

During my ensemble experiences, I learned a lot about rehearsal techniques, pacing, and ensemble management. I was able to lead rehearsals for chorus, band, and string orchestra. This variety of settings gave me a great introduction into all performing areas.

The biggest difference in choir and instrumental ensembles is the level of management. In choir, there are no instruments, so talking and whispering becomes more of an issue. Reminders often need to be given to students who are off-task. In these ensembles, I was able to lead piece with both fifth and sixth grade choruses. Our main focus was projection and blend. I was very pleased with their final performance.

In the instrumental ensembles, primarily band, I worked a lot on pacing. Over the semester, I improved with balancing rehearsing individual parts, entire pieces, and asking questions to promote balance and blend within the ensemble. This conversational time allowed for these beginning players to rest their "chops" and think critically about the music.

At the beginning of my experience, I was least comfortable in the string rehearsal setting. However, I worked to improve my own skills on these instruments, and I quickly became more proficient in instructing my students. In combined orchestra rehearsals, I led the piece "Samba La Bamba" with all fourth grade, or beginning, string players. Over the weeks, I was able to get students counting, playing with better intonation, and listening to those students around them. I feel like they accomplished a lot in a short amount of time!

I enjoyed these rehearsal experiences very much, and can't wait to have my own ensembles in the future!