

Colin Ross Music

www.ColinRossMusic.com

Teachers Packets

Assemblies (K-8)

Using a full sound system, a variety of keyboards, vintage guitars, mandolins, and folk instruments, these presentations are fast paced and entertaining. The instruments are used to demonstrate a variety of classic American musical styles from early Jazz and Ragtime through swing, blues and roots music.

The assembly is mostly music, but during the brief introductions, I put the songs in age-appropriate historical context, as well as addressing practice ethic, memorization, improvisation and musical technique. The educational content is solid but covert.

Musical selections include New Orleans jazz and blues from King Oliver and Louis Armstrong, swing from classics from Duke Ellington, Count Basie, and George Gershwin, and early American Roots music.

The assemblies end with a brief question and answer period.

Classroom Activities K-6

Each class starts with a short listening exercise. After listening to the “silence”, there is a brief musical performance, usually played on keyboard or acoustic guitar. This is followed by a series of stretching movements designed to develop good singing posture, diaphragm engagement and get the blood flowing.

Next is a short series of humming and vocal exercises that involve vowels, tonal placement, scales and basic ensemble skills. This is followed by singing songs. K-second usually start with familiar songs, then learn I Got Rhythm and This Land is Your Land.

Third through sixth grades are taught a method of memorization using one or more classic American songs as vehicles: I Got Rhythm, Blue Skies, It Don't Mean a Thing if it Ain't Got that Swing.

All students are taught how to identify and name all notes on any keyboard, including sharps and flats. This method has been used to teach hundreds of kids and adults.

The class ends with a recap of the new songs. K -3rd may have a final “freeze dance”, which is a very fun interactive listening game.

Classroom Activities for Middle School Music Students

This set of activities is targeted at students already in some kind of music program.

During this class period, I will demonstrate a few musical instruments by family. I will also outline a method of practicing, and a method of memorization, and the beginnings of music theory. We will quickly memorize a simple jazz standard or two.

The music theory portion will consist of simple scale formation, basic diatonic chords, and how this knowledge can be applied to playing by ear, and composition, and improvisation. At the end we sing our new songs and have an interactive “scat” vocal.

Classroom Activities for High School Music Students

These workshops focus on functional music theory. The pace is very fast, and the content is very specific. At the end of one class period students will know how to make any major scale, and derive the diatonic seventh chords from it. Additionally, they will learn to form all major, minor, and seventh chords (major 7th, dominant 7th, minor 7th, minor 7th flat 5, and diminished 7th), off any root. This method truly opens doors to a new understanding of how music works, and has changed the musical lives of hundreds of kids and adults.

The theory is tied to actual musical performance through a demonstration of playing by ear, improvisation and transposition. Handouts recapping the entire content, along with developmental ear training exercises, are given out at the end of the workshop.

I also love to work with the music faculty as a guest instructor on repertoire they are already preparing.