



Strengthen Your String Storm!

Inclusion of Guitar within Orchestral and Mariachi Ensembles!

American String Teachers Association - National Conference

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Why Did This Session “Peak” Your Interest? _____

A Blizzard of Benefits!

1. Take over the world with the sound of strings! More students in music = Winning!
More scaffolded levels! Less traveling!
2. Build more community! More diversity! Keep more students together for longer!
3. Guitars are more economical and more adaptable to a variety of living situations!
Break down barriers of entry and continuity!
4. Traditional guitar techniques lead to “extended techniques” of bowed strings!
5. Class structures and units are enhanced for more life-long music-making!
6. Pre-collegiate / pre-service music education goals are heightened!
7. Guitars help intonation of violin, viola, cello, and bass!
8. Guitars support your bowed-string martelé and rhythmic clarity goals!
9. Guitars represent popular music-making! They are historically and culturally relevant!
10. Large ensembles are awesome! Guitars included!

A Tempest of Teaching Tips to Combat the Complications!

1. Learn to play the guitar and classroom guitar methods!
 - a. GAMA - "Teaching Guitar Workshops"
 - b. National Workshop for Mariachi Educators
2. Setup
 - a. Removable neck straps - Allows for standing - Typical for Mariachi
 - b. Plastic tape with fret numbers for the first four fret finger positions
 - c. Full rest position - When seated, flip guitar face-down on legs.
 - d. Personal tuner on each instrument - Yes, the students also learn ear tuning!
3. Seating
 - a. Nametags on stands - Easily moveable, no extra seating charts needed!
 - b. Rehearsal - Guitarists often in the center of the 1st or 2nd row for visibility of hands - Because guitars are soft in comparison to bowed-strings, use eyes more than ears to check for notes when everyone is playing.
 - c. Performance - Chord parts near bass line / Single notes near others playing the same part
4. Single notes before chords / Fingerstyle before picks
 - a. Thumb or any finger
 - b. Index or middle for strings 1, 2, 3 / Thumb for 4, 5, 6
 - i. My classes typically start with free strokes, adding rest strokes for accents, and then rest strokes as norm.
 - c. Index and middle alternating for string 1, 2, 3 / Thumb for 4, 5, 6
 - d. Index for down-bows, middle for up-bows on bowed-strings 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 / Thumb for 6
 - e. Pick down for down-bows and up for up-bows
5. Bow vs chord strumming directions - They will not always match! For guitars...
 - a. Quarters or longer are often "down" strokes
 - b. Eighth notes can be "down up down up" or all "down" depending on context.
 - c. Triplets are often "down up down up down up" - "Miss" notes when needed, but keep the pattern subdividing.
 - d. Sixteenths are often "down up down up" - "Miss" notes when needed, but keep the pattern subdividing.
6. Aim for depth over breadth of pitches
 - a. Open Strings
 - b. Pentatonic Scales
 - c. G and D Scales
 - d. Chromatic Scale: A, A#, B, C, C#, D, D#, E, F, F#, G, G#...
 - i. Hum, sing, and play/sing with one finger staying on the same string
 - ii. Hum, sing, and play/sing in one position
 - e. I play/you play, call and response, improvisation, and composition

7. Teach the same aspects to everyone in the ensemble, when possible.
 - a. Single notes, tab notation, theory/creating chords, strumming patterns, chop/mute, etc.
 - b. Bow hand position with pencil
 - c. Tone / Projection: Move the right hand towards the bridge to hear more attack
 - d. Slurs
 - i. Pluck smoothly, with less attack with the right hand further from the bridge.
 - ii. Utilize hammer-ons and pull-offs - Sometimes shifting is necessary.
 - e. Bow tone work = Guitar chord work
 - i. Bowed strings bow divisions while guitars switch between chords
Ex. 4 downs on G string while guitars strum G, G7, G, G7

8. Repertoire: Play violin parts (sounds down an octave) or chordal music
 - a. Your method book of choice (Essential Elements 2000) - Use the Violin Book
 - i. Essential Elements Guitar book is NOT the same!
 - b. Multi-part books like Fiddlers Philharmonic, Jazz Philharmonic, Mariachi Philharmonic
 - c. My Multi-Level Masterpiece Arrangements and Original Compositions
 - d. Your favorite string or full-orchestra pieces
 - i. If single notes, play violin parts
 - ii. Create chord chart from piano or score
 - iii. Give piano part and discuss rhythm
 - iv. Write chords from score analysis on a violin (or other) part for the rhythm
 - e. Mariachi - mostly chordal
 - i. Arrangements from the National Mariachi Workshop for Educators
 - ii. Hal Leonard Mariachi Series
 - iii. Mariachi Mastery Series
 - iv. Mariachi Mastery Songbook

9. Reference sheets
 - a. Guitar notes on the treble staff and in tab notation
 - b. Guitar chord sheets
 - c. Blank chord sheets
 - d. BLANK STAFF PAPER IS LIFE!!! Always have a stack at the ready!

10. Variety of lessons and experiences
 - a. Performance opportunities for solos, small ensembles, large ensembles, and massive ensembles!
 - b. Non-playing aspects, including “Learning Logs” for processing and literacy, financial literacy (buying instruments, attending camps/workshops, private lessons, etc.), reading articles on music, sharing performance videos of meaningful performances, composition, physical and mental health, social skills, team-building, etc...

A Roaring Rainfall of Additional Resources!

- Classical Guitar 4/4 Size - Yamaha C40
- Classical Guitar 3/4 Size - Yamaha CGS103A
- Gator Soft Cases - I also have some hard cases, but they are various ones that have been donated.
- Wenger Instrument Racks - Preferably store guitars in cases and/or lockers to help keep picks, tuner, neck strap, sheet music/handouts folder/binder, etc. all together
- D'Addario Pro Arte Classical Guitar Strings - You can buy as a set of all six strings or as packets of just one type. The similar-type packets are the way to go because some strings wear out sooner than others (Ex. 5th String - A)
- Classical Guitar Straps - Levy's Leathers and Performance Plus
- Picks - Tortex Dunlop 1.0mm Triangle Shape - Preferred by Mariachi for heavy chordal playing
- D'Addario On-Instrument Tuners
- Aspen Music Festival and School - Mariachi Workshop - July 22-24 - Auditing Teacher Option

What aspect of today's presentation might you utilize in the next six months?

I scheduled a reminder in my calendar!

New String-Lovin' Teacher Buddy's Name: _____

Organization/Role: _____

Contact Info: _____

Thank you to Westminster Public Schools for helping support my appearance here today!

Thank you to the Aspen Music Festival and School and my Linert's Lions, Cool Cats, and Kind Kittens members for their work to support the research and development of many of the Multi-Level Masterpiece arrangements!

Thank you to the American String Teachers Association for hosting this presentation!

Thank you to all of my wonderful students who have been along for the ride as I figured more of this out!

**Thank you, ASTA music educators, for all of the work that you do
to enhance the lives of your students and communities!**