

Creativity Through Improvisation for Strings

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	2
Abstract.....	3
Chapter 1: Introduction and Rational.....	4
Chapter 2: Literature Review.....	11
Chapter 3: Method.....	24
Chapter 4: Results.....	31
Chapter 5: Conclusion.....	48
Bibliography.....	52
Appendices:	
Appendix A. IRB Protocol.....	55
Appendix B. IRB Parent Consent.....	61
Appendix C. Principal Consent.....	63
Appendix D. Violin Improvisation Lesson.....	64
Appendix E. Viola Improvisation Lesson.....	81
Appendix F. Cello Improvisation Lesson.....	98
Appendix G. Bass Improvisation Lesson.....	115
Appendix H. Judge's Assessment.....	132

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to discuss the importance of teaching improvisation to string musicians. This paper will discuss the history of improvisation, the importance of improvisation, the importance of creativity in the classroom. The results include lesson plans designed to teach improvisation to string players in grades seven and eight.

Improvisation is the spontaneous act of creating music that is an important aspect of many types of music. A student uses knowledge of style, time period, technique and skill to create music spontaneously. The art of improvisation is a study that can help a musician to better understand a certain genre of music as well as to help creatively express ideas. The National Standards for Music Education, a document created in 1994 as a curriculum guide, states that students should be able to improvise melodies, variations, and accompaniments. To create music using improvisation is a valuable experience that develops in quality with study and practice for all musicians.

Introduction and Rational

Numerous teachers in this country are not comfortable playing or teaching improvisation in the classroom. A concept that is often omitted in orchestra classrooms is the musical art of improvisation. The purpose of this research is to create a resource for orchestra students to incorporate improvisation creativity into the curriculum. This research addresses the importance of teaching the art of improvisation and creates techniques specifically designed for an orchestra classroom. This study includes a step-by-step procedure designed for seventh and eighth grade level musicians and their instructors.

Improvisation is an important skill to learn in the world of music. It is one of the few elements of music that involves a person to be creative and innovative. The job market of the 21st century and beyond will continue to require individuals who have experience with and can demonstrate creative thinking skills (Riddle 2011). Orchestra educators could create many experiences and opportunities to enhance these creative thinking skills for students.

In my experiences and research, I have found that improvisation is often avoided in the orchestra classroom because many of these teachers lack training and background with improvisation. A questionnaire of twenty-five orchestra directors from fifteen school districts found that 23 of these directors did not implement any improvisation in their curriculum. As a result, orchestra teachers have a low comfort level of incorporating improvisation into their curriculum. Most orchestra musicians have had little guidance or opportunities to develop improvisation during their musical education and performance experiences. Many string students begin their playing career with a method book, such as the Essential Elements series, that teach basic fundamentals of music such as notes, posture, bow techniques, and rhythm. They typically progress to books and methods that focus on orchestral solos such as those

outlined in the Suzuki series. These types of music curriculum and teachings offer a strong way to teach string players in order to provide students the fundamentals of their instrument and orchestra repertoire. It is important, however, for orchestra directors to further develop their students' skills and incorporate improvisation within their yearly curriculum of orchestral repertoire.

According to Volz's study, another reason why improvisation is typically ignored is due to the limited amount of improvisational resources that are available for an orchestra setting (2005). Numerous materials are available including method books and repertoire that teach bowing techniques, vibrato, shifting and other various concepts that are specific to string instruments. Beginning method books are usually written in a manner that makes it easier for a director to teach music and orchestra concepts within the context of a large group ensemble. However, you will not find nearly as many method books that are geared toward orchestra students that teach improvisation as compared to their band/wind instrument counterparts (Volz, 2005).

The website of the music publishing company J.W. Pepper only lists one method book designed specifically for strings for improvisation. The same website provides over 290 jazz/improvisation method books designed for band instruments.

As stated above, this lack of available resources can be intimidating for an orchestra teacher without experience with improvisation because this may make the instructor ask "where do I start?" and "how do I teach a technique I have little experience with myself?"

The question of "where do I start?" and lack of experience can be a driving force behind why improvisation techniques are not incorporated in orchestra curriculums. Typically, many string orchestra directors, unless they have significant band experience, have had little exposure

to environments that encourage improvisation such as jazz band. Typically, the public education system only offers classes or environments that fosters improvisation for instrumental students is a jazz band class. Jazz band is a setting that creates a “safe” place for creativity and improvisation (Azzara, 2002). There has always been a deep relationship between improvisation and jazz music that has caused the other music disciplines to create added feelings of intimidation. “If I do not (or haven’t) play jazz music I do not know how to improvise” can be a driving factor as to drive orchestra and other non-jazz musicians to avoid improvisation. For too long, musicians have left improvisation solely to jazz musicians (Randall, 2008). It may also allow a music teacher to let themselves “off the hook” when it comes to teaching improvisation. If a student expresses interest in improvisation, a teacher can encourage them to join the jazz band and learn improvisational techniques in that environment. Curriculum and instruction working within this system can work for wind/band instruments because most jazz literature incorporates many of the same instruments found in the wind ensemble. Yet, most middle and high school jazz literature do not include parts for string instruments. One exception to this is the double bass. This is highlighted and included in jazz ensemble literature because of its role in the music.

Even though it can be difficult for orchestra directors to teach improvisation, standard three of the National Standards of Music as designed by The National Association for Music Education (MENC) implicitly states this skill is basic for a thorough background and development in music. The standard is quoted as “improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments.”

Teaching improvisation can be taught to all students, individually or in a large group ensemble, despite the level of experience of the director. The following research outlines the

importance of teaching improvisation and to encourage orchestra directors to teach improvisation concepts to all orchestra students. Improvisation has had a great impact on my musical growth and has defined me in many aspects of my professional life. I have used improvisational techniques in many types of music with many different instruments and knowing this skill has created many great memories and experiences. These experiences provide a greater sense of urgency to give other orchestra directors a method that they can use to teach their students and hopefully these students will have many more musical opportunities in their lives.

The development of this project is presented in five chapters including this introductory chapter. Chapter two reviews literature addressing the history of improvisation in music, how improvisation can help students in their musical career, the importance of creativity, and the importance of teaching improvisation in education. Chapter three explains the methods of incorporating improvisation techniques in an orchestra ensemble. Chapter four lists the data and the results of the lessons that were created as the scholarly activity for this paper.

Questions Guiding the Research

- Can the improvisation methods aid in students' ability to improvise on their instruments?
- What methodology and type of exercises, strategies, and lessons have the ability to improve student improvisational skills?
- What elements are essential to the method's design to make it suitable for use in the large ensemble?
- What is the appropriate assessment one should use when assessing orchestra students improvisations?

Limitations

The orchestra improvisation method is being tested with students who volunteered to be part of an improvisational study. The group of students consisted of twenty-eight 7th and 8th graders who were enrolled in orchestra classes. The method is being introduced to one population in one school district.

Terminology

Accompaniment – The musical background for a principal part or parts.

Articulation – In performance, the characteristics of attack and decay of single tones or groups of tones and the means by which these characteristics are produced.

Baroque music – The period of Western music history extending from the end of the 16th century to ca. 1750: also the musical styles of that period.

Cadenza – In music for soloist, especially a concerto or other work with accompanying ensemble, an improvised or written-out ornamental passage performed by the soloist, usually over the penultimate or antepenultimate note or harmony of a prominent cadence.

Classical music – The period or style that has its tentative beginnings in Italy in the early 18th century. In most periodizations of music history, the Classical period therefore succeeds the Baroque and precedes the Romantic, in both cases with sizable chronological overlaps.

Dynamics – That aspect of music relating to degrees of loudness.

Improvisation – The creation of music in the course of performance.

Notation – Any means of writing down music.

Orchestra – A performing body of diverse instruments that includes violin, viola, cello, bass, and a combination wind or percussion instruments.

Phrase – By analogy with language, a unit of musical syntax, usually forming part of a larger, more complete unit sometimes termed a period. A phrase is the product, in varying degrees, of melody, harmony, and rhythm and concludes with a moment of relative tonal and/or rhythmic stability such as is produced by a cadence.

Suzuki – A system of musical instruction for children developed by Shinichi Suzuki. This method emphasizes learning music by ear versus reading musical notation.

Shift – In the playing of stringed instruments, the movement from one position to another.

Vibrato – A slight fluctuation of pitch used by performers to enrich or intensify the sound. In modern string playing, vibrato is produced by rocking the left hand, usually from the wrist, as a note is played.

Wind Ensemble – An ensemble with 50 or more players consisting of woodwind, brass, and percussion instruments, sometimes with the addition of a double bass.

Literature Review

Introduction

Music improvisation and creativity are routinely identified by music educators as essential skills for all students (Azzara, 2002). A review of literature on improvisation in music education, however, reveals that it is rarely part of the core of music education curricula (Azzara, 2002). In order to correct this trend, there is a need for improvisation instructional materials available for teachers in education (Azzara, 2002).

This review of literature, presented in five sections, offers an investigation into the role of improvisation in the teaching and learning process. The first section of this chapter begins with a definition of improvisation, followed by a historical view of improvisation in the world of music. The second section is a discussion about the importance of teaching improvisation in instrumental music curriculum. The fourth and fifth sections explore the approaches of teaching improvisation and the various improvisational assessments available to music educators.

Definition of Improvisation

During the research, most of the definitions of improvisation involve an ability to make music spontaneously within specified musical parameters. Spontaneity and interaction also are central ingredients to most definitions of improvisation found in the related research. Studying the features of creative improvisation, Briggs (1987) notes that there are certain universal components in all creative improvisation. Briggs refers to improvisation as “musical dialogue” and states that model sound patterns and processes of interaction were common to each improvisation investigated. Briggs points to extra musical factors such as context, environment, background, and experiences of the improvisers as contributing factors to the content and form of the music.

In a study of fifth-grade instrumentalists' ability to improvise, Azzara (1992) defined improvisation as a manifestation of musical thought. His research concluded that improvisation means that an individual has internalized a music vocabulary and is able to understand and to express musical ideas spontaneously, in the moment of performance. Improvisation can be compared to speaking and conversation in language (Azzara, 1993).

Although there are many definitions and interpretations of improvisation, three key elements define improvisation. These include a process of (1) spontaneously expressing musical thoughts and feelings, (2) making music within certain understood guidelines, and (3) engaging in musical conversation (Azzara, 1999; Kratus, 1990).

History of Improvisation in Classical Music

Improvisation was essential to the performance practices in music of the Baroque and Classical eras of Western music history (Azzara, 2002). Many of the composers of the Western canon, (e.g., Bach, Handel, Mozart, and Beethoven), were exuberant improvisers and teachers. Bach and Handel used various types of improvisation in their compositions (Bitz, 1998). For example, the preludes to keyboard suites by both composers consisted solely of a progression of chords. The performers used these chord progressions for the bases of their improvisation.

Green (1997) states that improvisation is vital to the identity of the classical style. The cadenza is a well-known vehicle for improvisation in music for soloists, especially in the concerto or other work with accompanying ensemble. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's Flute Concerto No. 1, in G major (K. 313) is a prime example of a composer allowing the musician to improvise on a cadenza. Unfortunately, most orchestral musicians no longer improvise their own cadenza because they lack the improvisational skills or experience. Instead, these musicians usually learn a published version of an improvised cadenza for a performance. For many pieces,

including Mozart's Flute Concerto No. 1 in G major (K. 313), musicians can purchase music or books that contain pre-composed cadenzas that other musicians have written or improvised.

In the 19th century, composers such as Frederic Chopin, Felix Mendelssohn, Franz Liszt, Anton Bruckner and Camille Saint-Saens were known for improvising in their compositions. Many of these composers improvised their own compositions and preludes in performances during this time.

In the 20th and 21st century, there are composers who have included improvisation sections in their pieces, however, improvisation has declined in Western classical music since the middle of the 19th century. Currently the art of improvisation has become a characteristic in the world of jazz music and other types of music. Schuller (1968) writes, "Improvisation is the heart and soul of jazz musicians." Improvisation is deeply rooted in jazz music. What about other types of music? Is jazz the only type of music where improvisation is the heart and soul?

Improvisation has deep roots in many other genres including jazz, rock and roll, Celtic, fiddle music, rap, country, Native American drumming, and ragas. All of these categories have used, and currently use, improvisation as an important component to their style. Without improvisation, these types of music would lose a vital characteristic of what defines the style of that particular style of music.

With virtually all kinds of music around the world incorporating improvisation, it adds to the confusion of why does it seem to be diminishing in orchestral music and among string musicians?

An encouraging sign is that there has been a rise of classically trained string musicians who have been composing pieces that mix classical and improvisational elements. During the last ten to fifteen years, musicians like Edgar Meyer, Mark O'Connell, Yo-Yo Ma, The Turtle

Island Quartet and The Kronos Quartet are all musicians that encourage improvisation within their compositions.

Importance of teaching improvisation in an instrumental music curriculum

The importance of teaching improvisation starts with the publication of The National Standards for Arts Education. The National Standards for Arts Education was a project developed by The Music Education National Conference (MENC). They created, organized and presented standards in 1994 with the goal of determining the specific elements of what is basic information for schoolchildren in the United States to be taught in the arts. This resulted in the creation of The National Standards for Music, Dance, Theater, and the Visual Arts (MENC, 1994). The National Standards for Music, adopted by MENC, created a curricular structure for content and achievement outcomes in music (MENC, 1994). The standards contain nine areas of music that should be taught by music educators at any grade level. National Standard 3 states that students should be able to “improvise melodies, variations, and accompaniments (MENC, 1994).”

Beyond the ruling defined by the The National Standards, improvisation in music education provides an outlet for creativity and musical expression (Perlmutter, 2010). Improvisation differs from traditional notated musical forms because they introduce the elements of spontaneity into the interpretive facts of the performance and even the music itself. Every element of the music including dynamics, articulation, phrasing, harmony, rhythm, melody, and form, is directly under the control of the musician (Hintz, 1995). Improvisation has also shown that students can improve technical skills, oral skill and music reading ability (Scott, 2007). When students take their minds off the written music notation, they are more likely to pay attention to the technical aspects of how their sound is being produced (Scott, 2007). Students

are more likely to rely on their ear and less on the actual notes. As a result, this proves that students who improvise develop superior listening skills (Perlmutter, 2010).

Caputo (2006) writes from an improvisation point of view and states that jazz music gives musicians a set of rules. The ability to improvise a jazz solo requires an understanding of the melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic elements of jazz. Meadows (1991) also states that jazz improvisers must be able to play within many musical scales as they implement their improvisational ideas and apply these scales spontaneously to the correct harmonic situation. Although Caputo and Meadows are referring to jazz musicians in their statements, the theory could apply to any type of music including rock, raga, bluegrass, funk, or other music of our world. The importance of improvisation is not regulated to one genre of music.

Jazz educator and author Jamey Aebersold said, “Teaching young musicians how to improvise and play jazz gives them independence and promotes self worth. Jazz teaches the importance of mastering scales, chords, articulation, and theory. It also stirs up one’s imagination and opens channels of creativity. And it often allows them to continue playing music long after the classroom has disappeared (MENC, 1994).”

Definition of Creativity

The definition of creativity ranges from the extremely broad to quite specific. This research incorporates definitions and focuses on key points of creativity.

A number of people have a wide and expansive definition of creativity. By doing so, they leave the term open to opinion, objectivity and interpretation. Psychologists define creativity as producing something that is “original” and “that works” – a key aspect of human experience and fulfillment (Landau 2010). Sir Ken Robinson (2001) defines creativity as the process of “having original ideas that have value.” Silverstein and Layne’s (2010) definition

states that creativity is an “imaginative activity fashioned so as to produce outcomes that are both original and of value.” Others offer a more refined, specific and subjective definition of creativity. Walling (2009) defines creative expression as a continuum between originality and replication. The originality is when a person creates something new or original. Replication is the re-creation of something created by others. This idea brings the idea of innovation into a definition.

Csikszentmihaiyi (1996) also touches on innovation in his definition that states "any act, idea, or product that changes an existing domain, or that transforms an existing domain into a new one." He also makes a point to include that “creativity does not give a person the freedom to dismiss facts.” The creative process should involve fact-finding and deep research. This process of research is a crucial stage in the creative process (Bronson and Merryman 2010). For example, if a musician wants to become an accomplished improviser, that person should research other examples of improvised music. The process has given the musician an opportunity to expand their knowledge of factual information such as artist, genres, musical phrases, dynamics and many other elements of music.

The authors Lingo and Tepper (2010) say that “creativity is rooted in a set of teachable competencies which include idea generation, improvisation, metaphorical and analogical reasoning, divergent thinking that explores many possible solutions, counterfactual reasoning, and synthesis of competing solutions. Creativity also requires an ability to communicate and persuade, and the skills and leadership to apply diverse and specialized expertise. “

Although there are extensive interpretations and debate about what creativity means, three key elements are incorporated in most definitions. These key elements of creativity include

(1) someone who produces something, (2) the product must be something original, and (3) an original product that others view as valuable, or add value to our world.

These three key elements provide a definition and characteristics of what being a creative individual means. With this definition it becomes necessary to discuss the importance of creativity and why students need to graduate high school with creativity experience.

Importance to Creativity

In Seth Godin's book *The Purple Cow* (2002), Godin uses the analogy that seeing ten brown cows may be considered boring but seeing one purple cow is phenomenal. He relates this statement to successful businesses such as Starbucks and Apple and their success is a result of their creativity, innovation, differentiation and remarkably. These types of business are what he defines as "Purple Cows."

This idea of a "Purple Cow" can relate to many elements of our world including education. This idea raises the following question: "Should the goal of the United States Educational system be to produce 'brown cows' or 'Purple Cows?'" In the world's current job market, companies are demanding an increasing number of employees that can demonstrate creative thinking skills when developing products and innovations (Martin 2010; Lingo & Tepper 2010; Riddle 2011). As the world continues to move to the future, forecasts show the need for creative individuals is increasing (Riddle 2011). To remain competitive in a globe economy, "Americans will need to draw on its ability to tell stories, create visually compelling messages and designs, come up with new ways to organize and synthesize information, and invent programs and businesses to solve complicated social problems or tap emerging markets (Lingo and Tepper 2010)." Author Daniel Pink (2006) believes we are entering an age where knowledge is not enough, and he states, "The future belongs to a different kind of person with a

different kind of mind—a mind that relies more on creativity, intuition, and emotion.” As a result, instructors should focus on educating children so they will become the “Purple Cows” that our world will need.

Alarming, research, for the first time, shows that American creativity is declining since 1990 (Bronson & Merryman 2010). In today’s world of education, there is a tremendous focus on standardized test scores and preparing students for a specific, required test during the school year (Kaufman 2007). With such a focus on instructing students to take a test, teachers are having more difficulty finding the hours throughout a school year to have moments when students can exercise their creativity (cite). To some, creativity is sometimes seen as irrelevant to educational practice (Kaufman 2007). People “often jump to the conclusion that “creative” applies only to the arts (Lingo & Tepper 2010).”

Sir Ken Robinson states “creativity is now as important in education as literacy, and we should treat it with the same status.” Research is also finding that creativity extends to medicine, engineering, arts, sciences, and numerous businesses (Lingo & Tepper 2010). 3M is one example of a Fortune 500 business that believes in the importance of creativity. In 1948, the company 3M started a program they named “15 percent time.” The program gives employees fifteen percent of their paid workday to explore, create and innovate anything the employee desires. This program, separate from the employee’s specialized area of expertise, has produced many of the company’s best selling products including the post-it note. Due to its’ success, the program has been adopted by other companies such as Google and Hewlett-Packard (Geotz, 2011).

Research has shown that childhood creativity is a better indicator than an IQ test to predict adult successes like starting businesses, developing innovations, developing new products

or writing a book (Landau 2010). People have a greater probability of becoming an inventor or innovator when they are given the opportunity to display their creative skills by mastering numerous arts and crafts. (Root-Bernstein, R.S. & Root-Bernstein, M.M. 2011)

Creativity has been found to be an effective motivating tool for individuals in a teaching position (Walling 2009). When people are in a situation where they get to create something, they are more likely to explore other ideas to finish their own creation. The more people explore alternative ideas to create something, the more they learn (Walling 2009).

Creativity has also shown medical benefits for those individuals who are given a chance to use their creative skills (Landau 2010). Creativity has the ability to enhance the immune system, reduce stress and can increase joy in an individual's life (Landau 2010).

Today, children have many opportunities to express their creativity. As adults, we see students express their creativity by designing web sites, blogs, online poetry, planning events, leading student organizations, digital photography, artwork, and music (Walling 2009; Lingo and Tepper 2010). Fifty-four percent of students say it is important, or essential, to pursue a career that allows them to be creative (Lingo and Tepper 2010).

Pablo Picasso said, "Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up." The research discussed above shows a clash between an educational system drifting away from creativity and a desire for students to create in a world that currently needs, will require, creative individuals. As creativity is declining in the United States, nations such as Great Britain and China are making widespread educational reform by making creativity development a priority (Bronson and Merryman 2010). When asked by an American reporter, a professor of a major Chinese university stated, "You're (United States) racing toward our old model. But we're racing toward your model, as fast as we can." (Bronson & Merryman 2010).

With so much importance on creativity in our current world and for the world of the future, teachers must incorporate creativity into the curriculum for their students. Improvisation gives music students the experience to enhance and practice these creative skills.

The Various Approaches to begin teaching improvisation

Experts provide numerous approaches for teaching improvisation. However, there are some key aspects and similar themes. The most common approaches base their conclusions on John Kratus's seven levels of improvisation (Kratus, 1991).

Level 1: Exploration. Exploration can be thought of as a necessary development in improvisation. When a student explores on an instrument he or she tries out different sounds and combinations of sounds in a loosely structured context. The sounds, however, are not guided by audiation, and the improvisation is process-oriented. While exploring, a student begins to discover combinations of sounds that can be repeated. Through the repetition of patterns, students can learn to audiate the patterns, which leads to Level 2. The teacher's role at Level 1 is to provide students with sufficient time to explore and a variety of sound sources for exploration. Exploration activities can be varied by changing timbres (for example, from metallophone to xylophone) or by changing the available pitch materials (such as adding or deleting tone bars). Exploration is a private, creative activity, rather than a group activity.

Level 2: Process-oriented improvisation. Once a student begins to audiate the patterns played in exploration, the resulting music becomes more directed and pattern-dominated. This is Level 2 improvisation, which can be identified by the emergence of cohesive patterns. The student at Level 2 improvises for his or her own pleasure but does not organize the musical material enough through mode or meter to enable others to share the music's meaning. The teacher's role and the educational activities for students improvising at Level 2 are the same as those for Level

1. As the student continues to audiate and use patterns, the student learns to organize the patterns into larger musical structures.

Level 3: Product Oriented Improvisation. When a student improvises with a product orientation at Level 3, he or she is conscious of certain external constraints on the music. For example, when a student is able to improvise with a steady pulse, in triple meter, or in a minor tonality, or to the melody of "Jingle Bells," the student shows an awareness of larger structural principles. At this point in the student's development, group improvisation is possible. In implementing activities for Level 3 improvisation, teachers can provide students with different constraints on their improvisations. For example, a teacher may ask students to improvise using a given rhythm pattern or set of chord changes. While improvising at Level 3, students begin to use patterns in a more coherent way, and the performance technique improves.

Level 4: Fluid improvisation. At this level, the student's performance technique is relaxed and 'fluid. The student is able to control the instrument so that the technical manipulation of the instrument becomes automatic, and little conscious thought is given to finger placement, embouchure, and similar matters. The teacher's role at the fourth level is to focus on the technical facility by providing the student opportunities to improvise in a variety of modes, keys, meters, and tempos. Once the technical problems of improvising are taken care of, the student is better able to concentrate on structuring the improvisation as a whole.

Level 5: Structural improvisation. A student improvising at the fifth level performs with an awareness of the overall structure of the improvisation. The student develops a repertoire of strategies for shaping an improvisation. These strategies may be nonmusical (such as moods or images) or musical (such as modes or development of patterns). The teacher's role is to suggest or model different means for giving structure to an improvisation. As a student develops

proficiency in structuring an improvisation, he or she begins to shift strategies while improvising. At this point, the student is ready to improvise stylistically.

Level 6: Stylistic improvisation. A Level 6 improvisation is one in which the student improvises skillfully within a given style. The student learns various melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic characteristics of a style and gains skill in incorporating those characteristics into an improvisation. Recordings can also be used effectively to model a style. For a time, students who are learning to achieve Level 6 may benefit from direct imitation of models. For most musicians, education in improvisation ends at Level 6. Only the most proficient improvisers can advance to the highest level of improvisation.

Level 7: Personal improvisation. The seventh level is achieved by those musicians who are able to transcend recognized improvisation styles to develop a new style. To a certain extent, all improvisation is personal, but Level 7 improvisation breaks new ground and establishes its own set of rules and conventions. Oddity or originality for its own sake does not produce a Level 7 improvisation. To help a student develop to the seventh level, a teacher can be encouraging and supportive of experimentation. But the teacher cannot have expectations for what a Level 7 improvisation might sound like, because there would be no way to predict what the new style would be.

Most experts agree that beginning with exploration is the best way to begin improvising (Volz, 2005; Kratus, 1996). A teacher allows the student to explore on their instrument different sounds, patterns, and sequences. Volz (2005) cautions an educator to avoid giving too many specific requirements when learning improvisation.

Herbert Marshall (2007) suggests that a teacher starts with a call-and-response exercise. This involves the teacher playing two or three note phrases while students responds by playing

back these successions. Once the students feel comfortable, then they are free to improvise their own phrases using the same two or three notes. This method allows students to improvise with more parameters and structure. Jon Chappell (2010) explains that the melody is a logical starting point for improvisation. The melody is born from the key signature and the corresponding major and minor scales associated with the key signature. Chappell (2010) believes if a beginning improviser knows a melody they can begin to improvise using the notes of the melody.

In Chris Azzara's book *Developing Musicianship Through Improvisation*, Azzara uses an approach what he calls "learning music that is similar to the process for learning language." Using a seven-step process, he teaches someone how to improvise using tonal patterns, melodic phrases, rhythm patterns and rhythm phrases.

Improvisation Assessing

There are many benefits for teaching improvisation for the students, however, teaching improvisation can also help music educators with assessment. Improvisation can accurately reflect students' understanding of a new concept or skill. Students can apply new techniques and concepts to notes and is thinking about what they have learned (Scott, 2007).

Conclusion

After a review of the literature and showing the importance of teaching creativity through improvisation, the groundwork has been laid to show the importance of orchestra directors and educators incorporating these musical elements into their curriculums. This project aims to fill this void and to make improvisation available to orchestra students. The next chapter will describe the methods used for creating, assessing, and incorporating techniques to a curriculum unit. These methods are to assist and guide orchestra directors to teach and incorporate improvisation into their classroom.

Chapter Three: Method and Methodology

The process used to develop and write a method designed to teach orchestra students improvisational techniques is presented in four sections: 1) Research of existing literature, 2) Developing an improvisation method, 3) Implementation, and 4) Evaluation of the results. The process is implemented with seventh and eighth orchestra students.

Section one, “a review of the literature” explores the existing information about improvisation as it relates to music and the importance of creativity in our society. The review examines the importance of teaching improvisation and the results reveal that many orchestra students do not receive improvisational techniques.

Following the review of literature, this research highlights a method that could effectively teach improvisational techniques for orchestra students.

The method contains a number of assumptions: 1) It is important to have a method of improvisation available for instructor, written in a clear and uncomplicated format, so orchestra teachers with little or no experience can easily incorporate the information into their own curriculum. 2) This method is a step-by-step process that is based primarily on music theory. 3) The method includes a series of short lessons and activities that can be taught in a large group setting. As a result, when an orchestra teacher completes this method, students will be able to analyze existing chords and scales, and improvise over a C, D, and G major chords.

The study created to test this method incorporates 7th and 8th grade string orchestra students. The students’ ages range from twelve to fourteen-years-old and only includes students who play a string instrument from the orchestra. The instruments included in the study are the violin, viola, cello, and double bass. To participate in the study, students must be enrolled in at the Eden Prairie Central Middle School.

In February of 2010, a letter was sent home to every student who participated in 7th and 8th grade orchestra. This letter explained the importance of improvisation, what it means in music, and some of the benefits learning the skill. The letter included a permission form that parents and students had to sign to participate in the research.

The subjects in this study include one-third of the current population of students in the central middle school program. Each student must participate in seven after-school sessions. The sessions are forty-five to sixty minutes in length and span a ten-week period. Seven students will be chosen to be recorded after each session to track their progress, knowledge and implementation of the lessons. Fourteen students will be recorded at the end of the improvisation sessions.

Students in the Eden Prairie Orchestra program have an opportunity to participate in orchestra starting in 5th grade. Students receive a twenty-two minute, small group lesson (3-5 students) and participate in a sixty-minute large group rehearsal once a week. In 7th and 8th grade, orchestra students receive a fifty-minute large-group rehearsal every-other-day for the entire school year. These students also receive five to six twenty-minute small group lessons during each semester.

All students participating in the study began orchestra in 5th grade with the exception of two students who began playing in 4th grade. Of the twenty-eight students, 13 of the students take private lessons with an instructor who is not associated with the Eden Prairie orchestra curriculum.

The Lessons

For this research, students receive a series of packets that focus on improvisational techniques designed specifically for string instruments. The goal of this step is to provide

students a foundation of the introduction to learning improvisation but they are not expected to master the technique. The lessons are an introduction to improvisation and students should seek out additional instruction to excel and become proficient in the skill. This method seeks to create a curriculum for orchestra that can be implemented over the course of a school year. Although this study was conducted in the span of two months, the design of the lesson is to give orchestra teachers flexibility on how and when they wish to teach it. These techniques are designed specifically for string instruments and take a theoretical approach to improvisation. The songs and exercises in these lessons are short in length and average eight measures in length. Short improvisational exercises make it possible for students to improvise in a large group setting. The techniques are also designed to create a step-by-step approach for a student to improvise.

- **Analyze** – Students analyze the chord(s) of the music.
- **Outline** – Students outline the voices of the chord(s) on their instrument
- **Half-note** – Students improvise the notes of the chords using half-note rhythms
- **Quarter-note** – Students improvise the notes of the chords using quarter-note rhythms
- **Rhythm** – Students improvise the notes of the chords while creating improvised rhythms.
- **Passing tones** – Students begin to implement passing tones in their improvisation.

The first page of the lesson is “Step one, how to analyze a chord”. Students learn two important elements of music: the structure of a chord and how to analyze a chord using a scale. The first chord students analyze is the D major chord. Each student is given a D major scale that highlights the first/root, third, fifth, and eighth/octave scale degree. Using the D major scale

creates a visual map so students can identify the notes of the chord using a scale. This also reiterates the importance of learning scales in their musical career. Once students learn how to analyze a chord, they will play the scale and the notes of the chord on their instruments. The group plays the chords using arpeggios and then students can choose a note of the chord to identify the quality.

Page Two: Once students learn how to analyze the D major chord, they progress to the G major chord and the C major chord. Students write in the scale degrees so they can find the root, third, fifth, and eighth to make the chord. It is important to have students find the eighth/octave because most chords are made up of four notes and in the future, it will help students find the 7th, diminished, or other similar chords, in the future.

The study is designed so the string players learn the D major, G major, and C major chords/scales first. These are the keys that most students learn in their first method book when they begin to play a string instrument. For example, book one of “Essential Elements for Strings: 2000 edition”, “Strictly Strings”, and “String Explorer” are popular method books that many orchestra directors use when teaching introductory string students. These books only use the key of D major, G major, and C major for all their songs and exercises. Many songs written for a beginning large group ensemble also tend to use these same keys and it will help the student build on what they already know. When learning a new element of music such as improvisation, it is important to start with as many familiar elements as possible. For example, students learning about sixteenth notes may benefit from using a piece or selection of music that incorporates these musical phrases in a piece familiar to the students. Quality pedagogies would not introduce sixteenth notes and a new note at the same time. Concentrating on one new concept is better than introducing two.

Band students are typically introduced to improvisation in a method book such as the Jamie Abersold series. Many of these books will first teach songs and concepts using the key of Bb major or F major. This makes sense for wind instruments because these are keys and scales that wind players have used and practiced in the majority of their playing experience. If a string player were to use the typical band improvisation books, even if it is a book developed for a C instrument, it adds a secondary, and unfamiliar, element to learning a new concept. The string player is expected to learn both the skills and techniques of improvisation, and playing a key that they lack experience. Furthermore, for string players, the keys of Bb and F major are introduced in the middle to end of volume two of most method books. If improvisation is introduced in 7th grade, a string player will have approximately two years of experience with the keys of D major, G major, and C major and only six months of F major and Bb major.

On page three, the students begin to improvise on their instrument and learn steps three, four, and five. It also introduces students to chords/chord changes and how they are presented in music.

For the song “Jamming On D”, students improvise using only the notes from the D major chord. “Jamming On D” is a simple eight-measure song using the D major chord that reviews the steps so students learn a process to improvising.

The students analyze the chord and outline the chord playing their instruments. The students first improvise “Jamming On D” using half notes, the third step. Once the students become comfortable using half notes, they will improvise using quarter notes, the fourth step. Once the group is comfortable improvising step four, they can begin step five which allows them to improvise their own rhythms. In all these steps, students can only use the notes from the D major chord.

These three steps work well in a large group orchestra setting because every member of the orchestra is able to play and participate. It gives students an opportunity to experiment with their improvisations in the “safety” of a large group and does not immediately require them perform improvisations as a solo. It also gives the director an opportunity to assess the group. Since the students should only be playing notes from the D major chord, the director can hear if the quality of the chord sounds correct.

Page four introduces students to an accompaniment part, which they learn as a group. Next, individual students will have an opportunity to improvise while the rest of the group plays the accompaniment part. Since “Jamming On D” is an eight-measure song, many students can improvise in a short amount of time during a rehearsal. Students are welcome to improvise using step three, four, or five depending on their comfort level.

Page five and the first half of page six essentially repeat the teachings, improvisational techniques, and lessons from pages three and four but use the G major chord instead of the D major chord. This will prepare students for the “D & G Jam” on pages six and seven. “D & G Jam” provides the student to improvise using two different chords for the first time.

Page eight gives students the opportunity to learn and improvise the C major chord. Again, like the D and G chords, students will learn C major by analyzing the chord, outlining the chord, improvise using half-notes, improvising using quarter notes, and improvising their own rhythms using the notes from the c major chord. Accompaniment is provided for large group settings.

Page nine and ten has songs that use the C, D, and C major chords to help students become comfortable improvising with more chords and frequent chord changes.

Pages eleven through fifteen introduce students to the technique of improvising using passing tones. For these exercises, the students are given a note from the chord on beats one and three while beats two and four are intentionally be left blank. Students can improvise on beats two and four using any note from the chord or the corresponding scale. At first, the students only play quarter notes rhythms on beats two and four. The next step encourages the students to use improvised rhythms, such as eighth notes, sixteenth notes, or triplets on beats two and four. This helps the students ease into the next step, which is to play a complete improvisation when only given the chord changes.

The final two pages of the lessons are intended for students to incorporate all the techniques they have learned throughout the lessons. For these improvisations, students are only given the chord changes.

The importance of following each lesson step by step becomes evident in this research when creating their improvisation. The process will give students techniques, guidance, and a foundation for future improvisation learning experiences and opportunities.

Chapter Four: Results

To support the theory and conduct the research, eleven students were recorded once the improvisation lessons concluded. Students demonstrated their knowledge of improvisational techniques, using only the chord changes, for the song “D & G Jam.” No other parameters were required to be followed. Three licensed instrumental music teachers then analyzed the recordings of the improvisations. They analyzed the recordings using a rubric designed specifically for this research (see below). Students were assessed on a scale from one to seven with “one” being the lowest and “seven” being the highest.

Table 1

Assessment Rubric (Appendix H)

Student	Judge #1	Judge #2	Judge #3
1. Pitch Recognition			
a. Student played within chord structure.			
b. Student used various pitches from the scales.			
2. Interpretation/creativity			
a. Student demonstrated melodic shape.			
b. Student used a variety of rhythms.			
c. Student maintained a steady beat.			
3. Other Musical Factors			
a. Student demonstrated quality tone.			
b. Rate overall quality of the improvisation.			

Table 2

Student Number One Evaluation Results (Appendix H)

Student #1	Judge #1	Judge #2	Judge #3
1. Pitch Recognition			
a. Student played within chord structure.	7	7	5
b. Student used various pitches from the scales.	7	5	6
2. Interpretation/creativity			
a. Student demonstrated melodic shape.	2	2	2
b. Student used a variety of rhythms.	2	2	2
c. Student maintained a steady beat.	7	7	7
3. Other Musical Factors			
a. Student demonstrated quality tone.	7	5	4
b. Rate overall quality of the improvisation.	3	4	4
 Mean = 4.7 Mode = 7 Standard Deviation = 2.04			

Student number one demonstrated they understood pitch recognition and was aware of the notes required to create a quality improvisation. In addition to demonstrating quality pitch recognition, the student was able to maintain a steady beat and a quality tone during the

improvisation. Student number one scored lower in the categories of creativity and needs more guidance and encouragement with improvising rhythms and creating melodic shape.

Table 3

Student Number Two Evaluation Results (Appendix H)

Student #2	Judge #1	Judge #2	Judge #3
1. Pitch Recognition			
a. Student played within chord structure.	6	7	7
b. Student used various pitches from the scales.	7	6	7
2. Interpretation/creativity			
a. Student demonstrated melodic shape.	5	5	4
b. Student used a variety of rhythms.	6	6	7
c. Student maintained a steady beat.	6	7	7
3. Other Musical Factors			
a. Student demonstrated quality tone.	5	6	6
b. Rate overall quality of the improvisation.	5	6	6
 Mean = 6 Mode = 6 Standard Deviation = 0.85			

Student number two demonstrated they understood pitch recognition and was aware of the notes required to create a quality improvisation. In addition to improvising within the chord structure, the student was able to incorporate a variety of rhythms and demonstrate melodic

shape. Student number two was also able to maintain a steady beat and a quality tone during the improvisation. Overall, this student created a quality improvisation while maintaining a steady beat and quality tone.

Table 4

Student Number Three Evaluation Results (Appendix H)

Student #3	Judge #1	Judge #2	Judge #3
1. Pitch Recognition			
a. Student played within chord structure.	5	6	5
b. Student used various pitches from the scales.	6	7	7
2. Interpretation/creativity			
a. Student demonstrated melodic shape.	3	4	3
b. Student used a variety of rhythms.	4	4	4
c. Student maintained a steady beat.	3	2	1
3. Other Musical Factors			
a. Student demonstrated quality tone.	5	6	7
b. Rate overall quality of the improvisation.	3	5	4
<p>Mean = 4.4</p> <p>Mode = 4</p> <p>Standard Deviation = 1.62</p>			

Student number three demonstrated they understood pitch recognition and was aware of the notes required to create a quality improvisation. The student’s lowest scores occurred in the

area of creativity because due to the lack of incorporating a variety of rhythms and melodic shape. This student struggled keeping a steady beat while improvising but was able to create a quality tone. Overall, student number three demonstrated the understanding of pitch recognition and the notes required to construct a chord, but needs more encouragement and experience in the area of creativity when improvising.

Table 5

Student Number Four Evaluation Results (Appendix H)

Student #4	Judge #1	Judge #2	Judge #3
1. Pitch Recognition			
a. Student played within chord structure.	7	7	7
b. Student used various pitches from the scales.	7	6	6
2. Interpretation/creativity			
a. Student demonstrated melodic shape.	2	4	5
b. Student used a variety of rhythms.	2	5	3
c. Student maintained a steady beat.	7	7	7
3. Other Musical Factors			
a. Student demonstrated quality tone.	7	6	7
b. Rate overall quality of the improvisation.	5	6	6
Mean = 5.7			
Mode = 7			
Standard Deviation = 1.61			

Student number four received high scores for pitch recognition and other musical factors. This student demonstrated knowledge of chord structure and scales while playing with a quality tone and steady beat. Student number four’s weaknesses included incorporating rhythms and melodic shape within their improvisation. This student requires more encouragement and experience in the area of creativity when improvising.

Table 6

Student Number Five Evaluation Results (Appendix H)

Student #5	Judge #1	Judge #2	Judge #3
1. Pitch Recognition			
a. Student played within chord structure.	5	7	6
b. Student used various pitches from the scales.	7	5	3
2. Interpretation/creativity			
a. Student demonstrated melodic shape.	4	4	5
b. Student used a variety of rhythms.	4	4	4
c. Student maintained a steady beat.	7	6	7
3. Other Musical Factors			
a. Student demonstrated quality tone.	6	6	6
b. Rate overall quality of the improvisation.	5	5	6
Mean = 5.3			
Mode = 6			
Standard Deviation = 1.17			

Student number five received high scores for pitch recognition and other musical factors. This student demonstrated knowledge of chord structure and scales while playing with a quality tone and steady beat. Student number five’s weaknesses were incorporating rhythms and melodic shape within their improvisation. This student requires more encouragement and experience in the area of creativity when improvising.

Table 7

Student Number Six Evaluation Results (Appendix H)

Student #6	Judge #1	Judge #2	Judge #3
1. Pitch Recognition			
a. Student played within chord structure.	5	7	6
b. Student used various pitches from the scales.	6	6	6
2. Interpretation/creativity			
a. Student demonstrated melodic shape.	5	4	4
b. Student used a variety of rhythms.	3	5	4
c. Student maintained a steady beat.	6	6	7
3. Other Musical Factors			
a. Student demonstrated quality tone.	6	5	6
b. Rate overall quality of the improvisation.	4	6	5
Mean = 5.3			
Mode = 6			
Standard Deviation = 1.04			

Student number six received high scores for pitch recognition and other musical factors. This student demonstrated knowledge of chord structure and scales while playing with a quality tone and steady beat. Student number six’s weaknesses were incorporating rhythms and melodic shape within their improvisation. This student requires more encouragement and experience in the area of creativity when improvising.

Table 8

Student Number Seven Evaluation Results (Appendix H)

Student #7	Judge #1	Judge #2	Judge #3
1. Pitch Recognition			
a. Student played within chord structure.	5	7	7
b. Student used various pitches from the scales.	5	6	6
2. Interpretation/creativity			
a. Student demonstrated melodic shape.	2	5	3
b. Student used a variety of rhythms.	2	3	4
c. Student maintained a steady beat.	7	6	7
3. Other Musical Factors			
a. Student demonstrated quality tone.	6	6	6
b. Rate overall quality of the improvisation.	4	6	6
<p>Mean = 5.2</p> <p>Mode = 6</p> <p>Standard Deviation = 1.56</p>			

Student number seven received high scores for pitch recognition and other musical factors. This student demonstrated knowledge of chord structure and scales while playing with a quality tone and steady beat. Student number seven’s weaknesses were incorporating rhythms and melodic shape within their improvisation. Overall, this student played a quality improvisation but could use more encouragement and experience in the area of creativity when improvising.

Table 9

Student Number Eight Evaluation Results (Appendix H)

Student #8	Judge #1	Judge #2	Judge #3
1. Pitch Recognition			
a. Student played within chord structure.	5	5	5
b. Student used various pitches from the scales.	7	6	7
2. Interpretation/creativity			
a. Student demonstrated melodic shape.	6	4	3
b. Student used a variety of rhythms.	5	4	3
c. Student maintained a steady beat.	7	6	7
3. Other Musical Factors			
a. Student demonstrated quality tone.	7	6	6
b. Rate overall quality of the improvisation.	6	6	5
Mean = 5.5			
Mode = 6			
Standard Deviation = 1.22			

Student number eight demonstrated they understood pitch recognition and was aware of the notes required to create a quality improvisation. In addition to improvising within the chord structure, this student was able to incorporate a variety of rhythms and demonstrate melodic shape. Student number eight was able to maintain a steady beat and a quality tone during the improvisation. Overall, this student was able to create a quality improvisation while maintaining a steady beat and quality tone.

Table 10

Student Number Nine Evaluation Results (Appendix H)

Student #9	Judge #1	Judge #2	Judge #3
1. Pitch Recognition			
a. Student played within chord structure.	5	6	7
b. Student used various pitches from the scales.	5	5	5
2. Interpretation/creativity			
a. Student demonstrated melodic shape.	6	6	6
b. Student used a variety of rhythms.	5	6	7
c. Student maintained a steady beat.	7	7	7
3. Other Musical Factors			
a. Student demonstrated quality tone.	6	7	7
b. Rate overall quality of the improvisation.	6	6	7
 Mean = 6.1 Mode = 6 Standard Deviation = 0.77			

Student number nine had scores that indicated adequate results with pitch recognition and the notes required to create a quality improvisation. This student demonstrated more strength in their creativity skills by incorporating a variety of rhythms and demonstrates melodic shape. Student number eight was able to maintain a steady beat and a quality tone during the improvisation. Overall, this student was able to create a quality and creative improvisation while maintaining a steady beat and quality tone.

Table 11

Student Number Ten Evaluation Results (Appendix H)

Student #10	Judge #1	Judge #2	Judge #3
1. Pitch Recognition			
a. Student played within chord structure.	4	5	5
b. Student used various pitches from the scales.	4	5	5
2. Interpretation/creativity			
a. Student demonstrated melodic shape.	6	5	5
b. Student used a variety of rhythms.	4	4	3
c. Student maintained a steady beat.	4	6	5
3. Other Musical Factors			
a. Student demonstrated quality tone.	5	4	3
b. Rate overall quality of the improvisation.	5	5	4
Mean = 4.6			
Mode = 5			
Standard Deviation = 0.79			

Student number ten had scores that indicated adequate results with pitch recognition and the notes required to create a quality improvisation. This student demonstrated some creativity during the improvisation. Overall, student number ten did not receive top scores in any one category but did not receive low scores in any one category.

Table 12

Student Number Eleven Evaluation Results (Appendix H)

Student #11	Judge #1	Judge #2	Judge #3
1. Pitch Recognition			
a. Student played within chord structure.	4	5	6
b. Student used various pitches from the scales.	5	5	5
2. Interpretation/creativity			
a. Student demonstrated melodic shape.	5	5	5
b. Student used a variety of rhythms.	5	5	4
c. Student maintained a steady beat.	4	5	7
3. Other Musical Factors			
a. Student demonstrated quality tone.	5	5	5
b. Rate overall quality of the improvisation.	5	5	6
Mean = 5			
Mode = 5			
Standard Deviation = 0.655			

Student number eleven had scores that indicated adequate results with pitch recognition and the notes required to create a quality improvisation. This student demonstrated some creativity during the improvisation. Overall, student number ten did not receive top scores in any one category but did not receive low scores in any one category.

Table 13

All Students Evaluation Results (Appendix H)

All Students
1. Pitch Recognition
a. Student played within chord structure.
Mean = 5.6
Mode = 5
Standard Deviation = 1.00
b. Student used various pitches from the scales.
Mean = 5.7
Mode = 6
Standard Deviation = 0.98

In the category of pitch recognition, the data revealed most students scored well and demonstrated their ability to play within a specified chord structure and scale. Students

understood the importance of playing within a specified chord structure to create a quality improvisation.

Table 14

All Students Evaluation Results (Appendix H)

All Students
2. Interpretation/creativity
a. Student demonstrated melodic shape.
Mean = 4
Mode = 5
Standard Deviation = 1.33
b. Student used a variety of rhythms.
Mean = 4
Mode = 4
Standard Deviation = 2.02
c. Student maintained a steady beat.
Mean = 5.9
Mode = 7
Standard Deviation = 1.50

The data for the interpretation/creativity section revealed students need more experience and guidance to enhance their creativity skills for improvisations. The scores for creativity were not as high as the other categories, however, the research indicates that students did implement, in small portions, their own rhythms and created a foundation for exploring their creative skills.

This data also shows that students were able to maintain a steady beat during their improvisations and were aware of the importance of keeping a steady beat.

Table 15

All Students Evaluation Results (Appendix H)

All Students
3. Other Musical Factors
a. Student demonstrated quality tone.
Mean = 5.8
Mode = 6
Standard Deviation = 0.96
b. Rate overall quality of the improvisation.
Mean = 5.2
Mode = 6
Standard Deviation = 0.96

The data for other musical factors shows that students were able to maintain a quality tone during their improvisations. This implies that students feel comfortable in the art of improvising and are not letting any potential nervousness interfere with their playing.

This data also indicates that students were able to demonstrate a quality improvisation using all the elements taught in the research lessons. Although the scores are not perfect, the outcome supports the idea that students have a good foundation for the skill and are aware of many key elements that make up an improvisation. These students had no prior instruction in improvisation.

Student Quotes

In November of 2011, nearly two years after the research was conducted, I followed up and spoke with students who participated in the improvisation research. They shared what they remembered about the initial study and how learning about improvisational techniques had impacted their own music development.

“I thought it (improvisation) was interesting and I improved my understanding of what improvisation is over the course of the class.”

“I remember the notes that make up a chord. It helped me invent new music and patterns. It also helped me with counting.”

“I remember how to build a chord and my ear training got better. I found that when I get lost during a piece of music, I can use my ear to help find where the group is.”

“I like playing my own ideas/solos in front people. It gives you a chance to share/steal ideas for your own solos. My little brother plays bass and wants to learn improvisation in the future.”

“I like making up my own rhythms and see how it sounds and how it sounds with a group playing behind you.”

“It was a nice change in the routine of orchestra class and it was fun to have a break from sheet music.”

“I learned that as long as you know your scales, you know what to play and make it sound better. It makes you sound better!”

“It helped me understand the importance of learning scales.”

“Learning how the chords work has helped me in Jazz band on the bass.”

“I like playing in front of people (other students). It helped with my confidence on my violin.”

“It helped build my confidence. In high school you have to do more soloing in front of the class. It was a great prep for high school.”

Conclusion

Creating and implementing an improvisation method for orchestra students is a valuable resource that can challenge students on numerous development levels and enhance their creativity skills. In addition to developmental and technical progress, improvisation is also something that can be enjoyable and rewarding for students as they learn a technique they hear everyday in all types of music.

When the research began, four questions were used to construct the hypothesis. During the course of the study, the following responses were generated:

1. Can the improvisation methods aid in students' ability to improvise on their instruments?

The data supports that using this improvisation method did increase students' ability to improvise. Those assessed did not have any formal improvisational training prior to the research methods. Students received high ratings for understanding a chord structure and having the ability to improvise within the D and G major chord structure. They were also able to perform improvisation with a steady beat and maintain a quality tone.

The data also concludes that students need more experience and guidance to enhance their creativity skills throughout the improvisations. Although the scores for the creativity portion of the rubric were not as high as other categories, the research indicates that students did implement, in small portions, their own rhythms and created a foundation for exploring their creative skills. Additional instruction and experience will be needed to help students become more proficient developing their own rhythms and melodic shape within their improvisations.

2. What methodology and type of exercises, strategies and lessons have the ability to improve student improvisational skills?

Creating a step-by-step instructional process was an important aspect of the research. Giving students a process for improvisation helped to minimize apprehension and took away the “where do I start?” feelings towards improvisation. Showing students how to construct chords using scales provided a concrete tool for creating quality improvisation. When students outline the chords on their instruments, it helps them with ear training and the ability to hear the quality of chords. Using scales to construct the chords also support the importance of learning and memorizing scales. The process will help students in the future when learning more complex chords and chord progressions.

3. What elements are essential to the method’s design to make it suitable for use in the large ensemble?

An important element to the method is to ensure everyone in the ensemble is engaged and participating when learning improvisation. For this method to work in a large group ensemble, it was critical to create songs that were eight measures long. By keeping the improvisations relatively short, this gave students an opportunity to improvise during the research sessions.

It was also imperative to create an accompaniment part for all the musicians in the ensemble. This ensured that each student was engaged and playing his or her instrument during the creative process. Furthermore, the soloist/improviser was not the only person playing and created a more comfortable environment for students to improvise.

4. What is the appropriate assessment one should use when assessing orchestra students improvisations?

When first introducing improvisation to students, I believe it is important to use a theoretical approach and give students the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge of theory within their improvisations. Creating a strong foundation of chord structure and scales will give

the musician the tools to for further development in the future. Once the fundamentals are understood, students can focus more on the creative aspect of improvisation. More practice and experience will provide opportunities to fine tune their skills and help make improvisation a second nature in practice and performance. I believe the assessment created for this research focused on the theoretical aspect of improvisation while still allowing the beginning stages of creativity to be measured.

As the hypothesis was developed and tested, the study focused on the importance of curriculum development and how to implement creativity in the classroom. All music instructors should incorporate some method to allow students to demonstrate creativity through improvisation within their curriculums. Ultimately, this project achieved the goal of creating an effective curriculum specifically developed for orchestra teachers and more importantly, taught orchestra students the fundamentals of improvisation.

In order to develop the theory further and provide a more authoritative outcome, the study would benefit from more statistically accurate data. Two elements should be addressed to complete this goal: (1) The research should include a student pretest to demonstrate preexisting knowledge of improvisation, and create measurable data of students' growth and knowledge of improvisation, and (2) Judges providing feedback and ratings should be trained, prior to the assessment, to develop rater reliability.

Students entering the workforce require a broad range of skills in today's world. In order to be competitive on both a national and global scale, educators need to prepare students for careers and the future they encounter beyond high school. As standard testing, limiting curriculum development and structured classroom settings continue to increase in the classroom, creativity and "thinking outside the box" are becoming strained. Yet, creative individuals are,

and will continue to be, recruited so our world can continue to invent, innovate, and ultimately help individuals strive for a better life. We need to ensure these inventions and innovations for our future will be extracted from the minds of students. Creativity must be nurtured in our society music teachers can be the leaders to assure that their students grow as individuals musically and creatively in their classrooms and schools.

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Appendix A

**University of Wisconsin-River Falls
IRB HUMAN SUBJECTS RESEARCH REVIEW PROTOCOL
PART I. Cover Sheet.**

Original Submission Proposal Modification Renewal

IRB USE ONLY		
Date Received: <u>3/11/10</u>	Approval Date: <u>3/11/10</u>	Protocol Number: <u>HDS-110</u>
Signed: <u>[Signature]</u>	Reapproval Date: _____	
Review: Exempted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Expedited <input type="checkbox"/>	Full Board <input type="checkbox"/> Board Members present: _____

This application is to be submitted to and approved in writing by the IRB prior to the initiation of any investigation involving human subjects, data or material.

A. Principal Investigator: Darrin Stohlberg

Dept/Program: **MSE Fine Arts**
Eden Prairie, MN 55344

US Mail address: *16181 Westgate Lane*

Telephone: 715-497-5656

Email address: **darrin.j.stohlberg@uwrf.edu**

Sponsor (if PI is a student):

Project Title: **Establishing Improvisation Techniques for 7th and 8th Orchestra Students**

Beginning Date: **March 16th 2010**

Ending Date: **May 11th 2010**

B. Is extramural funding being sought? no Potential Supporting Agency: no

C. Requested Review Level: See Appendix A of the manual for instructions on determining the appropriate level of review. Be aware that the IRB may require a level of review different from your recommendation.

Exempted review Expedited review Full Board Review

A complete protocol consists of Part I, this *Cover Sheet*, and a brief narrative consisting of Part II, *Description of Study*, and Part III, *Human Subjects Protection*. Follow outline for Parts II and III beginning on the next page, addressing each item. Attach a copy of the informed consent form you will administer, if any, and any instruments or questionnaires you will use. If your study will collect data at a school, institution, or place of business other than UW-RF, or if you will use data that belongs to another entity, attach a letter (on the organization's letterhead) from an official responsible for the testing site or data certifying that you have the organization's approval for the study.

Submit protocols to Bill Campbell, UW-RF Director of Grants & Research, 104 North Hall, 410 S. 3rd St., River Falls, WI 54022. If your protocol qualifies for exempted or expedited review, provide the original and one copy. If it requires full board review, provide the original and six copies.

D. Statement of assurance: I/We have read the UW-River Falls Policies and Procedures for Research Involving Human Subjects, and will comply with them, including the informed consent requirement. Furthermore, I/we will inform the IRB if significant changes are made in the proposed study.

[Signature] 3/1/10 Kristin A. Spunhy 3/5/2010

**PART II
DESCRIPTION OF STUDY**

- A. **Research question.** Type a brief statement of the question(s) being asked and the supporting rationale into the gray box below. (It will expand as you type.) For example: “The study is designed to determine if conformity is related to perceptions of group strength. This project is based on the social impact theory of group influence which suggests that social influence will increase as a function of perceived ‘strength’ among the group members. Perceived strength in this study is being defined by the expertise of the members.”

Notice that the statement is brief and expresses not only the research question but the theoretical rationale behind the question. Some projects will undoubtedly require a bit more explanation, but a complete literature review is not necessary for IRB review purposes.

If you have a hypothesis or hypotheses, explain them briefly. Hypotheses are encouraged but not required; preliminary studies that are designed to help the researcher form hypotheses are sometimes acceptable.

The study is to design a series of lesson plans to teach 7th and 8th grade orchestra students the skill of improvisation. Currently there are very few resources for middle school orchestra directors to teach the technique of improvisation. This project will give orchestra directors a method to teach improvisation that is specifically design for violin, viola, cello, and bass. Develop tools for effective assessing?

The following questions will guide the research.

What types of assessment tools be effected for .teacher tool. what kind of tool in what ways did the designed assessments enhance the skoll

Tim brophy - Assessing the developing the child musician. Templates

B. **Subject Selection.**

1. Number of subjects: **There are 96 students in the 7th and 8th grade ochestras. This project will be offered as a after school activity for those students. It is anticipated that 15-20 students will elect to participate of this learning opportunity.**
2. Human subject pool:
 - a. Describe relevant features of the subjects you will be using (e.g. sex, race, or ethnic group; age range; general state of mental and physical health; etc.). **All students are members of the middle school orchestras. The research will be designed for 7th and 8th grade students. Ages will range from 12-14. The study will include males and females. Ethnicity will include white, asian/south pacific/Indian, and african american.**

3. Describe all personnel, including names and affiliation with UW-River Falls (and any other relevant affiliations). **Darrin Stohlberg**
4. Describe the information to be gathered and the means for collecting and recording data. **Students will fill out worksheets and I will use video recordings throughout the study. Rubric will be collected**

If previously collected data is to be used, describe both the previous and proposed uses of these data. **No previously recorded data will be used in the study.**

5. Provide a step by step description of everything subjects will be asked to do in your study.
 1. **Students will be asked to participate in the prepared lesson plans created by myself**
 2. **Students will asked to do weekley recordings to illustrate the progress of their improvisational skills.**
 3. **Students will be asked to occasionally fill out worksheets that accompany improvisation techniques.**
6. Note the title and source of instruments (i.e. personality scales, questionnaires, evaluation blanks, etc.). Include copies of original instruments. **Models for assessment rubrics will be drawn from Tim Brophy. Models for improvisation will be drawn from Chris Azzara's book.**

PART III HUMAN SUBJECTS PROTECTION

A. **Potential Risks** you can anticipate for subjects.

1. Describe immediate risks, long term risks, rationale for the necessity of such risks, alternatives that were or will be considered, and why alternatives may not be feasible. **Other than the risk that all students face in a daily school life there will not be any added risks as a result of participating in this study.**
2. Describe any potential legal, financial, social or personal effects on subjects of accidental data disclosure. Though the potential for disclosure may be extremely remote, if a fire or bombing exposed your data, how would it affect subjects? **No actual students names will be used in the report. Data will be kept in a locked file in my office my computer harddrive is only accessed through password.**

B. **Expected benefits for subjects** (if any) and/or society.

The IRB is required to insure that the potential risks to subjects (however minimal) are clearly justified by the potential benefits of the research both to the subjects and to the current state of theoretical knowledge on the topic. You can assist this process by providing a statement clarifying

the potential for new knowledge resulting from the study as well as any benefits directly to the subjects. (Stating that “more research is needed on this topic” will be of little help; explain why more research will be a benefit.)

According to the National Standards of Music, improvisation is one of the skills that musicians should learn in a public music setting. However, most students who participate in a instrumental music program do not learn how to improvise unless they have participated in a jazz ensemble. Furthermore, students who participate in orchestra are at a great disadvantage to learn about improvisation because most jazz ensembles do not incorporate string instruments. The skill of improvisation encourages musicians to be creative. Improvisation teaches a musician to express themselves through music and is central to developing musicianship in all aspects of music. Further research and examinations of improvisational teaching methods for a large-group orchestra is needed to create a quality method for other orchestra teachers so this skill can be more easily incorporated into orchestra curriculums.

C. Deception used in gathering data.

Justify and support the use of deception in the project, particularly if subjects are being provided with any untruthful or misleading information. Realize that not providing complete information is minimally deceptive. Provide a detailed written description of the debriefing process. **No deceptive information will be used for this research.**

D. Safeguarding Subjects' Identity.

1. What uses will be made of the information obtained from the subjects? What elements of your project might be openly accessible to other agencies or appear in publications? **There is a possibility that this research could be presented at a conference or other professional gatherings.**
2. What precautions will be taken to safeguard identifiable records or individuals? How will confidentiality of data be protected? **All data collected will be stored in locked file cabinets and password protected computers. Although assessments will be given to students they will be asked not to put their names on the paper. Any video recordings will not show students or include names. Video recording will only be used to capture audio from the students. Students will not be shown on video recordings.**

E. Informed consent.

Please refer to Appendix D for guidelines with respect to informed consent and sample consent forms. If you will use an informed consent form, attach a copy of the form you will use to the protocol.

If the study involves children, the informed consent form must be signed by the child's parent or guardian. The IRB usually requires the child to sign a consent form as well so that s/he understands as completely as possible the research which is being performed. Older children can

sign the same consent form as the parent/guardian. For younger children, a separate form in simpler language may be required.

When a signed consent form is required, a copy must be made available to the subjects. At the very least--e.g. when completion of the instrument serves as giving consent--subjects must be given a form identifying the researcher by name, address, and phone number, and including these statements:

If you have concerns about how you were treated in this study, please contact: Dr. William Campbell, Director of Grants and Research, 104 North Hall, UW-RF, 715/425-3195.

This project has been approved by the UW-River Falls Institutional Research Board for the Protection of Human Subjects, protocol # _____.

Some researchers might meet this requirement by detaching the signature portion of the consent form and giving the rest to the subject. Others might print a separate card or sheet with the required information for distributing to subjects.

Studies that maintain the anonymity of subjects should not require subjects to sign informed consent forms, since that would violate their anonymity. Researchers can obtain their consent by providing a statement such as:

I am researching [brief description of study]. I ask you to participate by completing the following questionnaire. Please do not write your name on the questionnaire; this study is meant to be anonymous. It is completely voluntary; if you are willing to participate, please answer the questions to the best of your ability. If you choose not to participate, please return the questionnaire to the researcher. [name of researcher, contact information].

How will you obtain the informed consent of your subjects? **The informed consent of subjects will be obtained by sending a letter to the parents/guardians of all potential subjects. The letter will describe the nature of the study and its purpose. Parents/guardians will be required to sign and return the letter to me before any data is collected with their child.**

For next question

Recruitment letter and email. flier. infrom conscent lettter for parents and students. principal letter. rubric/assessement worksheet example

Attachments

If your study employs an instrument—survey, questionnaire, test, etc.—please include a copy. If the instrument is a commercial product that you cannot attach because of copyright or expense, reference the instrument in your narrative so that reviewers can research it.

If your study will take place at an off-campus, non-public site, please attach a letter from an official with appropriate authority giving you permission to perform your research on his/her site. For instance, protocols for studies involving school children must include a letter from the school's principal or other responsible official certifying that the researcher has the school's permission to perform the research. Such letters should be written on school letterhead and should mention the researcher by name and the project by title.

Appendix B

Dear 7th and 8th Grade Orchestra Parents,

For last three years I have been working on my Master's Degree through the University of Wisconsin-River Falls. The last step to complete the degree is to create a thesis/plan-B project. For my Plan-B Project I have decided to create a series of lessons on teaching the skill of improvisation for middle school orchestra students. I'd like to invite your child to participate.

What is Improvisation? Improvisation is the skill to compose and play music at the same time. Often improvisation is associated with jazz music. Legendary jazz musicians such as Miles Davis and Charlie Parker used the skill of improvisation. However, improvisation is in all types of music. Improvisation is what gives rock musicians such as Eric Clapton and Stevie Ray Vaughn the skills to create powerful solos on their guitars. The skill of improvisation is found in many bluegrass songs and is the skill that Charlie Daniels uses when playing a "mean" fiddle.

My Goal: Improvisation is a skill that any musician can learn. Many orchestra musicians shy away from improvisation. However, fear comes from not having the skills to improvise. As of now, there are very few resources that are specifically designed to teach improvisation in an orchestra setting. The goal of this project is to create a series of lessons that are designed to specifically teach improvisation to middle school orchestra students.

How do I sign my child up? To sign up for this musical experience you will need to fill out the second page of this packet and **return it to Mr. Stohlberg by February 12th**. The sessions will be held during the months of February, March, and April. The purpose of the class will be to develop improvisation skills in the students who attend. Any student that is a member of the 7th and 8th grade orchestras at CMS is welcome to participate in the class, whether or not they choose to have their data considered as part of the research study. If you are willing to let me consider your child's data in the research study, please be aware that neither your child's name, nor the school name be used in the final report. I need you to sign the bottom of the registration form where it states that you give your permission for the child to participate, but that the child can also withdraw at any time as the course progresses

Cost: FREE

Time: 3:30pm-4:30pm

Day: Tuesdays

Where: CMS Orchestra Room.

Dates:

February 23

March 23

April 20

March 9

April 6

April 27

March 16

April 13

**This class will not affect your child's orchestra grade. This is designed for the pure enjoyment of learning a new musical skill.*

**Students names and identity will not be used in the final research report.*

Please contact me if you have any questions of concerns
Darrin Stohlberg

Participation Form

Students name: _____

Instrument: _____

Parent(s) name: _____

_____ Yes, I would like my child to participate in the classes on improvisation.

_____ No, I do not wish for my child to participate in the classes on improvisation.

By signing below I am authorizing my child to participate in a research study on improvisation techniques for middle school orchestra students. I understand that my child can withdraw from the research portion of this improvisation class at any time and that he/she can still participate in the class.

Please mark all the dates on a calendar! Attendance is very important and I do expect your child to participate in all eight sessions.

Please return this form to Mr. Stohlberg by February 12th, 2010.

Student Signature

Parent Signature

Date

If you have questions about this research study or the Master's of Secondary Education-Fine Arts at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls, please contact William E. Campbell, Director of Grants and Research at UWRF. Email: wm.e.campbell@uwrf.edu Phone: 715-425-3195.

Please contact Mr. Stohlberg if you have any questions or concerns.

Darrin Stohlberg
Oak Point & Central Middle School
Orchestra Director
Eden Prairie, MN

Phone: 952-975-7600
Voicemail: 952-975-6658
Email: dstohlberg@edenpr.org

Appendix C



Educating for success in our diverse and changing world.

*Eden Prairie Schools
Central Middle School
8025 School Road
Eden Prairie, MN 55344
(952) 975-7300
Fax (952) 975-7320*

January 25, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

The purpose of this letter is to verify that Darrin Stohlberg, Orchestra Director at Central Middle School, has my approval and support for the aforementioned program.

College: University of Wisconsin River Falls.

Dates of the Research: Research will be conducted once a week. Students will be asked to participate in 8 sessions in March, April, and May.

Location: CMS Orchestra Room.

Project/Research Title: Establishing Improvisation Techniques for 7th and 8th grade Orchestra Students.

Purpose of Study: According to the National Standards of Music, improvisation is one of the skills that musicians should learn in a public music setting. However, most students who participate in an instrumental music program do not learn how to improvise unless they have participated in a jazz ensemble. Furthermore, students who participate in orchestra are at a greater disadvantage to learn about improvisation because most jazz ensembles do not incorporate string instruments. The skill of improvisation encourages musicians to be creative. Improvisation teaches a musician to express themselves through music and is central to developing musicianship in all aspects of music. Further research and examinations of improvisational teaching methods for a large-group orchestra is needed to create a quality method for other orchestra teachers so this skill can be more easily incorporated into orchestra curriculums.

Student protection/Parent involvement: Students who elect to participate in this project will work to develop their improvisational skills on their string instrument. Students participating in this study will not be identified by their names in the final report of the results. This project is open to all Central Middle School students who are members of the orchestra program. Additionally, students and parents will be asked to sign informed consent permission slips as to whether or not their data will be a part of the study. Students may participate in the after school improvisation classes whether or not their data is used in the final report. This study is being designed to ensure that students will only benefit from the improvisation experience. A lack of positive results will not have any negative effect on the subjects involved. Participation in this after school study will have no impact on a student's orchestra grade from class. All data will be stored in a locked file drawer. All computers used for gathering data will be password protected.

If you have any questions please contact me at 952.975.7300.

Sincerely,


Joe Epping
Principal
Central Middle School

Appendix D

Step One

Chord Analysis

How do I know what notes to play when creating an improvisation?

Violin

To be a proficient improviser, a musician must know what notes to use while creating an improvisation. To be successful at this step, one must know how to read and analyze chords.

For this lesson we will be analyzing major chords. Major chords are constructed by using the 1st, 3rd, 5th, and 8th (octave) scale degrees of a major scale.



For example, if we want to create a D major chord we will use the notes:

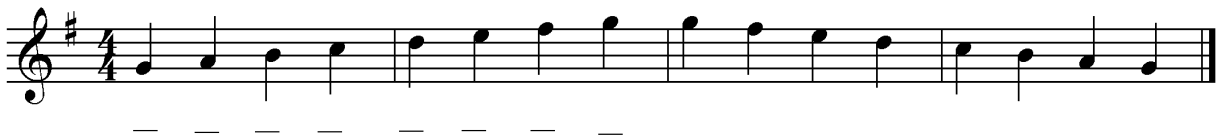
- D** = 1st note of the D major Scale
- F#** = 3rd note of the D major Scale
- A** = 5th note of the D major Scale
- D (high)** = 8th note of the D major Scale



The 1st, 3rd, 5th, and 8th notes of each scale will be VERY IMPORTANT when we begin improvising on our instruments. These notes will become our “home base” notes.

G Major Chord

Let's analyze a **G major Chord**. Write in the number below the notes to indicate the scale degree of that note.



1. What are the notes are used to create a G Major Chord? ___ ___ ___ ___
2. Let's play these notes. Give each note 2 counts.

C Major Chord

Let's analyze a **C major chord**. Write in the number below the notes to indicate the scale degree of that note.



1. What are the notes are used to create a C major chord? ___ ___ ___ ___
2. Let's play these notes. Give each note 2 counts.

Step Two

Improvising using the D & G major chords

Jamming on D major – Improvised Part

Below is an example of a piece of music with chord changes.

- Each measure has a chord written above it. This helps the musician know what notes can be used during an improvised solo.
- The slash marks help the musician know how many beats the chord will be played. In this example each measure has four slash marks. This indicates that the musician will have four beats of music using a D major chord.

Violin

Jamming On D

Darrin Stohlberg

The musical notation shows two staves of music. The first staff is labeled 'Violin' and 'Jamming On D'. It is in D major (two sharps) and 4/4 time. The first staff has four measures, each with a 'D' chord symbol above it and four diagonal slashes in the staff. The second staff starts at measure 5 and also has four measures, each with a 'D' chord symbol above it and four diagonal slashes in the staff. The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Let's improvise!

Try creating your own improvised solo using the notes of a D major chord.

1st time = Use only the notes from the D major chord and play each note for 2 beats.

2nd time = Use only the notes from the D major chord and play each note for 1 beats.

3rd time = Begin to create your own rhythms throughout the improvisation still using notes from the D major chord.

Jamming on D major – Accompaniment Part

Below is the accompaniment part. The accompaniment part is the music that will be played while another musician is creating an improvisation or solo.

Violin

Jamming On D

Darrin Stohlberg

Pizz. or Arco

**Have the group play the accompaniment part while students improvise.*

Violin

Jamming On D

Darrin Stohlberg

- 1st time** = Use only the notes from the G major chord and play each note for 2 beats.
- 2nd time** = Use only the notes from the G major chord and play each note for 1 beats.
- 3rd time** = Create your own rhythms throughout the improvisation using notes from the G major chord

Let's put it all together!

Jamming on G

Reviewing a **G major chord**. Write in the number below the notes to indicate the scale degree of that note.



What are the notes used to create a G major chord? _____

Let's learn the accompaniment part to *Jamming on G Major*

Violin

Jamming on G Major

Darrin Stohlberg



Let's improvise!

Try creating your own improvised solo using the notes of a G major chord.

1st time = Use only the notes from the G major chord and play each note for 2 beats.

2nd time = Use only the notes from the G major chord and play each note for 1 beats.

3rd time = Create your own rhythms throughout the improvisation using notes from the G major chord.

Violin

Jamming on G Major

Darrin Stohlberg

Musical notation for 'Jamming on G Major' in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first staff shows four measures, each with a 'G' chord label above it and a slash indicating improvisation. The second staff starts at measure 5 and also shows four measures with 'G' chord labels and slashes. The piece ends with a double bar line.

Try improvising using D major and G major Chords

Violin

D & G Jam

Darrin Stohlberg

Musical notation for 'D & G Jam' in C major (no sharps or flats) and common time (C). The first staff shows four measures, with 'D' and 'G' chord labels above the first and third measures respectively, and slashes indicating improvisation. The second staff starts at measure 5 and shows four measures with 'D' and 'G' chord labels above the first and third measures respectively, and slashes indicating improvisation. The piece ends with a double bar line.

Accompaniment

Violin

D & G Jam

Darrin Stohlberg

Write out the notes for the following chords.

D Major - 1st/root _____ 3rd _____ 5th _____ 8th _____
 G Major - 1st/root _____ 3rd _____ 5th _____ 8th _____

Violin

D & G Jam

Darrin Stohlberg

C Major Chord

Let's analyze a **C major chord**. Write in the number below the notes to indicate the scale degree of that note.

— — — — —

What are the notes are used to create a C major chord? ____ _

Violin **C Jam**

Darrin Stohlberg

Violin **C Jam**

Darrin Stohlberg

Putting three chords together!

Violin

3 Chords Craziness

[Composer]

Musical notation for '3 Chords Craziness' in G major, 4/4 time. The piece consists of two staves of music. The first staff starts with a G chord and continues with a D chord. The second staff starts with a C chord and continues with a G chord. The notation shows a sequence of eighth notes across the staves.

Write out the notes for the following chords.

D Major - 1st/root _____ 3rd _____ 5th _____ 8th _____
 G Major - 1st/root _____ 3rd _____ 5th _____ 8th _____
 C Major - 1st/root _____ 3rd _____ 5th _____ 8th _____

Violin

3 chord Craziness!

Darrin Stohlberg

Musical notation for '3 chord Craziness!' in G major, 4/4 time. The piece consists of two staves of music. The first staff starts with a G chord and continues with a D chord. The second staff starts with a C chord and continues with a G chord. The notation shows a sequence of eighth notes across the staves.

In the next song, you only have one measure of each chord to improvise!

Violin

Switching Up The Chords

Darrin Stohlberg

5

1. For the first time, play each measure using half notes.
2. 2nd time, play each measure using quarter notes
3. 3rd time, improvise you own rhythms.

Violin

Switching Up the Chords

Darrin Stohlberg

5

Using more of the notes!!

We will begin to incorporate more notes so we can embellish our improvisations. How do we know what notes to use?

Below is Jamming in D. You will notice that there are no notes on beats 2 and 4. On beats 2 and 4 you will improvise using any of the notes in the D major scale. Beats 1 and 3 are using the notes that outline a D major chord.

**Typically, beats 1 and 3 of an improvisation will use the notes that make-up the chord (root, 3rd, 5th, & 8th). On beats 2 and 4, the musician is free to use any of the notes from the scale that corresponds with the chord.*

Violin

Jamming in D

Using Passing Tones or notes not included in the chord

Darrin Stohlberg

The musical notation for 'Jamming in D' is written on two staves in 4/4 time with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The first staff contains four measures, each with a 'D' chord symbol above it. The notes are: Measure 1 (D4, F#4), Measure 2 (D4, F#4), Measure 3 (D4, F#4), and Measure 4 (D4, F#4). The second staff contains four measures, each with a 'D' chord symbol above it. The notes are: Measure 5 (D4, F#4), Measure 6 (D4, F#4), Measure 7 (D4, F#4), and Measure 8 (D4, F#4). There are horizontal lines below each staff indicating where improvisation can occur on beats 2 and 4.

Violin

Jamming On D

Darrin Stohlberg

The musical notation for 'Jamming On D' is written on two staves in 4/4 time with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The first staff is marked 'Pizz. or Arco' and contains four measures of eighth-note patterns: Measure 1 (D4, E4, F#4, G4), Measure 2 (D4, E4, F#4, G4), Measure 3 (D4, E4, F#4, G4), and Measure 4 (D4, E4, F#4, G4). The second staff contains four measures of eighth-note patterns: Measure 5 (D4, E4, F#4, G4), Measure 6 (D4, E4, F#4, G4), Measure 7 (D4, E4, F#4, G4), and Measure 8 (D4, E4, F#4, G4).

Let's try improvising with passing tones in the key of G. Like we did in *Jamming on D*, you will improvise on beats 2 and 4 using any notes from the G major scale.

Violin

Jaming in G - Passing tones

Darrin Stohlberg

Musical notation for 'Jamming in G - Passing tones'. The piece is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of two staves of music. The first staff contains four measures of music, each with a whole note on the first beat and a half note on the second and fourth beats. The notes are G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F#5, G5. The second staff starts with a measure rest, followed by a sequence of notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F#5, G5. The piece ends with a double bar line.

Violin

Jamming on G Major

Darrin Stohlberg

Musical notation for 'Jamming on G Major'. The piece is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of two staves of music. The first staff starts with the instruction 'pizz. or arco' above the first measure. The first measure contains a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter rest. The second measure contains a quarter note B4, a quarter note C5, and a quarter rest. The third measure contains a quarter note D5, a quarter note E5, and a quarter rest. The fourth measure contains a quarter note F#5, a quarter note G5, and a quarter rest. The fifth measure contains a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter rest. The sixth measure contains a quarter note C5, a quarter note D5, and a quarter rest. The seventh measure contains a quarter note E5, a quarter note F#5, and a quarter rest. The eighth measure contains a quarter note G5, a quarter note A4, and a quarter rest. The second staff starts with a measure rest, followed by a sequence of notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, A4, B4, C5, D5, E5, F#5, G5. The piece ends with a double bar line.

Let's try improvising with passing tones using more than one chord. Improvise the passing tones on beats 2 and 4 throughout *D & G Jam*. In measures using the D major chord, use notes from the D major scale. In the measures using the G major chord, use notes from the G major scale.

Violin **D & G Jam - Using Passing Tones** Darrin Stohlberg

5

Violin **D & G Jam** Darrin Stohlberg

5

Using passing tones in C major
On beats 2 and 4 you can play any note from the C major scale.

Violin **C Jam - Using Passing Tones**

Darrin Stohlberg

Musical notation for 'C Jam - Using Passing Tones' in 4/4 time. The first staff shows a sequence of notes: C4, E4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, E4, C4. The second staff starts with a measure rest, followed by notes: C4, E4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, E4, C4. A measure rest is placed below the first staff.

Accompaniment for C Jam

Violin **C Jam**

Darrin Stohlberg

Musical notation for 'Accompaniment for C Jam' in 4/4 time. The first staff shows a sequence of notes: C4, E4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, E4, C4. The second staff starts with a measure rest, followed by notes: C4, E4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, E4, C4. A measure rest is placed below the first staff.

Violin **3 Chord Craziiness - With Passing Tones**

Darrin Stohlberg

Musical notation for '3 Chord Craziiness - With Passing Tones' in G major, 4/4 time. The piece consists of two staves. The first staff starts with a G chord and contains four measures of music. The second staff starts with a C chord and contains four measures of music. The notation includes notes, rests, and chord symbols (G, D, C, G) above the staff. There are also horizontal lines below the staff indicating fingerings or bowings.

Violin **3 Chords Craziiness**

[Composer]

Musical notation for '3 Chords Craziiness' in G major, 4/4 time. The piece consists of two staves. The first staff starts with a G chord and contains four measures of music. The second staff starts with a C chord and contains four measures of music. The notation includes notes, rests, and chord symbols (G, D, C, G) above the staff.

Putting it ALL TOGETHER!!

The time has now come for you to improvise your own solo!

First Play: Play only quarter notes. On beats 1 and 3 use the notes for the D chord (D, F#, A, D). On beats 2 and 4 use any note from the D major scale.

Second Play: Begin to start improvising different rhythms. Try using whole notes, half notes, quarter notes, and eighth notes. Remember to still use only notes from the D major chord on beats 1 and 3.

Third Play: Try these same techniques on the songs *Jamming on G* and *C Jam*.

Violin

Jamming On D

Darrin Stohlberg

Violin

Jamming On D

Darrin Stohlberg

First Play: Play only quarter notes. On beats 1 and 3 use only the notes from the chord. Beats 2 and 4 use any note from the scale.

Second Play: Begin to start improvising different rhythms. Try using whole notes, half notes, quarter notes, and eighth notes. Remember to still use only notes from the chord on beats 1 and 3.

Violin

D & G Jam

Darrin Stohlberg

Violin

D & G Jam

Darrin Stohlberg

Appendix E

Step One

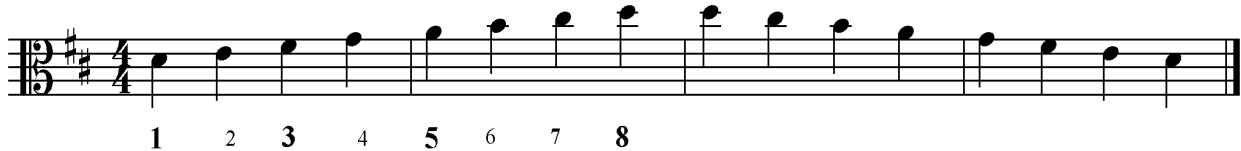
Chord Analysis

How do I know what notes to play when creating an improvisation?

Viola

To be a proficient improviser, a musician must know what notes to use while creating an improvisation. To be successful at this step, one must know how to read and analyze chords.

For this lesson we will be analyzing major chords. Major chords are constructed by using the 1st, 3rd, 5th, and 8th (octave) scale degrees of a major scale.



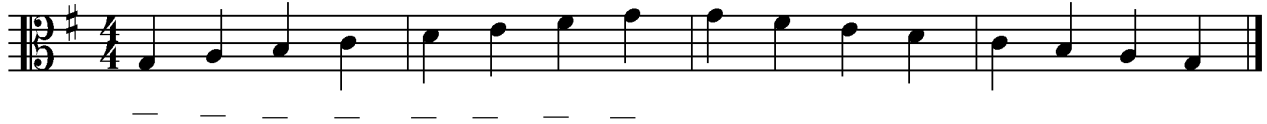
For example, if we want to create a D major chord we will use the notes:

- D** = 1st note of the D major Scale
- F#** = 3rd note of the D major Scale
- A** = 5th note of the D major Scale
- D (high)** = 8th note of the D major Scale



The 1st, 3rd, 5th, and 8th notes of each scale will be VERY IMPORTANT when we begin improvising on our instruments. These notes will become our “home base” notes.

Let’s analyze a **G major chord**. Write in the number below the notes to indicate the scale degree of that note.



1. What are the notes are used to create a G major chord? ___ ___ ___ ___
2. Let’s play these notes. Give each note 2 counts.

Let’s analyze a **C major chord**. Write in the number below the notes to indicate the scale degree of that note.



1. What are the notes are used to create a C major chord? ___ ___ ___ ___
2. Let’s play these notes. Give each note 2 counts.

Step Two

Improvising using the D & G major chords

Jamming on D major – Improvised Part

Below is an example of a piece of music with chord changes.

- Each measure has a chord written above it. This helps the musician know what notes can be used during an improvised solo.
- The slash marks help the musician know how many beats the chord will be played. In this example each measure has four slash marks. This indicates that the musician will have four beats of music using a D major chord.

Viola

Jamming On D

Darrin Stohlberg

The image shows two staves of musical notation for Viola. The first staff is labeled 'Viola' and the second staff is labeled '5'. Both staves are in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. Each staff contains four measures, each with a 'D' chord symbol above it and four diagonal slashes below it, indicating four beats of improvisation per measure.

Let's improvise!

Try creating your own improvised solo using the notes of a D major chord.

1st time = Use only the notes from the D major chord and play each note for 2 beats.

2nd time = Use only the notes from the D major chord and play each note for 1 beats.

3rd time = Begin to create your own rhythms throughout the improvisation still using notes from the D major chord.

Jamming on D major – Accompaniment Part

Below is the accompaniment part. The accompaniment part is the music that will be played while another musician is creating an improvisation or solo.

Viola

Jamming On D

Darrin Stohlberg

Pizz. or Arco

**Have the group play the accompaniment part while students improvise.*

Viola

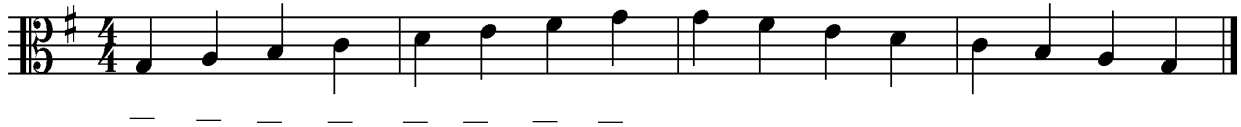
Jamming On D

Darrin Stohlberg

Let's put it all together!

Jamming on G

Reviewing a **G major chord**. Write in the number below the notes to indicate the scale degree of that note.



What are the notes used to create a G major chord? ____ ____ ____ ____

Let's learn the accompaniment part to *Jamming on G Major*

Viola

Jamming on G Major

Darrin Stohlberg



Let's improvise!

Try creating your own improvised solo using the notes of a G major chord.

- 1st time** = Use only the notes from the G major chord and play each note for 2 beats.
- 2nd time** = Use only the notes from the G major chord and play each note for 1 beats.
- 3rd time** = Create your own rhythms throughout the improvisation using notes from the G major chord.

Viola

Jamming on G Major

Darrin Stohlberg

Musical notation for "Jamming on G Major" in G major, 4/4 time. It consists of two staves of music, each with four measures of slurs. The first staff is labeled with 'G' above each measure. The second staff is labeled with 'G' above each measure and has a '5' at the beginning.

Try improvising using D major and G major Chords

Viola

D & G Jam

Darrin Stohlberg

Musical notation for "D & G Jam" in common time. It consists of two staves of music, each with four measures of slurs. The first staff is labeled with 'D' above the first two measures and 'G' above the last two measures. The second staff is labeled with 'D' above the first two measures and 'G' above the last two measures and has a '5' at the beginning.

C Major Chord

Let's analyze a **C major chord**. Write in the number below the notes to indicate the scale degree of that note.

— — — — —

What are the notes are used to create a C major chord? ____ _

Viola

C Jam

Darrin Stohlberg

Viola

C Jam

Darrin Stohlberg

C C C C

5 C C C C C

Putting three chords together!

Viola

3 Chords Craziness

[Composer]

Musical notation for '3 Chords Craziness' in G major, 4/4 time. The first staff shows a bass line for measures 1-4 with chords G and D. The second staff shows measures 5-8 with chords C and G.

Write out the notes for the following chords.

D Major - 1 st /root	_____	3 rd	_____	5 th	_____	8 th	_____
G Major - 1 st /root	_____	3 rd	_____	5 th	_____	8 th	_____
C Major - 1 st /root	_____	3 rd	_____	5 th	_____	8 th	_____

Viola

3 chord Craziness!

Darrin Stohlberg

Musical notation for '3 chord Craziness!' in G major, 4/4 time. The first staff shows a bass line for measures 1-4 with chords G and D. The second staff shows measures 5-8 with chords C and G.

In the next song, you only have one measure of each chord to improvise!

Viola

Switching Up The Chords

Darrin Stohlberg

6

4. For the first time, play each measure using half notes.
5. 2nd time, play each measure using quarter notes
6. 3rd time, improvise you own rhythms.

Viola

Switching Up The Chords

Darrin Stohlberg

5

Using more of the notes!!

We will begin to incorporate more notes so we can embellish our improvisations. How do we know what notes to use?

Below is Jamming in D. You will notice that there are no notes on beats 2 and 4. On beats 2 and 4 you will improvise using any of the notes in the D major scale. Beats 1 and 3 are using the notes that outline a D major chord. Beats 1 and 3 are using the notes that outline a D major chord.

**Typically, beats 1 and 3 of an improvisation will use the notes that make-up the chord (root, 3rd, 5th, & 8th). On beats 2 and 4, the musician is free to use any of the notes from the scale that corresponds with the chord.*

Jamming in D

Darrin Stohlberg

Playing passing tones or notes not in the chord

Viola

Jamming On D

Darrin Stohlberg

Viola

Pizz. or Arco

Let's try improvising with passing tones in the key of G. Like we did in *Jamming on D*, you will improvise on beats 2 and 4 using any notes from the G major scale.

Viola

Jaming in G - Passing tones

Darrin Stohlberg

Musical notation for Viola, 4/4 time, key of G major. The first staff shows a sequence of notes: G2, A2, B2, C3, D3, E3, F#3, G3. The second staff starts with a measure rest (5) and continues with notes: G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F#4, G4.

Viola

Jamming on G Major

Darrin Stohlberg

Musical notation for Viola, 4/4 time, key of G major. The first staff is marked "pizz. or arco" and contains a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and rests: G4, A4, B4, G4, A4, B4, G4, A4, B4, G4, A4, B4, G4, A4, B4, G4. The second staff starts with a measure rest (5) and continues with notes: G4, A4, B4, G4, A4, B4, G4, A4, B4, G4, A4, B4, G4, A4, B4, G4.

Let's try improvising with passing tones using more than one chord. Improvise the passing tones on beats 2 and 4 throughout *D & G Jam*. In measures using the D major chord, use notes from the D major scale. In the measures using the G major chord, use notes from the G major scale.

Viola **D & G Jam - Using Passing Tones** Darrin Stohlberg

Viola **D & G Jam** Darrin Stohlberg

Using passing tones in C major
On beats 2 and 4 you can play any note from the C major scale.

Viola

C Jam - Using Passing Tones

Darrin Stohlberg

Two staves of musical notation in 3/4 time. The first staff contains four measures of music, each with a half note on the first beat and a half note on the third beat. The notes are C4, E4, G4, and A4. The second staff starts with a measure rest labeled '5' and contains four measures of music. The notes are C4, E4, G4, and A4, with a half note on the first beat and a half note on the third beat. The notes are C4, E4, G4, and A4.

Accompaniment for C Jam

Viola

C Jam

Darrin Stohlberg

Two staves of musical notation in 3/4 time. The first staff contains four measures of music. The notes are C4, E4, G4, and A4. The second staff starts with a measure rest labeled '5' and contains four measures of music. The notes are C4, E4, G4, and A4. The notes are C4, E4, G4, and A4.

Viola **3 Chord Craziness - With Passing Tones**

Darrin Stohlberg

Musical notation for Viola, 4/4 time signature, key of D major. The piece consists of two staves. The first staff starts with a G chord and contains four measures of music with notes G, A, B, C, D, E, F, G. The second staff starts with a C chord and contains four measures of music with notes C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C. Chord changes are indicated by 'G' and 'D' above the first staff, and 'C' and 'G' above the second staff.

Viola **3 Chords Craziness**

[Composer]

Musical notation for Viola, 4/4 time signature, key of D major. The piece consists of two staves. The first staff starts with a G chord and contains four measures of music with notes G, A, B, C, D, E, F, G. The second staff starts with a C chord and contains four measures of music with notes C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C. Chord changes are indicated by 'G' and 'D' above the first staff, and 'C' and 'G' above the second staff.

First Play: Play only quarter notes. On beats 1 and 3 use only the notes from the chord. Beats 2 and 4 use any note from the scale.

Second Play: Begin to start improvising different rhythms. Try using whole notes, half notes, quarter notes, and eighth notes. Remember to still use only notes from the chord on beats 1 and 3.

Viola **D & G Jam**

Darrin Stohlberg

Viola **D & G Jam**

Darrin Stohlberg

Appendix F

Step One

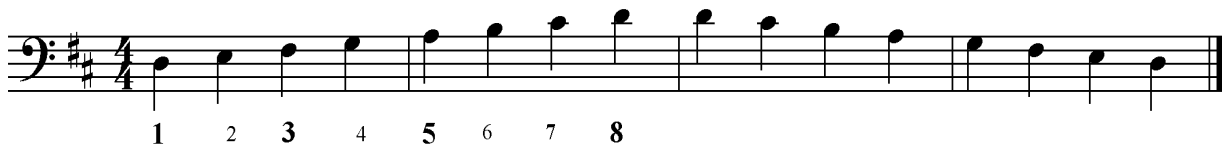
Chord Analysis

How do I know what notes to play when creating an improvisation?

Cello

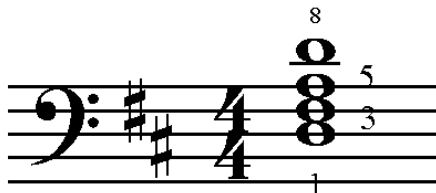
To be a proficient improviser, a musician must know what notes to use while creating an improvisation. To be successful at this step, one must know how to read and analyze chords.

For this lesson we will be analyzing major chords. Major chords are constructed by using the 1st, 3rd, 5th, and 8th (octave) scale degrees of a major scale.



For example, if we want to create a D major chord we will use the notes:

- D** = 1st note of the D major Scale
- F#** = 3rd note of the D major Scale
- A** = 5th note of the D major Scale
- D (high)** = 8th note of the D major Scale



The 1st, 3rd, 5th, and 8th notes of each scale will be VERY IMPORTANT when we begin improvising on our instruments. These notes will become our “home base” notes.

Let’s analyze a **G major chord**. Write in the number below the notes to indicate the scale degree of that note.



1. What are the notes are used to create a G major chord? ____ ____ ____ ____

2. Let’s play these notes. Give each note 2 counts.

Let’s analyze a **C major chord**. Write in the number below the notes to indicate the scale degree of that note.



1. What are the notes are used to create a C major chord? ____ ____ ____ ____

2. Let’s play these notes. Give each note 2 counts.

Step Two

Improvising using the D & G major chords

Jamming on D major – Improvised Part

Below is an example of a piece of music with chord changes.

- Each measure has a chord written above it. This helps the musician know what notes can be used during an improvised solo.
- The slash marks help the musician know how many beats the chord will be played. In this example each measure has four slash marks. This indicates that the musician will have four beats of music using a D major chord.

Cello

Jamming On D

Darrin Stohlberg

The musical notation consists of two staves of music. The first staff is labeled 'D' above it and contains four measures of music, each with four diagonal slashes representing a D major chord. The second staff is labeled 'D' above it and contains four measures of music, each with four diagonal slashes representing a D major chord. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4.

Let's improvise!

Try creating your own improvised solo using the notes of a D major chord.

1st time = Use only the notes from the D major chord and play each note for 2 beats.

2nd time = Use only the notes from the D major chord and play each note for 1 beats.

3rd time = Begin to create your own rhythms throughout the improvisation still using notes from the D major chord.

Jamming on D major – Accompaniment Part

Below is the accompaniment part. The accompaniment part is the music that will be played while another musician is creating an improvisation or solo.

Cello

Jamming On D

Darrin Stohlberg

Pizz. or Arco

5

**Have the group play the accompaniment part while students improvise.*

Cello

Jamming On D

Darrin Stohlberg

5

Let's put it all together!

Jamming on G

Reviewing a **G major chord**. Write in the number below the notes to indicate the scale degree of that note.



What are the notes are used to create a G major chord? ____ ____ ____ ____

Let's learn the accompaniment part to *Jamming on G Major*

Cello

Jamming on G Major

Darrin Stohlberg

pizz. or arco



5



Let's improvise!

Try creating your own improvised solo using the notes of a G major chord.

- 1st time** = Use only the notes from the G major chord and play each note for 2 beats.
- 2nd time** = Use only the notes from the G major chord and play each note for 1 beats.
- 3rd time** = Create your own rhythms throughout the improvisation using notes from the G major chord.

Cello

Jamming on G Major

Darrin Stohlberg

Two staves of musical notation for Cello in G major, 4/4 time. The first staff contains four measures, each with a 'G' chord label above the staff and a slash pattern representing a sustained note. The second staff starts with a measure number '5' and also contains four measures with 'G' chord labels and slash patterns.

Try improvising using D major and G major Chords

Cello

D & G Jam

Darrin Stohlberg

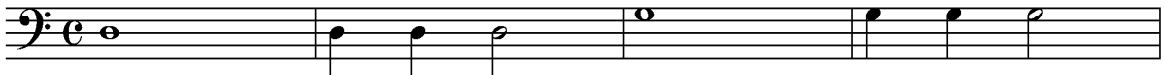
Two staves of musical notation for Cello in common time. The first staff contains four measures: the first two are labeled 'D' and the last two are labeled 'G'. The second staff starts with a measure number '5' and also contains four measures: the first two are labeled 'D' and the last two are labeled 'G'. Both staves use slash patterns to represent sustained notes.

Accompaniment

Cello

D & G Jam

Darrin Stohlberg



5



Write out the notes for the following chords.

D Major - 1st/root _____ 3rd _____ 5th _____ 8th _____
G Major - 1st/root _____ 3rd _____ 5th _____ 8th _____

Cello

D & G Jam

Darrin Stohlberg



5



C Major Chord

Let's analyze a **C major chord**. Write in the number below the notes to indicate the scale degree of that note.

— — — — — — —

What are the notes are used to create a C major chord? — — — —

Cello

C Jam

Darrin Stohlberg

Cello

C Jam

Darrin Stohlberg

Putting three chords together!

Cello **3 Chords Craziiness**

[Composer]

Write out the notes for the following chords.

D Major - 1st/root _____ 3rd _____ 5th _____ 8th _____
 G Major - 1st/root _____ 3rd _____ 5th _____ 8th _____
 C Major - 1st/root _____ 3rd _____ 5th _____ 8th _____

Cello **3 chord Craziiness!**

Darrin Stohlberg

In the next song, you only have one measure of each chord to improvise!

Cello

Switching Up The Chords

Darrin Stohlberg

Musical notation for 'Switching Up The Chords' in G major, 4/4 time. The piece consists of two staves of music. The first staff contains measures 1 through 5, and the second staff contains measures 6 through 9. Chord changes are indicated by letters G, C, D, and C above the notes. The notes are primarily quarter notes and eighth notes.

7. For the first time, play each measure using half notes.
8. 2nd time, play each measure using quarter notes
9. 3rd time, improvise you own rhythms.

Cello

Switching Up teh Chords

Darrin Stohlberg

Musical notation for 'Switching Up teh Chords' in G major, 4/4 time. The piece consists of two staves of music. The first staff contains measures 1 through 4, and the second staff contains measures 5 through 8. Each measure contains a slash (/) indicating improvisation. Chord changes are indicated by letters G, C, D, and C above the staves.

Using more of the notes!!

We will begin to incorporate more notes so we can embellish our improvisations. How do we know what notes to use?

Below is Jamming in D. You will notice that there are no notes on beats 2 and 4. On beats 2 and 4 you will improvise using any of the notes in the D major scale. Beats 1 and 3 are using the notes that outline a D major chord. Beats 1 and 3 are using the notes that outline a D major chord.

**Typically, beats 1 and 3 of an improvisation will use the notes that make-up the chord (root, 3rd, 5th, & 8th). On beats 2 and 4, the musician is free to use any of the notes from the scale that corresponds with the chord.*

Jamming in D

Cello Darrin Stohlberg

Playing passing tones or notes not in the chord

Jamming On D

Cello Darrin Stohlberg

Pizz. or Arco

Let's try improvising with passing tones in the key of G. Like we did in *Jamming on D*, you will improvise on beats 2 and 4 using any notes from the G major scale.

Cello

Jaming in G - Passing tones

Darrin Stohlberg

Musical notation for 'Jaming in G - Passing tones' in G major, 4/4 time. The first staff shows a bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The notes are: G2 (quarter), B2 (quarter), D3 (quarter), E3 (quarter), F#3 (quarter), G3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), B3 (quarter). The second staff starts with a measure rest (5) and contains notes: G3 (quarter), B3 (quarter), D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter). There are dashed lines below the notes in both staves.

Cello

Jamming on G Major

Darrin Stohlberg

pizz. or arco

Musical notation for 'Jamming on G Major' in G major, 4/4 time. The first staff shows a bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The notes are: G2 (quarter), B2 (quarter), D3 (quarter), E3 (quarter), F#3 (quarter), G3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), B3 (quarter). The second staff starts with a measure rest (5) and contains notes: G3 (quarter), B3 (quarter), D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter). There are dashed lines below the notes in both staves.

Let's try improvising with passing tones using more than one chord. Improvise the passing tones on beats 2 and 4 throughout *D & G Jam*. In measures using the D major chord, use notes from the D major scale. In the measures using the G major chord, use notes from the G major scale.

D & G Jam - Using Passing Tones

Cello

Darrin Stohlberg

5

D & G Jam

Cello

Darrin Stohlberg

5

Using passing tones in C major
On beats 2 and 4 you can play any note from the C major scale.

C Jam - Using Passing Tones

Cello

Darrin Stohlberg

Musical notation for 'C Jam - Using Passing Tones' in 4/4 time. The first staff shows a sequence of notes: C4, E4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, E4, C4. The second staff starts at measure 5 with notes: C4, E4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, E4, C4. There are dashed lines below the notes indicating fingerings.

Accompaniment for C Jam

Cello

C Jam

Darrin Stohlberg

Musical notation for 'Accompaniment for C Jam' in 4/4 time. The first staff shows a sequence of notes: C4, E4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, E4, C4. The second staff starts at measure 5 with notes: C4, E4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, E4, C4. There are dashed lines below the notes indicating fingerings.

Cello **3 Chord Craziiness - With Passing Tones**

Darrin Stohlberg

Musical notation for the piece "3 Chord Craziiness - With Passing Tones" for Cello. The score is in G major and 4/4 time. The first staff shows a G chord (G2, B2, D3) in the first measure, followed by a melodic line with passing tones (G, A, B, C, D, E, F, G) in the second measure. The third measure shows a D chord (D2, F#2, A2) and the fourth measure shows a G chord (G2, B2, D3). The second staff starts with a C chord (C3, E3, G3) in the fifth measure, followed by a melodic line with passing tones (C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C) in the sixth measure. The seventh measure shows a G chord (G2, B2, D3) and the eighth measure shows a G chord (G2, B2, D3). The piece ends with a double bar line.

Cello **3 Chords Craziiness**

[Composer]

Musical notation for the piece "3 Chords Craziiness" for Cello. The score is in G major and 4/4 time. The first staff shows a G chord (G2, B2, D3) in the first measure, followed by a melodic line with eighth notes (G, A, B, C, D, E, F, G) in the second measure. The third measure shows a D chord (D2, F#2, A2) and the fourth measure shows a D chord (D2, F#2, A2). The second staff starts with a C chord (C3, E3, G3) in the fifth measure, followed by a melodic line with eighth notes (C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C) in the sixth measure. The seventh measure shows a G chord (G2, B2, D3) and the eighth measure shows a G chord (G2, B2, D3). The piece ends with a double bar line.

Putting it ALL TOGETHER!!

The time has now come for you to improvise your own solo!

First Play: Play only quarter notes. On beats 1 and 3 use the notes for the D chord (D, F#, A, D). On beats 2 and 4 use any note from the D major scale.

Second Play: Begin to start improvising different rhythms. Try using whole notes, half notes, quarter notes, and eighth notes. Remember to still use only notes from the D major chord on beats 1 and 3.

Third Play: Try these same techniques on the songs *Jamming on G* and *C Jam*.

Cello

Jamming On D

Darrin Stohlberg

Musical notation for Cello, measures 1-4. The key signature is D major (two sharps) and the time signature is 4/4. Above the staff, the letter 'D' is written above each of the four measures. The notes in each measure are represented by diagonal slashes, indicating improvisation.

Cello

Jamming On D

Darrin Stohlberg

Musical notation for Cello, measures 5-8. The key signature is D major (two sharps) and the time signature is 4/4. Above the staff, the text 'Pizz. or Arco' is written. The notes are written as quarter notes. Measure 5 starts with a '5' above the staff. The notation shows a rhythmic pattern of quarter notes with rests.

Appendix G

Step One

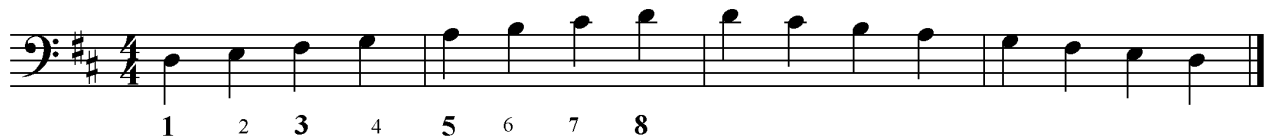
Chord Analysis

How do I know what notes to play when creating an improvisation?

Bass

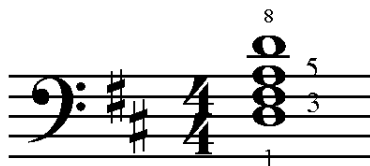
To be a proficient improviser, a musician must know what notes to use while creating an improvisation. To be successful at this step, one must know how to read and analyze chords.

For this lesson we will be analyzing major chords. Major chords are constructed by using the 1st, 3rd, 5th, and 8th (octave) scale degrees of a major scale.



For example, if we want to create a D major chord we will use the notes:

- D** = 1st note of the D major Scale
- F#** = 3rd note of the D major Scale
- A** = 5th note of the D major Scale
- D (high)** = 8th note of the D major Scale



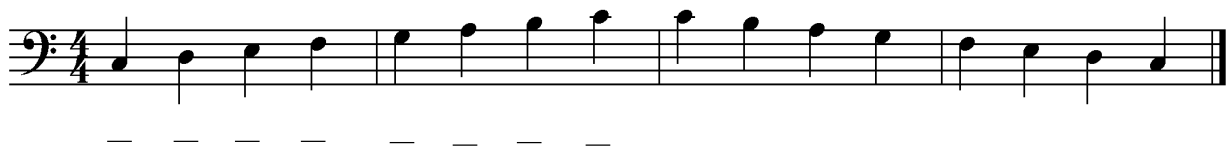
The 1st, 3rd, 5th, and 8th notes of each scale will be VERY IMPORTANT when we begin improvising on our instruments. These notes will become our “home base” note.

Let’s analyze a **G major chord**. Write in the number below the notes to indicate the scale degree of that note.



1. What are the notes are used to create a G major chord? ___ ___ ___ ___
2. Let’s play these notes. Give each note 2 counts.

Let’s analyze a **C major chord**. Write in the number below the notes to indicate the scale degree of that note.



1. What are the notes are used to create a C major chord? ___ ___ ___ ___
2. Let’s play these notes. Give each note 2 counts.

Step Two

Improvising using the D & G major chords

Jamming on D major – Improvised Part

Below is an example of a piece of music with chord changes.

- Each measure has a chord written above it. This helps the musician know what notes can be used during an improvised solo.
- The slash marks help the musician know how many beats the chord will be played. In this example each measure has four slash marks. This indicates that the musician will have four beats of music using a D major chord.

Double Bass

Jamming On D

Darrin Stohlberg

Let's improvise!

Try creating your own improvised solo using the notes of a D major chord.

1st time = Use only the notes from the D major chord and play each note for 2 beats.

2nd time = Use only the notes from the D major chord and play each note for 1 beats.

3rd time = Begin to create your own rhythms throughout the improvisation still using notes from the D major chord.

Jamming on D major – Accompaniment Part

Below is the accompaniment part. The accompaniment part is the music that will be played while another musician is creating an improvisation or solo.

Bass

Jamming On D

Darrin Stohlberg

Pizz. or Arco

5

The first musical staff shows a bass line in 4/4 time with a key signature of two sharps (D major). The notes are: D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter). The second staff continues with: D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter). The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

**Have the group play the accompaniment part while students improvise.*

Bass

Jamming On D

Darrin Stohlberg

Pizz. or Arco

5

The second musical staff is identical to the first, showing a bass line in 4/4 time with a key signature of two sharps (D major). The notes are: D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter). The second staff continues with: D4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter). The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Let's put it all together!

Jamming on G

Reviewing a **G major chord**. Write in the number below the notes to indicate the scale degree of that note.



What are the notes used to create a G major chord? ____ ____ ____ ____
 Let's learn the accompaniment part to *Jamming on G Major*

Bass

Jamming on G Major

Darrin Stohlberg

pizz. or arco



Let's improvise!

Try creating your own improvised solo using the notes of a G major chord.

- 1st time** = Use only the notes from the G major chord and play each note for 2 beats.
- 2nd time** = Use only the notes from the G major chord and play each note for 1 beats.
- 3rd time** = Create your own rhythms throughout the improvisation using notes from the G major chord.

Double Bass

Jamming on G Major

Darrin Stohlberg

Musical notation for 'Jamming on G Major' on a double bass. It consists of two staves in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The first staff has four measures, each with a 'G' chord label above a slash. The second staff starts with a measure number '5' and also has four measures, each with a 'G' chord label above a slash.

Try improvising using D major and G major Chords

Bass

D & G Jam

Darrin Stohlberg

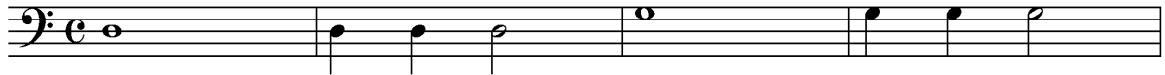
Musical notation for 'D & G Jam' on a bass. It consists of two staves in C major (no sharps or flats) and common time (C). The first staff has four measures: the first two are labeled 'D' and the last two are labeled 'G'. The second staff starts with a measure number '5' and has four measures: the first two are labeled 'D' and the last two are labeled 'G'.

Accompaniment

Bass

D & G Jam

Darrin Stohlberg



5



Write out the notes for the following chords.

D Major - 1st/root _____ 3rd _____ 5th _____ 8th _____
 G Major - 1st/root _____ 3rd _____ 5th _____ 8th _____

Bass

D & G Jam

Darrin Stohlberg



5



C Major Chord

Let's analyze a **C major chord**. Write in the number below the notes to indicate the scale degree of that note.

— — — — —

What are the notes are used to create a C major chord? ____ _

Bass

C Jam

Darrin Stohlberg

Bass

C Jam

Darrin Stohlberg

Putting three chords together!

Bass 3 Chords Crazyiness

[Composer]

Write out the notes for the following chords.

D Major - 1 st /root	_____	3 rd	_____	5 th	_____	8 th	_____
G Major - 1 st /root	_____	3 rd	_____	5 th	_____	8 th	_____
C Major - 1 st /root	_____	3 rd	_____	5 th	_____	8 th	_____

Bass 3 chord Crazyiness!

Darrin Stohlberg

In the next song, you only have one measure of each chord to improvise!

Bass

Switching Up The Chords

Darrin Stohlberg

5

- 10. For the first time, play each measure using half notes.
- 11. 2nd time, play each measure using quarter notes
- 12. 3rd time, improvise you own rhythms.

Bass

Switching Up The Chords

Darrin Stohlberg

5

Using more of the notes!!

We will begin to incorporate more notes so we can embellish our improvisations. How do we know what notes to use?

Below is Jamming in D. You will notice that there are no notes on beats 2 and 4. On beats 2 and 4 you will improvise using any of the notes in the D major scale. Beats 1 and 3 are using the notes that outline a D major chord. Beats 1 and 3 are using the notes that outline a D major chord.

**Typically, beats 1 and 3 of an improvisation will use the notes that make-up the chord (root, 3rd, 5th, & 8th). On beats 2 and 4, the musician is free to use any of the notes from the scale that corresponds with the chord.*

Jamming in D

Bass Darrin Stohlberg

Playing passing tones or notes not in the chord

Musical notation for 'Jamming in D' in bass clef, 4/4 time, key of D major. The first staff shows a sequence of notes: D2 (quarter), F#2 (quarter), A2 (quarter), B2 (quarter), D3 (quarter), F#3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), B3 (quarter). The second staff starts with a measure rest, followed by D3 (quarter), F#3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), B3 (quarter), D4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter). The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Jamming On D

Bass Darrin Stohlberg

Pizz. or Arco

Musical notation for 'Jamming On D' in bass clef, 4/4 time, key of D major. The first staff shows a sequence of notes: D2 (quarter), F#2 (quarter), A2 (quarter), B2 (quarter), D3 (quarter), F#3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), B3 (quarter). The second staff starts with a measure rest, followed by D3 (quarter), F#3 (quarter), A3 (quarter), B3 (quarter), D4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter). The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

Let's try improvising with passing tones in the key of G. Like we did in *Jamming on D*, you will improvise on beats 2 and 4 using any notes from the G major scale.

Bass

Jaming in G - Passing tones

Darrin Stohlberg

5

The musical notation consists of two staves in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The first staff contains a sequence of notes: G2 (quarter), B2 (quarter), D3 (quarter), E3 (quarter), G3 (quarter), B2 (quarter), D3 (quarter), E3 (quarter). The second staff starts with a measure rest labeled '5' and continues with: G3 (quarter), B2 (quarter), D3 (quarter), E3 (quarter), G3 (quarter), B2 (quarter), D3 (quarter), E3 (quarter).

Bass

Jamming on G Major

Darrin Stohlberg

pizz. or arco

5

The musical notation consists of two staves in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The first staff contains a sequence of notes: G2 (quarter), B2 (quarter), D3 (quarter), E3 (quarter), G3 (quarter), B2 (quarter), D3 (quarter), E3 (quarter). The second staff starts with a measure rest labeled '5' and continues with: G3 (quarter), B2 (quarter), D3 (quarter), E3 (quarter), G3 (quarter), B2 (quarter), D3 (quarter), E3 (quarter).

Let's try improvising with passing tones using more than one chord. Improvise the passing tones on beats 2 and 4 throughout *D & G Jam*. In measures using the D major chord, use notes from the D major scale. In the measures using the G major chord, use notes from the G major scale.

Bass **D & G Jam - Using Passing Tones** Darrin Stohlberg

5

Bass **D & G Jam** Darrin Stohlberg

5

Using passing tones in C major
On beats 2 and 4 you can play any note from the C major scale.

Bass **C Jam - Using Passing Tones**

Darrin Stohlberg

Musical notation for 'C Jam - Using Passing Tones' in bass clef, 4/4 time. The first staff contains a sequence of notes: C2, D2, E2, F2, G2, A2, B2, C3. The second staff, starting with a measure rest and a '5' above the staff, contains notes: C2, D2, E2, F2, G2, A2, B2, C3. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Accompaniment for C Jam

Bass **C Jam**

Darrin Stohlberg

Musical notation for 'C Jam' in bass clef, 4/4 time. The first staff contains notes: C2, D2, E2, F2, G2, A2, B2, C3. The second staff, starting with a measure rest and a '5' above the staff, contains notes: C2, D2, E2, F2, G2, A2, B2, C3. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

Bass **3 Chord Craziiness - With Passing Tones**

Darrin Stohlberg

Musical notation for the piece "3 Chord Craziiness - With Passing Tones" by Darrin Stohlberg. It consists of two staves of music in bass clef, 4/4 time, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The first staff begins with a G chord and contains four measures of music. The second staff begins with a C chord and contains four measures of music. The notation features quarter notes and half notes, with some notes marked with a fermata. There are horizontal lines below the staves, possibly indicating fingerings or bowings.

Bass **3 Chords Craziiness**

[Composer]

Musical notation for the piece "3 Chords Craziiness" by [Composer]. It consists of two staves of music in bass clef, 4/4 time, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The first staff begins with a G chord and contains four measures of music. The second staff begins with a C chord and contains four measures of music. The notation features eighth and sixteenth notes, with some notes marked with a fermata. There are horizontal lines below the staves, possibly indicating fingerings or bowings.

Putting it ALL TOGETHER!!

The time has now come for you to improvise your own solo!

First Play: Play only quarter notes. On beats 1 and 3 use the notes for the D chord (D, F#, A, D). On beats 2 and 4 use any note from the D major scale.

Second Play: Begin to start improvising different rhythms. Try using whole notes, half notes, quarter notes, and eighth notes. Remember to still use only notes from the D major chord on beats 1 and 3.

Third Play: Try these same techniques on the songs *Jamming on G* and *C Jam*.

Double Bass

Jamming On D

Darrin Stohlberg

Musical notation for Double Bass, titled "Jamming On D" by Darrin Stohlberg. The piece is in 4/4 time and D major. It consists of two staves of rhythmic patterns. The first staff has four measures, each with a "D" chord marking above it and a slash pattern representing a quarter-note rhythm. The second staff starts at measure 5 and also has four measures with "D" chord markings and slash patterns. The notation is in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#).

Bass

Jamming On D

Darrin Stohlberg

Musical notation for Bass, titled "Jamming On D" by Darrin Stohlberg. The piece is in 4/4 time and D major. It consists of two staves of melodic lines. The first staff is marked "Pizz. or Arco" and contains four measures of quarter notes. The second staff starts at measure 5 and contains four measures of quarter notes. The notation is in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#).

First Play: Play only quarter notes. On beats 1 and 3 use only the notes from the chord. Beats 2 and 4 use any note from the scale.

Second Play: Begin to start improvising different rhythms. Try using whole notes, half notes, quarter notes, and eighth notes. Remember to still use only notes from the chord on beats 1 and 3.

D & G Jam

Bass

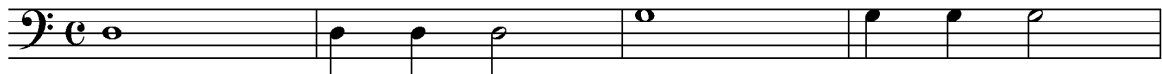
Darrin Stohlberg



D & G Jam

Bass

Darrin Stohlberg



Appendix H

Judge's Assessment

1. Pitch Recognition

a. Student played within chord structure.

Evaluator #1 _____ Evaluator #2 _____ Evaluator #3 _____

b. Student used various pitches from the scales.

Evaluator #1 _____ Evaluator #2 _____ Evaluator #3 _____

2. Interpretation/creativity

a. Student demonstrated melodic shape

Evaluator #1 _____ Evaluator #2 _____ Evaluator #3 _____

b. Student used a variety of rhythms

Evaluator #1 _____ Evaluator #2 _____ Evaluator #3 _____

c. Student maintained a steady beat

Evaluator #1 _____ Evaluator #2 _____ Evaluator #3 _____

3. Other Musical Factors

a. Student demonstrated quality tone

Evaluator #1 _____ Evaluator #2 _____ Evaluator #3 _____

b. Rate overall quality of the improvisation

Evaluator #1 _____ Evaluator #2 _____ Evaluator #3 _____

