

Name _____ Band Class _____

Practice Card #2 Instrument: _____

Date and Day of the Week	Nightly Practice Minutes
10/17/16 Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	
Saturday	
10/23/16 Sunday	
WEEKLY PRACTICE TOTAL	

Date and Day of the Week	Nightly Practice Minutes
10/24/16 Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	
Friday	
Saturday	
10/30/16 Sunday	
WEEKLY PRACTICE TOTAL	

I validate that the practice time recorded is correct.

Parent Signature: _____

Grading Scale for TOTAL MINUTES PER WEEK-Goal is 15 minutes for 5 out of 7 days per week.

A=70-75 minutes B=60-69 minutes C=50-59 minutes D=40-49 minutes F=39 minutes and under

This practice card is due October 31st.

How to Practice an Instrument

1. **Identify what you need to practice.** This could be a specific piece, a set of scales, or even something general like reaching high notes. Read through the piece and make sure you understand it. Review the piece with someone who plays the instrument you play well or a teacher.
2. **If possible, listen to the piece played by someone you know or a professional musician.** This will give you an idea of what the piece should sound like, what kind of feeling the piece gives, and how fast the piece should be.
3. **Don't jump right into the piece you want to work on; warm up with a series of scales or other warm up exercises.** There are books you can buy for your instrument with warm ups and scales.
4. **Run through the piece once, pausing to circle your mistakes with a pencil.** If this is your first time encountering a piece, start at the beginning and work slowly forward. Be aware of your mistakes and go back and correct them.
5. **After getting more familiar with the piece, target the areas that need work.** Don't start at the beginning of the piece and start playing until you reach the problem spots, but begin with those areas. Then go back and play the whole piece again once you've fixed the difficult parts.
6. **Even if you think you can play the section faster, start slowly.** Build up the tempo while paying strict attention to pitch, tone, rhythm, dynamics, and phrasing. There's no use in practicing something the wrong way.
7. **Make sure to play the piece more than once, even if you think you played it right.** You'll get the hang of it better if you practice it without mistakes to a slow metronome (max 100 bpm) for five to 30 minutes depending on your patience.
8. **After the problematic areas have shaped up, go back to the beginning of the piece and play through it, keeping an eye out for the measures you worked on previously.** If the sections you worked on are still shaky as you encounter them throughout the piece, go back and patch them up again.
9. **The same steps can be taken for scales, an exercise, or various techniques.** Begin slowly and listen for mistakes. At this stage, you want to be picky.
10. **Make sure you're focusing on your mistakes!** Studies show that less students quit because they're not practicing than because their practice time isn't spent progressively. When one makes a mistake, his or her brain is constantly ahead of what he or she is actually doing. When a mistake is made, you must go back a few notes (or better yet, a whole measure) before your mistake and play it over and over again (ideally, you'd want to play it more than ten times).
11. **Build up tempo until you are at "concert" tempo, or the tempo you would play if you were doing a concert.** Start by going a little faster than your original tempo, then more, then more, and then more. You may find that old problems open up or new ones occur. Fix them as before.
12. **At the end of your practice session, go back to the beginning of the piece and play it straight through just for enjoyment.** The difficult sections will play out better and will give you a sense of accomplishment.
13. **Play pieces for fun.** Play your favorite songs or a book by your favorite artists. You deserve it!

Contact Information

Adam Borst

Email: adam.borst@csredhawks.org

Phone: 616-696-1200 ext. 6224

Ryan Miller

Email: ryan.miller@csredhawks.org

Phone: 616-696-9100 ext. 6356

Band Website: www.cedarspringsbands.org

*The website includes our calendar with all band events, musical resources for note reading practice, etc.