Tips & Best Practices for Using MakeMusic Cloud in Your Classroom

1. Google Chrome Set Up
   - Make sure you are using the latest version of Google Chrome Browser. To do so, click **Chrome** in the top navigation and select **About Chrome**. This will check for the newest version of Chrome.
   - Know how to allow Chrome camera access for Video Assignments in your Chrome **Settings**.
   - As a basic troubleshooting step, know how to clear browser cache/history.

2. Before you send your first **Assignment**, get to know **MakeMusic Cloud** and its potential before you begin working with students. When you demonstrate confidence, students' fears decrease and interest in using **MakeMusic Cloud** increases.

3. Choose how to organize your classes
   - You can create one class per ensemble, one class per instrument/voice type, by day of the week, lesson groups, or mastery level.
   - Create as many classes as you need.
   - Use **Re-enroll** to populate students in classes by voice or instrument type or chamber ensembles you create.

4. Know the microphone and audio settings for all devices
   - Understand how to adjust the settings on the devices your students will use in and out of the classroom. This will help them get the best results and be set up for success.

5. Model, Model, Model
   - Show your students how you expect them to use **MakeMusic Cloud** at home.
   - Demonstrate in lessons, large ensemble, and small ensemble rehearsals.

6. **Video** assignments
   - Assign **Video** assignments so your students can show you how they are performing at home.
   - Check technique and posture.

7. Clearly name assignments
   - Change the default name that **MakeMusic Cloud** auto-fills when you create assignments so that they are identifiable and customized to both you and your students.

8. Optimize method book assignments
   • Assign lines from method books that are the culminating performance piece of newly learned techniques and skills.
   • Tell students to practice the lines that prepare them for the assignment to be handed in, or create **Ungraded** assignments if you wish to listen to some of the practice assignments you send students.

9. Utilize the **Comments** box
   • Strongly encourage students to submit comments along with their audio takes when submitting assignments.
   • Likewise, offer comments to your students.
   • Placing importance on this part of the process will keep you and your students in a loop of learning.

10. Schedule multiple **Sight reading** assignments
   • Create an assignment from a unique outline created in **Sight Reading Studio**. Duplicate it as many times as you need.
   • Change the title for each duplicate version and you will have the same parameters of sight-reading sent out several times.

11. Use **Ungraded** assignments
   • Get your students practicing material for you to listen to but not load up your grade book.
   • This also builds deliberate practice habits not associated with a grade.

12. Create consistency
   • Post assignments and due dates for the same days each week.

13. Design meaningful **Rubrics**
   • Create **Rubrics** that inform and guide your students toward better performance.
   • Consider creating **Rubrics** that reward students for slowing down an assignment to improve accuracy, or grading students on improvement.
   • Play a variety of random examples for the students to grade using your **Rubrics** to see if they have a good understanding of what is being graded.
   • Have older students guess their **Rubric** score in the **Comment** box and grade them for accuracy.
   • Use your carefully crafted **Rubrics** consistently.

14. First **Assignment** suggestions:
   • Send assignments that require listening and responding in the **Comment** box.
   • Have students listen to several pieces, choose the ones they like, and explain why in the **Comments** box. Label the assignment as "Writing Only" so they do not get frustrated with earning a high score on a brand-new piece.
   • Set **MakeMusic Cloud assessment** to **Easy** and the **Tempo** to **Any** for first submissions.

- Send an **Ungraded** assignment.
- Start the year with an assignment of a piece played last year.
- To test the students' understanding of using the **Record** button, the **Playback recording**, and the **Comments** box, have them press the red button and record 30 seconds of silence. Also, ask them to report in the **Comments** box what they hear. This simple and fun activity will help them build confidence using the app.
- Create a first **Rhythm only** assignment to develop rhythmic accuracy.

15. Use warm-ups as long-term assignments
- Develop a routine for your students to practice daily and assign it long-term.
- Have students record the first and last days of the assignment and ask them to compare the two for self-evaluation.

16. Assign *Suzuki* content to any and all musicians, its not just for strings
- Get your students to learn one of the beginning *Suzuki* songs by ear.
- This will allow them to develop their listening skills, and then focus on sound and technique.

17. Playlists
- Assigning **Playlists** is a great way to get your students to quickly access the music you want them to review, practice, and prepare for performance.
- This can be your way of having students practice without creating an official assignment.
- **Playlists** can be easily shared and sent to individuals or classes.

18. Sharing
- Sharing is a great way for teachers to give composition assignments through **Compose**, **Sight Reading Studio** outlines for students to practice, and **Playlists** of music for anyone to use.

19. Video Lessons
- Share *Music Professor Videos* with your students to reinforce the fundamentals you are teaching in your class.

20. Have students individually warm up with method book exercises in **MakeMusic Cloud**. This is a great opportunity to walk around the classroom and ensure everyone knows how to use the platform.

21. Use **MakeMusic Cloud** for chair auditions or concert assessments, at home or in practice rooms.

22. Use **MakeMusic Cloud** in sectionals for students to learn their part on their own and save time in the rehearsal room to explore deeper concepts. Have a sectional leader who controls the **Practice** App.

23. Program music from the **Library** and use the **Practice** app (**accompaniment**, **loop**, **tempo**) in rehearsals.

24. Use any **Accompaniment** tracks in MakeMusic Cloud as "live" mp3s to play while your percussionists are performing rudiments and/or non-pitched exercises instead of using a metronome. This helps develop listening/phrasing skills in your drummers.

25. Create **Sight Reading Studio** templates to reinforce newly taught skills such as a new rhythm, key signature, compound meter, triplet introduction, alternate fingerings, string hand positions, and sight singing examples that only utilize the first 3 pitches of a key (Do – Re – Mi), etc. Create a **Playlist** that begins with easy existing method book examples, moving through increasingly more difficult examples and ending with the templates to ensure students understand the concept beyond the first example they performed.