

## **Suggestions for Wind and String Instrumentalists**

“... clarinetists, saxophone players, and violinists play at the Improvisation portion of our Santa Clara County Branch Composers Today Honors Recitals.”

*Marilynn Carstens*

Founder of the MTAC Improvisation Program

The following are suggestions for Wind and String teachers on how to take advantage of the two State published books Games and Activities for Improvisation (GAI) and Improvisation Syllabus and Guide (ISG).

### **Games and Activities for Improvisation (GAI)**

This book is loaded with activities designed for any instrumental discipline. Be sure to read p. iii near the front of the book. These suggestions were put together based on the input of MTAC String, Wind, and Vocal teachers.

#### Other Hints

- Modal suggestions: “Feelin’ Phrygian” p. 54, “Dissect Dorian Dan” p. 68, “Chromatic Attic” p. 76, “Mixolydian Memories” p. 81, “Lydian Lass” p. 84, “Cereal Music” p. 90, “Licorice Stick” p. 91 & 92, that could be used.
- Instrumentalists are encouraged to use the rhythm of the words of the Composer Rhymes in the Games and Activities for Improvisation for their improvisations. See pages 135-145.
- Take advantage of all the Topical Improvisations (pages 109-170) and Background Improvisations (pages 171-191.) These “games/activities” can be used in groups or easily adapted for individual use. They stimulate and encourage students to explore their instruments as they try to portray the ideas presented on the page.

### **Improvisation Syllabus and Guide (ISG)**

Because this syllabus was based on an outline of the MTAC Certificate of Merit Keyboard Syllabus, there are constant references to the piano. This does not mean the book cannot be successfully utilized by non-keyboard teachers. Teachers often find assignments that they are certain will be useful for a particular student and simply ignore instructions or suggestions not applicable to that instrument.

#### Hints:

- Look for melodic based improvisation: Page 22 Project A; Page 55 Project A; and Page 75 Project A1 are just a few examples.
- Look for scale based improvisation: Pages 42-43 show classic examples.
- Improvise an accompanying figure: Use assignments such as Page 79 Project C; Page 83 Project A2; and page 87/88 Projects B to give ideas of accompanying figures that can be created.
- Introduce theory concepts: Seventh Chords (Page 112) and Twelve Tone Rows (Page 116 & 134) are just a few examples.

Special thanks to Marilynn Carstens for providing many of these hints.