

# Unison Preparation for a Piece through Finale and SmartMusic



## National Standards for Music Education

5. Reading and notating music.
6. Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.
7. Evaluating music and music performances.

## DESE-Missouri Knowledge Standards

Goal 1

## DESE-Missouri Performance Standards

1.4, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 2.1, 2.5, 2.7, 3.1, 3.2, 4.5

**Subject Area:** Instrumental Music

**Grade Range:** 5-12

Students gain confidence when learning in groups. By rehearsing parts of the piece in unison, the students improve faster and have a more enjoyable experience. Plus, it gives the students a chance to appreciate parts of the music they won't get a chance to perform.

**Materials Needed:** Finale 2003 (or higher), SmartMusic, PA system

**Time Allowance:** Multi-day

## Objectives

Students will:

1. Perform an etude based themes or perceived difficult parts within a piece of music.
2. Recognize and perform melodies, countermelodies, and difficult passages.

## Lesson

- Step 1: Analyze the score to a piece of music. With a pencil, mark sections of the score that you believe will cause the students difficulties.
- Step 2: Using Finale, enter each of these sections into a band score. Copy and paste each section. Make sure each melody is in a comfortable playing range for the musician.
- Step 3: Label each section with a different letter (Ex. A, B, C, etc.)
- Step 4: At each letter that was labeled, click Edit > Add SmartMusic marker > Rehearsal mark > Add > type measure number > OK.
- Step 5: Save as SmartMusic accompaniment file (File > Save Special). Give file a name. Save to desktop.

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- Step 6: Extract parts > print and copy for students > hand out
- Step 7: Rehearse letter by letter, going over difficult spots.
- Step 8: Open SmartMusic file. Instruct students to hum and finger along with the SmartMusic. Then, have students play along with the SmartMusic file.
- Step 9: Discuss problem spots. Use SmartMusic's *Loop* feature to isolate problem spots. Use the metronome to decrease and increase tempo.
- Step 10: As the students gain confidence, and can play the unison lines in tempo, hand out the 'real' piece of music.
- Step 11: Point out the similarities between the Unison Etude and the 'real' piece of music.
- Step 12: Begin full rehearsal.

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## Assignment Suggestions

I suggest handing out the unison etudes and having the students master them before handing out the 'real' piece of music.

Level I	Performing each unison line.
Level II	Performing each line up to tempo
Level III	Recognizing melodies, countermelodies and supporting parts
Level IV	Perform 'real' piece of music

## Indicators of Success

Students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate each unison etude by playing with a characteristic tone, playing the etude in tune, using the correct rhythms, with the correct notes, in the correct style.
2. Recognize the ability to listen 'across the band' by recognizing the melody, counter melody or supporting parts in different sections.

## Assessment

You may assess each student by testing each student over the same unison line. You can also use the On-Screen assessment feature if you create the file with Finale 2006 and open the file with SmartMusic 9.

## Lesson Extensions

1. You may choose to load the SmartMusic files onto the music computer station.
2. You also can upload the SmartMusic file onto the school website for download.