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The construction of an objective instrument for evaluating method materials for beginning heterogeneous instrumental classes in the elementary school.

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Boston University
BOSTON UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Thesis

THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN OBJECTIVE INSTRUMENT FOR EVALUATING
METHOD MATERIALS FOR BEGINNING HETEROGENEOUS
INSTRUMENTAL CLASSES IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

by

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(B.A., College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Virginia, 1939)

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Education

1951
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Second Reader: B. Alice Crossley
Assistant Professor of Education
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. SELECTION OF THE PROBLEM AND PROPOSED SOLUTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. RESEARCH PROCEDURES USED TO ESTABLISH THE CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING METHOD BOOKS FOR BEGINNING HETEROGEOUS INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC CLASSES IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. RELIABILITY OF CRITERIA</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. CONCLUSION</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

SELECTION OF THE PROBLEM AND PROPOSED SOLUTION

"There is a talent for loving music quite as surely as a talent for performing it, and the one is as deserving of cultivation as the other. Class instruction aims not only to develop the performer but also to cultivate the music lover."  

The purpose of this study is:

1. To discover educationally sound criteria which may be used as an objective instrument for evaluating method materials for beginning heterogeneous instrumental music classes in the grade schools.

2. To ascertain the relative importance of these criteria in the opinion of a representative sample of experienced instrumental music teachers.

3. To evaluate several widely used method books to determine to what extent they are adequate in terms of the criteria.

4. To determine the reliability of the criteria by comparing the consistency of independent evaluations of the same method books.

Selection of good method books is a very real problem for many music supervisors and teachers. Some supervisors have the assistance of

specialists to teach each instrument and leave the selection of method books to the discretion of the individual teacher. Many times such teachers select the books from which they were taught simply because they are familiar to them. This does not guarantee that the best method books have been chosen to meet the needs of the class. Some of these special instrumental teachers are not trained as educators and they are unaware of or indifferent to important educational aims.

Many music supervisors have the responsibility of teaching some or all of the instrumental classes in their school systems and of selecting the method materials themselves. The problem of choosing the right method for the particular group becomes more acute for teachers who through preference or necessity are teaching large numbers of children in the same class. In a class with only three or four students a good teacher can give enough individual attention to overcome partially the deficiencies of a poor method. But a thorough, well-planned, interesting method is a "must" for large classes and, of course, is most desirable for small classes as well.

The aim of this study is to provide an objective basis for the selection of method materials to be used for beginning heterogeneous instrumental music classes in the grade schools by establishing a set of criteria which can be used by teachers and supervisors as an aid in choosing a method.

It is not the purpose of this study to attempt to prove that heterogeneous classes produce better results than homogeneous groups or vice-versa. It is recognized that there are several points of view
on this subject. There are superior teachers who favor and get good results with any of the following procedures:

1. Private or individual lessons.

2. Small classes of homogeneous instruments (e.g., four to eight cornets in one class).

3. Small classes of heterogeneous instruments (e.g., two cornets, one trombone, three clarinets, and two saxophones in one class).

4. Completely heterogeneous classes (strings, winds, and percussion all in the same class). Only a few teachers have been found who favor this complete heterogeneity, but they are ardent advocates of its advantages.

5. Large classes of either homogeneous or heterogeneous instruments. Advocates of large classes as well as those who favor complete heterogeneity admit that a very superior teacher is required to obtain the good results they claim for such classes.

The term "heterogeneous" as used in this study means any combination of wind and percussion instruments within reasonable limits. It would not be within reasonable limits, for example, for one class to contain more drummers than there were players of wind instruments. And, while complete heterogeneity may be the fashion of the future, there are so few teachers at present who include strings in their heterogeneous classes that it is felt this study will have value for many more teachers by being limited to classes of wind and percussion
instruments. A great many classes of this type are being taught in
the schools today.

Many of the available methods are inadequate for heterogeneous
classes because:

1. They proceed from one note to the next for many pages until
the children have lost interest.

2. There is a lack of melodic material to maintain the interest
of the students.

3. They attempt to solve all the technical problems first before
giving the student an opportunity to hear how his instruments fits into
the harmonic balance of the group. Playing together early will make
it possible for the teacher to point out the need for more technical
skill under circumstances which will make the student want to become
more proficient.

The problem of this study, then, is:

1. To discover what factors make a method book for this type of
instrumental class either satisfactory or unsatisfactory.

2. To use these factors as criteria for evaluating several
widely used method books, and

3. To determine the reliability of the criteria by ascertaining
whether different experienced music teachers making evaluations inde-
pendently with these criteria as the basis for their judgment will get
reasonably consistent results.

Procedures used to establish these criteria will be described in
the next chapter.
REVIEW OF RELATED RESEARCH


This study deals with twelve band instruction books and "their adequacy in teaching the musical terms and directive signs." The twelve books were analyzed to discover what terms and signs each book contained.

One hundred sixty-six band music compositions were examined "to determine which musical terms and signs the young band player needs to know in order to effectively perform such compositions."

There was no agreement among the twelve books "concerning the logical order in which items of musical significance should be presented to the pupil—a marked tendency toward the use of English language terms was observed."

Expression marks and musical terms used in the twelve method books and in the band music compositions were listed in order of frequency.

The study states that "an adequate list of terms used in band music should be contained in an instruction book for band beginners," and that, "interest might be increased if the musical terms and signs... were presented in connection with a melody with which to demonstrate their use."

Grundman, Clare E., "Classroom Material for Elementary Instrumental Training," Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio, 1940.

Citing the need for better music for "a conglomerate band-orchestra" usually found in grade schools, Mr. Grundman has arranged
instrumental parts to the songs in the Music Hour series. He has
done this in an attempt to integrate the work of the singing classes
with that of the students who are learning to play instruments.

This study notes the inadequacy of available fingering charts.
It cites the importance of pictures because of their educational influence
on young children. The value of printed matter in the students’ books
is questioned.

The author further states, "The market is flooded with advanced
and semi-advanced music, but no book is published that presents plenty
of simple beginners material for elementary school instrumentalists."

Phillips, June C., "Survey on Beginning Band Practices," LaCrosse,
Wisconsin, 1950. (Pamphlet)

This statistical survey lists the beginners method books used most
frequently according to a survey in which replies were received from
thirty-one states. It tabulated procedures used by instrumental
teachers to create interest in beginning band instruments. The fourth,
fifth, and sixth grades and those in which most students begin the
study of a band instrument.

Pierce, Ann E., "The Selection and Organization of Music Materials,"
Thirty-fifth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education,
Part II, Public School Publishing Company, Bloomington, Illinois, 1936,
pp. 147-165.

This study deals with the selection of compositions for vocal and
instrumental groups and music books for grade school classes. It was
found to have little bearing on the question of selecting method books for instrumental classes.
CHAPTER II

RESEARCH PROCEDURES USED TO ESTABLISH THE CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

"The future of instrumental music in this country depends upon the success or failure of the instrumental classes in our public schools— if instrumental music is to serve a democratic purpose, it must broaden its bases and offer its opportunities to larger numbers."

The educational elements which a good method book for grade school instrumental music classes should contain were selected in the following manner:

1. Personal experience in teaching such classes.
2. The advice of faculty members and students at the Workshop in Music Education at Boston University during the 1950 Summer Session.
3. By surveying the opinions of a large number of outstanding instrumental music teachers. (The questionnaires used and results obtained will be described as a part of this study).
4. By research through books and magazines to determine the opinions of writers on this subject. For example, Helen M. Hannen states:

"In the choice of materials use these questions or criteria:
1. Is the appearance attractive. 2. Is the page easy to look

at or is it cluttered. 3. Is it suitable to the needs of the group. 4. Does it have lasting value. 5. Is it so presented that children can work by themselves. 6. Is the price prohibitive. 7. Does it favor strings or winds—

For beginning groups, separate classes: 1. Are the selections short. 2. Are the meters simple. 3. Are the rhythms simple. 4. Is the approach melodic or technical. 5. Is the material well-graded. 6. Are new problems introduced too soon and too often. 7. Will it hold the interest of the child. 8. Is it well suited to the peculiarities of the instrument."

And two other distinguished authorities write:

"A beginning method should contain the following essentials: 1. General instructions and information pertaining to care and use of the instrument. 2. Pictorial presentation of hand, wrist, and embouchure positions. 3. An accurate and complete fingering chart. 4. Thorough and logical presentation of fundamentals. 5. Correct starting tones. 6. Musical and melodious exercises. 7. All materials progressively arranged in teachable order. 8. Exercises to develop the use of all practical fingerings. 9. Preferred fingerings freely indicated. 10. Interesting and stimulating procedure. 11. Simple and concise statements in footnotes, explaining to pupils and teacher why drill is necessary on fundamentals stressed. 12. Supplementary material for individual problems. 13. Several exercises in the book which can be played by all instruments together—to give full band experience."

On the basis of personal experience, the advice of others, and research, a questionnaire was drawn up in July of 1950. Forty-eight students and teachers in the Boston University Workshop in Music Education were asked to give their opinions by means of this questionnaire. Twenty-seven replied.

Analysis of the returns to this first questionnaire indicated general agreement (over fifty per cent) on the importance of logical

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progression from one lesson to the next; need for material which is suitable for home practice; quality of the melodic and technical material; adaptability of the method for class or group teaching; indication of preferred fingerings; good illustrations; size of type; explanation of musical terms; balanced lessons; graded material so that pupils at different stages of advancement can be taught in the same class; correct starting tones for each instrument; written instructions for each lesson; publication of a teacher's manual that can be used by a music teacher who is not an instrumental specialist.

There was less agreement on the importance of: appearance of the book; whether the book should have a list of the instruments for which it is published; need for a full score; size of the books; whether a piano book is published; whether interest can be maintained by following the order of the book; the pictures used are of children rather than of adults; cost of the book.

Fewer than a third of the respondents considered the following items very important: book contains testing material; a condensed score is published; book contains theory lessons for the students to complete; book contains elements of appreciation; the melodic material has words printed as in a song book; the melodic material has accompanying pictures.

The last two points mentioned above received so little endorsement from those who replied to the first questionnaire that they were not included in the second questionnaire.
The first questionnaire and a tabulation of the results will be found on pages 43, 144, and 45.

Replies to the first questionnaire were used:

1. As a basis of rebuilding the questionnaire to re-word or eliminate questions for which dubious or qualified answers were received.

2. To add important items which were suggested by the respondents.

3. To eliminate questions which a considerable number of those who replied considered unimportant.

In February of 1951 a second questionnaire was mailed to one hundred and twenty-four music supervisors and teachers who were selected in the following manner:

1. Those who through personal knowledge were considered outstanding instrumental teachers.

2. Those recommended by Dr. Stephen Farmum, Director of Instrumental Music in East Providence, Rhode Island, as expert instrumental teachers from the membership of the New England Music Festival Association.

3. Those who in the opinion of the president of their state music teachers' association are doing excellent instrumental class work. After writing to the State Department of Education in several states and discovering that in many states no list is maintained of instrumental music teachers in the schools, it was decided to write to the presidents of the state music educators' associations in ten states requesting that they recommend the best instrumental class teachers in their state organization. The cooperation of these state presidents made it possible
to send questionnaires to outstanding instrumental teachers in Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, and the District of Columbia. Seventy-five (slightly more than sixty-one per cent) replied. The second questionnaire and a tabulation of the results will be found on pages 46, 47, 48, 49, and 50.

Since the seventy-five respondents were teachers and supervisors of considerable experience and skill, their opinions have been given great weight in establishing the final set of criteria, upon which a reasonably objective evaluation of method books may be made.

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING METHOD BOOKS FOR BEGINNING HETEROGENEOUS INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC CLASSES IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.

Group 1

The items in this group are to be considered as very important in rating a method book. The item number refers to the number that particular item had in the second questionnaire (see page 46). The percentage total means the percentage of the respondents who marked that item either very important or important. An explanation or clarification is given below each item.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>ITEM NUMBER</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Difficulties increase slowly.</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
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</table>

New problems are not introduced until the present material is understood. Each lesson should present no more than two new problems. For example, in presenting new tones for which the student must learn the fingering, how to produce that tone on his instrument, and remember it
well enough to recognize it the next time it is encountered in a song or exercise, there should be several exercises or melodies in which this tone occurs before the problem of a new tone is presented to him.

Melodies are satisfying and not just fragments.

The first line of America (first six measures) would be a fragment. The entire song should be presented to avoid the sense of frustration that comes from leaving the melody hanging in mid-air. The entire chorus of Jungle Bells (sixteen measures of 2/4 time) is satisfactory even though the verse is omitted.

Each instrument is started on a tone that is easy for a beginner to play.

For the clarinets the starting tone probably should be second line G. First line E is also a satisfactory starting tone. Less satisfactory are D and C below the staff. Any tone which involves the use of both hands is an unsatisfactory starting tone for the clarinet.

For cornet and trumpet any tone below middle C is unsatisfactory. G on the third space is too high for most beginners. While second line G is probably the most satisfactory starting tone, E and F below second line G and middle C itself are not entirely unsatisfactory.

For tuba (BB flat) F on the space below the bass clef is probably the best starting tone. Less satisfactory, but acceptable are B flat on the second line of the bass clef and B flat an octave lower.
For flute the most unsatisfactory starting tones are those which involve the use of all or nearly all the fingers (such as middle C, C sharp, and D). Fifth line F or first space F are satisfactory as well as G, A, B flat, and E.

For trombone fourth line F is an excellent starting tone. Somewhat less satisfactory are B flat on the second line and B flat an octave higher. Entirely unsatisfactory are tones which involve the use of distant positions (such as G on second space).

For horn the starting tone should be between middle C and the octave higher with A and B less satisfactory than the other tones of that octave.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>ITEM PERCENTAGE</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary of the written instructions is within the grasp of the average fifth grade student.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Very few instrumental teachers begin teaching students lower than the fourth grade. While many teachers prefer to begin in the first year of junior high school, this study is concerned with beginning instrumental classes in the grade school. A fifth grade student is about the average pupil with which we are concerned. Therefore, words used in the students' books (with the exception of musical terms) should be within the comprehension of an average fifth grade student.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>ITEM PERCENTAGE</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Book has a good selection of harmonized duets, trios, and the like.</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second cornet and horn parts should not be afterbeats. If the baritone part is a counter melody the trombones should have the counter melody also.
Do the notes look cluttered?  Is there too much or too little on a page?  

<table>
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<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Size of type (notes)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>97</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least one-eighth inch between staff lines.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size of type (words)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>93</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large enough to prevent eyestrain.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Book contains instructions regarding the care of instruments.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>92</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is too much to expect beginners to make repairs, but they should be taught the effect of candy and chewing gum on the insides of their instruments, the reason (bent keys) for not putting music books inside clarinet cases, the necessity for regular cleaning and oiling (e.g., for example, a trombone slide), the correct way to insert a cornet mouthpiece, and other simple procedures which will save the time that would be spent otherwise in trying to keep the instruments in playing condition.</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is a good proportion of familiar tunes for the students' satisfaction and unfamiliar melodies to make him read instead of playing by ear.</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>96</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perhaps one tune in each four or five should be an unfamiliar one. It seems unwise to set an arbitrary ratio. Such books as the All Melody Band Folio (Rubank) which contain all or nearly all familiar melodies are not satisfactory unless supplemented by other material. This is because many of the students have a tendency to play along by ear without actually reading the notes for time values, fingering, and the like.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>
Each lesson is balanced.

Certainly after the first few lessons, if not in the first lesson itself, there should be a melody or melodies to help maintain the students' interest. There should be also material which builds the embouchure (such as sustained tones or melodies containing sustained tones), material which develops proper tonguing (such as repeated eighth notes), material which can be used to improve intonation (such as exercises in thirds).

**Book contains exercises to improve breath control.**  
See Item 25 above.

These need not be on separate pages but can be worked into the other lessons and into the type of melodies given. It is recognized that a good teacher can take a simple melody and make it into an excellent breathing exercise by insisting on phrasing of which the particular group of children is capable.

**Book contains long tones to strengthen the embouchure (or melodies with sustained tones which will accomplish the same end).**  
See Item 25 above.

**Book contains interval exercises which can be used to improve intonation.**  
See Item 25 above.
Brass parts contain lip slurs or melodies which can be used for the same purpose.

See Item 25 above.

Many teachers believe that lip slurs for cornet and trombone are one of the best ways of strengthening the embouchure. An inclination of beginning players to press the instrument too hard against the mouth in order to get the higher tones causes a temporary paralysis of the lip muscles. Lip slurs cannot be played if too much pressure is used because the pressure will prevent the free movement of the muscles necessary to perform the slur with the lips. Hence, lip slur practice can be used under the guidance of a careful teacher to help the student eliminate the tendency to use too much pressure. After a few weeks of instruction when most of the students will have learned to produce a clear tone some attention should be given to this point.

Book contains tonguing exercises (or melodies which require the students to tongue) to develop a rapid and precise attack.

See Item 25 above.

When players are kept too long at the beginning on long tones and on melodies which are entirely of the sustained tone variety, they are inclined to have a "mushy" attack. There should be some songs or exercises which make it necessary to tongue the same tone repeatedly. For example the following excerpt from a cornet part to Volkwein's First Grade Band Book by George Southwell will be useful in developing
the tonguing ability of beginning cornetists:

\[ \text{Music notation image} \]

Percussion parts fit other parts with good musical relationship.

It is not necessary, of course, for the percussion parts to be always in the same rhythmic pattern as the melody, but certainly they should have a natural and musical relationship to the melody. For example, the following percussion part to the first six measures of America:

\[ \text{Music notation image} \]

would not be as satisfactory as

\[ \text{Music notation image} \]

Clarinetists are given sufficient material in the low register before the break is introduced.

Clarinetists should play for several weeks in the low register or until they can play with a clear tone all the tones in the octave from second line G to low G before attempting to play in the high register.
Break for clarinets is introduced logically.

Since third line B is a more difficult tone to produce on the clarinet than some of the other tones, the high register should not be introduced from E (lowest tone) to third line B. It should be introduced either from middle C to G on the space above the treble clef, or from B flat below the treble clef to F on the fifth line. Clarinetists should be able to play from E on the fourth space to A on the line above the staff before attempting the break from second space A to third line B.

There is logical progression from one lesson to the next.

For example, from quarter note to half note or from quarter note to eighth note seems logical. Eighth notes should be learned before the dotted quarter note so that it can be shown that \( \frac{3}{4} \) equals \( \cdot \cdot \cdot \cdot \).

Rests are introduced logically.

See Item 22 above.

From quarter rest to half rest or from quarter rest to eighth rest is logical.

Key signatures are introduced in logical order for each instrument.

See Item 22 above.

Clarinet should go from Key of C to Key of F or from Key of G to Key of G (Major Keys).
Trombones should go from Key of B Flat to Key of E or from Key of B Flat to Key of F.

Back contains pictures to illustrate correct posture. embouchure, hand position.

Photographs should be clear in all details (no fuzzy photography). If seated posture is shown, the feet should be on the floor, back straight and leaning slightly forward with shoulders away from the back of the chair.

For cornet, the right thumb should be curved between the first and second valve casings instead of sticking up above the lead pipe, fingers arched above the valves instead of on a level.

For horn, the mating of the bell with the right hand should be shown.

For clarinet, the illustrations should show the correct position of the left forefinger to roll from the A Key to the tones below (F sharp, for example) and the fingers should be curved instead of straight.

For snare drum, the correct position and use of the wrists should be shown and the illustrations should emphasize that the forearm is not raised and lowered with each stroke.

Ranges are not too extreme for brasses.

Trombones should not be required to go above B Flat for the first semester. Cornets should not go above D.
Playing (or more usually striving for) the higher tones before the embouchure is strong enough causes too much pressure and a strained, squeezed, tight tone instead of a free, open-throated tone. If a beginner can be made to produce a free, full tone it can be refined into a beautiful tone later.

Fixing charts are comprehensible to grade school students without explanation by the teacher.  

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<td>TOTAL</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>90</td>
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Some explanation may be necessary or desirable at the beginning to show the students how to use the chart, but when the chart is so complicated that the students have to have each new tone explained to them, the chart is unsatisfactory. Charts which show actual hand positions (photographs) are desirable for woodwind instruments.

There is sufficient review material that it is not necessary to go over and over the same lesson or exercise.

35 90

The students are frustrated by too much repetition. They want to feel that they are making progress. The same results can be obtained by new melodies or exercises which present the same problems.

Book contains selections the group can play together for demonstration or concert.

50 90

This is very necessary to give the students a sense of accomplishment and to "sell" the parents and other students on the possibilities of the instrumental class.
The method is designed for class teaching rather than for individual instruction.

This is a rather obvious point but an important one since this study is concerned with class teaching.

Rhythmic problems are the same for all instruments and parts in the harmonized exercises and melodies.

For advanced students, learning to play \( \frac{1}{2} \) while another instrument is playing \( \frac{1}{2} \) is desirable and easy, but for a beginner who is struggling with the problem of producing the tone, getting the right fingering, and counting the time it is confusing to have other instruments play a different rhythm.

Rook is not advised to B flat instruments so that flute, oboe, and horn are usually in a difficult key or range. All parts are of approximately equal difficulty.

It is recognized that the B flat instruments are most numerous in classes of this type and that they must be well taught. But at least one reason why so many school bands have no flutes and horns or very poor players on these instruments is that the beginners become discouraged by having to play at the top or bottom of their range while the B flat instruments are playing in the easier middle section of their ranges. Horns should have the melody a great deal of the time in a beginners' group. It is difficult to learn to play when your part consists of afterbeats.
Preferred or alternate fingerings are indicated.

For example, clarinetists should be shown that to play this combination it is desirable to use the first finger of each hand in preference to the two other fingerings for E Flat.

Sufficient parts are published so that slow, intermediate, and advanced students can be taught in the same class.

Some clarinet players will develop the ability to reach the tones of the high register within a few weeks. Others will take much longer. After the first few lessons there should be a choice of parts so that the more advanced students may play in the high register while the slower students either play the melody an octave lower or a harmonized part in the low register.

The same reasoning applies to cornet parts when the range is high. There should be harmonized parts on lower tones so that the players who cannot play the high tones can learn also.

Book contains seasonal songs.

Christmas songs during that season of the year, for example, offer the teacher a strong motivating force to encourage home practice. Seasonal songs enable the instrumental class teacher to correlate his work with that of the classroom teachers for assemblies, units, projects, and the like.
ITEM  PERCENTAGE  TOTAL  
NUMBER       

A teacher's manual is published.  

The manual should contain a full score.  

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Group 2  

The criteria in this group are those which, from fifty-five to eighty per cent of the respondents to the second questionnaire considered important. In evaluating a method book they are not to be considered as important as the items in Group 1 (which were considered important by from eighty to one hundred per cent of the respondents).  

The item number refers to the number that particular item had in the second questionnaire (see page 46). The percentage total means the percentage of the respondents who marked that item either very important or important.  

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General attractiveness of the book.  

Neatness of makeup, general impression a child would gain when looking through the book.  

There are written instructions for each lesson in the students' books and in the teacher's manual.  

Instructions in the students' books must be clear and concise. The students will not read long, involved explanations.
Durability of cover and binding: Should be so constructed as to last at least one year with hard usage.

Quality of paper: Durability, whether too glaring white, etc.

Teacher's manual is so designed as to be usable by a music teacher who is not an instrumental teacher.

While many of the respondents to the questionnaire thought no person who is not an instrumental specialist should be teaching this type of class, the fact remains that in many school systems a teacher who is just a good all-round musician, or perhaps a good pianist, is charged with the responsibility of teaching instrumental classes.

A piano accompaniment book is published.

Especially for small classes or for classes in which there are no percussion instruments the piano will help to maintain a steady rhythm and keep the players together.

Lines of lessons are numbered consecutively from 1 to 1 throughout the book.

This might eliminate such mistakes as the student's playing line eight of lesson nineteen when the teacher meant for him to play line eight of lesson twenty.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Item Number</th>
<th>Percentage Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pictures show children playing the instruments rather than adults.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children are more apt to want to do what they see other children doing.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sharp and flats are introduced before key signatures are studied.</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The students should at least know that sharp and flats are and what effect they have on pitch and fingerling before studying key signatures.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book contains a list of the instruments for which it is published.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This saves some time when ordering parts.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book contains testing material so that the teacher can check up periodically to see whether the students are learning what he believes he is teaching.</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of tests for diagnosis makes for more effective teaching.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the physical makeup of the book in proportion to its cost?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budgets are realities we have to cope with. No book should be bought just because it is cheap, but we should try to get the most we can for the taxpayers' money. A more expensive book should have a more durable cover, or better paper, or more profuse illustrations, or be more comprehensive. In short, there should be some tangible reason for spending more money for this book than for another.</td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
There are charts or other means for the parents' signature regarding the amount of time the student spends in home practice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NUMBER</td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since the amount of time the student spends in home practice has a very great bearing on whether he is successful in learning to play and since it is the joint responsibility of the teacher (for good instruction and motivation) and the parents (for encouragement and such help as they are able to give), there should be some method by which the parents can indicate their interest in and attention to the progress of the child at home.

Group 3

Criteria in this group include those which fewer than one-half of the respondents to the questionnaire marked important and other items which were not included in the questionnaire. They should be considered when evaluating a method book but should not be given as much weight as the criteria in Group 1.

1. Book contains elements of appreciation (facts about the composer, the composition, the period of time in which it was written, and the like).

It seems a narrow educational concept to believe that the instrumental class teacher who has taught the instrument itself and nothing else has done enough. We are attempting through music to add to the educational experiences of the whole child.
2. There should be at least one solo (with piano accompaniment) for each instrument. This will encourage the ambitious students to make progress and not to be satisfied with merely keeping up with the average.

3. Problems are encountered in "real" music. Cornets, for example, might attempt to play Abide With Me in the Key of G Major and find F Sharp in the seventh measure. This would lead naturally to an explanation by the teacher of the reasons why the class must learn the Key of G Major.

4. There is an explanation of all musical terms used in the book.

5. The method is so designed as to allow the whole class to play together most of the time. Since there are many types of instruments in a heterogeneous class of the type with which this study is concerned, economy of time and maintenance of interest demand that very little time be spent, for example, in having the trombones play alone while the other players merely sit and listen.
CHAPTER III

RELIABILITY OF THE CRITERIA

"Our aims in instrumental music must be to teach the instrument through music and for the sake of music and to use the instrument to refine, define, and make more ardent the music-making impulse." 1/

The reliability of evaluations made according to these criteria was checked in the manner described below.

Flute, clarinet, cornet, trombones, horn, and drum parts were purchased to the following method books: Smith-Yoder-Bachman Ensemble Band Method, 3-Way Method Beginning Band Musicianship, Easy Steps to the Band, Boosey and Hawkes Band Method, and the Belwin Elementary Band Method.

Three experienced music educators were asked to examine these books critically, to evaluate them using as a basis for their judgment the criteria in Groups 1, 2, and 3 as listed in the previous chapter, and to rank them in order.

It was felt that if these criteria were a sound basis for judgment the rank order reached independently by these music educators should be rather consistent. The results of these evaluations were as follows:

EVALUATION OF FIVE WIDELY USED METHOD BOOKS BY MUSIC EDUCATOR "A".

This person is the Supervisor of Music in a small town. He has had sixteen years of experience. He teaches all the heterogeneous instrumental music classes in his school system.

Names of Methods Evaluated

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Rank Order</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Smith-Yoder-Bachman Ensemble Band Method</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-Way Method Beginning Band Musicianship</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy Steps to the Band</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boosey and Hawkes Band Method</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belwin Elementary Band Method</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This teacher spent about ten hours evaluating the five books and reached the above rank order through such considerations as the following:

As to photographs illustrating correct posture, the Smith-Yoder-Bachman Ensemble Band Method contained one posture photograph plus two diagrams showing the correct position of the lips and tongue and an explanation of the pictures and diagrams. Easy Steps to the Band contains one posture photograph. The other three methods contained no illustrations of correct posture.

Both Smith-Yoder-Bachman and Belwin had excellent theory lessons with assignments for the students. The 3-Way Method had some explanations of theory with no assignments. The other two books contained none.

All five books kept the flutes in difficult keys most of the time.
The Boosey-Hawkes book is less suitable for heterogeneous classes of beginners because it has a great deal of lesson space devoted to having each type of instrument play alone before there are exercises in which the entire group can play together. This does not mean that this book is not a good book for some purposes but simply that it is less suitable for beginning heterogeneous classes than the others since successful management of such a class demands that all the children be kept playing most of the time.

The Boosey-Hawkes book had the best instructions regarding the care of instruments although none of the books was adequate in this respect. Easy Steps to the Band was not satisfactory as to correct starting tones. For example, in this method the flutes begin on E flat and horns on B flat below the treble clef. These are not easy tones for beginners to play.

Easy Steps was somewhat superior to the other books for having a good proportion of familiar and unfamiliar melodies.

Belwin and SYB had the most clear and concise written instructions.

In many respects there was little or no choice among the five methods, for example: Explanation of musical terms used, general attractiveness, quality of paper, durability of cover, range for brasses, sufficiency of review material, selections the group can play together for demonstration or concert.
EVALUATION OF FIVE WIDELY USED METHOD BOOKS BY MUSIC EDUCATOR "E".

This person is the Director of Music Education in a medium sized city. He teaches a few of the instrumental classes in his school system and supervises several instrumental teachers who teach the other classes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names of Methods Evaluated</th>
<th>Rank Order</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Smith-Yoder-Bachman Ensemble Band Method</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-Way Method Beginning Band Musicianship</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy Steps to the Band</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boosey and Hawkes Band Method</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belwin Elementary Band Method</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The rank order stated above was reached through such considerations as these:

The Smith-Yoder-Bachman book is excellent as to theory work. Its fingering chart is not easy to understand and the book is too much based on the technical approach.

The 3-Way Method has well-selected pieces and a good technical approach. It is not really a heterogeneous method. It is based too much on technique, the pages are crowded and the print is too small. Its fingering chart is difficult to read and it advances too rapidly.

Easy Steps to the Band has well-planned lessons. Its fingering chart is not good. It advances too slowly to maintain interest.

The Belwin Elementary Band Method has excellent instructions at the beginning of the book. Its fingering chart is difficult to understand. It is too much based on the technical approach. It begins
too slowly and then advances too rapidly.

The Boosey-Hawkes Band Method has crowded pages, instructional print too small, double notes hard to read, an obscure fingering chart. It is not really a heterogeneous method.

EVALUATION OF FIVE WIDELY USED METHOD BOOKS BY MUSIC EDUCATOR "C".

This person is the Director of Music Education in a small town. He teaches the instrumental ensembles at all grade levels in his school system and supervises the work of four other part-time teachers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names of Methods Evaluated</th>
<th>Rank Order</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Smith-Yoder-Hachman Ensemble Band Method</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-Way Method Beginning Band Musicianship</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy Steps to the Band</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boosey and Hawkes Band Method</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belwin Elementary Band Method</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above rank order was arrived at through such considerations as these:

The Boosey-Hawkes method advances too rapidly. The Belwin Elementary Band Method advances too slowly.

The melodies are not satisfying in either the Belwin or Boosey-Hawkes methods.

Easy Steps starts some instruments on tones that are difficult for a beginner to play. Boosey-Hawkes gets around this by not being a class method but a method for individual instruments for the first page and one-half.
The vocabulary in the Boosey-Hawkes method was more difficult for grade school students than that of the other methods examined. The 3-Way and Boosey-Hawkes methods had poor formats. The printed words in the Easy Steps method were too small. None of the methods examined was adequate in regard to instructions on taking care of the instruments.

SYB and Easy Steps were superior as to the illustrations. The fingering charts in the 3-Way and Boosey-Hawkes were somewhat less satisfactory than in the other methods.

All the books were satisfactory as regards selections the group can play together for demonstration or concert. The SYB method had the best graded material. All the methods were satisfactory as to the durability of the cover and binding.

The quality of paper in the Boosey-Hawkes method was somewhat less good than that of the other methods.

The 3-Way method was the only one which included a chart for the parents' signature regarding home practice.

There was agreement among the three music educators who made the evaluations on the preceding pages that the Smith-Yoder-Bachman Ensemble Band Method should rank first, the 3-Way Method Beginning Band Musicianship fourth, and the Boosey and Hawkes Band Method fifth. There was a slight disagreement as to the ranking of the other two methods. Music Educator "A" thought the Belvin Elementary Band Method should rank second with Easy Steps to the Band third. Music
Educator B ranked Easy Steps to the Band second and the Belwin Elementary Band Method third. Music Educator C ranked them both second since he thought the differences in them were of little consequence.

The only difference of opinion, then, was whether Easy Steps to the Band should rank just ahead of the Belwin Elementary Band Method or vice-versa. If it had not been for the very small differences in quality of these two methods it is possible that all three evaluations would have been in complete agreement.
CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS

"The general objective of music teaching in the grade schools is to cause the
original, crude, native interest in rhythm and in tone—to develop into a
genuine love of good music based on an
intelligent appreciation of its moods,
its structure, and its notation." 1

These five method books probably can be considered as among the
best published since their wide use indicates that a great many music
teachers have selected them out of hundreds which are available. It
seems reasonable to assume that the deficiencies of these methods are
also characteristic of those less widely used.

The chief deficiencies in these five methods seem to be:

1. They do not take full advantage of the educational influence of pictures. Some of them contain no pictures whatever. The clarinet
   books, for example, might well have illustrations of the correct left
   hand position in playing the intervals F Sharp to A
   \[\text{\includegraphics{figure}}\]
   and A to B.
   \[\text{\includegraphics{figure}}\]

   The methods for French Horn would be more helpful to both students and
   teachers if there were illustrations of the correct right hand positions
   in playing.

---

1/Karl Wilson Gehrkens, *Music in the Grade Schools*, C.C. Birchard,
Boston, 1934, p. 1.
2. They are entirely inadequate in their instructions regarding the care of instruments. Of course, any good teacher emphasizes care of instruments to his classes, but if more stress were laid upon this important factor in the method book itself, the parents as well as the children would be more conscious of the importance of good care. Much of the teacher's time is taken up in trying to make emergency repairs and much time from lessons is lost by students whose instruments are not in playing condition.

3. While the B flat instruments are the most numerous, a beginning heterogeneous instrumental music class must have as one of its objectives the development of players for band and orchestra at the high school level, and certainly flutes and horns are desirable instruments for every high school orchestra and concert band to have. The practice of keeping the flutes in the Key of B Flat almost throughout the method book is of questionable value in stimulating the interest of aspiring flutists in a beginners' group. And certainly the horns should have the melody more frequently. This deficiency would be less important, of course, in a class in which only B Flat instruments were taught.

4. The importance of testing to diagnose weaknesses and to improve teaching is not generally recognized by publishers of method books, if these five books are a fair sample. Only two of the books evaluated recognized this factor and included testing material.

5. Only one of the books contained a provision for the parents' indication of the pupil's satisfactory home practice.
6. Elements of appreciation are generally disregarded entirely although one of the methods evaluated contained an interesting short history of the instrument.

7. The fingering charts particularly for woodwind instruments are sometimes difficult even for an adult to understand. Pictorial presentation of the fingerings might be easier for a child to grasp than the usual series of 0 for open holes and 9 for closed holes.

The fact that one of the method books evaluated had thirty-one pages while another had thirty-nine pages of equally good material for the same price (eighty-five cents) seems to have some importance.

The consistency of the judgment of the three music educators who evaluated these method books independently seems to indicate that such a means of selecting a method has some value for teachers who wish to choose books that will most adequately meet the needs of their instrumental classes. It must be remembered that no set of general criteria can be relied upon exclusively without taking into consideration the needs of the particular group for which the method is being selected. For example, a ninth grade instrumental class might need a method which used more difficult vocabulary and more extensive instructions than the simple, concise instructions needed in the grade school. And a beginners group which had no flute players would not be concerned whether or not the method they were using started the flutes on a tone that is hard to play.

Although the books evaluated were excellent in many respects, their weaknesses seem to indicate a need for the publishing of better material
for beginning heterogeneous instrumental music classes in the grade school.

The reliability and usefulness of this study might be increased by:

1. Having a greater number of educators make the evaluations.
2. Evaluating a greater number of method books.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Farnsworth, Charles E., "Instrumental Music as a Subject in the Public Schools," *MTNA Proceedings*, 1921, pp. 48-56.


---, Music In American Schools, Silver-Burdett, New York, 1943.

Normann, Theodore, Instrumental Music in the Public Schools, Oliver Ditson Company, Philadelphia, 1941.


FIRST QUESTIONNAIRE

Name ____________________________
Position __________________________
Town or City __________________ State __________________________

I use the following method books for my instrumental classes: (please list)

1. ____________________________
2. ____________________________
3. ____________________________
4. ____________________________
5. ____________________________

The following have been suggested to me as factors which should be considered when trying to determine whether a method for instrumental classes is a good one. Please cross out items you consider unimportant and place an X beside those which you think are very important. For example, if you think "Cost of Book" is unimportant, please indicate your opinion thus: Cost of Book. If you think "Cost of Book" is of great importance, please indicate your opinion thus: Cost of Book (X). Please leave unmarked items which you consider important but not of great importance.

1. Cost of Book ____________________________
2. Appearance of book ____________________________
3. Book contains pictures to illustrate playing positions ____________________________
4. There are written instructions for each lesson ____________________________
5. There are written instructions at the beginning of the book ____________________________
6. There is logical progression from one lesson to the next ____________________________
7. Book contains theory lessons for the student to complete ____________________________
8. There is a piano accompaniment book published ____________________________
9. There is a teacher's manual published ____________________________
10. The teacher's manual is designed so that it can be used by a teacher who is not an instrumental specialist ____________________________
11. Size of type (notes) ____________________________
12. Size of type (words) ____________________________
13. Each lesson is balanced. (That is, it contains melodic material, technical material, material for tone quality, intonation, etc.) ____________________________
14. Can interest be maintained by following the order of the book or is skipping necessary ____________________________
15. A full score is published ____________________________
16. A condensed score is published ____________________________
17. The book contains testing material ____________________________
18. There is an explanation of all musical terms used in the method ____________________________
19. Size of the book. (Small size, octavo, or full size) ____________________________
20. Format (The arrangement of material on a page. Is there too much or too little on each page) ____________________________
21. Length of each lesson. (Does it correspond to the class period) ____________________________
22. Is each lesson arranged so that slow, average, and advanced students can be taught in the same class ____________________________
23. Quality of the melodic material ____________________________
24. Quality of the technical material ____________________________
25. Does the book contain elements of appreciation (facts about the composer, the selection, the period in which it was written, etc.) ____________________________
26. Is there material which is suitable for home practice ____________________________
27. The method is adaptable for class teaching and not only individual lessons ____________________________
28. Preferred fingerings are indicated ____________________________
29. Contains a list of the instruments for which it is published. ( )
30. Has an attractive cover. ( )
31. Correct starting tones for each instrument. ( )
32. The melodic material has the words printed as in a singing book. ( )
33. The pictures used to illustrate playing position are pictures of children rather than of adults. ( )
34. The melodic material has illustrative pictures. (for example, a melody based on ascending scales might be called "Climbing The Mountain" and be accompanied by a picture of mountain climbers. )

Please indicate any other factors which you consider valuable in a method book for instrumental classes.

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Thank you very much for your cooperation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Number</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Unimportant</th>
<th>Dubious Answers</th>
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<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dear Supervisor:

As a part of my work towards a Master of Education degree at Boston University I am trying to set-up a rating scale which can be used for an objective evaluation of method materials for beginning heterogeneous (wind and percussion) instrumental music classes in the grade school.

Your assistance in filling out the enclosed questionnaire will be greatly appreciated.

The items listed in the questionnaire have been suggested to me as factors which should be considered when trying to determine whether a method for beginning heterogeneous instrumental music classes is a good one. Please indicate by checking (√) the proper column whether you think each of these factors is VERY IMPORTANT, IMPORTANT, UNIMPORTANT, or whether you have NO OPINION in regard to the particular item.

A stamped, addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience.

Sincerely yours,

Fred Felmet
Winchester, Mass.
Is the physical makeup of the book in proportion to its cost? (Is a $1.25 book better than a $1.00 book because of better paper, more durable binding, better illustrations, etc.)

General attractiveness of the book.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of type (words)</th>
<th>Size of type (notes)</th>
<th>Quality of the paper (durability, whether too glaring white, etc.)</th>
<th>Durability of cover and binding.</th>
<th>Size of student books (hand, octavo, or full size)</th>
<th>Do the pages look cluttered? Is there too much or too little on a page?</th>
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Book contains list of the instruments for which it is published.

Lines of lessons are numbered consecutively from 1 to 7 throughout the book.

His might eliminate such mistakes as the student’s playing line 8 of Lesson 19 instead of line 8 of Lesson 20.

Book contains pictures to illustrate correct posture, embouchure, hand position. Pictures show children playing the instruments rather than adults.

Fingering charts are comprehensible to grade school students without explanation by the teacher.

There are written instructions for each lesson in student's book and manual.

There are sufficient instructions at beginning of book and none for each lesson.

Book contains theory lessons for the students to complete.

There is a workbook in which students complete theory lessons assigned by teacher.

Book contains testing material so that teacher can check up periodically to see if students are learning what is being taught.

Book contains instructions regarding care of instruments.

Vocabulary of written instructions is within grasp of average grade student.

There are charts or other means for parents signature regarding amount of time it is in home practice.

Logical progression from one lesson to next. (e.g. whole notes before half notes, sharps and flats are introduced before key signatures are studied.

Key signatures introduced in logical order for the instrument.

Each lesson is balanced (i.e. contains melodic, technical, intonation material)

Book contains exercises to improve breath control.

Book contains long tones to strengthen embouchure.

Brass parts contain lip slurs.

Book contains interval exercises for improving intonation.

Book contains tonguing exercises to develop rapid and precise attack.

Rests are introduced logically (e.g. whole rests with whole notes then half rest)

Preferred or alternate fingerings are indicated (e.g. C# to E Flat on clarinet).

Each instrument is started on a tone easy for a beginner to get.

Difficulties increase very slowly.

There is sufficient review material so that it is unnecessary to go over same once several times.

Book is not geared to E Flat instruments so that flutes, oboes, horns are not in difficult key and range. All parts are of approximately equal difficulty.

Clarinetists are given sufficient material in low register before break is introduced.

Break for clarinetists is introduced logically (e.g. from C below treble clef to space above, or from B Flat below treble clef to F on fifth line).
The following factors which do not appear in the questionnaire I consider very important in choosing a method book for beginning instrumental classes:

I would like to comment on the following items in the questionnaire:
ITEM NUMBER   YOUR COMMENTS ON THIS ITEM

I would like a copy of the composite results of the questionnaire (Yes or No)

NAME
POSITION
SCHOOL ADDRESS
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<th>Unimportant</th>
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In addition to merely checking the proper columns to answer the 54 questions, many of the supervisors and teachers who replied made comments about the things they looked for in choosing a method book.

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<thead>
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<th>Comment</th>
<th>Number making this comment</th>
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<tr>
<td>There must be items that create interest</td>
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<tr>
<td>No book fits all class situations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age level of class calls for different books</td>
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<tr>
<td>All instruments (including strings) should be taught together</td>
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<td>There should be elaborate use of pictures</td>
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<td>Conductors part should contain full score</td>
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<tr>
<td>Group methods should not leave out material which will help to solve the problems of specific instruments</td>
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<tr>
<td>There should be means for pupil suggestions about activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instrumental work should be correlated with singing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Familiar melodies should not be used and then changed to avoid a technical problem that has not yet been introduced.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The clarinet should be favored because of its importance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Let's have melodies instead of mechanical exercises</td>
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<tr>
<td>There is no time in instrumental classes to teach theory or appreciation. Leave these items out of method books.</td>
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<tr>
<td>All instrumental teachers should be specialists</td>
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<tr>
<td>Why not let them play &quot;real&quot; music and learn from the problems encountered instead of having so much preparatory material such as lip slurs, tonguing exercises, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>They are supposed to know rests, sharps, and flats from the classroom music before they enter the instrumental class</td>
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</table>

Forty different methods were used by the 75 persons who replied to the questionnaire. The methods most frequently mentioned were: Tune A Day, Rubank series, Belwin (Weber), Easy Steps To Band, Boosey-Hawkes Instrumental Course, Universal Method, 3-Way Method, Beginning Band Musicianship, First Steps To Band, SYB.