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# Reflection Teaches Both Student and Teacher

**H**ello! I hope that everyone has finally been able to fall into a routine for this semester. This semester I have begun student teaching, and I wanted to share some of my last semester thoughts, as well as my feelings going into student teaching.

My last semester on campus at Crane I was in a Teaching Beginning Instrument (TBI) Practicum. During this course I had to teach 10, 30-minute lessons to a private student. It turned out that I would not be teaching trumpet lessons (my primary) but instead, flute lessons. I still felt fairly confident as our first lesson drew nearer and I came up with a pretty basic first lesson plan, expecting the student to be a beginner. After the first lesson, my plans were thrown for a loop as she was far — and I mean FAR — more advanced than I had anticipated. My skills were put to the test, and I soon realized that she could out play me on flute.

At the end of each lesson one of our assignments was to complete a lesson reflection. I was a little discouraged at the beginning because I wasn't sure how I could help this student progress. I spoke about that in my lesson reflection, as well as discussing what went well in the lesson and what I wanted to improve for next week.

I filled out my assignment and turned it in without thinking too much about it. The next time our class met I was not feeling great about my teaching, sharing my struggles about how I was supposed to teach this girl, not to mention that she valued very highly both music in her life and her identity as a flautist. I felt a lot of pressure!

At the end of the class my professor stopped me to talk about my reflection and said he thought that it was very thoughtful and that I have lots of good ideas going forward. Little did he know that boost of confidence was exactly what I needed at the time.

I have always had a tricky time looking back on my work, especially watching videos of lessons taught, as it gives that hearing-your-voice-in-the-mic feeling.

I wanted to share one of my first lesson reflections as a template for being able to draw out all the smaller things that went well, even if you feel you may have flopped the lesson. Here is an example of my post-lesson reflection:

### Elaborate about what went well in your lesson:

"This week [she] was able to finally get more success with the high G. Together we troubleshooted and figured out that she needed to lift her left-hand thumb off the key.

"We did a few exercises based on warming up around the key of G when she brought up multiple tonguing. She was very invested and eager to learn this skill, so I shifted our lesson to focus on double tonguing. I broke it down by starting with the syllables and paying attention to the tongue placement. We did just air articulation and then moved it to the flute.

"She was able to pick it up extremely quickly, so I started her on some double note scalar exercises and did a lot of listening then playing each thing three times: single tongue, K tongue, double tongue. We also talked about how you can see in the chin/throat area when someone is using the K syllable.

"We then shifted over to *The Magic Flute*, finishing it up so we can get ready to start something new. She performed for me everything that we have worked on so far, and then I had her give me her "glows and grows." When I asked her, she said that it makes her think deeper than she normally does, so that is something I want to continue. Lastly, we touched on Variation 1 of *The Magic Flute*. I slowed her down and made her finger and articulate through before playing it on her flute. At the end I tied the DT back in by suggesting that she DT all of the repeated notes in the piece for extra and contextual practice."

### What would you like to improve if you were able to do this lesson over again?

"If I were to do this lesson over again, I would like to have more familiarity with double tonguing on flute. I essentially taught her how I do it on trumpet, which worked, but I am curious about the differences.

"At one point she was working through sight-reading Variation 2 and was not getting it correctly immediately. She then asked me to play it for her, which I did, and then she was fine. I know that she is really strong at playing by ear so I would like to strengthen her reading skills by not giving into that request so easily but rather help her count through it, play notes individually for pitch, etc. To give her techniques that she can use when she is learning music on her own."

I include my work as an example of how to get started and how the reflection process really does help with your teaching. Even though it may feel tedious, take the time to reflect on your success and struggles and see how it makes a difference in your next lesson!

### Announcements

#### Deadline to run for state office:

- March 25, 2023, is the last day to run for state office! We would love to see a group of students made up from several different schools in New York!
- If you have questions about positions, please email [collpres@nyssma.org](mailto:collpres@nyssma.org) or reach out to @collegiatenyssma on Instagram

#### Eastern NAfME Conference

- April 13-16, 2023.
- New York collegiates will be hosting a student teaching panel.
- For registration info, go to [nyssma.org](http://nyssma.org).

Warm regards,  
Emma Uruburu  
Collegiate President