

Lesson/Rehearsal Plan

Walnut Creek

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Reference recording: https://www.armyfieldband.com/images/uploads/education/WalnutCreek_full.mp3

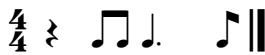
Warm-up/Skill-Building Ideas

Objective: Establish warm, rich ensemble tone and a steady pulse.

Have the drummer play a straight eighth note ballad* pattern at 80 bpm.

* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H-t8ey3FPsA>

- On a Concert Bb scale have all horns and piano play the following rhythms one note per measure:



- Have bass and guitar player play quarter notes while listening and watching each (and the drummer!) other to make sure that the pulse is steady and together.
- Ensure that students are articulating very lightly, think 'du', and that the air is moving *through* the notes uninterrupted.

Objective: Increase students' technical skill.

Where each number represents the scale step, have the students play digital patterns in the key Bb Major while drums plays a straight eighth note-ballad pattern. Maintain a very connected style having students first slur the patterns and then articulate them very lightly. Try different tempos.

- 1-2-3-4-5-4-3-2-1, 2-3-4-5-6-5-4-3-2, 3-4-5-6-7-6-5-4-3, 4-5-6-7-8-7-6-5-4, etc.
- 1-2-3-4, 2-3-4-5, 3-4-5-6, 4-5-6-7, 5-6-7-8, 6-7-8-9, 7-8-9-10- 8, 8-7-6-5, etc.

Be creative and expand the patterns or come up with some of your own design.

Rehearsal/Teaching Suggestions

Have students listen to the reference recording.

- Direct students to *actively* listen to certain things.
 - "Listen" to: the articulations, the drummer, the bass line, the releases, the phrase length and shape, the piano, the dynamic differences, etc.
 - Don't be afraid to listen to a recording (or parts of a recording) multiple times to really *hear* what is happening.

Learn mm 1-4 (Introduction)

- Drummer should be using brushes “stirring the soup”. Make sure the hi-hat is crisp on beats 2 & 4 along with a slight accent on every beat in the right hand. Bass drum could be on all 4 beats but very light or “feathered” so not to bury the bass.
- Bass think full value quarter notes with lots of sustain. If the note isn’t sustaining make sure that the left hand is very firm on the fretboard. Ideally this should be performed on an upright bass.
- Make the line very smooth and give it shape. Bring out the solo line in your right hand.
- Encourage the rhythm section to always be mindful of one another. Look and listen.

Learn mm 5-12 (A section of the melody)

- Rhythm section maintain the style established in the introduction but now take more of a supporting role to the melody in the saxophones.
- Saxophones think “full”, warm, rich sound with good blend and balance. Ideally the lead alto line (the melody) should be slightly louder than the rest of the section.
- When notes are articulated think gentle with a “du” syllable.
- Don’t be afraid to give the line shape. Typically when the line goes up, use a slight crescendo. Use a slight decrescendo when the line descends. Have them write it in their parts.
- Experiment with when and where students should take a breath. It could be staggered or communal. If you choose communal breaths make sure that the style of release fits the music, they shouldn’t be abrupt. Have them write breath marks in their parts.
- Remember that tenuto marks mean full value and “stressed”.

Learn mm. 13-20 (repeat of the A section of the melody with counter-melody in the trombones)

- Saxophones should predominate as they have the melody.
- Trombones, think connected notes. Make sure that even though the notes are going by slowly that the slides are moving quickly. The half notes should be full value with clean releases on beat 1 of measures 15 and 17. Determine where students should breathe and have them write it in their parts.

Learn mm. 21-28 (The B section or “bridge” of the tune)

- Brass now have the melody. Think “full”, warm, rich sound with good blend and balance. Ideally the lead trumpet line (the melody) should be slightly louder than the rest of the section.
- Determine breathing and mark it in.
- On the dotted half notes put in a slight crescendo, careful not to “mushroom” the notes. Experiment shaping the musical lines with 2 or 4 measure phrases.
- When saxophones enter with a counter-melody in measure 22 and even though the line musical line is descending, consider putting in a slight crescendo to push the phrase

forward. Have them consider that they are picking up in the conversation from the brass players. Aim for full value notes with musically appropriate releases.

Learn mm. 29-36 (The A section of the tune once again making the overall form AABA)

- Aim for full, balanced and blended sound in saxophone melody with lead alto predominating slightly.
- Trumpets and trombones should shape their respective lines.
- On notes with tenuto articulations think “stressed”.
- Crescendo slightly through beat 4 of mm. 36 in the trombones as it is a pick-up to the phrase beginning at mm. 37.

Learn mm. 37-44 (A section harmony with the brass stating a new melodic material)

- Brass aim for full, balanced and blended sound with lead trumpet predominating slightly. Saxophone line should be of lesser dynamic.
- On any notes longer in duration than a quarter crescendo slightly to push the phrase forward. Careful not to “mushroom” the notes.
- In mm. 38 in the saxophones experiment with the shape of the phrase. Try crescendo as the musical line descends. Make sure the half notes are full duration with appropriate release on beat 1 of mm. 40.
- Brass players could experiment with where to breathe throughout this section. It could be staggered or communal.
- In mm. 43 bring out the chromatic motion in lead trumpet and lead trombone.

Learn mm. 45-52 (A section harmony with saxes stating new melodic material)

- Brass players should release together on beat 3 on mm. 45. Consider adding a decrescendo on this half note to draw more attention to the new melodic material in the saxophones.
- Because the melodic material is essentially repeated in the saxophone line, consider playing it louder the second time mm. 47-48.
- In mm. 49 make sure that brass players listen to the saxes so the eighth note on the end of 2 is performed together.
- Mark “No breath” in the saxophone part between mm. 48 and 49. Have all horns crescendo through the half note on mm. 48.
- Brass players release together on beat 3 of mm. 50.
- Stress the notes with tenuto marks.
- Experiment with dynamic shape into mm. 53. You may want to start the decrescendo sooner.

Learn mm. 53- 60 (Piano solo)

- Piano player could stylize the written solo adding rubato or changing the rhythm somewhat. Make sure the overall musical intent is maintained.
- When saxophones enter after the piano solo, experiment with dynamics. Try starting softer and crescendoing or start louder and decrescendoing into mm. 61.

Learn mm. 61-Fine (The ending)

- Experiment where you want the saxophones to add breath marks or consider stagger breathing.
- Watch releases into rests, be precise.
- Conduct the final three measures. Consider subdividing beats 3 and 4 for more effect.
- Drummer could switch to soft mallets for the cymbal rolls on the final three measures.
- Make sure the drummer “shuts the door” by putting a release of some kind on the last note.

Additional Musical Considerations

In slow, ballad-style music don't be afraid to add dynamic interest and shape the musical lines.

Guitar should play full-value quarter note downstrokes throughout. Experiment with the speed of the strokes.

Drummer should include light fills to define the ends of the 8 measure sections.

Ballads are the only musical setting where the piano player should use the sustain pedal.

Suggested Listening

<i>But Beautiful</i>	Stan Kenton Orchestra	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zjkarxd1awA
<i>A Child is Born</i>	Thad Jones Orchestra	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8FU-8-noAy0
<i>Sophisticated Lady</i>	Duke Ellington Orchestra	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8LLfY9pQg