



August 2010

5<sup>th</sup> grade parents:

Thank you for your interest in having your child join band! Now that I have your interest/info slip, I will begin assigning times for your child to come to the band room to test out a few of our instruments. There is more about why we do this on the following page. If a parent is available to come to this appointment, they are more than welcome.

Also in this packet, you should find information on how to choose an instrument, how to obtain an instrument, rental prices for one local music store, and a variety of other information. Yes, there a lot of details, but I am hoping that this helps give you all of the information you need and makes everything easier for you.

As we get closer to the 5<sup>th</sup> grade band “open house” with Shivelbine’s Music Store, I will send one last note home as a reminder which will include a meeting schedule.

I also have a few notes in this packet about those that already have an instrument at home. I also hope to see you at the open house to give you important band and instrument care information.

**Open House is September 13<sup>th</sup> at CIS!**

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**In this packet:**

- Page 1 *How to choose an instrument & Why it is important to rent (rather than buy)*
- Page 2 *Desirable / quality instrument manufacturers*
- Page 3 *You already have an instrument*  
*School-owned instruments*  
*Other materials*  
*Lessons*
- Page 4 *Types of instruments*
- Page 5 *Rental pricing information*

## **How** to Choose an Instrument...

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- The most important thing is that we choose an instrument that is right for your child!
- Often, dental make-up, and sometimes, physical size, may play a role in deciding which instrument will suit a child best.
- When students are “trying out” the instruments, we are just looking to see what they may be able to handle, physically, and most importantly, what instrument on which they can most easily produce a sound.
- Sometimes, a student may want to play an instrument that just will not work out for them. Most students will find that they are able to produce a sound quickly on certain instruments, but not on others. For example, a student may think they want to play trumpet, but for some reason, simply cannot produce a sound, due to dental make-up, etc., but they ARE able to produce a sound on a low brass instrument, such as trombone or baritone. If the student chooses the trumpet anyway, they may have already set themselves up for a struggle and playing an instrument will not be fun. We don’t want to tell your child what to play, but we will guide them in making the best decision for them and the band.
- Percussion: Students interested in percussion will be required to learn **both snare drum and the bells**. Snare drum study will focus on rhythm and overall good drumming technique. Bell study will allow students to learn about melody as well (reading pitch), and good mallet technique that will transfer to other instruments, such as xylophone, marimba, and tympani. There are many instruments in the percussion section, and it is crucial that all percussion students receive a foundation of both drumming and keyboard playing now. If not, a student will find that they cannot participate as much as they would like because they are limited in what they are able to play.

## Why You Should **RENT** Instead of Purchase...

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- The simplest reason is, that if you purchase an instrument and in a month your child decides he/or she doesn’t like it – you are stuck with that instrument. If you are renting, you just leave it with me (if renting from Shivelbines), and as long as you are paid up with the store, you are done with it!
- If a student does not like, or finds they are not happy with the instrument they have and would like to try another, they can do that - if you are renting.
- Why I recommend Shivelbine’s: Shivelbine’s has been doing business with area schools for many years and understands the unique needs of school bands. A representative from Shivelbine’s visits our school each week. This can be very convenient for you as well. If your instrument needs repaired, they will pick it up at the school, saving you a trip to Marion.

## Choosing the Instrument ~ **Brands**

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Shivelbine's is already aware of my preferences regarding specific brands for different instruments. If you choose to visit a different establishment, I ask that you consider the following:

### **Look for the following brands\*:**

<b>FLUTE</b> Gemeinhardt Emerson Jupiter Artley (ok) Armstrong (ok)	<b>CLARINET</b> Buffet Yamaha Jupiter Vito Selmer (also Bundy) – <i>I'm not too crazy about the older models, but ones produced in the past couple of years are good.</i> <b><u>If possible, avoid:</u></b> Artley, Blessing
<b>SAXOPHONE</b> Selmer Yamaha Jupiter Keilwerth Vito <b><u>If possible, avoid:</u></b> King, Conn, Blessing	<b>OBOE</b> Yamah Jupiter Buffet Selmer Vito
<b><u>All Brass (Trumpet, Horn, Trombone, Baritone):</u></b> Bach / Selmer Yamaha Conn Jupiter King Holton <b><u>If possible, avoid:</u></b> Blessing	

*\*There are other manufacturers I left off of this list that primarily make high / professional quality instruments. If you are looking at a used instrument and it is suggested that it falls into this category, please ask me before making any decisions.*

### **If you are looking at instruments that are not on this list:**

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- If it does not have a brand name on it – there is probably a reason....If the name isn't on this list, it most likely not a desirable instrument.
- I do not recommend mail-order businesses or E-Bay. I have viewed very MISLEADING advertisements. If the price seems too good to be true – IT PROBABLY IS!
- **PLEASE STAY AWAY FROM:** Sam's/Wal-Mart, department store instruments, etc... These instruments are made with inferior materials and workmanship. The instrument will most likely not last more than a year. If the instrument needs to be repaired, often it cannot be without breaking it further due to flimsy materials. Area instrument repair shops will often refuse to fix them with concern for being liable or damaging it more.

## *A Few More Things...*

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- **You have an instrument already**

- Even if the student already has an instrument at home that you think they should use, I would still like them to take the opportunity to try the instruments.
- If you decide the instrument you already possess is what your child will play, please make sure it is clean and in good working condition. A student's success can be greatly hindered by the condition of the instrument.
- If you know you would like the instrument to be repaired and/or cleaned, you can bring it to our open house and Shivelbine's will take it for maintenance (or visit the store before-hand). If you are unsure of the condition of the instrument, you can also bring it at this time and we can try to help you assess the instrument.

- **If you cannot find a means to rent an instrument, but want your child to be in band...**

- The school can try to help you. We have a few instruments, but keep in mind that selection is low and they are not always in the best condition. We will get it to where it will play as well as possible, but it may not look very nice (the looks really aren't very important anyway). If we are able to help, I ask that you sign a contract (a sample is attached) and pay a small fee of \$50.00 for the year and each year that you use the instrument. This will help us to pay for general maintenance, will go towards rent if the school has to rent it for you (if the school doesn't own any), and/or help us in purchasing better and more instruments for students in the future.

- **What else you need:**

- Students will also need a lesson book: I have not yet decided what book we will use.
- I strongly recommend that students have a **music stand** to hold their music while they practice at home. Sitting on their bed with the book on the floor doesn't work so well...However, it is not required
- Shivelbine's will be aware of what Carterville students need.

- **Lessons & Full Band**

After all of the students and what they are playing are sorted out, I will begin work on a lesson schedule. This can take me a week or so, so please be patient. Students receive one 20min lesson once a week with me or Mr. Norrington. After a few weeks, we then try to also play together as a full group. We will then begin meeting twice a week at lunch recess (Tuesdays and Thursdays). All lessons and full band rehearsals continue throughout the school year. Students will receive a grade for their participation and progress. Grading begins the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter.

- The next page has some information on instruments that are good to begin on. If you do not know much about instruments, hopefully this will help you.

## Flute



The Flute is a very popular woodwind instrument often chosen by students because it is small. Students should realize small does not mean easy! Since it is a favorite of many students, a parent needs to check with the band director to see if there are already enough flutes. The piccolo, with a higher pitch and a higher demand of performance, is only played by those who are playing the flute at a high level.

## Oboe

The oboe is a double reed instrument that is not as well known. It provides a nice tone color for the band and good oboe players are sought after in school, university and professional ensembles. The level of dedication on the part of the student is important to consider, for the oboe requires consistent study.

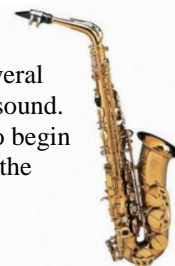


## Clarinet

The Clarinet is a reed instrument with a beautiful tone. It is great for beginners and can be a foundation for learning other instruments such as the oboe and bass clarinet. The size of a child's hands is important to consider, for there are many holes to cover.

## Saxophone

The Saxophone is a very popular reed instrument because of its use in popular and jazz music. There are several members of the sax family – Alto, Tenor and Baritone – all of which are needed in the band to create a full sound. A beginner usually starts out on the alto sax because of its smaller size, although students may be allowed to begin on tenor – be sure to check with your director. The size of a child's hands is also important to consider for the saxophone, for the keys of the sax are large and heavy.



## Trumpet

Trumpets are the most popular brass instruments and are great for beginners. To play a brass instrument it is necessary to be able to identify pitches and have good lip and teeth structure.

## Horn

The horn is a very flexible brass instrument. It can be very melodic and beautiful, dramatic, and exciting! The horn may be one of the more difficult brass instruments to play, so it is important that the student is committed to practicing.



## Trombone



The Trombone is the only brass instrument with a slide instead of pistons or valves. It is about medium in size and requires a lengthy reach in the arms. It is easy to blow and has a beautiful tone and is much needed in school and professional bands. A strong sense of pitch is essential to the success of playing the trombone.



## Baritone/Euphonium & Tuba

The Baritone is medium-sized instrument with valves similar to a trumpet. The Baritone produces a deep, rich sound. Beginners may start on a Baritone and transfer to the Tuba – a very vital instrument in the band – later on. However, a few students are able to actually begin on the tuba, if they are able to physically handle the instrument.

## Percussion

Percussion students will be required to play the snare drum and bells. There are many other instruments in the section such as the timpani and xylophone. By also playing the bells, students will gain a foundation of technique and pitch reading that will transfer to the rest of the instruments in the section. Without this foundation, students may never learn how to play these other instruments, greatly limiting opportunities to play with the band. Because of the popularity of drums in professional bands, it is necessary to ask your band director if there is a need for percussionists

**Shivelbine's Music**  
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**Rental Information:**

- The initial rental payment for any instrument, used or new, covers a **three month time period** for that instrument. Books and music stands are purchased separately.
- Used and “Rental Return” (instruments that were used briefly and returned and are often are like new) are subject to availability. However, if an instrument is not available in your price range at the initial rental, you may switch it for one that is in December if one becomes available.
- Beginning in December, you can buy it outright at a discount, or begin monthly payments until it is paid off. **Most monthly payments fall in the \$20 to \$60 range depending on the price of the instrument selected.** They are covered for repairs and replacement during the entire rental/purchase period.

**RENTAL PRICES**

Amounts below cover the 1<sup>st</sup> three months!!!! Monthly payments begin in December and are based on the purchase price of your individual instrument

<b>Instruments</b>	<b>NEW</b>	<b>Rental Return</b>	<b>USED</b>
Flutes Clarinet Trumpets Trombones Percussion Kits*	\$55.00	\$45.00	\$35.00
Alto Saxophones Baritones	\$90.00	\$75.00	\$60.00
Oboes	\$115.00	\$95.00	\$75.00
Single Horns	\$145.00	\$125.00	x

\*Percussion kits – contain a snare drum, set of bells, stands, sticks, & mallets.