

Orange County Public Schools Executive Summary

TIME USE AND INSTRUCTIONAL FOCUS IN BEGINNING AND ADVANCED MIDDLE SCHOOL BAND SETTINGS

The purpose of this study was to observe time use and instructional focus in the middle school beginning band and advanced band settings. The analysis included the systematic recording of teacher behavior and student performance activities for the entire class period observed, as well as consideration of the relationship between teacher behaviors and student performance in specific instructional episodes during the class period. All timing data was recorded using the SCRIBE (Simple Computer Recording Interface for Behavioral Evaluation) software. Participants included five expert middle school band directors, who were video-recorded teaching a beginning band class and an advanced band class in the same instructional day. A total of 394.60 minutes (approximately 6 hours and 36 minutes) of rehearsal were observed; a total of 202.21 minutes were observed in the advanced band setting, and 192.39 minutes were observed in the beginning band setting. The first layer of observation included documentation of the whole class period using six categories: 1) teacher instruction, 2) instrumental modeling, 3) group performance, 4) section performance, 5) individual performance, and 6) student verbal behavior. Time devoted to warm-up and preparatory activities (prior to literature) was also documented in this layer of observation. The second layer of observation included documentation of the whole class period using three categories: 1) time on the podium, 2) active conducting, and 3) individualized instruction. The third layer of observation entailed identifying rehearsal frames in which targets were identified and categorized. Strategies identified as general music instructional strategies were documented in this layer as well. Results of this study revealed differences in the frequency of observed behaviors between the beginning and advanced band settings, with significantly more episodes of teacher modeling, individualized instruction, and student verbal questions/responses occurring in the beginning band setting. A significantly greater number of episodes of section performance occurred in the advanced band setting. Teachers spent more time on the podium and actively conducting the ensemble in the advanced band setting than in the beginning band setting, and more time was used for preparatory activities (prior to literature) in the beginning band setting than in the advanced band setting. Target categories emphasized in the beginning band setting reflected an emphasis on fundamentals and literacy, whereas the target categories in the advanced band setting reflected greater emphasis on performance-based goal achievement.

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