IMPROVE YOU PERCUSSION SECTION
BY FIXING THINGS THAT DRIVE YOU NUTS!

By
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SOLVING ORGANIZATIONAL PROBLEMS

-Compare flute section

-Front row

-Each has own chair, stand, music and

-Under director's nose....

-with percussion section:

-Back row or far corner(s)

-No set spot (chair, stand, music)

-Trust them to organize themselves
(Self-directed work team?)

so....

ORGANIZATION BY FIVES

Stations...Stands/Carpet Squares...Music Folders...Pencils

The Five Stations:

I	Timpani
II	Bass drum/cymbals
III	Snare Drum
IV	Accessory Percussion
V	Keyboard percussion

Two stands and 1 carpet square per station

5 Folders (minimum) labeled as above (with pencils)

Mark music with a corresponding folder number

Using an “Organization Sheet” (for parts assignment)

SNARE DRUM:

TUNING:

-Loosen muffler, remove tape and/or change the head

-Tune top head for a soprano (not a tom-tom) sound

-Untie snare from snare throw-off

-Loosen snare butt

-Center snares

-Adjust snare throw-off to ½ way point

-Re-tighten snares to butt and throw-off

-Re-adjust heads/snare tension as needed

-Adjust tone control or use O-ring to
take out that annoying ring

7 STEPS TO BETTER SNARE DRUM PERFORMANCE

1. Stick tips in same part of the drum (form a "V")
2. Check alignment of thumbs and stick tips
3. Strike the drum with a uniform angle and height
4. "Stick to rim" angle and height the same for each hand
5. Wrists and forearms level and parallel to the floor
6. Wrist stroke is like petting your dog *(assuming you like your dog!)*
7. Get a Snare Drum stand that fits the player's height

GENERAL SNARE DRUM IDEAS:

-Natural height, grip and motion

-Snares run 6:00 to 12:00

-General playing–over snares–just ahead of center

-Roll notation: Convert to a rhythm, then double bounce or buzz that rhythm

-Flams & ruffs: Low & high stick-buzz or open styles - Avoid artificial accents

OTHERS:

BASS DRUM: *BOOOOOOOOM (lowest possible "good" tension)*

1. Chair - knee - left hand
2. 1 Gen Purpose and 2 roll mallets
3. Stand in line with director
4. Listen to style (long/ short notes- drum set)

CYMBALS: *Grip - Mush to Clean - Dampening*

1. Make friends with the bass drummer!
2. Stick & roll mallets
3. Level suspended cymbal, 9 & 3 position
4. Susp. Crashes 1200 with shoulder on bow

TAMBOURINE: *"Play with one hand, hold with the other"*

1. Fist, heel of hand, knuckles, finger tips, knee-fist
2. Prep position to release the instrument
3. Start and stop rolls
4. Body movement dynamics

TRIANGLE: *Go for the pretty sound*

1. Cushion to avoid stand noise
2. Pop (soda) can grip
3. Rolls: corners, not too fast
4. Two beaters?

WOOD BLOCK: *Horse's hoofs, or is someone at the door?*

1. Hold in hand or place on carpet square
2. Medium rubber mallets vs. snare drum sticks

SLEIGH BELLS*: Off to Grandma's house….*

1. Consider starting and stopping position to avoid excess noise.

CASTANETS: *Flamenco (not flamingo) dancers*

1. Singles, pairs and machine

"Always go for the characteristic sound!"

MALLET PERIPHERAL TECHNIQUES

STANCE

"Ghost instrument"
Hands play...Arms position
Playing spot
Stick angles
Keep the sticks low

LEARN THE WRITTEN KEYBOARD NOTATION

F-A-C-E
Every-**G**ood-**B**oy-**D**oes-**F**ine
Sharps and Flats

PERIPHERAL VISION...WHAT IS IT?

Focus on one spot and seeing many others...
Moving your eyes - not your head

PERIPHERAL VISION AND THE KEYBOARD

Two's & Three's
"One car garage / Two car garage"

MENTAL PREPARATION

Read the music and visualize where the notes are in terms of two's & three's
(You don't write the names of the notes on a flute or trumpet do you?)

PHYSICAL PREPARATION

Music stand placement
"Muscle memory"
Peripheral practice

READING AT THE KEYBOARD

"If I play an incorrect note or rhythm, I will continue to play at a slower tempo"

DRUMSET BASICS

1. SET-UP *Add toms last....develop basic time with basic set*
   Sit down behind your snare drum AND bring the pedals to you
   "Elbows around the toms"
   Second floor cymbals
   Use ankles, not legs

2. STICKS
   Two sizes (5A & 5B) AND Brushes
   Medium to soft yarn (cymbal rolls) AND Specials ("Hot Rods" "Blasticks")

3. YOUR ROLL BEHIND THE DRUMS: *You're in the driver's seat!*
   Steady Tempo (shared responsibility)
   Know the styles (a must!)
   Phrasing (like a sentence structure)
   Sound Shifts between hi-hat, ride cymbals / quarter-eight-sixteenth patterns

4. STYLES:

ROCK: Bass Drum/Snare Drum Groove with Bass Guitar (SD on 2 & 4)

LATIN: Assume role of the Latin percussion section: *claves, bass drum, shaker, cowbell*

SHOW: One person percussion section *Not always ala jazz band drumming*

SWING: Ride cymbal style with hi-hat on 2 & 4 (hand-clap)
Optional bass drum time *softly* supporting bass
Accompaniment / *reinforcements*
Bass Drum/Snare Drum: Low/High, Long/Short

5. BASIC FILLS AND SET-UPS "anticipation":

Note: this area will contain three examples of drum set "set-ups"

off the beat | on the beat | A basic combination

MALLETS AND STICKS:

BELLS:	Hard Plastic/Brass
XYLOPHONE:	Hard Rubber
VIBES:	Medium Hard Yarn
MARIMBA:	Medium Rubber/Medium Yarn
CHIMES:	Rawhide or Yellow Plastic (Diameter should match or be larger than tube)
TIMPANI:	Hard-Medium-Soft (For sound as well as articulation) Tuning Fork (A-440)
BASS DRUM:	Regular (should have some weight to it) 1 pair of "Roll Mallets"
SNARE DRUM:	2-B
SUSP. CYMB:	Medium Yarn (rolls) 1 snare drum stick
WOOD BLOCK:	Medium Rubber

CARE AND MAINTENANCE: *IS IT WORTH $13.03?*

Small "Phillips" & "Regular" screwdrivers	$1.98
Nylon twine (snare & triangle string) 100ft.	$1.39
Nylon 1/8th inch cord (chime string) 1 ft.	$0.09
Vaseline (lug lubricant)	$0.99
1/4 inch wing nuts (take stand to store)	$0.30
1/4 inch plastic tubing 1 ft.	$0.20
Rubber feet	$0.23
Clamp spring (triangle clip) 1 inch	$1.99
Hose clamps (stands)	$0.59
WD40	$2.19
Fine sandpaper	$0.99
Paraffin wax (shell/bowl edging)	$1.99
One (1) Very cheap cigar	$0.10

Other:

Cameo Copper Cleaner

Soft Scrub

Small metal/nylon washers between tuning lug and rim

"0" rings

OTHER NECESSITIES

Two drum keys

Cymbal felts (split in half)

THE CHARACTERISTIC SOUNDS OF PERCUSSION

WHAT KIND OF SOUND?

Most characteristic of the musical style being performed
Visualize the "action"
Become the sound-effects technician
Enhance the ensemble

TEST

___Chimes	A. Galloping horses, knocking
___Bells	B. Native American music
___Xylophone	C. The BIG arrival!
___Vibes	D. Lightning, ocean waves
___Marimba	E. A "French" telephone
___Snare Drum	F. Majestic church bells
___Tom-Tom	G. Mysterious, fear approaching
___Bass Drum	H. Angelic melody
___Cymbals	I. Wild Spanish dancing
___Wood Block	J. “South of the Border”
___Triangle	K. Parade, shots, guillotine
___Tambourine	L. “Booooom”
___Tam-Tam (LOUD)	M. Spacial-modern-jazzy
___Tam-Tam (soft)	N. Dancing Skeletons
___Castanets	O. Wild “Hungarian” dancing

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REFERENCE MATERIAL: Pre 1960 Warner Brothers cartoons...

Good Stuff:

Snare Drum:

Developing Dexterity – Mitchell Peters – Mitchell Peters

The Performing Percussionist (Volume 1) - James Coffin – Barnhouse

Musical Studies for the Intermediate Snare Drummer - Garwood Whaley – JR Publications

The All-American Drummer – Charles Wilcoxon – Ludwig

Portraits in Rhythm (Complete Study Guide) - Anthony Cirone – Alfred

Drumset:

Today's Sounds for Drumset – Murray Houliff – Kendore

Ultimate Play-Along for Drums (Level 1 – Vol. 1) - Dave Weckl - Alfred (Book & CD)

The Big Band Drummer – Ron Spagnardi - Modern Drummer Publications

Keyboard:

Mallet Percussion for Young Beginners - Randy Eyles - Meredith/Hal Leonard

New Elementary Studies – G. H. Green - Meredith/Hal Leonard

Four Mallet Exercises – Garwood Whaley - Meredith/Hal Leonard

Mallet Primer – Neil Grover - Meredith/Hal Leonard

Timpani:

Modern Method for Timpani – Saul Goodman – Warner Brothers

General Percussion:

The Art of Bass Drum and Cymbal Playing – Cirone/Whaley - Meredith/Hal Leonard

The Art of Tambourine and Triangle Playing – Grover/Whaley - Meredith/Hal Leonard

The Art of Percussion Accessory Playing – Cirone/Whaley - Meredith/Hal Leonard

E**asy Percussion Ensembles for Teaching the Techniques:**

Breeze-Easy Percussion Ensembles – Saul Feldstein - Warner Brothers
(*Note: this is out of print, but check around your band library or the back of some old file drawers , you might find a copy, if you do, its excellent material*)

15 Percussion Ensembles – Sandy Feldstein – Alfred
(Written for 4 players, instrument substitutions are encouraged)

Contest Ensembles for Young Percussionists – Murray Houliff - Kendor
(*A collection of easy ensembles for 5 players*)

Percussion Section Techniques – Grimo/Snider - Meredith/Hal Leonard
(*A collection of 8 ensembles with conductor's guide and performance CD*)

Other:

Percussion 101 –Jim Catalano –Handout from Midwest Clinic 2006 - Available on the Midwest Clinic web site: http://www.midwestclinic.com/clinicianmaterials/2006/jim_catalano.pdf

Percussion Education: A Source Book of Concepts and Information –Percussive Arts Society– www.pas.org *(A collection of 18 outstanding percussion education articles)*

"Dealing With Drummers", Garwood Whaley, The Instrumentalist, August 2007.
"*A tongue-in-cheek guide to percussion*"

Questions about percussion, careers in military music or Navy Band National Tours?
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