

## II. Detaché Stroke Development

### Violin/Viola:

- A. Bow parallel to bridge
- B. Initially bow over "F" holes, halfway between bridge and the fingerboard
- C. Down Bow: Begin in the middle of the bow and open elbow joint
- D. Up Bow: Close elbow joint
- E. Gradually lengthen the bow stroke with greater bow control and roll bow stick toward scroll approaching the frog of the bow.

### Cello/Bass:

- A. Bow generally moves parallel to the bridge
  - 1. Exception: allow bow to move slightly toward the bridge on the bass in lower left hand positions
- B. Flat bow hair generally throughout the stroke for beginning students
- C. Sound production: heavy, relaxed arm/elbow weight to help produce a big sound
- D. Initial bow instruction in lower half and frog of bow
- E. There is a folding/unfolding of the arm from the right shoulder and elbow joint (be careful not to pull shoulder down while bowing)
- F. Reach out for higher pitched strings and pull back for lower pitched strings
- G. Double Bass: sound production governed by shoulder and back
  - 1. Strings should be as close to the fingerboard as possible without buzzing
  - 2. Rosin: Carlsson Swedish bass rosin best, POPS acceptable

3. Black bow hair coarser and easier for beginner to produce an acceptable initial sound
4. Easier to produce initial big sound with German bow

# **Detaché Stroke Development Teaching Strategies**

## **A. Balance point bow hold**

Form bow hand shape at balance point of the bow to reduce pressure on fingers from the weight of the bow

## **B. Bowing through toilet paper tube - over the shoulder or in front, then on instrument**

Insert tip of the bow through a toilet paper tube and simulate bowing motions with tube guiding bow's path

## **C. Bow in air with pencil or straw**

Pretend to bow with the bow hand shape formed on a pencil or straw. Keep the object traveling in a straight path

## **D. Swinging Out - Vln/Vla**

Placing left index finger inside right elbow, move right forearm in and out without moving upper arm – simulates arm action for bowing

## **E. Elbow Energy - Cello**

Move forearm out to a straight position for arm, then move upper arm to continue stroke. Reverse to bow the other direction

## **F. Pendulum - Bass**

Move whole arm back and forth like a pendulum with very little elbow involvement. Don't lock elbow

## **G. Lift/settle**

Lift bow in the air and set on string, allowing the bow, hand, and arm to settle down into place applying some weight to the string

## **H. Connect the sets**

Perform lift/settle exercise in two different parts of the bow, about 2 or 3 inches apart, then move bow on string to connect the two places. This gives a short, easily controlled bow stroke to start

## **I. Tracing the Path**

(cello and bass)

Holding bow by the tip with the left hand, place on the strings in the correct spot parallel to bridge. Allow bow hand shape to slide up and down the length of the bow tracing the path the bow hand will travel when actually bowing

## **J. Two-Handed Bowing**

(cello and bass)

Holding bow at both ends, bow back and forth between hands, keeping motion parallel to the floor

**K. Bowing through Tube**

Using a tube for a guide, bow back and forth in the correct path. Can be used in front or over the shoulder with the left hand holding the tube. Can also be fastened to the strings with a rubber band to simulate the actual stroke of a bow

**L. Pointer Guide**

(cello and bass)

Point left index finger to the proper contact point on the string and bow along according to the guide

**M. Straw in F-hole**

(violin and viola)

Place one or two straws in the lower end of the f-hole to provide “goal posts” for the bow to follow. Useful for upper strings who can’t actually see the correct angle for the bow. Allow students to use straws until correct motion has been established

**N. Frog to the Floor**

A verbal reminder for cello and bass students who tend to “saw wood” with tip pointing down and the bow traveling at an angle to the strings rather than perpendicular

**O. Buddy Bowing**

(violin and viola)

Have one student watch as a player bows back and forth, making corrections to the bow angle as needed. Students then reverse their positions with the player becoming the watcher

**P. Additional aids for parallel bow stroke**

- Watching bowing in a mirror – must look at side view so they can see the bow’s angle to the string accurately
- Place a strip of tape under the strings between the bridge and fingerboard to mark the bow’s path
- Keep strokes short (from balance point to middle for upper strings, frog to balance point for lower strings) until control is gained, gradually increasing length as student becomes more skilled