

Inspiring the Intermediate String Player

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Handouts, slides, and more available at:

www.stringedtech.com

Characteristics

- Typically 2nd and 3rd year players
- Perhaps experienced students placed in your beginning class

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What happens to students over the summer?

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Challenges

- It's not a “new” instrument/experience
- Students had the same teacher last year
- Generally, student are not the top players in the school
- Classmates are the same (positive & negative)

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Beginning of the year

- Instrument maintenance
 - Strings
 - Pegs & fine tuners
 - Bridge & soundpost adjustments
 - Check instrument size
- Time for an instrument upgrade?

Skills learned in beginning year

- Body posture and instrument set-up
- Essential technical skills
 - Right hand / bowing & left hand
- Note reading
- Class procedures

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Book I

- Pizzicato
- Open Strings
- D & A string tetrachords
- D Major, G Major, C Major
- Quarter notes, eighth notes, half notes, whole notes
- Slurs, Staccato

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Finishing the 1st year: Expectations

- Solid posture and instrument set up
- Knowledge of notes/fingerings
- Ability to read music comfortably
- Acceptable tone
- Good intonation

What is NEW for intermediate players?

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Starting the 2nd year: Review

- Gets the “rust” off
- D major scale & arpeggio
- Slurs
- 3/4 time
- Dynamics
- G major scales & arpeggio
- Staccato
- C major scale & arpeggio
- Changing bow speeds
- Lots of aural training (echoes)
- May have to re-teach notation

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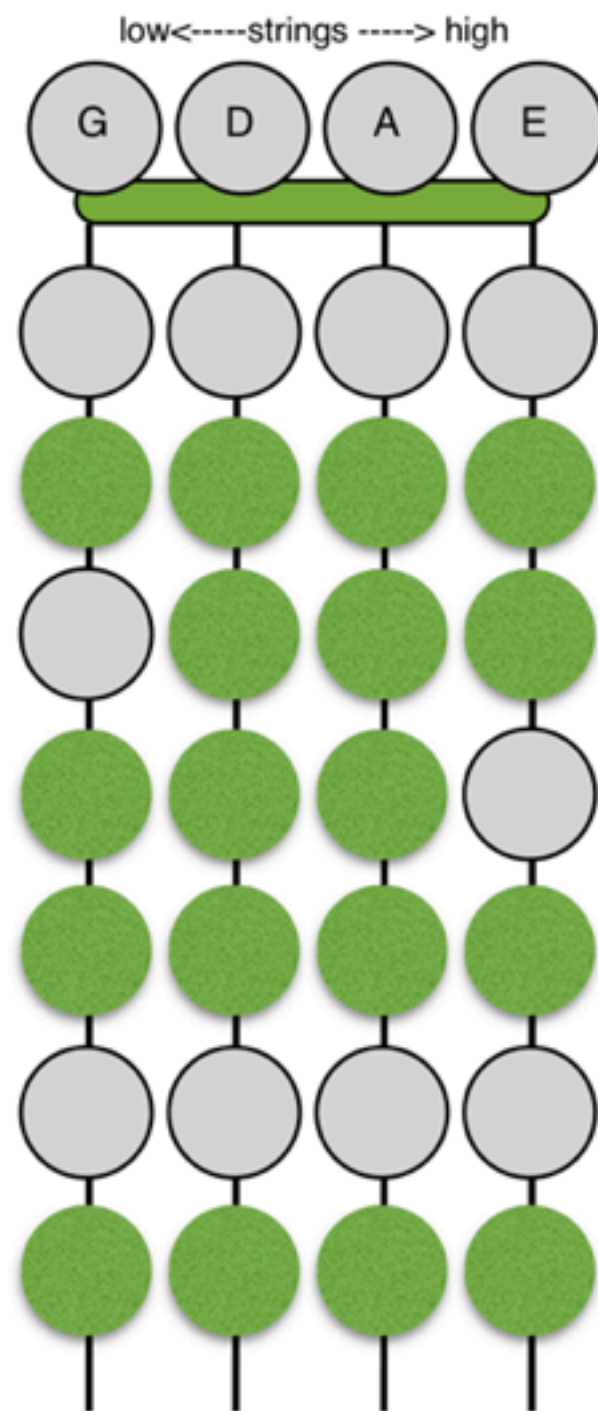
New technical skills

- New fingerings - Low 1, High 3, Extensions
- New key signatures & time signatures
- Lots of new rhythms including syncopation and dotted rhythms
- Refined technique
- Preparations for shifting (harmonics)

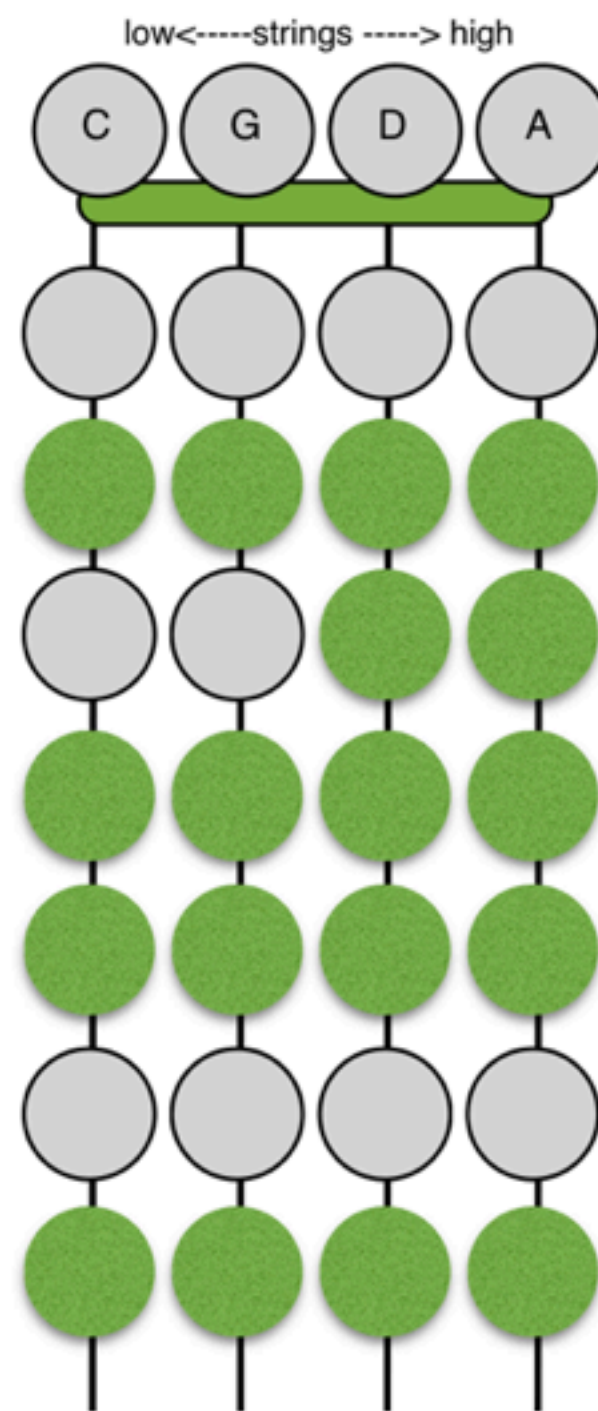
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Notes learned in Essential Elements Book 1

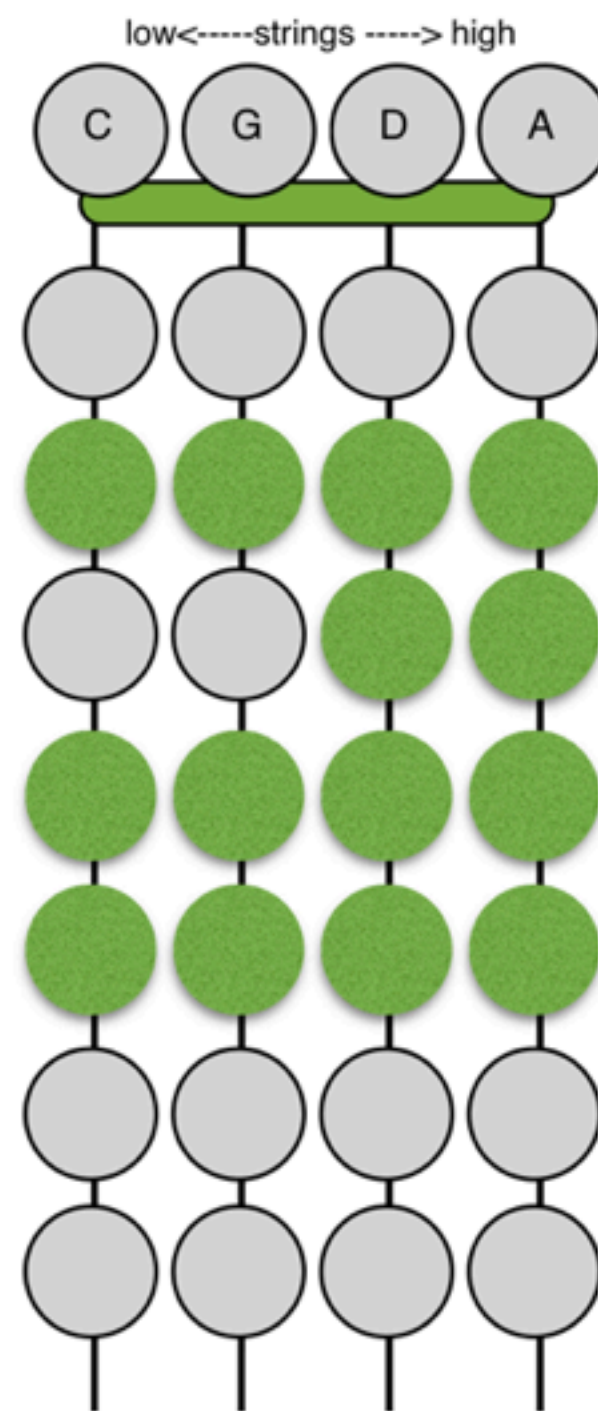
Violin



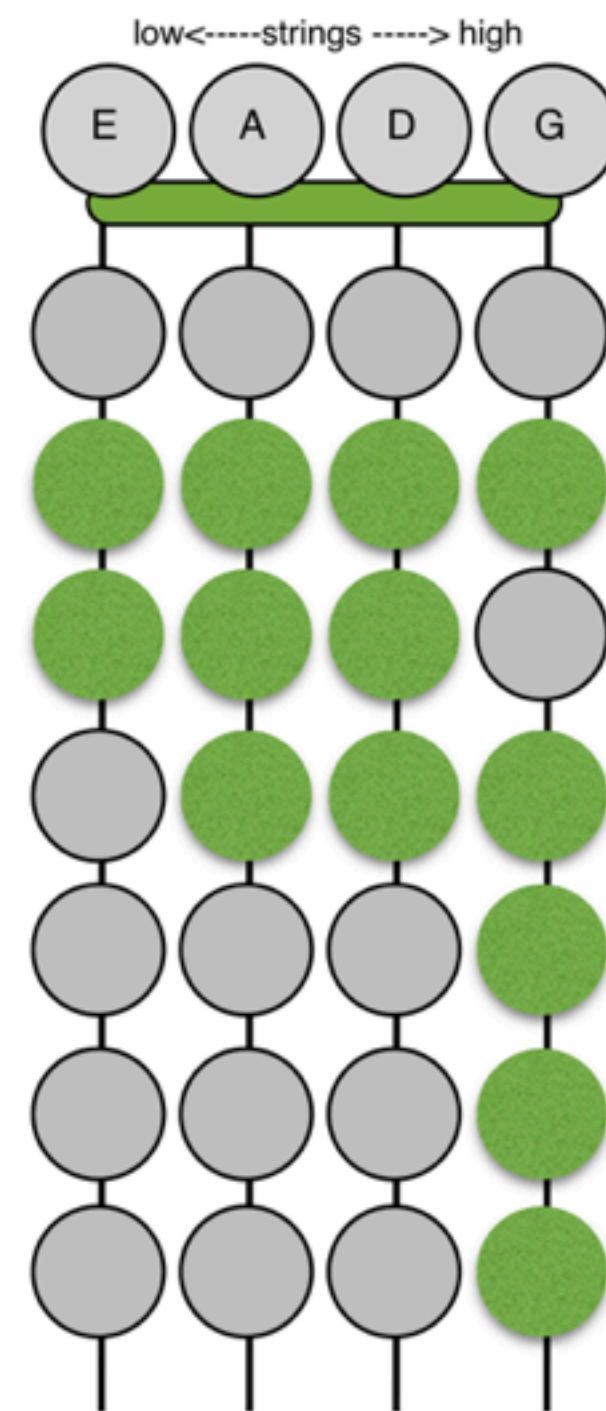
Viola



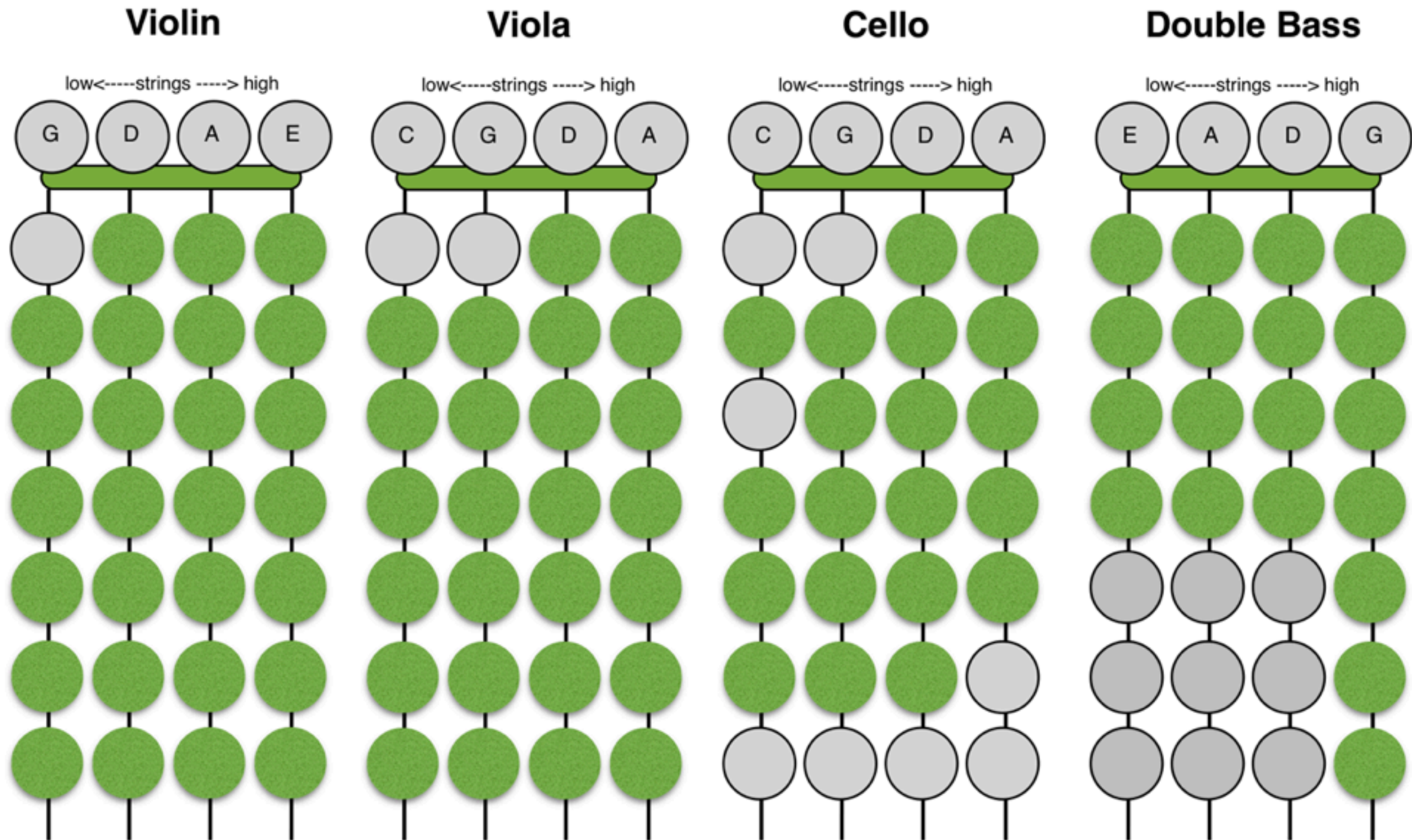
Cello



Double Bass



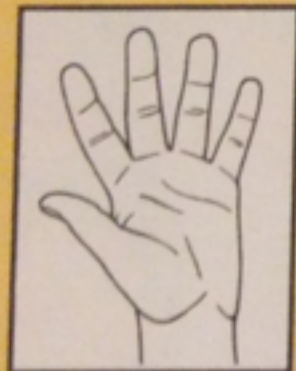
Notes learned in Essential Elements Book 2



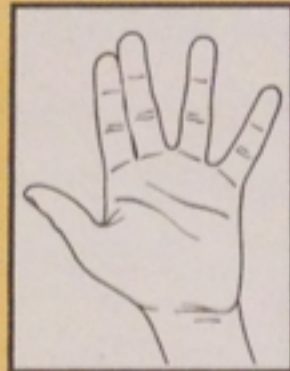
Finger Patterns for Violin/Viola

FINGER PATTERNS

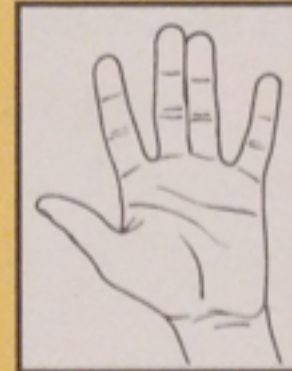
There are four basic finger patterns, which are combinations of whole and half steps. In the "open" hand pattern, a half step occurs between the open string and first finger. The other patterns have half steps between 1–2, 2–3, or 3–4. Notice that some finger patterns include new notes.



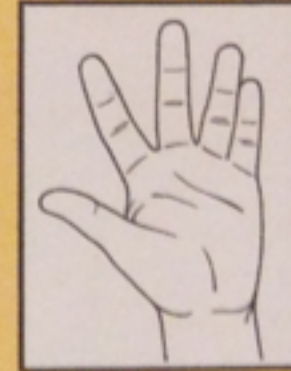
open hand



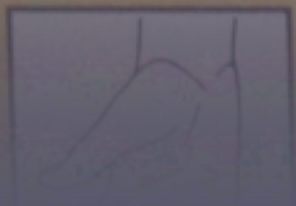
1–2



2–3



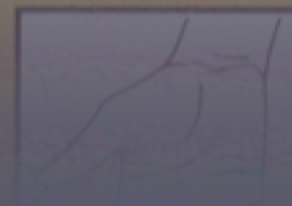
3–4



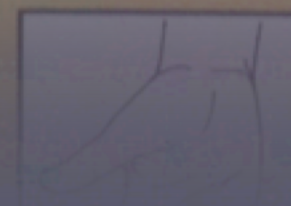
open hand



1–2



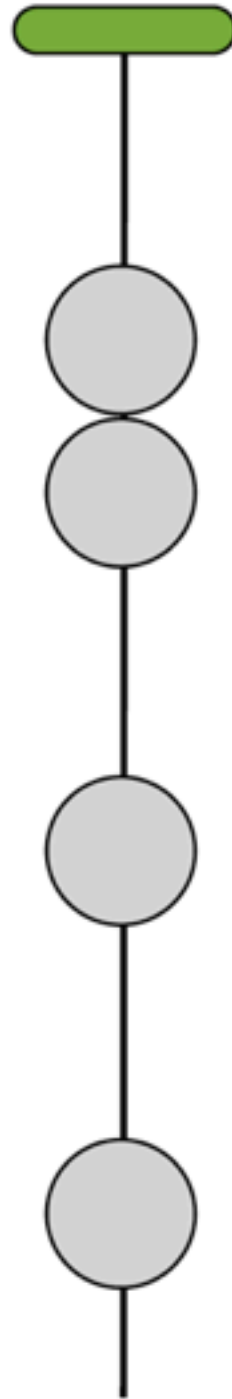
2–3



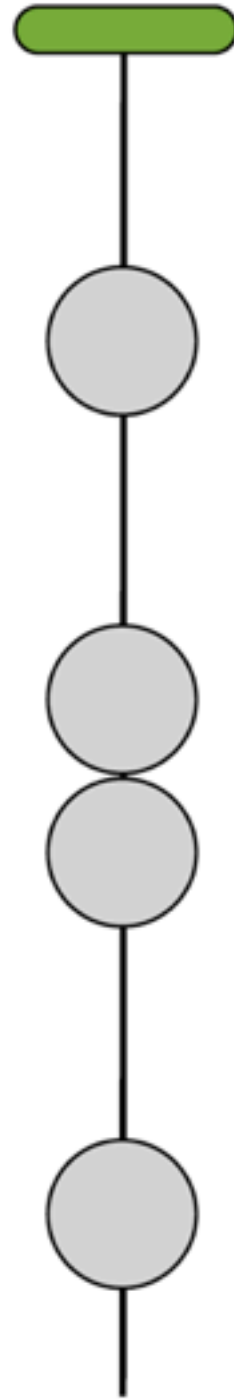
3–4

Violin & Viola Finger Patterns

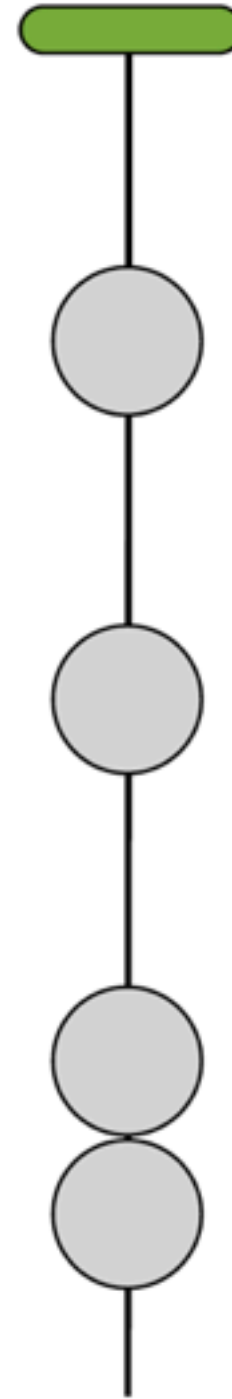
1-2 pattern



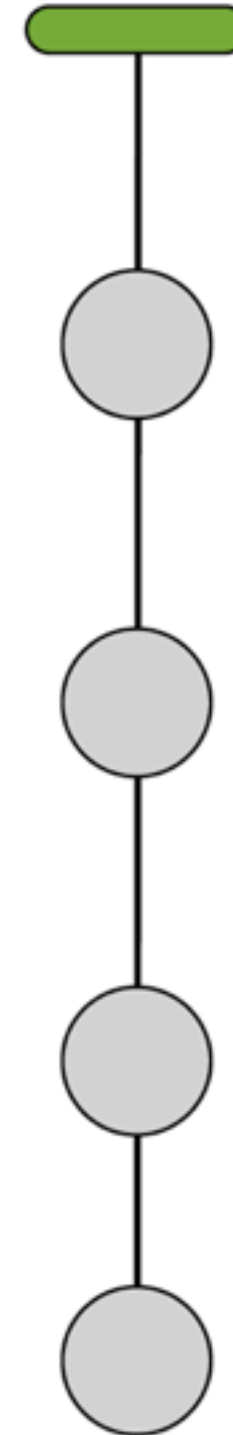
2-3 pattern



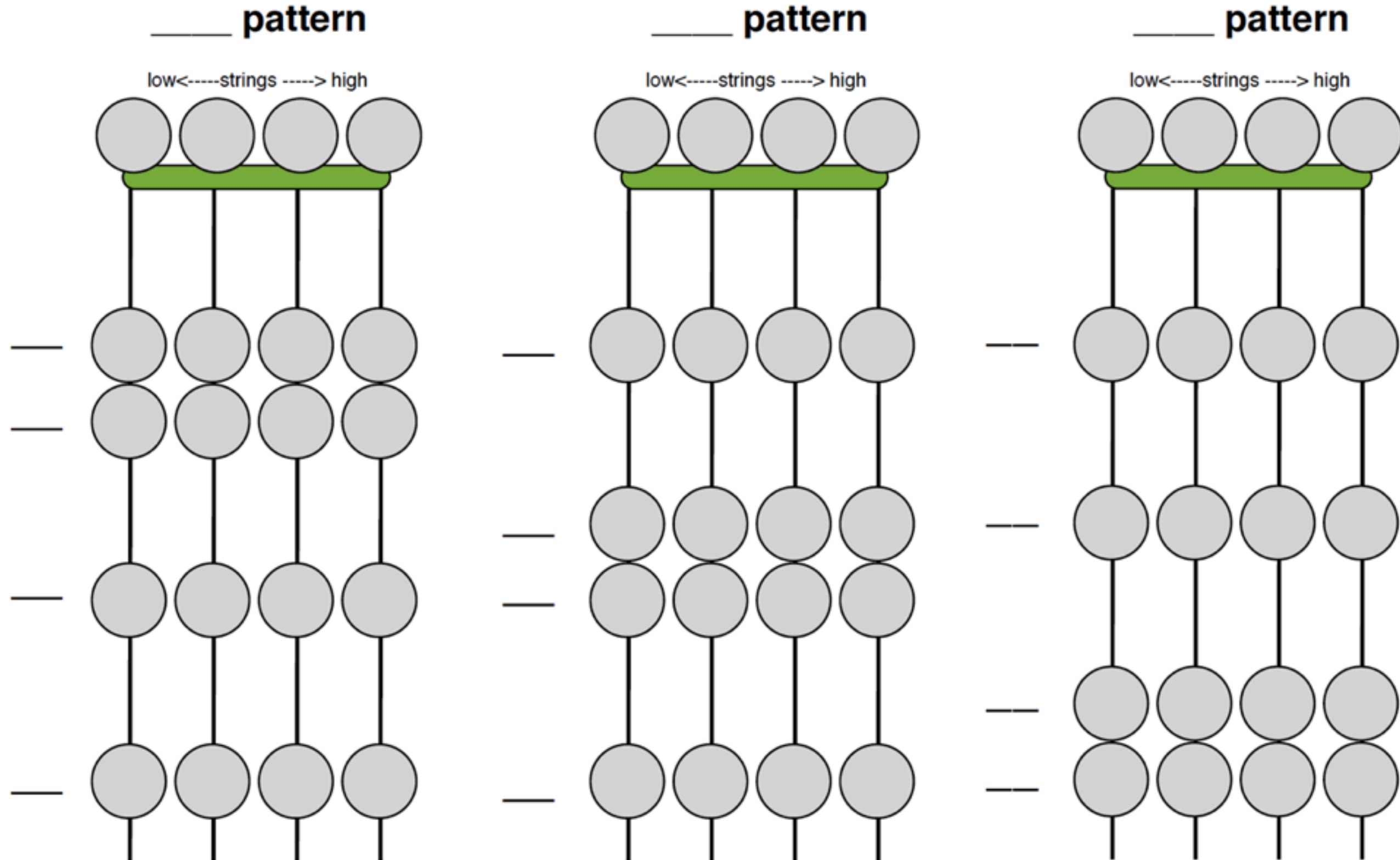
3-4 pattern



open hand



Violin & Viola Finger Patterns



Assessments

- Keep assessments geared for student success, attainable goals
- Students should not be surprised or stumped about how to do an assessment
- Consider recorded video and assessments to keep rehearsals moving and avoid students becoming self-conscious about their playing
- Archive assessment videos to create a digital portfolio (examples)

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Finding “newness”

- Must show excitement & promote the learning of new technical skills
- Challenge students: “When you increase your technical skills you can play more exciting sheet music”
- Positive reinforcement - LOTS of it
- Get parents involved
- Regularly practice sight-reading

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Finding “newness”

- Encourage private lessons
- Foster social practice sessions (“Pizzicato & pizza party”)
- Mix it up by altering seating or even the orientation of the room/sections
- Integrate technology - even a simple drum beat can make a difference!
- Find student leaders to help run class/warm-ups

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Finding “newness”

- Foster playing tunes by rote (learn the latest tune on the radio!)
- Allow students to compose (soundtracks, etc.)
- Improvise!!
- Use alternative music styles like fiddle, jazz, pop (Electric instruments?)
- Assemble chamber music groups to play at events & concerts
- Bring in guest conductors and artists

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Orchestra Exchange via Skype

Hilliard Heritage Middle School
Orchestra (Hilliard, Ohio)

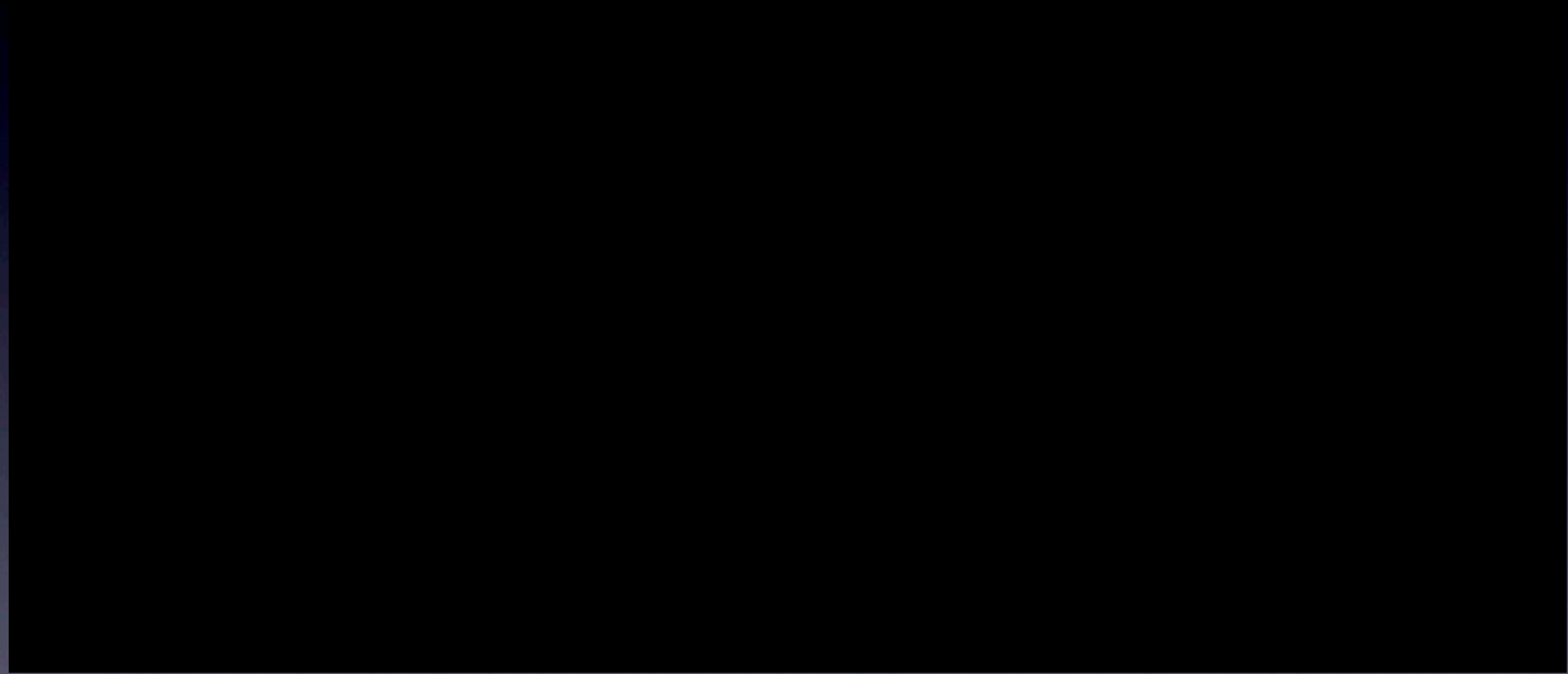


and

Hunters Creek Middle School
(Orlando, Florida)



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“ORCHESTRA EXCHANGE”

Hunters Creek MS Orchestra / Hilliard Heritage MS Cadet Orchestra

Learning about alternative styles with Christian Howes



www.stringedtech.com



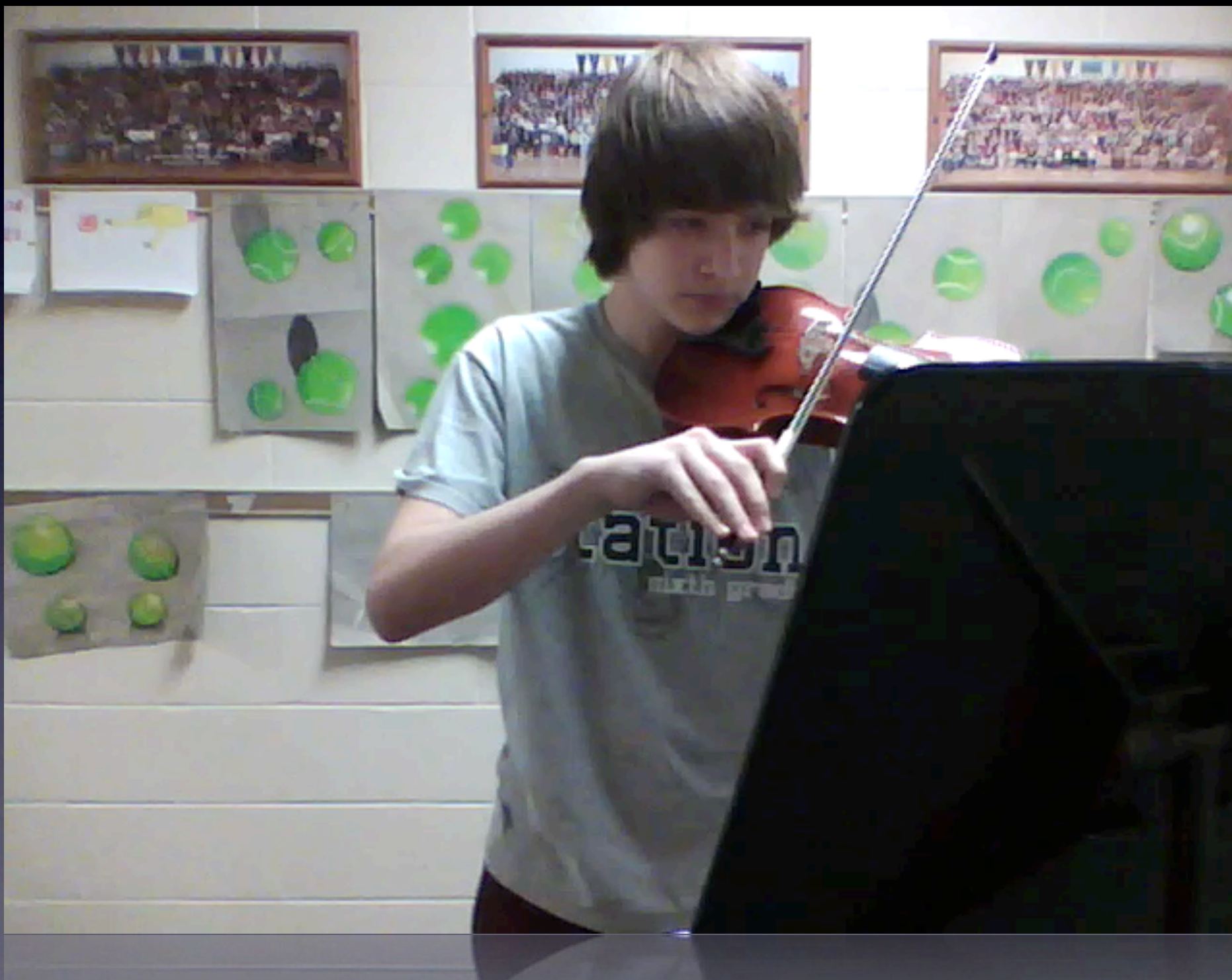
Christian Howes with the Hilliard Heritage MS Concert Orchestra

If a student wants to drop...

- Find out the REAL reasons (musical, social, etc.)
- Point out and showcase the student's strengths to others
- Consider an instrument conversion (violin to bass, etc.)
- What solutions have worked for you?

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Switching Instruments...



Switching Instruments...



Switching Instruments...



Switching Instruments...



To summarize...

- Understand the needs of intermediate players
- Pay extra special attention
- Foster their musical and technical growth
- Keep it fresh and fun!

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Special thanks to...



Contact Me!



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Slides and more available at:
www.stringedtech.com

