Rock Bands in the Elementary School Setting:

Getting Started as well as Tips and Tricks

September 20, 2013 PEIMEA AGM and PD Day
Presenter: *Steve Giddings, Montague Consolidated School*
Website: *www.stevesmusicroom.com*

Minimal equipment that you need to successfully teach and perform with rock bands:
What most schools already have:

- **A PA system with 5 to 8 channels**
- **2 to 3 microphones with cables**
- **Keyboard**
- **Keyboard amp**

Other equipment you will need:

- **At least one drum kit**
  - You can buy a beginner model kit for $500.00 and maybe even cheaper if you look around.
- **At least one guitar amp and one guitar**
  - Look at the Mustang series of fender amps. They come in a range of sizes and are very versatile and well priced.
  - For guitars look at the Squier line of Fender guitars. My school has 2 classic vibes. They are decently priced and pretty good quality for what you get.
  - Some students will likely already have a guitar and an amp if money is tight.
- **A bass and bass amp**
  - Students typically don't own a bass from my experience.
  - Keyboard amps can double as a bass amp. If you have one with multiple inputs that would be an asset.
  - If worse comes to worse you can put the bass directly through the PA.
- **3 to 5 patch cables**

Resources

- **On YouTube: martyzsongs**
  - This channel contains a collection of guitar lessons that are very well paced and extremely accurate. It is a go to place for learning guitar parts. I also refer a lot of my more independent students to martyzsongs.
- **iPhone and iPad app: Songsterr**
  - This app is a collection of guitar tabs for pretty much any song in existence. It is sometimes inaccurate but it is a great resource to help get started or to figure out a tricky bit. I use it mostly for figuring out guitar solos.
- **Website: UltimateGuitar.com**
  - Has tabs, lyrics and chords to help you through learning a song. Not always accurate but pretty close a lot of the time.
- **Your ear**
  - It is amazing how good our ears actually are as trustworthy resources.
- **PC Software: YouTube Downloader**
  - Perfect for downloading that song or instructional video from YouTube that you can't find anywhere else.
- **PC Software: Band in a Box**
  - This piece of software is designed for improvising. You input the chord progression and everyone can solo over it.
- **Website: Steve's Music Room (www.stevesmusicroom.com)**
  - My website contains a ton of stuff that can help you get your band off the ground.
- **Website: Musical Futures (www.musicalfutures.org)**
  - This website is from Lucy Green's work on how popular musicians learn. Musical Futures is a program being implemented in many UK schools and now some schools in Canada. There are lots of teacher resources once you figure out how to navigate it.

Auditions

Here are what my audition rubrics look like:

GUITAR AUDITION CHART - Auditioner's Name_____

	Chords	Barre Chords	Scales	Fretboard	Audition song
Beginning level					
Some knowledge					
Demonstrates skill					
Outstanding skill					

Notes:

Rock Band Song List

When I first started implementing my rock program at Montague Consolidated School, the most frustrating and time consuming task was finding school appropriate songs that fit the skill level of the musicians in the band. This list is compiled from only four years of teaching rock bands at my school and over the next few years will grow to include many more songs. Also, this list acts as a grading system for rock band music. Think of the concert band grading system as it relates to the skill level and experience of the musicians in the band but instead of B100 to B600, we have Easy, Medium, and Difficult. I am hoping that this list will provide you with a place to begin or a place to advance your rock bands at your schools.

EASY includes basic chords, scales and concepts as well as some easy solos. BEGINNER TO LIMITED KNOWLEDGE LEVEL (Limited knowledge: players who have had some lessons and know most of the basic chords and started learning some power chords and barre chords but are still somewhat uncomfortable with them)

MEDIUM includes basic chords as well as barre chords, picking patterns and some intermediate level solos. LIMITED KNOWLEDGE TO INTERMEDIATE LEVEL. Note: will be a challenge for limited knowledge players.

DIFFICULT includes all basic chords and/or all barre chord forms as well as intermediate to advanced arpeggiation, intermediate to advanced solos and some advanced picking and finger picking patterns. INTERMEDIATE TO ADVANCED LEVEL note: will be a good challenge for any intermediate players.

The list includes the song name, artist name, chords and skills learned from the song. This list is mostly catered to guitar players, but unless otherwise stated, one can assume that the keyboard, bass, drums and vocals are pretty straightforward. (ei – straight up rock beat variation, root note bass and/or basic piano chords that more or less follow the guitar and easy vocal melodies)

I have charts for only 3 of these, the rest I rip from the track and teach myself the parts. YouTube is a great resource for this if you are uncomfortable with learning by ear. Also, you will be surprised what the students can learn from YouTube without your help if you are uncomfortable with playing these instruments.

Christmas

- **Christmas Love** by Billy Idol (Easy - G, C, D, A7, D7, Em, simple picking patterns)
- **Run Run Rudolph** (Easy - Power chords, Blues)
- **Christmas All Over Again** by Tom Petty (Difficult – A ,F#m, Bm, E, Gm, Barre Chords)
- **Takin' Care of Christmas** by BTO (Easy – Power chords, Blues)

Other (Easy)

- **Should I Stay or Should I Go** by The Clash (D, G, A7, G/F, drums may find this difficult in chorus)
- **Nothing Else Matters** by Metallica (Em, C, D, G, B, power chords, picking patterns) note: I would begin without picking
- **Eye of the Tiger** by Survivor (Power chords, easy barring, fits female voices nicely, keyboard has the following progression in the verse: Cm, Ab, Bb Cmsus2 all in root position)
- **One** by U2 (C, F, Am, G, easy one string picking)
- **Blitzkrieg Bop** by The Ramones (Power chords, I-IV-V-I progression, could be quick for the drummer)
- **Good Riddance** by Greenday (G, Cadd9, Dsus4, Em11)
- **You Really Got Me** by The Kinks (Power chords) note: I rarely include the guitar solo when teaching this one and if I do it is simple improvisation on G minor pentatonic
- **All the Day and All of the Night** by The Kinks (Power chords)
- **Takin' Care of Business** by BTO (Blues, Power chords, F Pentatonic/Blues scales)
- **House of the Rising Sun** by The Animals (Am, C, D, F, E7, Am Pentatonic/Blues scales) note: the progression can be a bit confusing
- **Wish You Were Here** by Pink Floyd (G, Am, D, C, G Pentatonic scale)
- **Island in the Sun** by Weezer (Easy barring, Em, G, D, Am, C, guitar players should be comfortable with the moveable F chord formation)
- **Yellow** by Coldplay (Capo, A, F#m, E, Dsus2, string bends)
- **Rock You Like a Hurricane** by The Scorpions – Without solos (Power chords, palm muting)
- **Lean on Me** by Bill Withers (C, F, G7, very easy for all instruments, a little low for singers, easy root position chords in parallel motion for the keyboard)
- **Come Together** by The Beatles (B, A and G power chords for guitars. Bass is a challenge throughout but repeats. The guitar solo can be turned into a keyboard solo and is very simple. Drums have a triplet fill at the beginning that comes up again near the middle of the song)
- **I Love Rock and Roll** by Joan Jett (Power chords E, A, B, G. I-IV-V-I progression. Drums are really easy but there is a small turnaround in the chorus. Take out last verse lyrics and replace with first)

- **Boulevard of Broken Dreams** by Greenday (make sure you change swear word to messed and use only an edited version. Contact me for it. Capo 1, Em, G, D, A, C, easy guitar solo, could be a bit low for some singers.)
- **When I Come Around** by Greenday (Power chords, F#, C#, D# [optional 5th string minor barre], B [optional 5th string major], I-V-vi-IV, G#, A#, B power chords. Make sure to take out the second verse and use the first verse twice. I have an edited version of this.)
- **Astronaut** by Simple Plan (Dm, G, F, Am, C. Basic strumming patterns)
- **Down on the Corner** by CCR (C, F, G and some challenging strumming patterns, lead guitar has a pentatonic melody throughout the song)

Other (Medium)
- **Happy Together** by The Turtles (Capo 2, Picking, Em, C, D, G, B, fifth string major barre chords)
- **Buddy Holly** by Weezer (Power Chords with lots of changes and jumps)
- **Kryptonite** by 3 Doors Down (Bm, G, Asus2, Picking patterns, a challenge for drummers)
- **Don't Stop Believin'** by Journey (E major scale solo, picking, drummers could find this song a challenge to keep steady, fits female voices quite nicely, bass line can be a challenge for a limited knowledge player. Keyboard part can be done with one hand as long as the bass part is strong)
- **Sweet Home Alabama** by Lynyrd Skynyrd – without solos (D, C, G, Picking patterns, blues) note: without picking patterns this song is much easier
- **What About Love** by Heart (Dm, Bb, F, C, 5th string major barre chords, power chords, solo picking, a bit of scale work on the keyboard)
- **21 Guns** by Greenday (Dm, Bb, F, C, 5th string major barre chords, power chords, solo picking)
- **The Final Countdown** by Europe – without solos (Power chords, palm muting, a good challenge for the keyboard player)
- **The Boys in the Bright White Sports Car** by Trooper (all power chords. Some of the strumming patterns can be difficult for limited knowledge guitar players. Intermediate to advanced guitarists could play the solos in this song. They are based mostly on the blues and minor pentatonic box patterns)
- **Times Like These** by Foo Fighters (Am, C, Em, D as well as E, D and C power chords. Intermediate solo picking. The big challenge in this song is the drums and the time changes. There are many places where the time switches to 7/4 and then to 8/4 and back again. You need strong drummers for this tune)
- **Separate Ways** by Journey (Power chords, palm muting, easy harmonics, challenging strumming pattern for a limited knowledge player. Keyboards have: Em, D, C and a bit of easy solo riff work at the beginning middle and end. Drummers have a few solos, a good chance for them to improvise)
- **I Wanna Rock** by Twisted Sister (Power chords, strumming pattern could be a challenge for limited knowledge player. Some intermediate level drum fills)

- **Summer of '69** by Bryan Adams (D and A power chords as well as A, D, G, F, Bb, C major and Bm, 5th string major and minor barre chords. switches are pretty quick at times)
- **Clocks** by Coldplay (Capo 1, D, Em, Am, G, F, 8/8 grouped as 3+3+2, keyboards: Advanced arpeggiation, Eb, Bbm, Fm, dual keyboard, drummers will be challenged to keep steady and follow the 3+3+2 pattern)

Other (Difficult)
- **Sweet Child O Mine** by Guns n' Roses (Down tuning, D, C, G, intermediate to advanced arpeggiation, picking patterns, power chords, bends, solo picking, some advanced bass lines)
- **Take on Me** by A-Ha (Bm, E, A, D, A/C#, F#m, 6th and 5th string barre Chords, a challenge for your singers and keyboard players)
- **Stairway to Heaven** by Led Zeppelin (Finger Picking, Am, C, G, D, FM7, barring, challenging for all instruments and voices)
- **Dream On** by Aerosmith (Finger Picking, bends, some advanced solo picking)
- **Blackbird** by The Beatles (Finger Picking)
- **Oh! Darling** by The Beatles (E+, A, E, F#m, A7, D, F7, Bm7, Bb7, 5th and 6th string major, minor, major7 and minor7 barre forms, blues and triplet feel for drums and keyboard, arpeggiation, picking patterns, a challenge for your guitar players, the bass line is quite a challenge as well)
- **Barracuda** by Heart (power chords, palm muting, simple to complex metre changes. 4/4 to 5/4 and 4/4 to 3/4. Drums and guitars have the biggest challenge with all the time changes and some of the drumming is quite advanced in places)

A Quick Lesson on Reading Guitar Tablature

Tablature uses a 6 line staff (4 for bass) where each line represents a string on the instrument. The bottom line is the thickest, lowest sounding string (E). The numbers represent the fret number to be played on that string. Stacks of numbers imply harmony and separated numbers imply melody much like standard notation.

There are 3 basic types of tablature:

       Notes and rhythms are notated above the tablature.

Rhythms are notated along with the tablature.

No rhythms or notes - just tabs. You have to know how the song goes to play this. Unfortunately, it is the most common type you will see on the internet. This is the tab for Blitzkrieg Bop by The Ramones.

```
E ----------------------------------------------------------------------
B ----------------------------------------------------------------------
G ----------------------------------------------------------------------
D -------------------7--9----------------------7--9---------------------7--9--
A 7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7--5--7--7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7--5--7----7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7--5--7--
E 5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5---------5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-----------5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5----------


E ----------------------------------------------------------------------
B ----------------------------------------------------------------------
G ----------------------------------------------------------------------
D ----------7-7-7-7----------------------------7--9---------------------
A 7-7-7-7--5-5-5-5--7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7--7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7--5--7--------------
E 5-5-5-5-------------5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5--5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5------------------


E ----------------------------------------------------------------------
B ----------------------------------------------------------------------
G ----------------------------------------------------------------------
D --------------------7--9----------------------7--9---------------------7-9--
A -7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7--5--7--7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7--5--7----7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7--5-7--
E -5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5---------5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5-----------5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5--------


E ----------------------------------------------------------------------
B ----------------------------------------------------------------------
G ----------------------------------------------------------------------
D -7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7----------------------7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7------------------
A -5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5---7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7--5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5---7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7--
E ------------------5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5----------------------5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5--


E ----------------------------------------------------------------------
B ----------------------------------------------------------------------
G ----------------------------------------------------------------------
D -7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7--------------------------------------9-9-9-9-9-9-9-9--
A -5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5----7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7---9-9-9-9-9-9-9-9--7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7--
E ------------------5-5-5-5-5-5-5-5---7-7-7-7-7-7-7-7---------------------
```
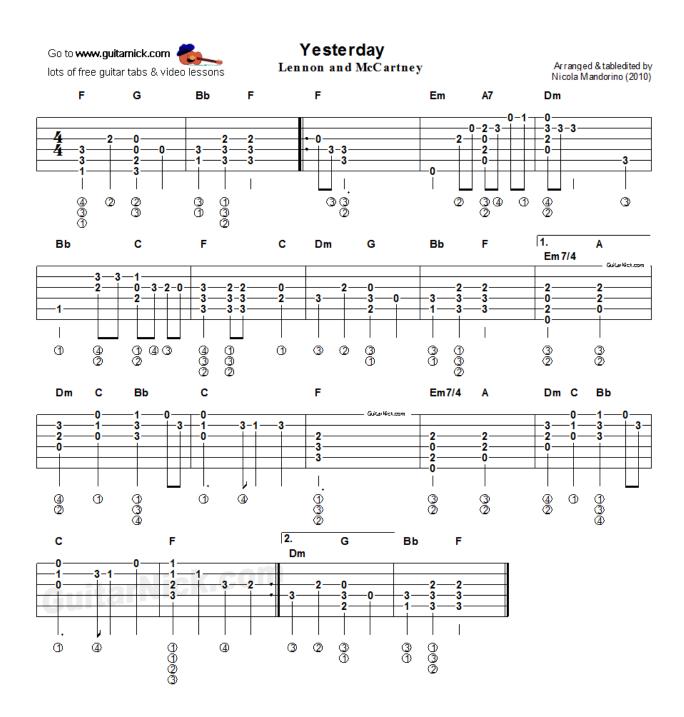
Kinks - You Really Got Me
Songwriters: DAVIES, RAY

Girl, you really got me goin'
You got me so I don't know what Im doin'
Yeah, you really got me now
You got me so I can't sleep at night

Yeah, you really got me now
You got me so I don't know what Im doin,' now
Oh yeah, you really got me now
You got me so I can't sleep at night

You really got me
You really got me
You really got me

See, don't ever set me free
I always wanna be by your side
Girl, you really got me now
You got me so I can't sleep at night

Yeah, you really got me now
You got me so I don't know what Im doin, now

Oh yeah, you really got me now
You got me so I can't sleep at night

You really got me
You really got me
You really got me
Oh no...

(solo)

See, don't ever set me free
I always wanna be by your side
Girl, you really got me now
You got me so I can't sleep at night

Yeah, you really got me now
You got me so I don't know what Im doin, now
Oh yeah, you really got me now
You got me so I can't sleep at night

You really got me
You really got me
You really got me