



Lesson: Musical Timeline Project

OVERVIEW

A historical timeline can serve as a model for a musical timeline that identifies the significant musical events and other features of pieces being rehearsed in band class. The creation of a musical timeline can serve as a vehicle for students to identify, understand, and represent the form of the piece, key musical elements incorporated by the composer, and the effect generated by listening to the music. You may also use the musical timeline to set performance goals when preparing a piece for a concert.

A historical timeline identifies significant events that have occurred over a selected period of time, usually measured in increments of a year. A musical performance is comprised of significant musical events (themes, accents, dynamic changes, phrases, etc.) that occur over time and are usually measured in increments of a measure.

The musical timeline, displayed in a prominent place in the rehearsal room, can provide a perspective of the overall piece in the same way that a historical timeline provides a perspective of a particular era.

LEARNING GOAL

Students will become more familiar with how their part fits in the overall scope of the piece. In addition, students' attention may be directed to different parts of the piece by referring to defining characteristics in place of rehearsal markings (e.g., "Let's start rehearsing at the beginning of the B section").

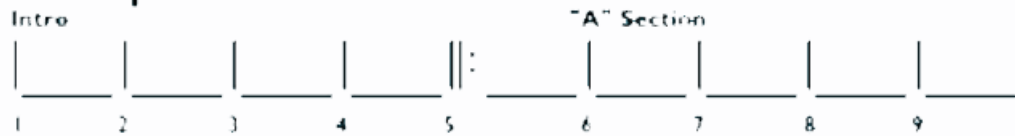
RESOURCES & MATERIALS

You may use construction paper, butcher paper, or any other materials that allow you to post a long line representing time on a wall. Ideally, the line should be big and long enough to see from anywhere in the rehearsal room.

PROCESS - CONSTRUCTING THE MUSICAL TIMELINE

The line may be divided into increments of measures (Ex. 1), sections delineated by rehearsal markings (Ex. 2), or larger sections (Ex. 3).

Example 1



Example 2



Example 3



You may use the timeline to identify and represent the following:

1. Form/structure – A visual representation of the form of the music being studied will help students to understand how a piece of music is structured. By including rehearsal markings along with form, students will not only understand the location to be rehearsed, but also how that musical location fits in the overall piece.
2. Distinctive musical elements – By adding musical symbols to the musical timeline, students can identify the location of key concepts, such as syncopated rhythms, ascending scales, ostinati, or other elements. Stylistic information may also be included.
3. Functions – The timeline may represent the beginnings and endings of melodies, changes of harmony, motives, phrases, and other key information that will guide students in thinking about making effective musical decisions in their performance. If space permits, specific instrument functions may be represented (e.g., Cl., Fl., Ob – melody; A. Sax, F. Hn. – countermelody).
4. Musical affect – Students may post original artwork or descriptive words underneath sections of the musical timeline that reflect how and what the music makes them feel. Students may also depict stories, imagery or other expressions of what the music evokes.
5. Historical/Cultural/Social References – Pictures, maps, essays, or other media that share historical, cultural, or social information about specific references in the music may be posted under the section of the timeline where the reference occurs. (E.g. In *Hambone*, musical references are made to hambone, cakewalk, and Bo Diddley.)
6. Performance goals – The timeline may be used to identify and post musical goals and deadlines in preparing for a concert. For instance, a particularly challenging rhythm that is contained in the piece may be posted under the measure where it occurs along with the date that