

All-State: Smart Music and Impact— how to incorporate these programs into your school or private studio program

presented by Jeanne Kauffmann

reported by Kathryn Liebenow, Janet Anderson

Smart Music is software that students can use at home to guide their practice and get assessments of their skills. The software has many features including a tuner and a list of thousands of string music titles including method books and all of the Suzuki literature. There are scales available, rhythms, jazz exercises and play by ear. Instructors can scan original music into Smart Music as well.

Students can practice their orchestra music at home with all the parts or a solo with accompaniment. Looping rehearses short segments over and over. The student or the teacher can choose the tempo. You can set the articulation, key, metronome, and decide the background accompaniments. The software shows the student if they have a wrong note by making all cor-

rect notes green and all wrong notes red. It shows the accuracy of the student's rhythm by showing the incorrect rhythm the student played also in red. Another feature is an accompaniment that can be set to follow the student.

Smart Music's assessment tool called Impact allows teachers to give students assignments that the software can then rate. The teacher can also listen to the assignment and rate it. Smart Music comes with several assignments for every piece but a teacher can also create assignments. The computer gives a score of correct notes vs. incorrect notes and logs the time spent on the exercise.

Setting up the grade book is easy. You may set up your own grading scale or use the pre-determined one. Names and e-mail

addresses of students and parents can be imported.

Smart Music is relevant to students who find it entertaining to be able to play with a computer. The assessment feature helps them understand in a concrete way what is wrong with their performance of a specific excerpt and it can become like a game to try and fix it. Parents would also like the program because they too can then encourage and guide their students.

Jeanne Kaufman teaches elementary orchestra in the Robbinsdale district and is an official Smart Music presenter. Janet Anderson teaches at South Junior High in St. Cloud. Kathryn Liebenow teaches in Brooklyn Park. ♪