TRAINING THE MULTI-INSTRUMENTALIST

STUDY GUIDE

NURTURING THE STUDENT WHO WANTS TO “DO IT ALL” IN MUSIC
Traditional music education often prioritize specialization towards becoming highly proficient on a single instrument. Some music students, however, identify less with playing a single instrument, but take a broader approach to music making through playing multiple instruments along with singing, composition, recording and production. These highly motivated students can provide tremendous opportunities and challenges for the music educator!

Spark Curiosity!
Teaching and learning multiple instruments can provide a powerful platform for instilling a focused and efficient approach to practicing due to the increased demands and time commitment.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
1. Develop and reinforce effective practice techniques using a “quality over quantity” approach
2. Discover and apply musical concepts and techniques that are common across multiple instruments
3. Apply developing skills through music composition, songwriting, and/or production

LESSON PLANS
Consider developing lesson plans to meet these learning objectives through the study of multiple instruments. Here are some ideas to get you started:

• Have students create a daily practice journal as a multi-instrumentalist that provides a specific schedule and goals for each session. Over the course of each session, shorter, more focused amounts of time will be dedicated to each instrument (e.g. 20 minutes on each instrument x 3 instruments = 60 minute practice session.) Also, remember to schedule breaks for each practice session! Set specific goals for each instrument that are realistic yet challenging.

• Have students identify the commonalities and transferable techniques between the instruments. Does learning an instrument help with singing? Does singing help in playing an instrument? What techniques are common across certain instruments? What techniques are entirely unique to specific instruments? Does understanding multiple instruments help when playing with others in an ensemble?

• Encourage students to apply their developing skills on multiple instruments through composition, songwriting and/or production. What are the roles of the different instruments in the composition? What are the advantages and disadvantages of writing and recording music doing “it all yourself”?

RESOURCE