

LESSON PLAN: Guitar Technique

Objective:

Students will be able to play the guitar with good technique. This will allow them to feel more comfortable playing the instrument, give them more stamina, and set up habits that prevent repetitive stress injuries from playing a musical instrument.

Resources:

Guitars

Procedures:

- 1 Make sure students are sitting comfortably with their guitars in their laps. Show how if the guitar rests on your legs flat it will be more difficult to hold, wanting to slide off and being too low to play comfortably. Optional: Show that when you cross your legs (right over left) you can rest the guitar comfortably and securely on your lap, also raising it for better alignment with the arm.
- 2 Have students dangle their left arms at their sides completely relaxed. Notice how the wrist is in a straight line and the fingers all have a natural curvature to them. We want the hand and wrist to have this same basic shape when we bring it up to the guitar. Have them slowly bring their hand up in front of their faces, maintaining the straight wrist and rounded finger shape.
- 3 Have them hang their relaxed arm at their sides and then bring their hands directly to the guitar maintaining the level wrists and rounded fingers. Have them put their thumbs straight up and down on the back of the guitar neck while the rounded fingers in front tap the fret board on any strings or notes.
- 4 Check with students to see that they're holding their guitars at an angle that allows the wrist to stay "flat" when they're in a playing position. If their guitar necks are positioned too low, the wrist will feel strain and fatigue, causing the hand to feel tired quickly. The angle of the guitar neck may need to be adjusted to accomplish this.
- 5 Show that the same alignment is possible when using a guitar strap and playing from a standing position. The strap has to hold the guitar high enough so that the hand has access to the fretboard without having to bend the wrist.

National Core Arts Standards (Music):

Anchor Standard 6: Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work. Present: Perform expressively, with appropriate interpretation and technical accuracy, and in a manner appropriate to the audience and context (NAfME). Example: Harmonizing Instruments MU:Pr5.1.H Rehearse, Evaluate, and Refine. Common Core Correlation: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RST.6-8.3 Follow precisely a multistep procedure when carrying out experiments, taking measurements, or performing technical tasks.

