

8 Ways to Take Your Group Classes to the Next Level



1. Teach a collaborative program

Teaching all students in your class the same thing, at the same time is the best way to maximise impact and ensure that the benefits of groups ARE happening in your lessons! But what about allowing for individual progress?

2. Plan for individual progress

Yes, individual progress within a group is still possible, even with a collaborative structure. But it does require plenty of planning and the use of differentiation.

3. Have a levelling system

It is not enough to start a group and then expect all the students in your group to move along together forevermore. As you have probably experienced, this fixed-group set-up inevitably leads to some not being challenged, and some struggling to keep up. Have a few different levels that students can move through AT THEIR OWN PACE. If one student stays at a level for 18 months, and another for only 3 months, you know that you are providing an individual route, that is appropriate for each individual learner.

4. Cyclical v linear curriculum structures

The only way numbers 1-3 work is if you ditch the linear curriculum structure that so many method books use, and have a clear set of objectives for each level that are constantly consolidated. Once secure in those objectives, students can move to the next level. This cyclical structure means that NEW students can join your groups at any time, meaning maximum flexibility and easier scheduling for you!

5. Ensure a variety of activity types

Students learn in so many different ways, and groups are perfect in allowing for this, so long as you are planning for different learning styles. You will want to mix up your activity types, including how learning is accessed, how you deliver information, how learning is evidenced by your students, and how you interact with your class.

6. Have a consistent structure

Whilst it is important to mix up your activity types, you need to do this within a consistent structure. Children so often need order and predictability to feel safe, to manage their expectations, and to ensure they are receptive to learning.

7. Sing sing sing!

Children are so much happier singing in groups than they are on their own, and as group teachers, we have to take advantage of this! Because singing is such an important tool for so many areas of learning (not only in music/piano!). Use singing to consolidate learning concepts, to help learn to play pieces, and for an overall joyful experience!

8. Plan for creative tasks

Whether this be composing, improvising, describing, colouring, listening, dancing, gaming, creativity in our group lessons should be at the forefront of our curriculum plan! Creative learners are successful learners! Creative lessons enable for deeper learning, more connections, and a more well-rounded musician (and human, let's face it!).

Although there are many more ways in which you can ensure your groups are working in the most impactful way possible - using headphones, and supporting parents with home practice, to name a couple - these are what we consider to be some that are missed, particularly when using a method book that has not been designed with groups in mind. They are also the areas that prompt teachers to use the KeyNotes program, as these are all in place! If you would like to find out more about offering the KeyNotes Music program in your studio, [click here](#).