intermediate band students, if properly written, would be one of the most useful pieces of music in the band repertoire. The main object of these exercises
is to teach the young bandsman to read quickly, accurately, and independently, the different kinds of rhythm most frequently used in playing. Several rhythm studies have been written for intermediate use—the Unisonal Scales, Chords, and Rhythmic Studies, by White, the Ensemble Drill, by Fussell, the rhythm section of Foundation to Band Playing, by Griffen, and others. These are fairly good, but not extensive enough. Probably the band director's hardest task is teaching his players to read independently. This cannot be accomplished in 5 or 6 pages of rhythm exercises. A book of 75 pages of unisonal rhythm exercises would not be any too large. This type of studies is tiring to the student if used too long at a time, but if used ten minutes per day as a supplement to the regular band rehearsal, it would be excellent. It would be ideal for sectional rehearsal.

There are a number of individual instruction books which contain good sight-reading practice, such as Amsden Practice Duets for cornet, St. Jacome Method for cornet, Klose for clarinet, etc. These studies could not be suitably transposed for the entire band, or even for the entire section of instruments for which it is composed, because of the extremities of range. Since these exercises would be written primarily for rhythm study, they should like within a comfortable range for all instruments. I have attempted to use rhythm and scale studies for a section of clarinet or cornet players. In using
parts of Arban, difficulty is experienced with the high notes. The solo cornet players can usually handle the high A's and Bb's, but the 1st and 2nd stands of cornets have trouble. I have used the Pares Scale Studies as a class method with some success. The clarinet method works quite well. In some places high G's are encountered, and as in the case with the Arban method, the 2nd and 3rd clarinetists are not familiar enough with these notes to keep up with the 1st stand players.

The rhythm study should contain scale work, intervals, tonguing, and slurring practice in order to build up the students' technique as well as sight-reading ability.

A series of exercises written with all the foregoing limitations requires a great deal of skill of composition in order to create sufficient variety and melody. Many unison exercises written for the entire band will not sound well on account of the heaviness produced by the bass instruments, but if the exercises are written in this fashion, any single player or group of players can use the exercises. The students can take them home for individual practice. Good practice material will be afforded some of the instruments which do not have a melodious part in the regular band music—such as bass, alto horn, trombone, bassoon, 2nd cornet, 3rd clarinet, and baritone saxophone. The bass and alto horn players need more practice on scales and intervals, since there are occasional solo passages of this kind in
the music. This material is also excellent for testing either the playing ability or progress of the student, and is something "concrete" to work on outside of band rehearsal.

In transposing these exercises into the proper keys for the various instruments, some "octave jumps" will be found necessary. In cases where a single high or low note is used, it can be written in octaves to accommodate players who do not have sufficient lip development, as in the following example:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{\textbf{G}} & \quad \text{\textbf{G}} \\
\text{\textbf{F}} & \quad \text{\textbf{F}}
\end{align*}
\]

Since these exercises are intended for "intermediate" players, it is assumed that they know their instrument well enough to find the correct tones as written in the exercises.

A clever class method has been written by Frank Mancini and Harold Bartlett. It is founded on their idea of "measured rhythm". The student is taught to beat his foot right from the first lesson and is shown how to divide the beats in each measure. The music is marked to show the proper position of the foot at the playing of each note. This method shows the working out of a definite scientific system of solving the "rhythmic problem". The method makes the teaching of rhythm the prime consideration; all other problems, such as range, scales, technique, and starting point, are secondary.
CHAPTER V
EXPLANATIONS FOR CLASS METHOD

Exercises 1-6 contain only three different notes, written in whole notes.

Exercise 7 introduces Bb (cornet part). The key of F is learned before the key of C, since this places the keynote in the middle of the range.

Exercises 8-10 introduce half notes and rests, and one new note, E.

Exercise 12 introduces C.

Exercise 13 introduces quarter notes.

Exercise 16 is the first tune—an abbreviated melody from the "Surprise Symphony", Haydn.

Exercise 17 The range of the alto horn is extended upward to middle C, while the range of the other brass instruments is extended to low C. The large notes are the cornet tones, the small ones in parenthesis the alto horn's.

Exercises 18-22. Considerable stress is laid upon intervals with whole and half notes at this stage, in order to give the student practice in adjusting his embouchure for the correct tone. In places, the alto horn part moves contrary to the Bb brasses. This is done here for the purpose of getting the alto horn player accustomed to moving differently from the other instruments, as there will be much of this later on.
Exercise 23 The C scale for alto horn; F scale with octave jump for Bb brasses.

Exercise 24 The C scale for cornet; introducing B-natural for the first time; G scale with octave jump for alto horn.

Exercise 25 Additional intervals.

Exercise 26 "Abide with Me" written in 2-part harmony. When familiar songs are used, they should be written according to popular usage rather than the original or "historical" version. Beginning players will always play a song the way they sing or whistle it rather than read it as written. Harmony should be written in the same rhythm as the melody as much as possible unless there is some particular reason for writing it differently.

Exercise 27 Another 2-part song with the addition of a bass part. Fingerings of new notes such as D-sharp, F-sharp, and C-sharp in Ex. 26, should be marked.

Exercise 30 This song emphasizes B-natural in both the melody and harmony parts, as the tendency, so far, will be to play Bb.

Exercise 31 "Lightly Row", written in duet form, with added bass.

Exercises 32-34 Introduce 3/4 time, also the tie.

Exercise 35 "Soft Music" with melody in bass part, afterbeat accompaniment in soprano parts.

Exercise 36 Unison the first half; duet the last.
Exercise 37 A variation of "Jolly Farmer", written in 4/4 with melody in bass, and accompaniment in top voices.

Exercises 38-39 Chords. Four and five-part harmony used for the first time. Repeat sign introduced.

Exercise 40-44 Eighth notes in unison.

Exercise 45 "Long, Long, Ago" written in unison.

Exercise 46 Additional eighth notes using C-scale.

The exercise will be named according to the key used for the individual part.

Exercises 47-48 Dotted quarter notes, followed by eighth notes.

Exercise 49 "America", written in unison. This piece could be harmonized without being too difficult; however, each player likes to play the tune to America. Later on there will be ample opportunity for playing harmony parts.

Exercise 50 Additional eighth notes.

Exercises 51-52 Two songs using dotted eighths, "Auld Lang Syne", and "The First Noel".

Exercise 53 "Song of Love" fully arranged, with bass, horns, and trombones furnishing 3/4 rhythm.

Exercise 54 "America the Beautiful" in unison. Range of Bb instruments extended upward to E.

Exercise 55 A review exercise with quarter rests and notes, half rests and notes mixed together for counting practice.
Exercises 56-59 Additional eighth notes, with emphasis on eighth rests. High "F" introduced.

Exercise 60 "Welcome, Sweet Springtime", using eighth rests.

Exercises 61-62 Unison songs using eighth rests on the beat.

Exercise 63 F Scale.

Exercise 64 PTA song, fully harmonized.

Exercise 65 Additional eighth notes and rests.

Exercise 66-67 Eighth note accompaniment.

Exercise 68 "Over There", harmonized.

Exercise 69 Bb scale.

Before 6/8 time is introduced, a careful explanation should be given of the time values. Since the major part of 6/8 music for the beginner will be played two beats per measure, emphasis should be laid upon this tempo rather than on six beats per measure. Although the counting of 6/8 time is vastly different from that of 4/4 time, 6/8 seems to be an easy and natural rhythm, and one which students pick up readily. Marches are played two beats per measure, and with the bass and drums playing, it is fairly easy to divide the measure into two parts. Students will play correctly such examples as the following without understanding the time values:

\[
\text{Notes for 6/8 time.}
\]
Exercise 70-71 6/8 time, continuing the key of Bb.
Exercise 72 Hymn written in 4 parts (6/8).
Exercise 73 Eighth and quarter rests, (unaccented) in 6/8 time.
Exercise 74-75 Three eighth notes written on one beat.
Exercise 76 Quarter note followed by eighth note.
Exercise 77 "Pop Goes the Weasel" in unison, high "G" introduced.
Exercise 78 Trio to "New Colonial", fully harmonized in march style. The key of C is used rather than the original key of F to avoid the high G's.
Exercise 79 "O Come All Ye Faithful", harmonized.
Exercise 80 "Silent Night", harmonized.
Exercise 81 G scale.
Exercise 82 "Come Thou Almighty King", harmonized.
Exercise 83 "Hark the Herald Angels Sing", harmonized.
Exercise 84 Eb scale.
Exercise 85 "Cut-time", (alla-breve), using key of Eb.

This series of graded exercises should enable a young band of average 5th and 6th grade students to progress to the easier march books such as Vandercook or Jewell Junior March Book. The students can not be expected to sight-read these march-books which follow, but they will do better, I am sure, than they would after using most of the class methods now in current use in schools.
Half Notes--Half Rests

E

Quarter Notes
Surprise Symphony
Haydn

Melody
Lightly Row

3/4 Time
Welcome, Sweet Springtime  Mendelssohn
Pop! Goes the Weasel
Come Thou Almighty King

Hark the Herald Angels Sing
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