



BAMBOOTAMBOO

play it and smile



Workshop Manual

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Introduction

This manual has been written to help understand how to structure a musical workshop, the skills gained from this can be used with either the Rhythm Packs, Songbooks and after school club resources all available free for our website www.bambootambo.com.

To run a rhythmic workshop successfully you need not be a skilled drummer or musician.

The main attributes needed to run a Bamboo Tamboo Workshop are:

- Confidence in working with a group of people
- The ability to listen to the group as a whole

There are several key steps to the running a workshop and it is important to put them in the right order, if you do miss a step it is not the end of the world, but will make your task more difficult to accomplish.

For your first few workshops don't worry about putting an introduction or break into your piece, just concentrate on teaching the rhythms and layering the groove.

Steps to a Successful Workshop

1. Form a circle
2. Introduction
3. Warm up games
4. Clap a Beat
5. Call and response
6. Give Out the instruments
7. Introduce Bamboo Tamboo rhythms
8. Layer the rhythms
9. Introduction
10. Breaks
11. Solos

This workshop structure is useful for use with all key stages, however there are some specific notes for working with younger children at the end of this document.

We will now look at each of these steps in more detail.

Step 1

Form a Circle

Arrange the participants in a circle making sure to be part of the circle yourself.

This can be done either seated or standing.

The circle is important because everybody in the circle can see everybody else. This is important for a number of reasons:

1. It helps with discipline, there is nowhere to hide.
2. It helps when teaching Team Work as everyone can get eye contact with everyone else.
3. It promotes a sense of unity, everyone is equal.

Step 2

Introducing Bamboo Tamboo

This is simply introducing the Art Form of Bamboo Tamboo to the class.

You can include as much of the history of Bamboo Tamboo as you like, though from experience keeping it brief helps to maintain concentration.

Demonstrate how to play Bamboo Tamboo on the tubes and show the differences of pitch between the different colours.

Step 3

Warm Up Games

The object of the following games is to relax the group and to start getting them used to your body language, it is important to use exaggerated gestures and use your whole body to communicate.

Any warm up game is fine, I'm sure that you will have your own favourites, detailed here is a nice simple one, for further ideas of games see the separate ebook entitled Warm Up Games.

Game 1

This game is about timing, all we are going to do is take it in turns to clap, starting with yourself, then the person to your right and so on around the group.

Once the group has successfully completed a couple of circuits you can try increasing the speed, timing is still important.

Now, without stopping the game, try reversing the direction.

Every time, on your turn, reverse direction.

When the group is attuned to your body language stop the game.

Game 2

This is the same as game 1 except everyone in the group may change direction when it is their turn to clap. We are after clear non verbal communication.

This is important when playing music, as you will not be able to hear any verbal communication.

After a while, on your turn, clap to someone across the circle from yourself. Use very clear body language and establish good eye contact. This teaches the group to pay attention at all times.

Some groups may start doing this themselves with no prompting from you, if they do let them get on with it. This is normally a good sign

Let the game run for a couple more minutes before stopping.

Step 4

Clap a Beat

When we listen to music we often find ourselves moving or tapping in time to the rhythm of the music, ask the group what we call that part of the music that makes us move?

Answer the beat.

When we play music we all need to play to the same beat.

While I am explaining this I always hold a beat with my body, this means that while I am talking a part of me will be tapping, nodding, marching or otherwise externalising a beat so that the whole group will be aware of that beat, though not necessarily consciously.

Give the group a count of four in time with your movements and encourage them to join in clapping a beat.

Once the beat is strong you can then double the speed for a few measures (if you are comfortable doing this) before coming back to the original speed and then stopping.

When you have a group clapping a beat or playing a rhythm it is important for you to keep track of where the first beat is, mostly (almost exclusively at this level) you will be playing 4 beats per measure, and with a little practice this becomes second nature.

Step 5

Call and Response

Now we are going to introduce some rhythmic variation.

A good way of doing this is by playing Call and Response, or Listen and Copy.

Explain to the group that you will clap a rhythm and they will listen to it and then clap it back to you.

Start with simple rhythms and then gradually build the complexity, you can also play around with how loud or soft you play.

For exercises on how to develop your confidence and ability to generate rhythms please see our ebook entitled *Developing Rhythmic Confidence*.

Step 6

Give Out the Instruments

Divide your group into three equal sections, there is no need to separate the groups physically.

Give the red tubes and beaters to the group immediately to your right.

Give the Blue tubes and beaters to the next group.

Give the yellow Tubes and beaters to the final group.

The group will usually start playing before you have given out all the instruments.

Enter the middle of the circle with your tube and play an exaggerated beat by hitting the tube on the floor.

When the group joins in with the beat move back and take your place in the circle.

Now without stopping hold your tube up and play the same beat by striking it with the stick (not hitting the floor any more solely using the beater).

When the group has joined you in this action alternate hitting the tube on the floor then striking it with the stick.

Play this for a few moments before bringing the group to a stop.

Try some call and response with the Bamboo Tamboo.

Step 7

Introduce Bamboo Tamboo Rhythms

Now the group has got the basic playing technique we can introduce the Bamboo Tamboo rhythms.

By using words and phrases we can remember rhythms more accurately.

Say the first phrase and begin to play the rhythm, when you have played it a couple of times invite the whole group to join in.

Your group will not always get the rhythm correct straight away, this is a part of their learning process not an error on your part.

Keep going until they can all play the rhythm in time.

Without stopping motion the Red group to continue playing, then stop the Blue and Yellow groups.

Listen to the Red group for a minute before getting the Blue group to join back in. Now stop the Reds.

Listen to the Blue group for a minute before getting the Yellow group to join back in. Now stop the Blues

Listen to the Yellow group for a minute before getting the Reds and Blues to join back in.

When the group can play the first rhythm, teach the second part in exactly the same way.

Step 8

Layer the Rhythms

This is often the most nerve wracking part for an inexperienced leader, yet if you have successfully managed parts 1 – 7 this usually takes care of itself.

Keep the Group playing the second rhythm then stop the Reds, encourage the Blues and Yellows to continue with the second rhythm.

Now play the first rhythm and ask the Reds to join you.

If this becomes difficult for the group sometimes just giving them a little time to get used to the idea of playing two rhythms simultaneously is all they need.

If this isn't the case get the Blues and Yellows to say their rhythm (quietly) without playing. Whilst doing this they should maintain eye contact with as many people in their group as they can.

Eye contact makes people support and help each other.

Now get the Reds saying their rhythm in time with the Blues and Yellows.

Once the group can say their rhythms in time with each other they can begin to play again, but always maintaining the eye contact with each other.

Teach the third rhythm to the whole group, then stop the Reds whilst the Blues and Yellows continue and get them to play the first rhythm.

When this is working motion the Reds and Yellows to keep playing and stop the Blues.

Start playing the second rhythm and invite the Blues to join back in playing this.

Congratulations you are now playing a Bamboo Tamboo groove.

Step 9

The Intro

When the group can successfully play the groove, try starting them simultaneously by giving them a count of four.

When they can manage this it is time for an intro.

An intro is simply a more interesting way of starting the groove than counting them in.

The intro is usually a call and response piece.

You begin by playing the call, and then the whole group plays the response.

When teaching the intro it is easy to demonstrate the timing by hitting your tube with the beater for the call and banging it on the floor for the response.

Teach the first phrase and get the group to play it until the timing is solid.

Now teach the second phrase, again repeat as many times as necessary.

Now put the two phrases together. Practice this a few times until it is solid.

Now play the intro and have the group start playing the groove immediately afterwards.

This doesn't always go right first time, don't worry, and just keep rehearsing it until it is right.

Step 10

Breaks

A break is a simple phrase that is played by all groups simultaneously, on your signal, whilst they are playing the groove.

The easiest break to learn is called the five beat break, this simply consists of everybody playing five hits on their instrument after a signal and a four count.

Count to four and play the break on your tube. Give a four count and get everyone to play the break with you.

Now count four, have everyone play the break and then begin to play the groove.

Now explain that when the group is playing the groove and you want them to play the break you will give them a sign, for the 5 beat break hold your hand out palm away from you with your fingers spread.

This is just a sign that in a moment you will play the break, the group should carry on playing the groove at this point.

When you know that all the group (ok, most of the group, you already know which ones in you class will miss this) have seen the sign count four in time with the music, after which the whole group plays the break, shouts hey and then resumes the groove.

Again this does not always go right first time.

Step 11

Solos

At any time while the group is playing the groove, you can ask one group to continue playing then stop the other two groups.

This gives each group a chance to showcase their rhythm on its own.

To start the other groups simply count them back in.

Key Points

The whole programme is tailored to the group becoming confident in you as a leader and to your body language.

In order for this to happen you need to be consistent, relaxed and use very clear and smooth movements.

Always exaggerate movements when communicating to the group. And move from your feet this will help you use your whole body to communicate.

The group will make lots of mistakes whilst learning. This can cause a great deal of humour and is nothing to worry about; they will get it right eventually. The more relaxed you are, the more relaxed they will become.

Always march in time before counting the group in, this prepares them for the tempo and makes it easier for them to get it right.

Take care to get the tempo right, too fast and they'll have difficulty articulating their phrases and too slow and it loses its vitality.

When the group starts playing together often they will speed up a bit, it can feel like it is drifting out of your control. As long as they don't continue to accelerate, this is a good sign as it means that they have understood and taken ownership of the rhythm. If they do accelerate until the whole thing falls apart just laugh and tell them that it's not a race and that they need to keep at steady tempo.

When the group is playing the groove listen to the piece of music as a whole. Hear how the different rhythms interact and make sure that you always know where the '1' (the first beat) is.

When you can listen to the whole group as one practise zoning in on one particular group of instruments and then go back to listening to the whole band. This way you will develop your ear and start to automatically pick up on any little mistakes that may happen. Only try to correct them if they occur repeatedly.

Foundation / Key Stage 1

Introduction

The way in which we begin a Foundation/Key stage 1 workshop is very similar to how we begin a Key stage 2 workshop.

The main difference being the complexity and number of layers of rhythms.

When working with a younger age group it is critical to find out where the group is in terms of development.

Foundation

With very young children the key is to access what they already know, in the form of nursery rhymes and songs.

Clapping a beat is always the place to start, no matter what age group you are working with.

Call and response whilst clapping can sometimes work well, but is very difficult if using the instruments.

Playing a simple beat along to songs and nursery rhymes is possibly the best way to use instruments, as it unites the group and begins to help understanding a pulse.

Over time you can begin to introduce some of the rhythms from our website www.bambootambo.com

Key Stage 1

Year 1 will be able to manage everything that you do with Foundation stage, and can usually play the rhythms contained on our website, but may struggle to put two or more rhythms together.

Though with time and practice they will soon be able to manage this.

Year 2 will usually be able to play two parts simultaneously.

Having said this, all classes are different and some experimentation may be required to find out where best to start with your class.

You will also notice a big difference depending on when in the school year you are doing this.

In all early years there will be a marked difference in ability from September to July.