Better Sub Plans in Less Time

How to Create a Classroom Culture of Leadership/Ownership
It’s 5am, and you wake up feeling sick...

“I’m already awake, so I’ll just tough it out”

“It’s easier to go to work sick than to write out sub plans”

“We’re working on something important today”
You are important

Your health is more important than any activity happening in class that day.

You can construct your classroom culture so you can let go and take care of yourself for a day.

You can construct lesson plans that anyone who is literate can execute.
Build Sub Plans So Students are Still Learning

Plan activities that you might not otherwise do in class, like theory exercises.

Give student leadership a chance to lead the class, or lead sectionals.

Give students a chance to see what work needs to be done when running through songs without the piano or director.

Give students reading activities, like reading about music history or a famous composer.
About Me

Ainsley Boan
West Junior High
Choir/Guitar/Piano

- Taught in the Boise School District for 10 years
- 2 years elementary general music
- 9 years junior high music
- 9 years high school marching band front ensembles
- Also taught special ed music, AVID, coached track, ski team, rugby
3 Parts

Get Ready-
How to write your plans so it’s easy to prep for an emergency sub

Get Set-
Structure your class so the students are prepared for sub days

Go-
Sample sub plans and lesson ideas that work for a variety of music classes
Get Ready
Setting Up Sub Plans

Create a template. Include:

Your schedule

A brief description of each class

The daily routine of the class

This should live in your Google Drive or somewhere online you can access from home for last minute sub plans

Example:

Sub Plans- Template

Hi, and thanks for subbing for me! The sub binder has class rosters and a bell schedule. There is also a bell schedule on the front board (top left corner). The sight reading binder should be on the blue music stand in front of the risers, and another binder on the piano has music the choirs are performing, organized by class.

All classes should first complete worksheet ___ and turn it in when completed.

1st period- Piano- Students start in their seat for attendance. They can turn on the keyboards and get started on their own. Float around and give them feedback/make sure they are on task. Pack up at 8:33.

2nd period-Mustang Magic- Auditioned SATB Choir: They start in a horseshoe in ABC order. Shad or Sadie lead warm-ups, then they go to the risers for sight reading (they know what page they’re on). After sight reading they can do the worksheet before rehearsing music.
Setting Up Sub Plans

Create a sub binder/folder. Include:

- Bell Schedule
- Class Rosters
- Emergency Procedures
- Special Ed Accomodations
- Student Activity (worksheets, a book with cd, etc)
Emergency sub plans that can be used by anyone: a sub, another teacher, student teacher, etc.

A copy lives in sub binder.

A stack of music theory worksheets lives in a basket near the sub binder.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIME</th>
<th>PERIOD</th>
<th>MINUTES</th>
<th>ADD. BELLS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:45-warning</td>
<td>bell</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:50-8:34</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:37-9:21</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:21-9:31</td>
<td>BREAK</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:36-10:20</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:23-11:07</td>
<td>4th</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:07-11:39</td>
<td>7th/8th Grade Lunch</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>11:34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:10-11:54</td>
<td>5th</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:39-12:23</td>
<td>6th</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>12:21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:54-12:26</td>
<td>9th Grade Lunch</td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:26-1:10</td>
<td>7th</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:13-1:57</td>
<td>8th</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00-2:30</td>
<td>9th</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The reasons I often call in sick :(
Setting Up Sub Plans

Give your sub binder a home that is obvious to someone new to your classroom.

Label it so it is easy to see

Let your office manager know where you keep it
The problem with movies
The problem with movies

• Subs struggle with technology
The problem with movies

- Subs struggle with technology
- In Boise, you must jump through hoops to show a movie
The problem with movies

- Subs struggle with technology
- In Boise, you must jump through hoops to show a movie
- Kids go home and say, “all we did was watch a movie”
The problem with movies

- Subs struggle with technology
- In Boise, you must jump through hoops to show a movie
- Kids go home and say, “all we did was watch a movie”
- Students are more likely to ignore the lesson and chat, or text, or sleep.
Get Set
Making Sub Plans

That are productive and easy for subs to follow

Make a lesson that follows the flow of your regular class routine

Avoid difficult transitions

Establish routines and practice in class before you have a sub

Assign student leaders in each class
Class Routine

Establish a simple routine or flow to class

Follow this same routine most days so students know what to expect

Example: In choir, students begin class in ABC order to take attendance. A student leader leads stretching and a warmup. They move to the risers for sight reading, we rehearse performance music, and end by filling out daily points and putting binders away.
More Routines

Piano class: *Begin in seats for attendance and to review concepts. Students have assigned keyboards they play. Two students are in charge of turning on the keyboard system. 1 minute before the bell all students cover their keyboards and push in their seats.*

Guitar class: *Students get their own guitars and books and warm up while everyone gets settled. They play a couple warm ups together, then practice out of the book. 2 minutes before the bell rings they put guitars back in lockers.*
More Routines

Elementary general music: Students enter class in a specific riser order and stand in assigned spots on the risers. As they enter I have music playing or play the guitar and sing a song with the class. After singing we read a book, do a lesson in the text book, etc. We end with a song with movement, and they exit class.
Routines with the Sub

Students know the expectation to begin class

Students can begin class without instruction from teacher

The start of class routine gives an easy way to take roll, and students go to assigned spots so sub can put names to faces

Beginning class with structure will improve behavior in the rest of class
Avoid Difficult Transitions

Transitions are opportunities for students to get off task. Some may never return...

Noisy/messy transitions can disrupt the flow of class

Practice transitions before there is a sub. Aim for perfect transitions when you are present so they will be near-perfect with the sub
Transition Examples

Bad Transitions:

My students leave their binders in the hallway during choir. Any transition when they have to get things from their binder means walking across the room, leaving line of sight of the teacher, talking to peers in class, and taking their time returning to the risers.

When students move to an unfamiliar position they complain or feel uncomfortable. If they are most comfortable on the risers, I will keep them on the risers with a sub.

Good Transitions:

Choir binders have pencils in them, so no one needs to get a pencil from their binder. To complete a worksheet, choir students sit where they are on the risers, take the pencil from their binder, and use the binder as a hard surface to write on.

I always have a basket on the piano for them to turn in assignments. This saves the sub from collecting everyone’s papers.

Students know where to find loaner pencils if they lost the one in their choir binder.
Video of choir transitions from ABC order, choir president warms up class, sing to the risers.
Practice Routines in Class

What do you want your routines to look like? What behavior do you want to see? What would be a perfect example of that routine?

Practice routines in class, aiming for perfection, whatever that means for you.

Example: *If I want kids to move from one spot to another quickly, then we make it into a competition and time how long the transition takes. Then we do it again and try to beat our time. Occasionally I’ll time them again, and if we improve our time we play a favorite game or sing a favorite song at the end of class.*
Video of choir moving from one song to another, changing places on the risers.
Video of piano class moving to keyboards
Student Leaders

At the beginning of the school year have your class elect a student leader

- Choir President
- Section Leaders
- Song Leader

Let these students lead for a little bit each day in class. When you have a sub, your student leaders will feel comfortable guiding the class through some activities (this varies depending on age group).
Video of choir president leading warm ups and stretching
Video of guitar class counting off songs
Go!
Lessons
Some samples and ideas

Some of these lessons may work for any discipline or any grade

Some of these lessons may only work for junior high choir

Everyone can use these ideas to springboard into strategies that will work in your own classroom
30 Days to Music Theory

Best for emergency sub plans:

After students complete their start of class routine and go to their seats/risers, pass out one worksheet from the book “30 Days to Music Theory”

When students finish worksheet they turn it in to the basket and get ready to rehearse a song, or whatever extension activity you prefer.
Draw to Music

I started this lesson in elementary music, but it works well for Special Ed music, and even junior high and high school if you supply more advanced art supplies for older students (high schoolers may not want to color with crayons, but colored pencils)

My favorite way to teach this is with a book on “Carnival of the Animals” that comes with a cd.

Read a page of the book, then have students color a picture as they listen to the song.

Repeat the song as many times as needed to finish artwork.
Sectionals

Works well with older students

With my junior high kids I have them work in sectionals after completing the theory worksheet. This gives them an extension activity, but limits the length of sectional time.

With high school kids this distributes responsibility so you don’t have one person running class each time you’re gone. Instead you have multiple section leaders working with peers.
Open Mic

Once a month we hold a class talent show for students who want to share.

Students know about a week ahead of time when open mic will be so they can prepare and bring music/instruments.

Students already know the expectations for performers and audience because we practice in class before the sub is there.

If all goes to plan, the sub can sit and listen as students take turn performing for the class.
Sub plans that are enriching

Plan activities that incorporate something you are doing in class, but maybe don’t have time to cover during a regular class:

- Music Theory worksheets give students an opportunity to write out what they have only seen and heard.
- Drawing to classical music gives students time to listen to famous pieces and interpret them.
- Open mic allows students time to perform solos, and encourages practice outside of class.
Questions? Please email me!

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Thank you!