



Music Teaching Matters

April 28, 2026 - No. 98

Exploring the many layers of music teaching.



This past week I've had an intertwining of questions on my mind - What makes a good assignment for our students? How can we help students take ownership of their musical journey? And how can we integrate meaningful repetition into our students' home practice sessions? After all, good assignments can make a huge difference. Ownership means that it belongs to students. And repetition brings students closer to fluency and mastery. So how can music teachers get all that to happen? [Click HERE](#) to continue reading.

With appreciation for the work you do,
Merlin Thompson
Creator & Founder of Teach Music 21C

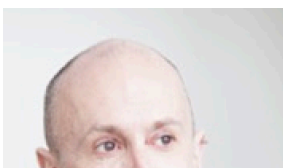
Podcast Recommendation



#88: Let's Talk Students

An encouraging and inspirational conversation as Lorrie Merrell and Merlin Thompson explore what it's like to join students on their own meaningful musical journey - even when we don't necessarily know where things will end up. [Listen HERE.](#)

Free Webinar



Meet With Merlin -- April 30

Are you looking for a place to ask questions or



think out loud with someone who understands the work? Then look no further. These sessions are for you. Hope to see you there.

[Register HERE](#) with any questions you may have.

Language Teaching Tips

"Instead of..." language can be a powerful strategy, especially when music teachers shift from identification to invitation.

Instead of identifying: You need to slow down here.

Invite students: I wonder what it would sound like if you could play 3 different ways - speeding up, staying the same, slowing down.

Instead of identifying: You need to practice like this.

Invite students: Which practice strategy do you think will be more helpful? With the book? Without the book?

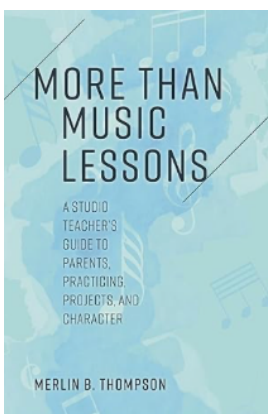
Instead of: Did you practice last week?

Invite students: Tell me what's going on with your practicing? What's hardest? What's easiest?

Instead of teacher approval: Good job! That was perfect!

Invite student agency: You kept the pulse all the way through. Your shaping the phrase is so consistent and beautifully linked to your breath. Thanks for that!

More than Music Lessons



A Music Teacher's Testament (page 183)

I am a music teacher. Whether by intention, by accident, or by calling. Honored to nurture musical journeys. Privileged to walk along side my students. My days are rich with meaning and value.

I open doors. I show the way. I jostle. I step aside. I treasure when students take the reins...

A few lines from this book can inspire your teaching in just moments.

Get your copy [HERE](#).

Coming Soon!

Something exciting is taking shape at Teach Music 21C.

The soon-to-be-released **Teach With Vision - Inspire For Life** project is growing out of a simple belief: that music lessons can carry messages far beyond technique and repertoire.

- If you've ever struggled to put your **teaching philosophy** into words...
- If you want parents to immediately **understand the value** of what you do...
- If you're ready for your lessons to **reflect a bigger purpose**...

You'll want to watch for what's coming next.

More details coming soon.

Upcoming Dates

April 29: Presentation for East Carolina University music students.

April 30: Meet With Merlin webinar. [Save your spot HERE.](#)

May 14: "Inspiring Lifelong Music Making". Presentation sponsored by Long & McQuade.

Recommended ReVisiting

As music teachers, what can we do in the present moment to be the kind of teacher our students need? How can we avoid using outdated teaching goals to measure the success in our current teaching? Here's an informative post:

- What Keeps Music Teachers from Getting Out of the Comfort Zone. [Click HERE.](#)



Follow Teach Music 21C On



[Instagram](#) [Youtube](#) [LinkedIn](#)

Overwhelmed by emails? We understand.

Click here to [Unsubscribe](#). Come back when you can.