

◆ TEACHER'S EDITION ◆

THE YOUNG MUSICIAN'S TEXTBOOK

VOL. 22 • NO. 1

intune

MONTHLY

HOW TO PLAY

NO DOUBT'S
"JUST A GIRL"

**MODE
MOBILITY**

**WHAT'S A
PLUG-IN?**



GRACIE ABRAMS

Leading with heartfelt lyrics and an emotive voice,
she's gaining followers with every show and new release

- ◆ The Tao of Intune
- ◆ Making Your Principal Your Advocate
- ◆ Using AI To Become a Better Musician
- ◆ Best Music Schools: Mastering a Masters

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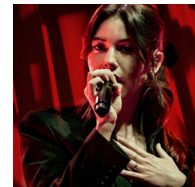
WHILE WE'VE WRITTEN before suggesting how teachers can integrate In Tune into their curricula, the start of In Tune's publishing season is always a good time to revisit the theme.

Ours is a reading resource meant to expand the music education curriculum and add information and perspectives that attempt to address the interests of a diverse collection of students. Whether they're enrolled in band, orchestra, chorus or general music, some students maintain musical interests beside or beyond what is taught in school. In Tune seeks to pique those interests with content meant to be absorbed privately, individually, and before or after class. It's the educator's opportunity to then either assess comprehension through classroom discussion or build upon the content through project work that could include everything from music creation and/or production to ensemble work and beyond. We also hope that the activity/lesson plans posted on the "Teacher Resources" tab on the home page of intunemonthly.com will add further fuel to the fire.

Over the years (this is In Tune's 22nd school year season) we've heard a teacher or two request our editorial calendar. We certainly understand the need for planning! However, while we do schedule our special editorial reports on things like "going to college for music" in our October and February issues and then the marching arts in March, we invent In Tune issues on a 30-day cycle. We do this to produce as timely and relevant a mix of stories as possible. There are some that are indeed "evergreen," like our "Icons" column or our features on instruments. However, our decisions on how to combine those features in a given issue depends on our cover subjects, chosen as we go, and what's going on in music in the moment, for balance.

We hope you can find ways to marry our content with your work, that you will value the serendipity we offer your students, and that our products will help you keep your program and your students in tune. ●

Teachers can go to intunemonthly.com/lessonplans for full lesson plans and videos. This month, lesson plans are available for the following stories:



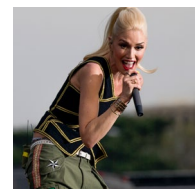
Gracie Abrams

Despite the pressures and challenges of the music industry, this 25-year old singer/songwriter remains grounded and committed to her art. As she grows and pushes herself to evolve as an artist, Gracie Abrams is poised to become one of the defining voices of her generation.



Mode Mobility

Modes have many practical uses for contemporary musicians as players and composers. Practicing them helps us hear and play more flexibly inside major and minor keys. They also open our minds to new sounds.



How To Play "Just A Girl" by No Doubt

The first single released from No Doubt's Tragic Kingdom album in 1995, the singles "Just a Girl," (along with "Don't Speak") established No Doubt and its singer Gwen Stefani as a major force in 90's punk/pop. Our writer breaks it down in this "Learning New Songs" episode.



2025 Best Music Schools

Twice each school year, In Tune publishes a feature story about going to college for music. Rather than a ranking of "Best Music Schools," we profile the essential task of choosing which school is best for you. This installment focuses on the application process, and the impact of school size on the student experience.

For more, go to intunemonthly.com/subscribe

The Tao of In Tune

AS WE POINTED OUT in this space last spring, “The Tao Of In Tune” is meant to explain why we write what we write, and we’ve rarely been as compelled to do so as with the advent of our new feature on getting a masters degree. The essence of our decision lies in our observation that music education is sitting along a fault line, “higher ed” now minting new music teachers with a raft of skills for the much changed modern music world. There is no instrument, no piece of music, no teaching technique that has been touched by technology or new methods. If you became a teacher after 2020, you’re probably fully equipped. Before that, not so much. Continuing education is the answer and can take you in any number of new directions... Separately, here are a few notes on the content in the current issue of In Tune:



MUSIC NEWS

Our collection of music news is designed to keep music students aware of the broader music world around them. This issue’s vignettes include “Kennedy Center Honors Music Legends,” “Latin Music Week Returns to Miami,” “Chalamet Channels Dylan in Upcoming Biopic,” “Filipino Budots Dance Trends on TikTok,” and more.



INFLUENCES

Here’s how the influences of modern rock band Pierce The Veil connect back through time to The Who.



MEDIA

Our monthly collection of music media features the new book *And the Roots of Rhythm Remain* - by Joe Boyd, a podcast from Funk maestro and

Vulfpeck guitarist Cory Wong called “Wong Notes” on the Premier Guitar network featuring extended interviews with John Mayer, Peter Frampton, up-and-coming players like Yvette Young and Molly Tuttle (plus others), and a video of Lalah Hathaway stunning Robert Glasper by singing three notes at once, and more.



FRONTRUNNER

This month’s Frontrunner column features another collection of artists on the rise, bracketed by a list of noteworthy songs curated with student musicians in mind. This issue’s five are Jimin (of BTS fame, now soloing,) British singer/songwriter Jesse Ware, Ivan Cornejo (an American singer/songwriter who creates and performs regional Mexican music,) jazz pianist and composer Luther Allison, and pop singer/sonwriter Morgan Wade.



WHAT DO YOU DO?

John Bastianelli is CEO of Slate Digital, creators of audio production tools including mixing/mastering plug-ins and digital modeling microphones.

MEMORABLE MUSIC MUSEUMS

A visit to the American Jazz Museum in Kansas City, Missouri, offers a stunning experience highlighting the sights and sounds of a uniquely American art form.



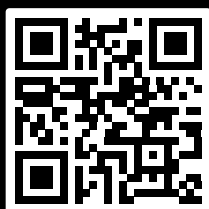
MUSIC THAT RESONATES

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Making Your Principal Your Advocate

Four Steps To School-Wide Relationship Building

In an open-ended survey in a large school district representing urban, suburban, and rural communities, principals were asked to provide the answer to the question, “What one word would you use to describe your music teacher?” The positive responses shared just below thus describe those qualities that these building level leaders value in their music educators. Responses were sorted and organized into like descriptors as follows:

Communicative, Collegial, Caring, Dedicated, Passionate, Committed, Success-oriented, Organized, Dynamic, Positive, Team-builder, Encouraging, Flexible, Professional, Knowledgeable, Advocate, Creative, Talented, Effective, Responsible, Motivating, Inspiring, Helpful, Content-oriented, and Demanding

An alternative option was also provided for those principals who may not have had the same type of responses. They were asked to complete the sentence, “To improve our music program, I would ask my music teachers to. . .” and their responses were organized and sorted as follows:

Communicate, Communicate, Communicate; Coordinate/Collaborate with Colleagues; Recruit and Retain More Students; Articulate with Feeder Schools; Focus on Building a Group Identity; Promote More; and Perform More

So what does this tell us? This second set of responses may have been the result of any manner or reasons, but whatever the case, it is evident that the lacking qualities are nearly the same as the valued qualities provided in the first, more positive set of responses.

The best music educators have programs that also reach beyond the confines of what happens in the classroom and performance venues. Their programs have become a part of the fabric that is woven into the culture of the school and thereby serve to enhance the entire school climate—an environment that principals work tirelessly to provide.

So how might this be achieved? Communication and engagement are chief among many considerations. Below are four (4) ideas that engage the principal, the faculty and staff, and the student body ultimately creating a more constructive and instructive environment through music.



COMMUNICATION IS KEY: Keeping Your Principal in the Loop

It's obvious from the survey referenced above that effective communication is the most highly-valued asset appreciated by the school principal. New teachers should consult with their principals before embarking on any major projects to ensure they understand the related school policies and procedures particularly when it comes to fund-raising. Event scheduling is another critical factor that can be a source of great consternation. Unless instructed otherwise, the principal should be given the opportunity to review all proposed activities of the music program well in advance to ensure that there are no conflicts. It's also important to keep the principal advised of the ongoing achievements of your students both as an ensemble as well as individuals. (You don't want to be the best kept secret in the building!) On a regular basis, remind your principal of your schedule and ensure that an invitation is extended for him/her to take part in a significant way whenever the situation presents itself. Offer to have your ensembles/soloists perform at events being hosted at the school such as parent meetings, administrative meetings, and community meetings. Finally, keep a smile on your face and remain relentlessly positive. In many cases, principals must deal with a good bit of negativity during the day. Be the person everyone

likes to see coming down the hallway. Your can-do attitude and upbeat nature will be appreciated.

FAMILIARIZE YOUR PRINCIPAL WITH THE MAGIC OF MUSIC: **Using the “Come on Down” approach**

There’s nothing like seeing the excitement that is created by our programs so don’t be shy about inviting your principal into your classroom to see the magic first hand. Ask your administrator to help hand out instruments to your newest students or to serve as an audience member for an upcoming performance. And don’t forget meeting the parents. Principals love to get in front of parents so ask them to serve as the featured speaker at the first parent meeting or to host the first concert of the year when the students and parents are most excited. The First Performance National Day of Celebration Concert Toolkit, available to download for free at nammfoundation.org/fpndoc, has a script that your principal can read from, or you can modify the script to suit your own situation. Certificates are also available to download so even better if your principal can stick around to award them and get photos with the students and their parents. Don’t forget to thank your principal in front of the parents for supporting the program and perhaps provide a thank-you memento signed by the students—a framed print with some sort of musical theme to hang in the office.

EXPAND THE MAGIC: **Honoring the Faculty and Staff**

Now that the principal is engaged in your program and sees the joy of the students and their parents, why not expand that magic. Start with the faculty and staff. Ask your principal or school secretary for a list of birthdays of faculty and staff and come up with a plan to ensure that each one of them is surprised with an impromptu birthday serenade. Start with creating a class birthday song to use for this purpose. Engage your students in the “composition” and make it fun by adding specialized movement or some sort of skit like reading a proclamation just prior to launching into song. You can then assign certain classroom members from throughout the day to barge into the classroom or office in song to acknowledge that person in front of students or colleagues. It should take no more than 90 seconds but will make that person’s day and entertain those within earshot as well. You might even think about having “Happy Birthday from XYZ Music Dept” pencils, balloons, or certificates made up to gift to the recipient. Principals love how this one gesture can lift the spirits of the entire school as one staff member after the other is honored in song on their special day. (This also shows how fun it is to be in your program to students who are not involved...YET!) Another idea is to host a Valentine’s Day Appreciation Luncheon for the faculty and staff. See if a local restaurant would help by sponsoring a spaghetti and meatball entrée and engage your students by having them serve as the luncheon entertainment. Parents

will also enjoy becoming involved by acting as servers and bussers for the event.

EXPAND THE MAGIC: **Engaging the Student Population**

Music programs go beyond textbooks and lectures—they create a magical space where students immerse themselves in the joy of music-making but what about the rest of the student population. How can the music program serve the students who are not active music-makers? From Taylor Swift to Bruno Mars to Billie Eilish and beyond, the musical choices of today’s students are more diverse than ever. There’s no better way to show the general school population that your program honors all musical styles than by creating opportunities for the students to perform music of their own choosing.

Chances are you have students who would love the opportunity to perform and setting up something as simple as a monthly Karaoke gig during the lunch hour would give them the opportunity to shine in front of their peers no matter what age group. You may even have students who play in their own bands outside of school who would be eager to perform live in such a setting. And how fun would it be to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month or Black History Month by performing appropriate music during the lunch hours? Making these performances upbeat and fun is key and honors the diverse musical styles that today’s students enjoy.

GENEROSITY AND GRATITUDE: **Serving the School Community**

By adopting a service mentality to *ask not what your school can do for you—ask what you can do for your school*, the school’s music program can have an immeasurable impact on the how the general student population views their school. The ideas are countless. Your principal will be extremely grateful that you have helped to provide a more positive environment for learning but more importantly, in serving the school, your students will soon discover that sharing their musical talents as well as their passion for giving back not only makes others feel better, it also makes them feel better as well so it’s a win-win situation for everyone. And when we all feel better, we do better, and this type of positivity is the catalyst that can create change. Onward and upward! **T**



MARCIA NEEL serves as Senior Director of Education for Yamaha Corporation of America. She also serves as Education Advisor to the Music Achievement Council, a 501(c)(6) organization whose sole purpose is to assist directors in recruiting and retaining students in instrumental music programs through effective professional development. Marcia also serves as a member of the Board of Directors of Percussive Arts Society.



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MASTERING



Amy Lui, Band Director at Francis Polytechnic High School, Los Angeles

By Andrew Surmani and Dan Gregerman

NG A MASTERS

RIISING THROUGH THE EDUCATION SYSTEM TODAY is about setting yourself apart, and incorporating a breadth of graduate coursework into your resume will color it and help do that. Standing out in this way can then change your economic standing and generate greater career opportunities within your district or another.

THE MUSIC INDUSTRY is in a constant state of evolution. And, when we refer to the “music industry” we are also including music education as a critical part. For most of us, at a minimum, we hope that a majority of our students go on to become great audience members and arts supporters who will keep the arts alive in schools and in our communities. However, we also have students who want to go on to be world class performers, music educators, composers and songwriters, DJs, producers and various other music industry professionals. In an ever changing world of new technology, including artificial intelligence, virtual reality, augmented reality, and Web 3.0, we are constantly being challenged as educators to keep up with the ever changing landscape. The alternative is becoming dinosaurs while our young students create incredible new content, get it out there to the masses via their social media channels as content creators and/or influencers, and leave us behind. We must also realize that sitting in our classrooms could be the next inventor of a better way to listen to music, a better way forward for music publishing or to build and produce musical instruments and equipment. It’s a harsh way to look at the future, but we have to be realistic about upgrading our and continually stay on top of the changes.

In addition, most educators are required to provide proof of professional development on a regular basis in order to renew their teaching certificate and credentials. One of the great ways to do this is to pursue a master’s degree. There are many institutions and programs throughout the country and even the world, that offer single courses, workshops, master classes and more that can not only meet the needs of this professional development, but can count as coursework towards a master’s degree.

“I have two categories of reasons for pursuing a masters degree,” says Elizabeth Blake, String Director, Conejo Unified School District. “The first one is economic. It’s going to bump my retirement benefits significantly for the rest of my life, so what I’m spending on the degree (now) is going to be recouped in just a couple of years. That’s the big one; if it wasn’t for that I wouldn’t be doing it, but since I am, the other thing that it’s going to provide is a lot more credibility and a lot more employment opportunities. For example, if I want to work for California’s university system, they prefer that you have a master’s degree. If I want to work for a community college in California, they require an advanced degree and they will not consider



you without one. It also gives me more credibility if I want to (give) presentations or clinics.

Those are my basic reasons; to open some doors and boost my income.”

“As someone who has taken 10 years’ worth of higher music education courses and with an extensive background in classical music training (bachelor’s in music performance, master’s in music education and various community college courses on pedagogy, jazz, musicology and ethnomusicology), not once have we ever mentioned the word “microphone” in any of those courses I took,” offered Amy Lui, Band Director at Francis Polytechnic High School, Los Angeles. “So as a high school music teacher in my first year of teaching in the fall of 2019, I was completely clueless on how to even set up a microphone to make announcements during our winter concert in the school auditorium. Then a few months later, the pandemic hit and we all went online, scrambling for technological resources to use. Unfortunately, nearly all of my students no longer wanted to be in band because that type of online music ensemble participation was not meaningful to them, and all the students that were originally going to pursue music in college and as a career realized a severe lacking in job attainment for classical or jazz music, especially during intense times like a pandemic. But after coming across CSUN’s Master of Arts in Music Industry Administration (MIA), I knew this was the program for me to learn what I needed to so that I can pivot my program to teaching something more sustainable and allowing my students to be more career ready while exploring a deeper understanding of the cultures that they live in and consume. I knew that I could not afford to leave my full time teaching position to pursue yet another degree so the MIA program being offered fully online and in the evenings and Saturday mornings made it all work out. Fast forward to 2024, this shift in my curriculum allowed for our program to be given the California Music Educators Association’s Innovations Award and be a recipient of the Save the Music Foundation’s J Dilla Music Tech Grant.”

As educators it is so important to not only teach, but



Amy Lui, Band Director at Francis Polytechnic High School, Los Angeles

to continue to learn. Working on a master’s degree will also continue this thirst for knowledge and has many practical benefits, as outlined above. This pursuit of education as a professional in the industry also sets a great example for our students. They can see we too are working to balance learning and homework with the rest of our busy lives. In addition, almost every professional development program out there will provide you with nuggets of knowledge that can be used in the classroom.

If one is nervous about the workload of pursuing a master’s degree, remember that there is no time limit on how

long you take to complete the program. Some individuals take a leave of absence or even resign from their jobs to return to the classroom as a student, and others prefer to work on this pursuit part time. Don’t allow the pressure of any institution force you to complete the degree work sooner than what will work for your life and lifestyle. It is alright if it takes several years to complete a degree because the opportunity to further your education will always be available.

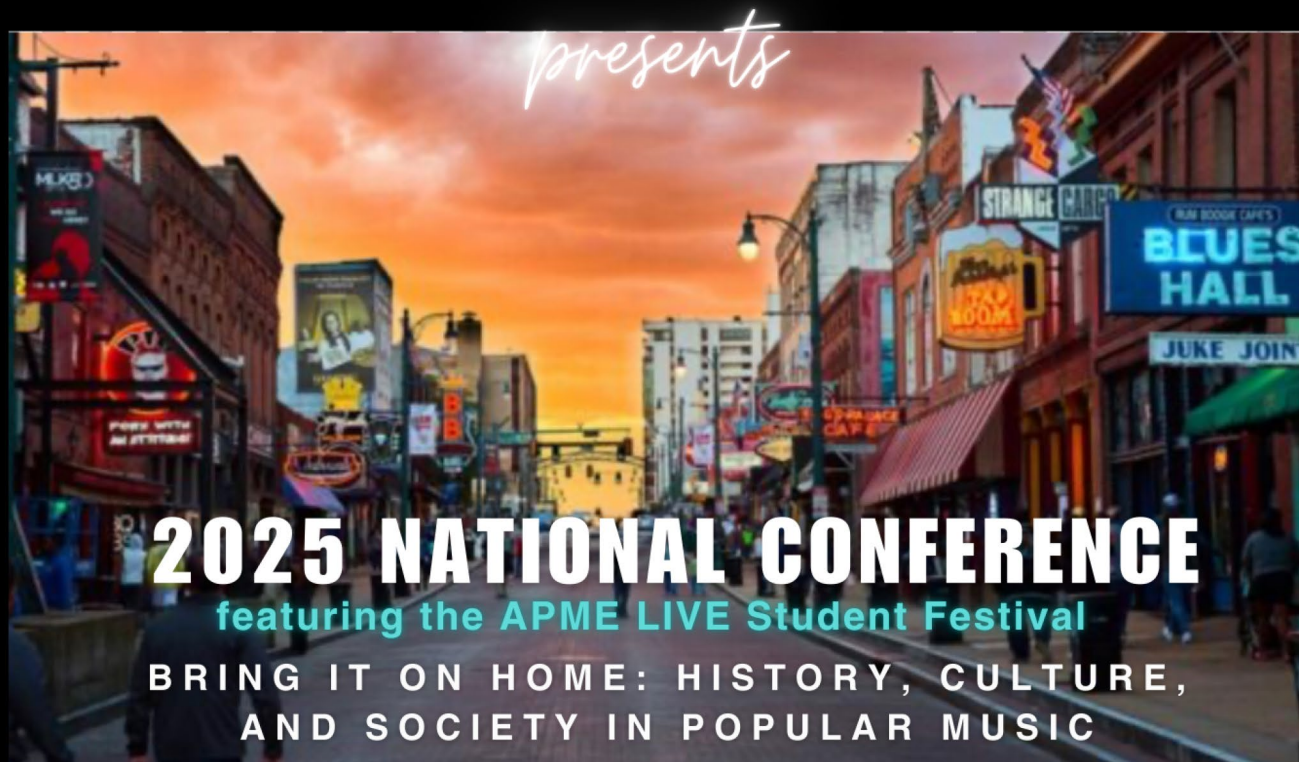
It can be a fight to keep the arts curriculum alive and a constant battle to recruit and compete with AP classes, other electives and athletics. But, keeping up with the incredibly evolving world of technology, methodology and pedagogy by staying relevant through the pursuit of a master’s degree, will aid in overcoming all of these obstacles while building your strength as an educator. **T**

ANDREW SURMANI is Professor, Music Industry Studies and Academic Lead, Master of Arts in Music Industry Administration degree program, California State University, Northridge (CSUN) in Los Angeles. Founding Board Member and Past President of the Jazz Education Network (JEN). Co-author of “Essentials of Music Theory,” Alfred Music. Business Coach..

DANIEL GREGERMAN is Choral Director/Vocal Jazz Director, Niles North High School, Skokie, IL (retired after 35 years) and also current Director of Vocal Jazz, Glenbrook High School, Glenview, IL. Founding Board Member of the Jazz Education Network (JEN) and Co-author, “Rehearsing the Vocal Jazz Ensemble,” Meredith Music Publications.

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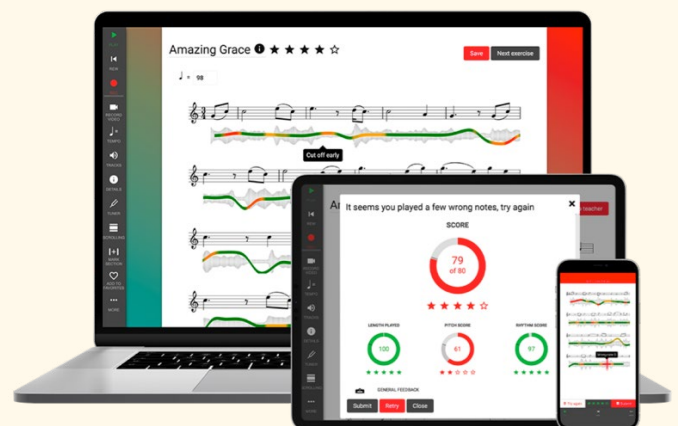
By Dr. Jim Frankel

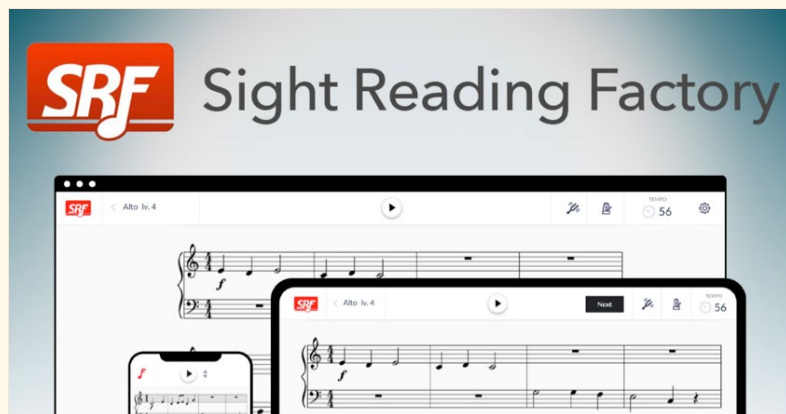
SICIAN

THE ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY in music education has expanded significantly since the pandemic, and in the last few years, and the use of artificial intelligence (AI) has been a topic that has garnered a lot of attention. Is it a good or bad thing for music education? There are lots of incredible AI-powered tools that can help students enhance their musicianship. From personalized practice sessions to advanced score analysis, AI-driven software has quickly become a valuable tool for some music educators. This article will explore how five innovative platforms—PracticeFirst, Sight Reading Factory, Moises.ai, Soundtrap, and yes, ChatGPT—can be integrated into your program to foster better musicianship among middle and high school students.

PracticeFirst is an AI-driven assessment tool, available exclusively from MusicFirst, that gives students real-time feedback on their performances. This platform “listens” to students play or sing and provides instant, objective assessments based on rhythm, pitch, intonation, and tempo. The assessment algorithm is powered by AI – matching the audio file that is generated when a student records themselves with a reference recording. The algorithm compares the two and provides detailed feedback.

By pinpointing specific areas for improvement, students can focus their practice on those elements, leading to more efficient and effective rehearsal time. For example, unlike other programs, if a student speeds up or slows down during their performance, PracticeFirst *understands* that, and provides tempo feedback af-





ter the performance is finished, rather than marking every subsequent note as wrong. As band directors, we know that kids speed up and slow down – the software must also know that to make it a useful assessment tool. Only an AI-based tool can do that.

One of the most challenging aspects of musicianship, particularly for young students, is sight-reading. **Sight Reading Factory** offers a solution by generating an endless supply of sight-reading exercises tailored to the skill level of each student. The software can create exercises for individual students, small ensembles, or full bands, ensuring that everyone is challenged appropriately.

Sight Reading Factory's AI-driven algorithm can adjust the difficulty level based on the user's performance, making it an excellent tool for progressive learning. For instance, a student struggling with rhythm might receive exercises that focus on that aspect, while a more advanced student might be challenged with complex time signatures or key changes. Integrating Sight Reading Factory into your program can significantly boost students' confidence and competence in

sight-reading. Directors can use the platform during rehearsals as a warm-up exercise or assign it as part of a student's regular practice routine. The ability to generate new material each time ensures that students are constantly exposed to fresh challenges, preventing the monotony that can come with repeated exercises.

Moises.ai is an AI-powered music app that offers a range of tools designed to help musicians practice and analyze music. Its most notable feature is its ability to separate audio tracks into individual components,

such as vocals, bass, drums, and more. This allows students to isolate specific parts of a recording and focus on them during practice.

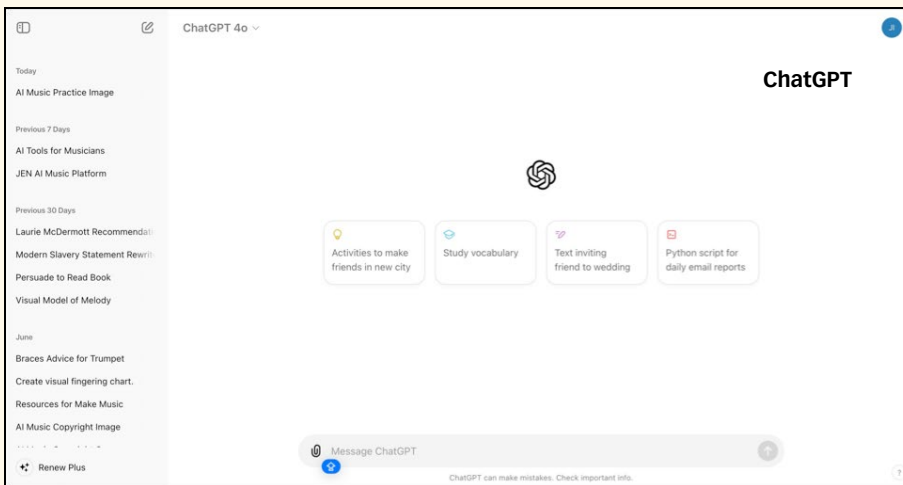
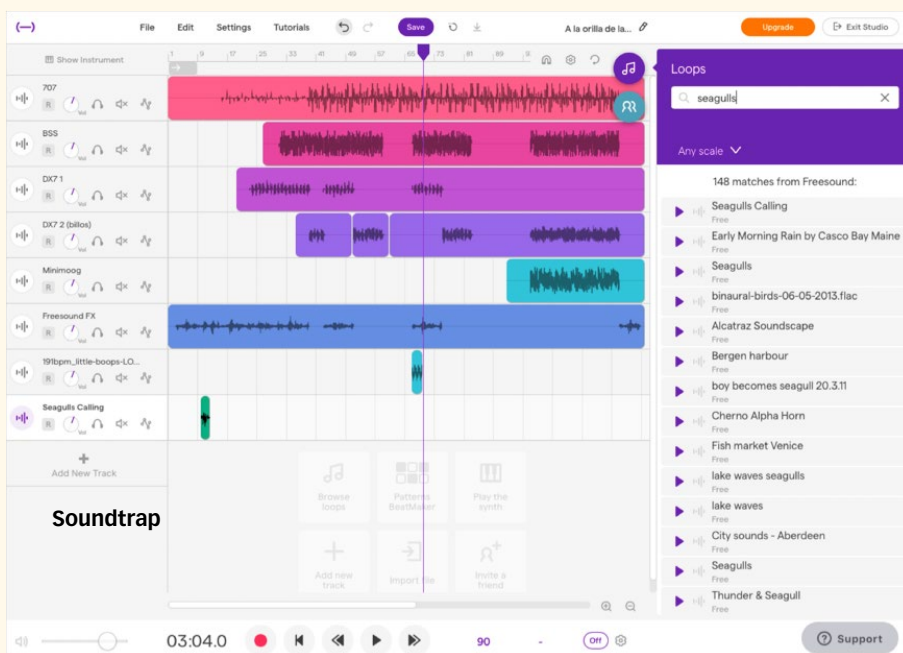
Moises.ai can also be an invaluable tool for ear training and part preparation. By isolating their part from a full recording, students can listen more intently to their section, understanding how it fits within the larger ensemble. Additionally, the app's tempo and pitch control features allow students to practice difficult passages at a slower tempo or in a different key, gradually increasing difficulty as they improve. Band directors can use Moises.ai to create customized practice tracks for their students. For example, a director might isolate the brass section of a piece and assign it to the brass players for focused practice.

Soundtrap is a cloud-based digital audio workstation (DAW) that enables students to create and collaborate on music projects online. With AI-driven features that simplify the process of recording, editing, and mixing, Soundtrap is an excellent tool for teaching composition, arranging, and music production.

For band students, Soundtrap offers a platform to explore creativity beyond traditional performance. Students can experiment with arranging pieces for different instrumentations, creating original compositions, or even producing their own recordings. The collaborative nature of Soundtrap also allows students to work together on projects, fostering teamwork and communication skills.

Directors can integrate Soundtrap into their pro-

The image is a banner for the Moises.ai website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links: Products, Features, Made for, How to, API, Blog, Login, and Sign up. Below the navigation bar, the text 'Moises.ai' is displayed in a large, bold, white font. To the left of the text, there is a large, bold, white heading: 'Moises Web App: The essential tool for music practice'. Below this heading, there is a paragraph of text: 'An innovative platform designed to elevate the music creation and practice experience for musicians of all levels. With powerful features, Moises Web App allows you to enhance your skills, powered by AI.' Below the paragraph, there is a blue button that says 'Start Free'. At the bottom, there are three icons: 'Download on the App Store', 'Get it on Google Play', and 'Download Desktop App'. To the right of the text and icons, there is a large, circular image showing a screenshot of the Moises.ai interface, which displays a musical score and various controls.



tailored practice routines based on a student's skill level, instrument, and the specific pieces they are working on. For example, a student struggling with rhythm in a particular passage can receive a set of targeted exercises designed to address that specific issue. Additionally, ChatGPT can provide students with written feedback on their practice sessions. By inputting observations or questions into the AI, students can receive guidance on how to improve their technique, overcome challenges, or refine their interpretation of a piece. This instant access to personalized advice can help students progress more quickly and with greater confidence.

The integration of AI-driven software into music education is not just a trend; it represents a significant shift in how we can teach and learn music. By incorporating tools like PracticeFirst, Sight Reading Factory, Moises.ai, Soundtrap, and ChatGPT into your band program, you can offer your students a more personalized, engaging, and effective learning experience. These platforms not only enhance tradi-

tional music education methods but also open up new avenues for creativity, collaboration, and exploration. As music educators, embracing these technologies can help you better prepare your students for the musical challenges of the future, fostering a deeper love and understanding of music that will last a lifetime. **T**

ChatGPT is an AI language model that can serve as a versatile tool for directors and students alike, and it's likely the first thing that you experienced in the current rush of interest in AI. Its ability to generate text-based content makes it an invaluable resource for a variety of educational purposes, from generating practice routines to providing historical context on pieces being studied. ChatGPT can also be leveraged to improve the musicianship of your middle and high school band students' customized practice plans and feedback. ChatGPT can assist by generating

tional music education methods but also open up new avenues for creativity, collaboration, and exploration. As music educators, embracing these technologies can help you better prepare your students for the musical challenges of the future, fostering a deeper love and understanding of music that will last a lifetime. **T**



DR. JIM FRANKEL is founder/director of MusicFirst. In addition to his writing, Jim is a highly sought-after clinician and keynote speaker in the local, national and international music education communities. He is on the Board of Directors for TI:ME and the Association for Popular Music Education (APME), the current Treasurer for Music COMP, and past president of ATMI.



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