"Making a Percussive Game Plan"

2023 Oklahoma Bandmasters Association

Presented by

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2:45PM – 3:45PM, Renaissance Hotel and Conference Center

Tulsa, Oklahoma

Making a "Percussive" Game Plan

Kennan Wylie

Every teacher needs an effective "game plan" for successful results. In percussion education, this plan will include items such as when to start snare drum, when to start keyboards, when to introduce rhythms, when to start rolls, when to introduce timpani, how many rudiments should be covered, and so many more decisions. A successful game plan can help you achieve these expectations.

The best way to answer these questions is to determine what EXPECTATIONS you have for YOUR percussionists by the end of their first year. The selection of curriculum will also play a vital role in helping your students meet these goals.

I will share some of my first-year goals and the basic plan I use to help my students achieve these goals. The "what, when, and how" will all be covered using easy to read graphs with explanation.

This clinic will discuss several different types of teaching scenarios.

Scenario #1

Full time percussion instructor. 4 - 5 times <u>percussion class</u> weekly 35 – 45 minute classes.

<u>Scenario #2</u>

Full time percussion instructor. 2 - 3 times <u>percussion class</u> weekly 35 – 45 minute classes.

Scenario #3

Non percussion instructor. 4 - 5 times percussion class weekly 35 – 45 minute classes.

Scenario #4

Non percussion instructor. 2 - 3 times <u>percussion class</u> weekly 35 – 45 minute classes.

Scenario #5

Non percussion instructor, Homogeneous <u>Band Class</u> 4 - 5 times weekly 35 – 45 minute classes.

Scenario #6

Non percussion instructor, Homogeneous <u>Band Class</u> 2 - 3 times weekly 35 – 45 minute classes.

<u>Scenario #7</u>

Music instructor, Homogeneous <u>Band Class</u> 1 time weekly 35 – 45 minute classes.

Year 1 Beginning Percussion - **"What to do"**

Snare Drum

Scenarios:	. Design understanding of grin hand negition and strates
1,2,3,4,5,6,7	 Basic understanding of grip, hand position, and stroke. Produce appropriate rebound stroke / controlled stroke (down, tap, up)
1	 Demonstrate 14 warmups that will cover essential techniques including singles, doubles, accents, flams, paradiddles.
	 Proficiently perform basic rhythms including quarter note/rest, half note/ rest, whole note/rest, dotted notes, 8th note/rest, 16th note/rest, 8th/16th note triplet while counting aloud and foot tap.
	Basic understanding of cut time / odd meter time.
2	 Demonstrate 10-14 warmups that will cover essential techniques including singles, doubles, accents, flams, paradiddles.
3	 Demonstrate 10 warmups that will cover essential techniques including singles, doubles, accents, flams, paradiddles.
2,3	 Proficiently perform basic rhythms including quarter note/rest, half note/ rest, whole note/rest, dotted notes, 8th note/rest, 16th note/rest, 8th/16th note triplet while counting aloud and foot tap.
	• Basic understanding of cut time / odd meter time.
4,5,6	 Demonstrate 8 warmups that will cover essential techniques including singles, doubles, accents, flams, paradiddles.
	 Proficiently perform basic rhythms including quarter note/rest, half note/ rest, whole note/rest, dotted notes, 8th note/rest, 16th note/rest, 8th note triplet while counting aloud and foot tap.
7	 Demonstrate 6 warmups that will cover essential techniques including singles, doubles, accents, paradiddles.
	 Proficiently perform basic rhythms including guarter note/rest, half note/

rest, whole note/rest, dotted notes, 8th note/rest

<u>Keyboard</u>

Scenarios:	
1,2,3,4,5,6,7	 Basic understanding of grip, hand position, and stroke. Produce appropriate stroke Understanding of all tetrachords / major scales
1,2,3,4,5	 Proficient keyboard identification – Low "F" up 2.5 octaves Proficient treble clef staff identification – Low "F" up 2.5 octaves
6	 Proficient keyboard identification – Low "F" up 2.0 octaves Proficient treble clef staff identification – Low "F" up 2.0 octaves
7	 Proficient keyboard identification – Low "F" up 1.5 octaves Proficient treble clef staff identification – Low "F" up 1.5 octaves

<u>Timpani</u>

Scenarios:

1	 Basic bass clef stand identification Produce appropriate stroke. Understanding of hand position, technique, beating area Knowledge of drum ranges / proficiently tune drum
2,3,4,5	 Basic bass clef stand identification Produce appropriate stroke. Understanding of hand position, technique, beating area
6	• Basic Knowledge

Accessory Instruments

Scenarios:

1,2,3,4,5	 Basic knowledge / technique for bass drum Basic knowledge / technique for tambourine Basic knowledge / technique for crash cymbals and suspended cymbal
6,7	 Basic knowledge / technique for bass drum Basic knowledge / technique for crash cymbals and suspended cymbal

Latin Percussion Instruments

Scenarios:

1,2,3 • Basic knowledge / technique for bongos, congas, claves, maracas, guiro, cowbell, timbales

Drum Set

Scenarios:

1

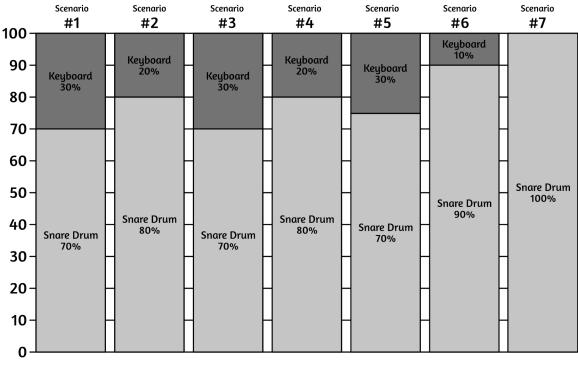
- Basic knowledge of set-up, foot technique for BD and Hi hat.
 - Basic coordination skills for fundamental rock, jazz, Latin patterns.

Year 1 Beginning Percussion - **"When to do What"**

Consider sketching out a monthly plan with some weekly goals. This make take some time to develop the timing of what works for you in your situation. For example, what might work for someone who sees their students 5 times a week might not be the same for those who see their students 3 times a week. Adjustments will have to be made.

Here is a small sample of Mr. Wylie's plan for the first semester (18 weeks) of school. Notice the graphs help illustrate the percentages.

August



<u>Scenario #1-2</u>

Snare Drum

Concentrate only on the basic rebound stroke. We will do this on the pad only. This legato stroke will be the most universal stroke that we can apply to every percussion instrument. 8 on a hand, paradiddle / 8th note combinations. Introduction of basic rhythm: quarter note/rest, half note/rest, whole note/rest, 8th note/rest, dotted quarter note.

Keyboard

• Basic music theory instruction – staff, clef, measure, bar lines, accidentals, naturals, sharps, flats, etc.

• Use MusicTheory.net to learn note recognition and staff identification.

Tape over any marked notes on the keys.





<u>Snare Drum</u>

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<u>Keyboard</u>

• Basic music theory instruction – staff, clef, measure, bar lines, accidentals, naturals, sharps, flats, etc.

• Use MusicTheory.net to learn note recognition and staff identification.

Tape over any marked notes on the keys.

RRRRRRR - LLLLLLLL (repeat 4 times)

.

RLRLRR



<u>Scenario #5-6</u>

#‡

Snare Drum

• Concentrate only on the basic rebound stroke. We will do this on the pad only. This legato stroke will be the most universal stroke that we can apply to every percussion instrument. 8 on a hand, paradiddles.

Introduction of basic rhythm: quarter note/rest, half note/rest, whole note/rest.

<u>Keyboard</u>

• Basic music theory instruction – staff, clef, measure, bar lines, accidentals, naturals, sharps, flats, etc.

• Use MusicTheory.net to learn note recognition and staff identification.

Tape over any marked notes on the keys.







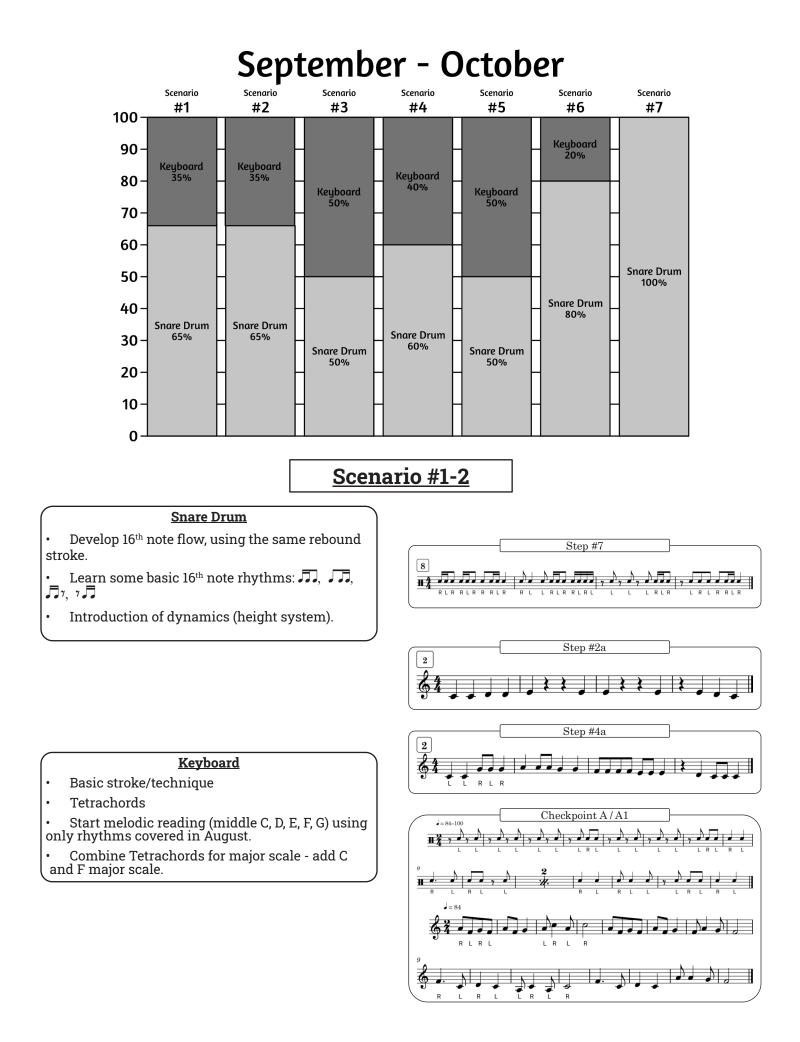
<u>Scenario #7</u>

Snare Drum

• Concentrate only on the basic rebound stroke. We will do this on the pad only. This legato stroke will be the most universal stroke that we can apply to every percussion instrument.

RRRRRRR - LLLLLLL (repeat 4 times)

8 on a hand,.



<u>Snare Drum</u>

Keyboard

• Start melodic reading (middle C, D, E, F, G) using only rhythms covered in August.

Combine Tetrachords for major scale - add C

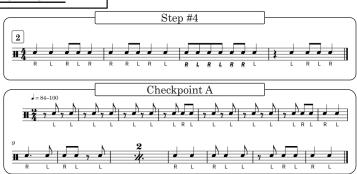
• Continue basic rhythms (quarter notes, half notes, whole notes)

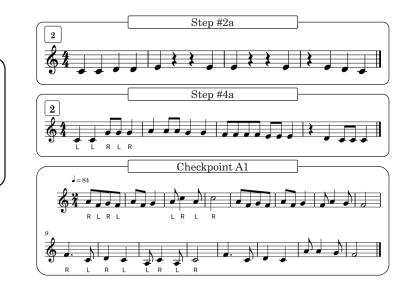
• Continue basic 8th note rhythms.

Basic stroke/technique

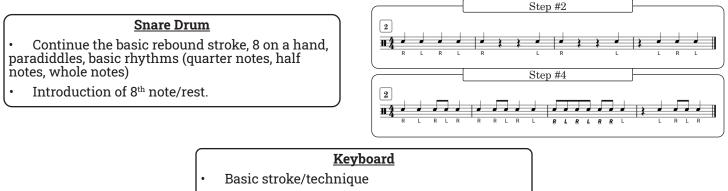
Tetrachords

and F major scale.





<u>Scenario #5-6</u>



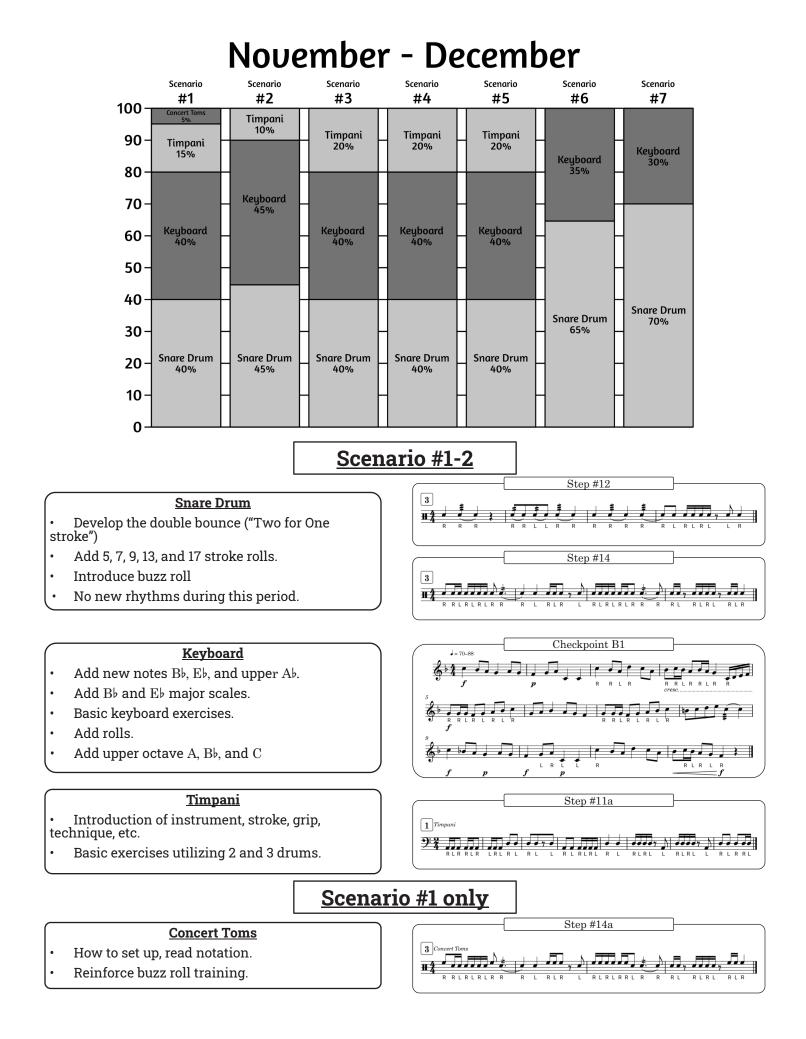
Tetrachords

<u>Scenario #7</u>

<u>Snare Drum</u>

• Introduction of basic rhythm: quarter note/rest, half note/rest, and whole note/rest.





Snare Drum

- Develop $16^{\rm th}$ note flow, using the same rebound stroke.

• Learn some basic 16th note rhythms: ,, ,, ,,

• Introduction of dynamics (height system).

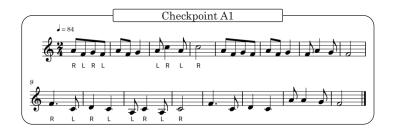
<u>Keyboard</u>

- Basic stroke/technique
- Tetrachords

• Start melodic reading (middle C, D, E, F, G) using only rhythms covered in August.

• Combine Tetrachords for major scale - add C and F major scale.





<u>Timpani</u>

• Introduction of instrument, stroke, grip, technique, etc.

<u>Scenario #5-6</u>

Snare Drum

• Continue basic rhythms (quarter notes, half notes, whole notes)

Continue basic 8th note rhythms.

<u>Keyboard</u>

• Start melodic reading (middle C, D, E, F, G) using only rhythms covered in August.

• Combine Tetrachords for major scale - add C and F major scale.





<u>Scenario #7</u>

Snare Drum

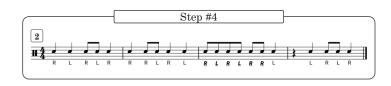
• Continue the basic rebound stroke, 8 on a hand, paradiddles, basic rhythms (quarter notes, half notes, whole notes)

• Introduction of 8th note/rest.

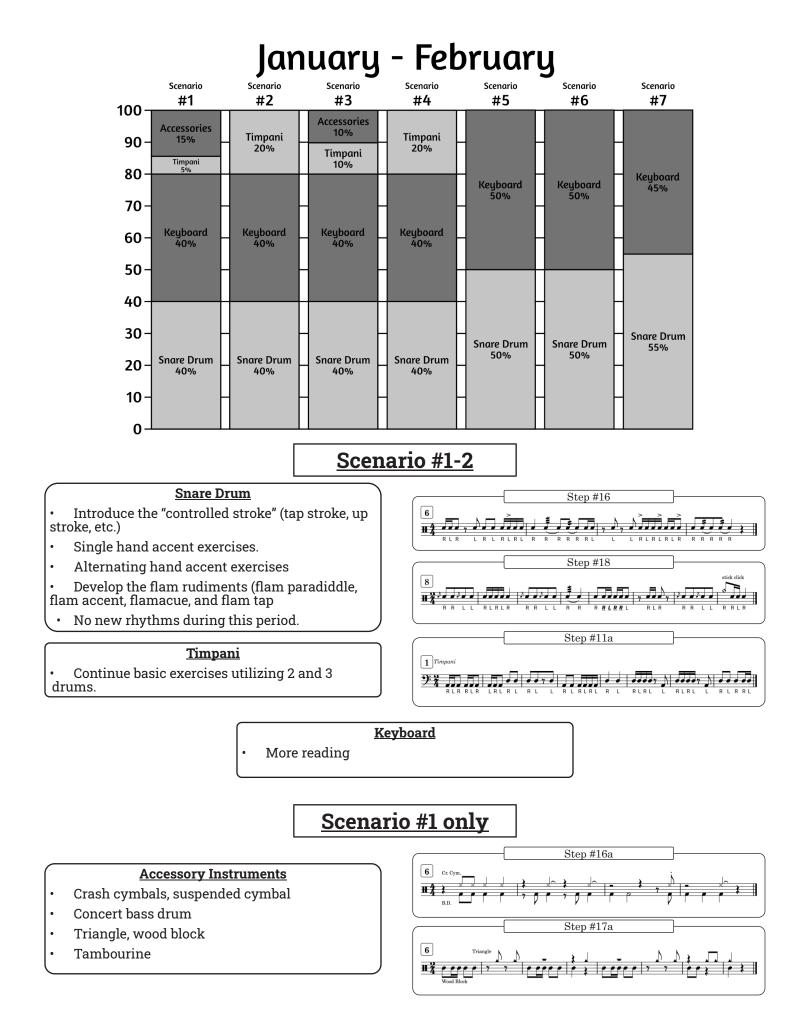
<u>Keyboard</u>

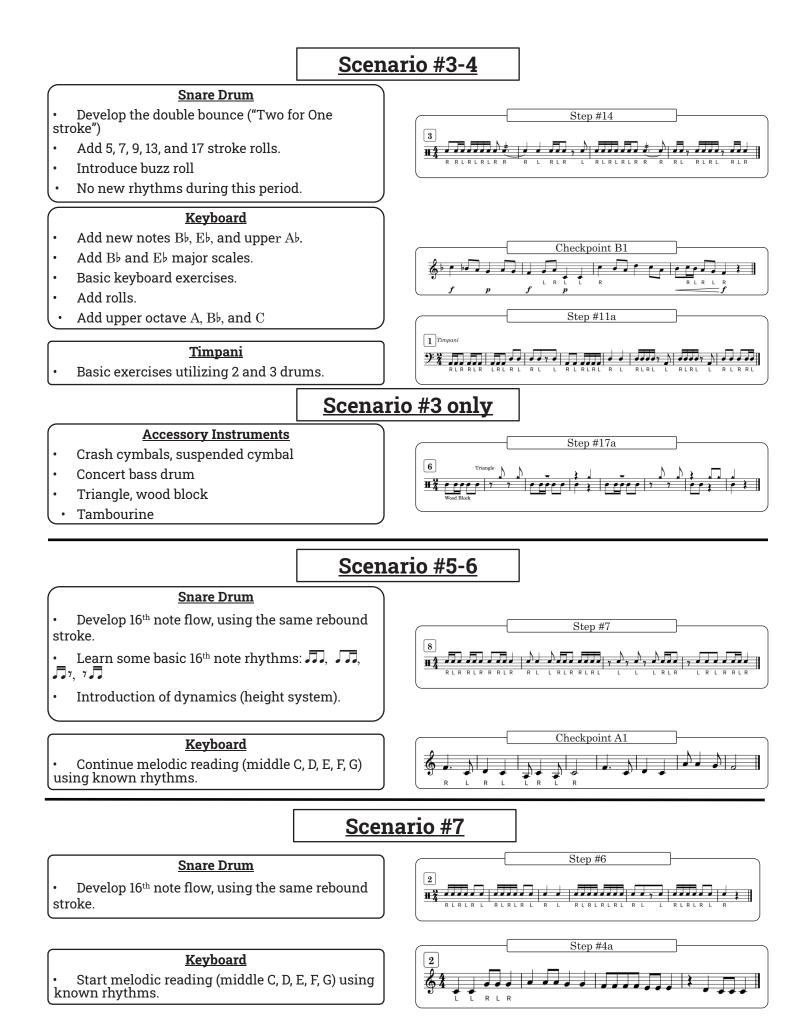
• Start melodic reading (middle C, D, E, F, G) using only rhythms covered in August.

• Combine Tetrachords for major scale - add C and F major scale.

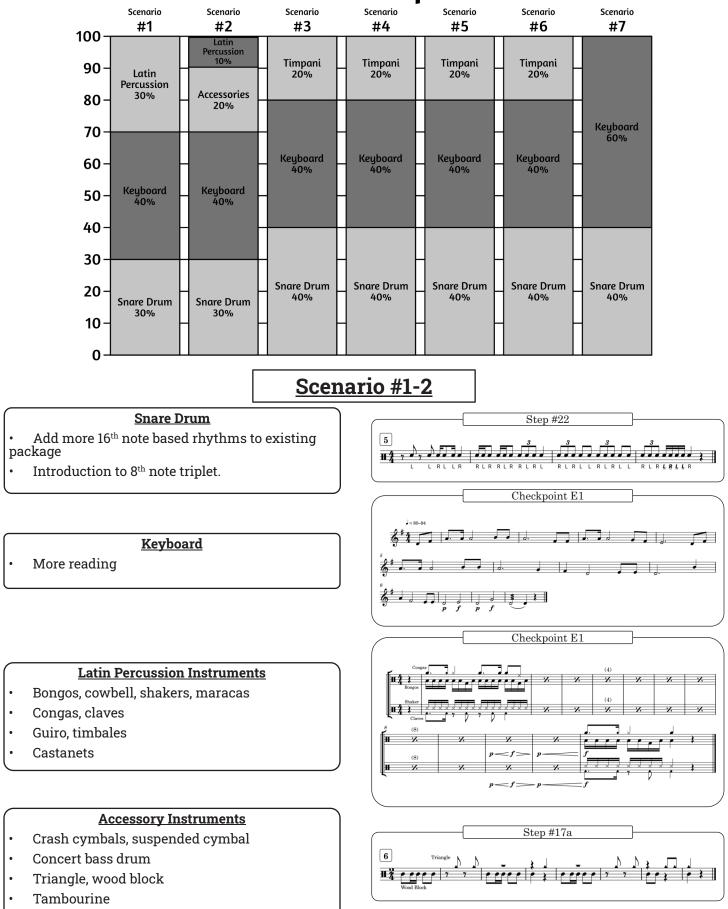


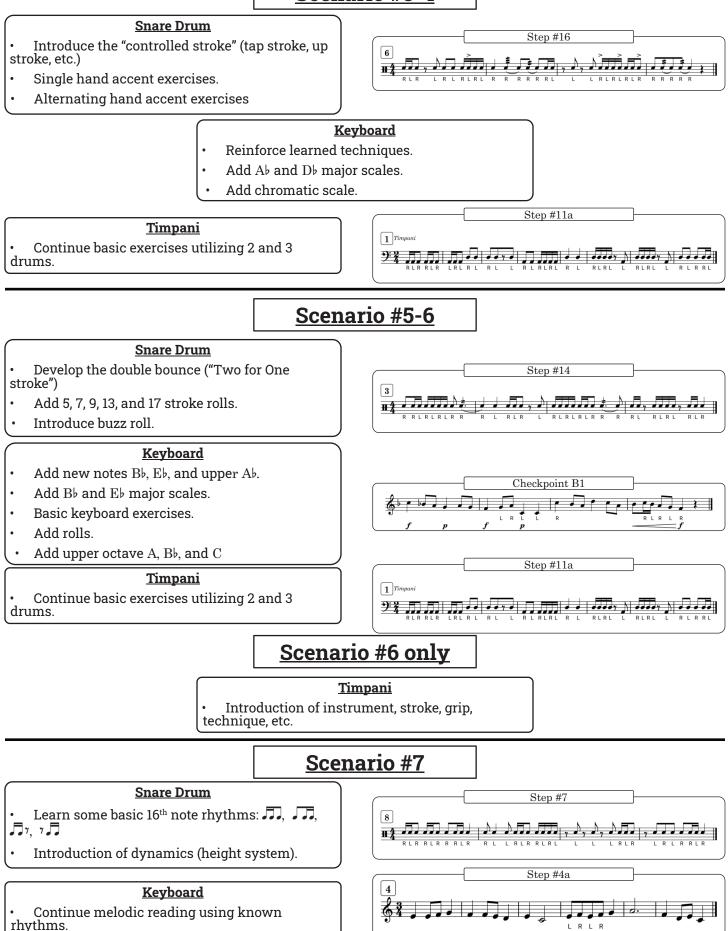


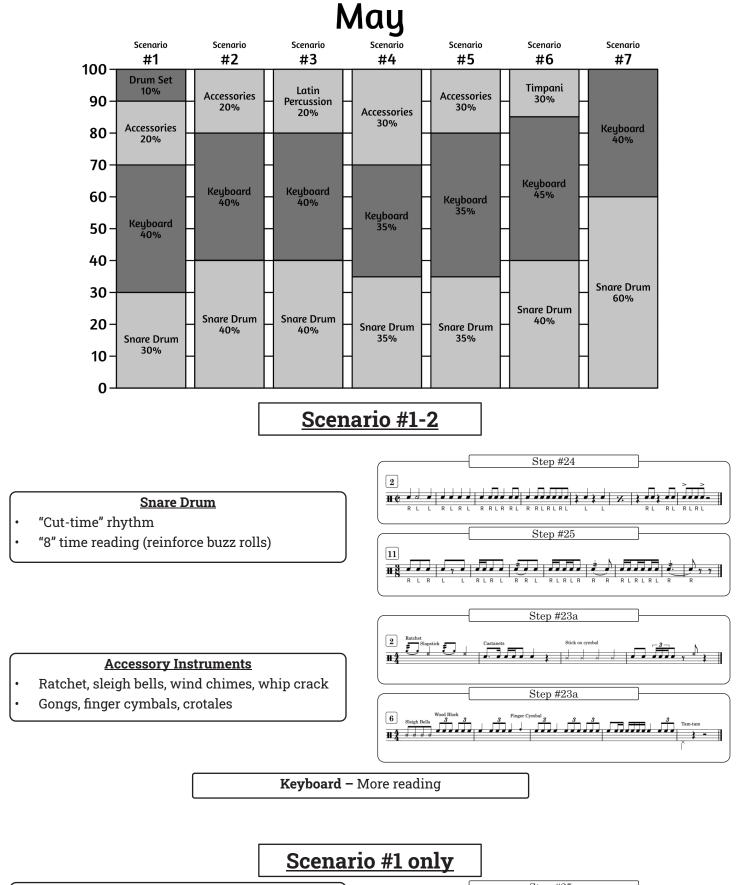




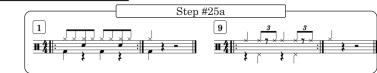
March - April

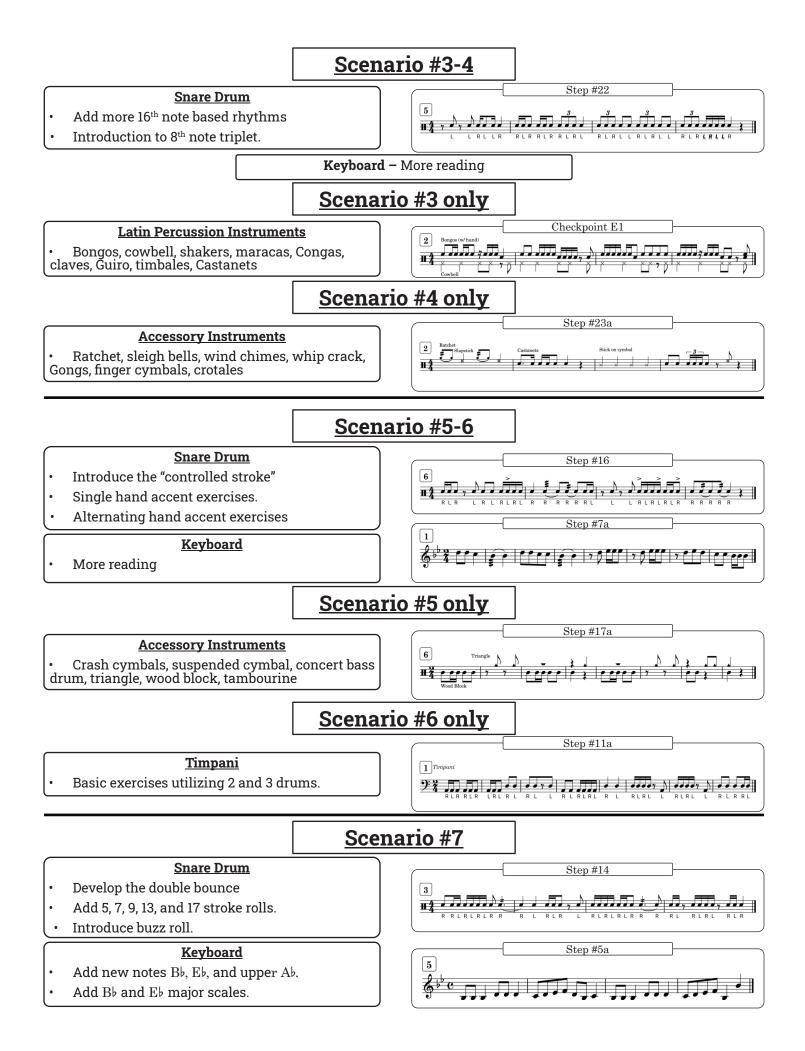






- Drum set
- Introduction to drum set.
- Basic rock, jazz, and Latin beats.





Year 1 Beginning Percussion - "How to do it"

Select a curriculum that will allow the best results to be achieved, not necessarily the quickest or easiest. Choose one that feels comfortable to you. Select one that has flexibility and options for you to help you reach your desired goals. Also keep in mind the musical value of the selected curriculum. Appropriate literature even at the beginning level can greatly impact a young percussionist's musicianship.

The "accountability" factor can also be another big key. Another words, once new concepts are taught / introduced they should be included throughout the year. This tends to make the student more "accountable" about what they have learned.

Another consideration is having beginning percussion students perform a solo and/or ensemble for a performance. What a great tool to continue their development in specific areas. Also, use any potential full beginner band music to help teach accessory instruments as well as keyboard training. These types of opportunities are very useful and can give students a "break" from their daily curriculum while still learning.

In closing, whatever "game plan" you design for your students, try to stick with it and give it time. Adjustments can be made throughout the process or from year to year. Provide realistic goals that will benefit your percussionists as well as your band program. Best of luck!

Additional Considerations:

- 1. Meeting weekly before or after school for additional time (a la sectional)
- 2. Creating a "Drum Club" so students can attend weekly for additional time
- Online resources educational percussion tutoring.
 Ask local or visiting percussion specialists to attend monthly or bi monthly to monitor progress and assist with any teacher related questions.

5. Encourage high school percussionists to visit (possibly create a "Percussion Buddy" program)

Suggested methods: Percussion Method: Simple Steps to Successful Beginning Percussion – Kennan Wylie

Band Method: Essential Elements – Hal Leonard

Mr. Wylie's helpful hints

1. Keep it simple

Try not to over analyze beginning Percussion. Use your ears and common sense and you will be fine. Percussion is NOT rocket science! Avoid "over-thinking" the process of teaching beginning percussionists.

2. More play, less talk

Keep your class moving by playing more than talking. Kids want to play, not listen to me ramble.

3. Listen to each student individually daily

Try to listen to each student play by themselves daily. For example, choose a warm up and go down the line. This will help you as much as it will help the student. Peer and self-evaluation is invaluable.

4. Count aloud / Tap foot

One of the best ways to develop a stronger sense of pulse. If you can count it, you understand it, and you can play what you understand.

5. Be relentless on warmups

Every day of every week of every month rep the warm-ups! The music will only sound as good as the warm-ups.

6. Metronome ALL the time

Sounds like a no-brainer, but many educators are not consistent with usage.

7. Percussion is visual

What you see is what you hear. Sticks too high, sticks too low, not striking in the middle of drum, beating spots on bar, timpani ,etc.

8. "Air Drumming"

One of the best ways to evaluate student counting is to have the student count aloud while "drumming" in the air. This concept also works well when playing keyboards by having the students name the notes aloud while playing in the air.

9. Be careful of uniformity

Having all students look the same is a great goal, but not the most important goal. The muscles of young students develop at different rates and may cause some variations of the intended technique. Nothing wrong with a pinky hanging off, or maybe a slightly too open fulcrum, or even a slight awkward stick angle.

10. Be patient and stay the course

It is going to sound bad before it sounds good. Not getting immediate results should not deter you from your long term goals. Be patient, repetitive, consistent, and results will eventually occur.

All music examples included in this handout are from:

<u>"Simple Steps to Successful Beginning Percussion"</u>

For more info come by our Midwest Booth #1631 or visit our website at www.kwylie.com.

SPECIAL THANKS TO

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