

CMP: "One Size Fits All" or "Tailor Made?"

By Carrie Lane Gruselle



Some people can buy off the rack. Some people need alterations. Some people do fine in one-size fits all. Individual needs and tastes determine whether you furnish your wardrobe from a department store, the mall or your favorite couturier or haberdasher.

Likewise in the classroom or studio, teachers come in all different sizes and shapes, circumstances and states, strengths and needs. CMP has something to offer every teacher in every situation through its flexible and thorough five point model (Selection, Analysis, Outcomes, Strategies and Assessment).

Suppose you teach in a school district without a budget?

Recycle the reliable pieces in your file by personalizing your outcomes and strategies to each specific group of students. This way you're saving money, meeting the unique needs of your students and are not going crazy teaching the same way day after day.

How about a school district with a budget and students who all take private lessons?

You are among the lucky few who have considerable flexibility in selecting exactly the appropriate music for your groups. With all of the talent gained from years of piano lessons, less time can be spent on skill outcomes and more time can be spent on knowledge and affective outcomes. You may also prefer to spend more time on more advanced skill outcomes.

Do you teach in a school district with high expectations for competitions and festivals?

You would certainly be cautious of taking time away from rehearsing pieces but will discover that time can be saved in the long run by finding strategies that also assess learning. Analysis of the piece before beginning to teach it allows you to make your instruction more effective and direct. Also, by devising outcomes that bring the students hearts closer to the composition or the composer they will give a more meaningful performance.

Do you teach in a school district that is currently focusing on accountability and assessment?

The CMP model supplies a broad variety of formal and informal questioning tools, including question

techniques, paper and pencil tests or portfolio assessment.

Does your situation require absolutely no formal student assessment?

The CMP model reminds us that we can "take the temperature" of our students' learning with a variety of simple and informal techniques. For instance, ask the students to take out the piece that uses marcato articulation at letter D or the piece that is based on a Norwegian folk tale.

Perhaps you are a new teacher to your district. To get off on the right foot, select music that allows you to teach to your strengths, yet challenges you to grow as an educator. Choose outcomes and strategies that are realistic and achievable so that success may build upon success. Affective outcomes that build community in your classroom can get the students on the same page quickly.

If you are a veteran teacher who is content with the status quo, perhaps some new approaches to analysis can help you to choose pieces in the new catalogue of repertoire and most effectively spend that shrinking supply account.

General music teachers whose students have minimal performance expectations will likely be focusing more on knowledge and affective outcomes. By selecting the highest quality of music to study and experience, you will feel confident about contributing to the shaping of the next generation of music consumers.

Many teachers begin by incorporating small snippets of ideas into their lessons, others jump in headfirst and strive for at least one complete plan on each program. All may take advantage of what CMP has to offer at the pace or quantity desired. As Cornelia Watkins put it, incorporating CMP into your teaching can be anything "from a wheel alignment to engine overhaul," if you'll pardon the mixing of metaphors.

So try it on and see how it fits! Take in a sleeve here, let out a hem there, dye the vest to match your shoes if it suits you, but check it out. You will like what you see in the mirror and so will your students!