

Dear Band Parents:

Today was our first day of band lessons. All of the students met with me to go over band procedures and take a look at our start-up packet of information including our first practice assignment. We talked about the correct embouchure position for woodwinds and brass, hand position for percussion, and practiced blowing/buzzing/playing rhythms from the 3rd page of the handout called “Play All Rhythms”. This is the start of homework for the week.

We used **the mouthpiece ONLY** for woodwind and brass players during our first lesson, so expect some duck-like sounds this week. Percussion students begin their studies with mallets but we will work using the drum pads for this week. I have asked students-**please don't take the instruments out until our next lesson**. Students should play their “instrument” (mouthpiece or drum pad) daily in a quiet room with a closed door. Learning the mouth/hand position/counting/decoding symbols for notes and rests is plenty for this week and an important first step in the process of learning a new instrument!

We read through the basic note/ rest values of whole notes/rests, half notes/rests and quarter notes/rests. We did exercises on the mouthpiece/drum pads during lessons. We will not start reading music on the staff for another week or two, but students can read rhythm/note values because of their music class with **Mrs. Arcari**.

This week, all students should play the exercises from “Play all rhythms” (and beyond, if they are ready!) to play on their mouthpiece/drum pad. The next step is the RHYTHM STUDIES page of the handout for more practice (it's page 43 in our book at the back of the book) which many students will be ready for after a few practice sessions using “Play all Rhythms”. In addition, students should read about their instrument (pages 2 and 3) of their book. I am asking students to color in a treble clef for each day of practice on a chart at the back of their packets. The minimum practice requirement is five days of practice and students may practice MORE if they are interested!!! ☺ Five/six days of practice will be great progress! For woodwind and brass players, this initial practice on the mouthpiece helps develop their mouth muscles (embouchure). Practice should be for about 10-15 minutes each day at this point.

If your child doesn't have his/her instruction book for band, please purchase THE STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE book 1 for your child's instrument this week. Each student will receive their permanent lesson schedule for the year and music folder next week at our lessons.

Our **first rehearsal** will take place next week **in the gym** on **Thursday, September 18th at 8am**. **Please plan on dropping off your student a little earlier at 7:50**, so there is time to set up before we begin. We will be going over our rehearsal procedures and etiquette to start, and will also look at some of the rhythm exercises from this week's practice assignment, as well.

Thank you for your support of our music program and please let me know if you have any questions. I am excited to be joining you as the Band Director at Mill Hill School and looking forward to a fun and musical year with your children!

Best Regards,

Julia Brion

PRACTICE = FREQUENT REPITION OF MATERIAL