



HELP! What Do I Do on the First Day of School During a Pandemic?!

August 27, 2020

- **Goals:**
 - You will experience an SEL lesson that helps you (and eventually your students) *set the culture and tone that best supports your students this year*
 - You'll have a plan for hearing your students' voices with regard to their anxieties, worries, and what they're looking forward to so you can respond appropriately
 - You'll understand why it's essential to attend to the social and emotional needs of our students in order to keep them engaged so we can deliver content
 - You'll be able to ask yourself key questions to guide your planning so you set up a successful school year...ONE step at a time!
- As this unfolds, notice more than just what I talk about.
 - Imagine how your students might feel on their first day in a new situation where they don't know everyone – what makes you feel safe? What could help them feel safe?
 - Be curious about how you can adapt what I do and make it work for your students based on their social and emotional needs (which will be ever-changing)
- **WHY the first days are so important**
 - UPBEAT (preparation, starts with selecting literature, score study, etc. prior to the upbeat that sets the tone of everything from style and tempo to dynamics and intensity before a sound is even produced)
 - 80/20
- **WHAT to think about – The “Little Things”**
 - Personal vs PowerPoint – facial expressions / how does that change things?
 - Different needs now – keeping them engaged vs. settling them down
 - Their voices – from instruments to words / this can challenge them (Austin – cat/laundry)
 - Before vs After – role of the First Four Minutes
 - Speed Bumps & Walls – organization, overwhelm, extra responsibilities, grief, fear, tech nightmares, getting lost, etc.
- **PREPARING**
 - **Welcome Video** – Meet Mrs. Moffat and Band Leadership Council
 - 1) [New Students](#)
 - 2) [Returning Students](#)
 - **Survey** – Our Band Leadership Council is creating this at our next meeting. (We'll be asking about whether kids have instruments available / are able to play during the day / and a few no-risk get-to-know-you questions)
 - **What to expect the first day** (computer, headphones, journal, pen)

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THIS IS THE “SEL LESSON”

GOAL: Students will identify their feelings about the upcoming year in band so I am able to use their voices to create activities that address their social and emotional needs so they can be better prepared to focus on content.

- Welcome and Thank You
- Feelings about starting school and band
 - Prep by inviting them to think about things they’ve been looking forward to, worrying about, fear missing, etc.
- Three words that describe how you feel about the upcoming school year.
 - **Type Three Words but DON’T Hit Enter until directed** This can be done in the chat box (public or private) or via [Real-Time Word Cloud](#)
 - These words will be used for next week’s SEL lesson, so be sure to have a way to save their responses (can be anonymous)
 - **Stories** – *your* story so they can feel *their* stories
 - 1) Why I am a band teacher
 - 2) What band did for me: childhood / college years / adult
 - 3) **Vision** – Put them at ease: Music Education Together
 - **Type Three Words** again after story: Feelings about upcoming experience.

Questions for discussion or reflection for students:

- 1) Did any of your feelings change after you reframed how you feel about band this year?
- 2) What are you most looking forward to with your music experience this year?

Where do you go from here?

- Using the words students wrote *before* you presented your story become the basis for next week’s SEL activity as you help them address their uncertainties
- Using the words the students wrote *after* you talked to them about the potential for the upcoming year, you can begin the conversations about the goals you have as a group, in spite of the challenges, and that begins to drive future SEL and curricular decisions



FINAL THOUGHTS:

From *The Tipping Point* by Malcom Gladwell / pages 259 and 275

“We are actually powerfully influenced by our surroundings, our immediate context, and the personalities of those around us. By tinkering with the presentation of information, we can significantly improve its stickiness. Simply by finding and reaching those few special people who hold so much social power, we can shape the course of social epidemics.

In the end, Tipping Points are a reaffirmation of the potential for change and the power of intelligent action. Look at the world around you. It may seem like an immovable, implacable place. It is not. With the slightest push – in just the right place – it can be tipped.

When people are overwhelmed with information, and develop immunity to traditional forms of communication, they turn instead for advice and information to the people in their lives whom they respect, admire and trust.”

Students will turn to you, their music teachers, for guidance beyond band, choir, and orchestra.

We have important work to do!

Thank you for participating in this training. I hope you found it to be useful as we step into a year of uncertainties.

If you have any questions or you'd like to know more about the **ongoing support and live trainings** I do with music teachers who want to intentionally incorporate meaningful SEL activities to support their students this year, let's hop on a call! I'd love to talk to you.

[Schedule a Call](#)

With you on this journey -
Lesley

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