

MONSTER CONCERT – April 28, 2018

PRACTICE TIPS

It has been requested that we compile a list of recommended practice tips for the Monster Concert music. We hope this will give you a good start, at least. If you have questions that are not addressed with these suggestions, please let us know, and we'll do our best to help you.

Spell the Notes – Double check the note naming accuracy, because students can often associate notes on the staff with keys on the keyboard, but completely bypass the name of the note. That can have a negative effect on note accuracy.

Use Correct Fingering – be sure the students are using correct fingering as specified in the music. That will help to decrease problems with pauses and assure better hand position changes.

Count Aloud – Successful ensemble playing is very dependent on each participant's ability to count accurately. Please be sure your students can do that well. It will be an expected skill in the rehearsals. Tap each hand with the metronome. Tap hands together with the metronome.

Observe dynamics – the dynamic signs are just as important as the notes, rests, etc. Please be sure your students can play their parts according to the dynamics marked in the music, and that they consistently incorporate the dynamics in their practice with you.

Students Learn Both Primo and Secondo – Thorough knowledge of both parts of the music makes each player function better. They learn to listen better, and become more sensitive to how the two parts interact.

Play LH and RH Parts with Students – the teacher playing LH along with the student's RH, and vice versa, will increase smoothness in playing, accuracy with rhythm and concentration and listening skills. They really have to pay attention to play along with the teacher! It also enhances the ability to maintain a steady tempo, use correct dynamics, and express phrases appropriately.

Teach Basic Conducting Patterns – and teach your students to follow them accurately. Be sure to vary the tempo, work with ritardandos, crescendos, etc. so they know how to play expressively as the conductor calls for it. If you aren't sure about those conducting techniques, let us know you need some help. We know not everyone has had experience in following a conductor.

Teach Students to Keep the Conductor in their Field of Vision. Students can become so dependent on watching their music that they can't respond to changes. Teach them to enlarge their field of vision and also to use their listening skills to stay in sync with the ensemble.