ORGANIZING CLASS TIME
• 2 minutes to get instrument and music organized at the beginning of class and 2 minutes at the end of class to put things away - stick to this and have students help you with the time when you can’t see the clock or don’t notice it is time to put things away
• have the order of music or exercises listed on the board each day
• tune
• warm-ups - scales, vibrato exercises, etudes, canons, rhythm drills, improvisation etc.
• play a familiar piece or exercise straight through
• introduce a new piece or exercise or do extensive practice on difficult sections of a piece
• end with something familiar, already learned, their favorite piece or go straight through the section of the piece you just drilled to get a feel of continuity
• keep the pace of the class moving ahead and if you sense that students are disengaging themselves, switch to another activity
• don’t be afraid to have expectations or work hard for at least the middle section of the class period - they like to be pushed and feel good when they accomplish something

WAYS TO VARY PRACTICE - SMALL GROUP INSTRUCTION
• students each play a measure, line or phrase moving from one student to another without pausing.
• students each play a specific note of a piece - one on D, one on E etc.
• teacher plays a measure and students identify it.
• teacher plays a measure, phrase or line and the students echo it back.
• stand up when you hear the "A section" of an ABA form piece.
• improvise an ending to a piece.
• sing the piece with solfege.
• divide the students into A and B groups. The A group plays the first measure, the B group plays the second measure, alternating measures throughout the piece. Divide the groups by beats or rhythms for variety.
• one half of the groups plays a measure and the other half of the room echoes the measure to check for intonation accuracy.
• stand up every time you play a specific note such as a new note or an accidental or a note in the key signature.
• count how many times a new note appears in a piece.
• alternate standing up and sitting down every time the dynamics change.
• decide on an action for each type of rhythm you have in a piece and do that action while counting aloud. Example: quarter note=clap
• add slurs to exercises with sets of 4 eighth notes - 2 notes to a slur, 4 notes to a slur etc.

WAYS TO MAKE YOUR CLASS INTERESTING WHILE PRACTICING CONCEPTS
• sort students for ensembles or project groups - hand out cards with different musical symbols, terms, dynamic markings, musical eras etc. and have students mingle and match the card to other students to form a group.
• teach rhythmic dictation by using popsicle sticks and pennies - students place a stick down for each note heard the first time the example is played; the second time the example is played, place sticks across the groups for beams; and for dotted notes use pennies.
• play a scale with rhythm cards - hold up the first card of your set for students to play on the first tone, switch to the second card while they finish the first card; play the second card on the second tone etc.