

Florida Music Education Association 2018 All-State Music Conference

"Guitar 101": The Nuts and Bolts of Starting and Maintaining a Successful Guitar Program



Presenter:
Christopher Perez
Director of Guitar Studies
Freedom High School, Orlando, FL

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Marriott Waterside Florida Ballroom 1-3, Tampa, FL

**“The approach to what you do,
results in what you get...”**

Freddie Gruber (1927-2011) – Drummer and Master Teacher

Welcome! Teaching class guitar has become very popular in the field of music education. As such, there are many serious considerations to take into account when teaching guitar and the exciting possibility of developing a program.

In this session, we will cover basic, essential items needed to start guitar classes including how to build and maintain a successful guitar program. Topics of discussion include instrument, material and music purchases, class discipline, assessment, concert performances, class scheduling, basic pedagogy and more. Let's cover and discuss the following items!



- I. **Getting Started!** Reasons and considerations for beginning a guitar program:
 - a. Filling out a teacher's schedule?
 - i. Are you teaching a class(es) or developing a program?
 - b. Filling an educational need?
 - c. Desire to create a guitar program?
 - d. Administrative support?
- II. Student Cost:
 - a. Freedom charges a \$50/\$60 per year student fee
 - i. For first year students includes book (students have to write in it and tear out work sheets), small ensemble music, string replacement (4 to 5 times a year), equipment repair/replacement
 - ii. For second year and beyond includes music folders, clinician/festival/MPA fees, transportation, music purchases, string replacement, equipment purchases and guitar shirt
 - iii. The ideal situation is if the school or district funds your program completely.
- III. Equipment recommendations (class set of instruments):
 - a. **Acoustic** – **Rogue RA-090, Yamaha F335 or Mitchell MD-100** are good bets.
 - i. Needs a pick to play or grow out R.H. fingers for good fingerstyle playing
 - ii. Higher tension strings – louder; more callouses develop for L.H. fret work, hard to press for young players
 - iii. Tuning machine gears are harder to keep in tune
 - iv. Strings won't last long (rust quickly and could snap easily)
 - b. **Classical** – **Yamaha C-40, Cordoba CP-100 or Lucero LC100** are good bets.
 - i. More for finger style guitar playing
 - ii. Quieter tone
 - iii. Lower string tension (easier on fingers)
 - iv. Could go up to 6 months before changing strings.
 - c. If developing a full 4 year program you should also acquire:
 - i. 6 to 8 Requinto guitars (**Cordoba**) 4th higher than traditional
 1. A-D-g-c-e-a tuning
 - ii. 3-4 Acoustic Basses (**Fender, Guild and Dean** make great products)
 - iii. 1 Electric Bass Guitar (**Fender and Ibanez**)
 1. **Fender Rumble 150** bass amp
 - iv. 1-2 electric guitars
 1. **Fender Champion 100** combo guitar amp
 2. **Line 6 Spider V 75** watt combo guitar amp
 - a. Combo means the effects (reverb, delay, distortion) are built into the amp

IV. Time and **Space** (not a theory of relativity):

- a. Will you purchase a class set or have students bring their own?
 - i. What instruments and how many you will have in the room?
 - 1. 25 / 50 / 75 / 100+ guitars????

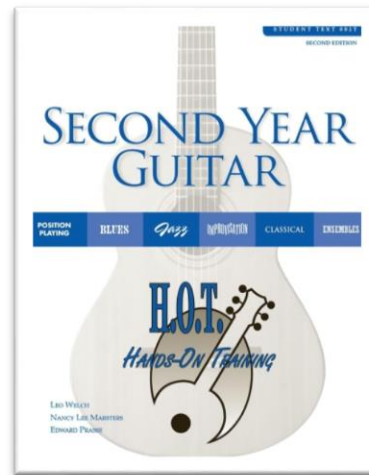
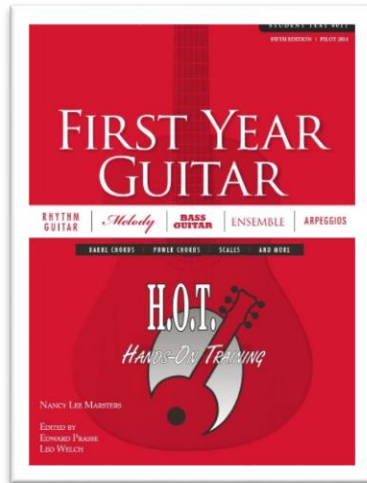


- b. Will you purchase guitars and related equipment for class use?
 - i. For about \$5000-\$6000 you can purchase
 - 1. Guitars (25 Classical or Acoustic)
 - 2. Guitar Cases (hard-shell!)(Do not get guitar “bags”!)
 - 3. Guitar holders (garden tool holders @ \$7-\$10 each from Lowe’s or Home Depot work great!)
 - 4. <https://www.stringsbymail.com/> are cheapest and are very open to become a vendor with your school district
 - a. D’Addario classical strings - EJ45 Normal Tension
 - b. Martin bulk acoustic strings – 80/20 Bronze or 92/8 Phosphorus, light tension
 - 5. Foot stools for classical guitars- 2”X4”X7½” boards cut up and drilled with 3” wood screws work well.
 - a. See Physical Requirements Guitar Lab sheet
- c. Is there adequate space in your music room/facility to house/store equipment and to teach a class up to 35 students?
 - i. Are your students going to: **Bring it? Store it? Hang it? Rack it?**
- d. Homemade vs. Storage Company made, (ex. Wenger) \$\$\$\$ what can you afford?

V. Teaching materials (class room texts):

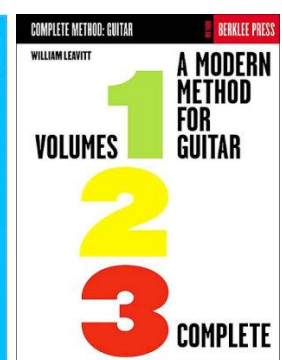
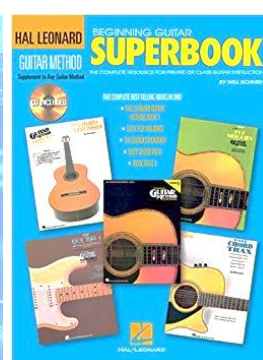
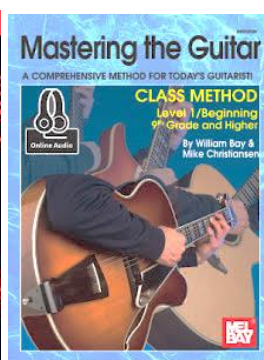
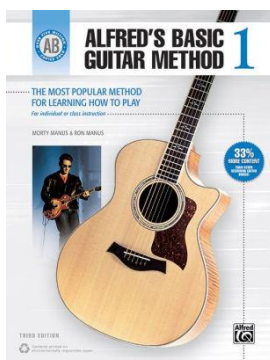
a. **First Year Guitar - Hands On Training (H.O.T.)** by Nancy Marsters

- i. Class Guitar Resources <http://www.classguitar.com/>
- ii. Comes with rubrics for assessments, pre-made written tests & teachers manual
- iii. Covers fundamental concepts.
- iv. Also has a Second Year Guitar book



b. Some other publishers also make good first year guitar books.

- i. **Alfred “Basic Guitar Method 1”** by Morty Manus and Ron Manus
 - ii. **Alfred “Classic Guitar Technique Vol. 1”** by Aaron Shearer
 - iii. **Mel Bay “Mastering the Guitar Class Method 9th Grade and Higher”** by William Bay and Mike Christiansen
 - iv. **Hal Leonard (Superbook)** by Will Schmid
 - v. **Berklee Press “A Modern Method for Guitar”** by William Levitt
- c. You need to decide what you want to focus on and **teach**. The books and methods are only a guide to your teaching!



- VI. Students should have proficiency to perform by the end of the first year (see my handout from last year's 2017 FMEA presentation "**The Baker's Dozen**"):
- a. Basic 1st position chords (14 chords) and I-IV-I V7-I chord changes
 - b. 1st & 2nd position scales (C maj./a min., D maj., F maj., G maj./e min., A maj.)
 - c. E to E or G to G 2 octave chromatic scale
 - d. Power Chords (rock & blues) (C and G Blues scales would help with improv; C-D-Eb-F-G-Bb-C blues for soloing.
 - e. Arpeggios w/ chord changes
 - f. 5th position melodies
 - g. Ability to at least, count and perform notes and rests combinations up to eighths with dotted rhythms.
 - i. <http://vicfirth.com/web rhythms/> by Norm Weinberg
 - ii. <http://www.joelrothman.com/books.html>
 1. "Teaching Rhythm" by Joel Rothman
 - h. Basic small and larger ensemble experiences



VII. Class Discipline:

- a. Create a fun and safe environment. The guitar student is VERY different being than the Band/Choir/Drama/Dance/Piano/Orchestra student
- b. Maintain high expectations of your teaching and of student performance
 - i. Know what to teach; maintain well-paced and engaging lessons / rehearsals; effective delivery will eliminate 99% of behavior problems
 - ii. Communicate frequently with parents; keep them informed!!!!



- c. Opportunity to create a new and exciting culture in your school/Performing Arts Department
- d. Rotate students around the room each quarter to keep them engaged
- e. Get to know your students as a **person**; students will work for you when they know you are interested in them. Kids are Human, not Droids!



VIII. Assessments:

- a. Have clear and definitive rubrics in place to cover your playing tests
- b. Use written tests to gauge mastery of theory items and terminology

IX. Concert Performances:

- a. In-Class recitals (solos, master classes and small ensembles)
- b. End of year concert
 - i. Each class performs 2-3 simple songs
 - ii. Have quickly advancing students perform a solo
 - iii. Program music from Bach to Rock!
- c. Great recruiting tool to have beginning students continue into the following year(s)



X. Class Scheduling:

- a. At Freedom HS – 7 periods of guitar for all ability levels
 - i. Guitar 1 (3 classes)
 - ii. Guitar Ensembles (3 ability based ensembles)
 - 1. Guitar Orchestra, Tasto, Ponticello
 - iii. Guitar Conservatory (1 private study class of 5 to 10 students)
- b. Beginner level classes
 - i. Never played before
 - ii. Can play songs but only read tablature, if at all
- c. Wait until next year, if they are a true beginner (2-3 months in)
 - i. Fair of student/class
 - ii. Technical/Physical performance
 - iii. Music Theory knowledge and application
 - iv. EOC – Final Playing test



- XI. **Going beyond to the 2nd year and more!** Other important factors:
- a. Administration (be friends with your Principal and AP for Instruction/Curriculum)
 - i. Financial support for music purchases, guitar stands, folders (Deer River), music storage, better equipment.
 - ii. Scheduling - Administration must cover your back! Ability based classes/ensembles!!!! It's about your students and their needs!!!!
 - b. Audition for a spot in an upper level ensemble for next year
 - i. End of Year Final Exam (Playing Test) – Segovia Major and Melodic Minor Scales (2 or 3 octaves) 4 year rotation
 - 1. F maj./d min.
 - 2. G maj./e min.
 - 3. A maj./f# min.
 - 4. D maj./b min.
 - c. Songs from solo collections from Doberman Editions and the Bridges Series (Royal Conservatory of Music)
 - i. Final Exam (Playing Test) **Grade 1 solo**
 - 1. *Soñando (Dreaming)* – Jaime Zenamon
 - 2. *Ostinado* – Norbert Kraft
 - 3. *Souvenir d'automne* – Simone Iannarelli
 - 4. *Souvenir d'Espagne* – Paul Gerrits DO28
 - ii. Final Exam (Playing Test) **Grade 2-3 solo**
 - 1. *Ancient Drums* – Norbert Kraft
 - 2. *Study In C Major* (II ii-26) Francisco Tarrega
 - 3. *Prelude In C Major* – G. F. Handel
 - 4. *Saltarelle* – Claude Gagnon DO22
 - iii. Final Exam (Playing Test) **Grade 4-5 solo**
 - 1. *Rose in the Garden* - Carlo Domeniconi
 - 2. *Amanacer* – Jaime Zenamon
 - 3. *Nocturne I* – Robert Benadict
 - 4. *Study in Seven* – Norbert Kraft
- XII. There are many music publishing sites to get music (free and purchase)
- a. I HAVE INCLUDED SEVERAL HANDOUTS TO HELP WITH YOUR SEARCH!

If you are on Facebook, I recommend you join the following groups as they are a positive online community that share ideas, music, resources, recordings and more! It is a valuable place to connect with other guitar teachers and artists from around the world! Some groups are closed and you need to request to become a member.

School Guitar Teachers - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/220920031658606/>

Classical Guitar Student and Teacher Forum -
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/274662036019194/>

Classical Guitarists - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/342656415943605/>

Thank you for attending today's session! If you have more questions, please contact me at Christopher.Perez@ocps.net or at 407.816.5672

To learn more about the Freedom High School Guitar Program please visit www.fhsguitar.net.