

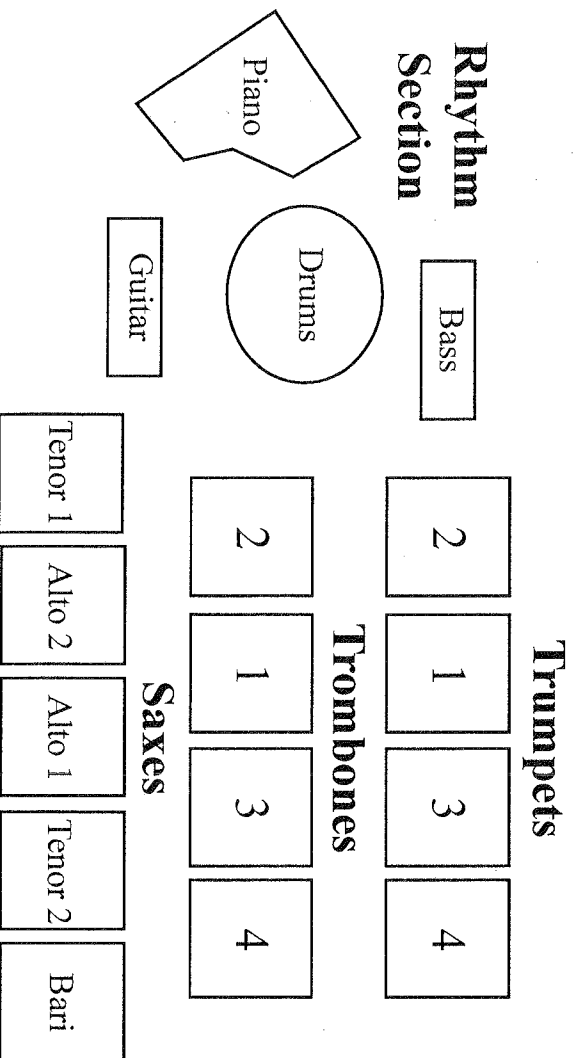
# Getting Started

Starting a jazz band can seem like a huge task. You may or may not have any jazz playing experience and are not quite sure where to start. Here are some general things to think about:

- Try to have the minimum instrumentation covered, even if it means that you do not have the instrumentation of a 'traditional' jazz band (use alternate parts if necessary). In order to arrange a chart so that it is playable with minimum instrumentation, sometimes the range of the 3rd trumpet/trombone is higher than the 2nd. If you have a full band, have a stronger player on the 3rd part, rather than the 2nd.
- Look over the score and select a section in which all players play (especially a unison section). First, have the rhythm section lay down the groove. Next, have the horn sections sing their rhythms with articulations. Finally, have the horns play their parts along with the rhythm section. Try to get your band to play with the correct feel before trying to conquer the notes of the entire piece.

- Know your players. Select charts that your students will be able to play successfully, but will also provide a challenge so they will not get bored easily and will learn something new. Include different styles of jazz music in your repertoire.

## Traditional Set-Up



# Jazz Terms

**break** - A brief solo passage during a cessation of the accompaniment, usually only one or two bars in length.

**call and response** - The performance of musical items in alternation between two distinct groups of musicians or between a soloist and a group.

**comping** - to provide a chordal accompaniment for a soloist.

**fall off** - A gliss which falls from the end of a chord or note.

**lay back** - To play slightly behind the beat.

**riff** - A short melodic idea which is repeated as an accompaniment behind a soloist.

**shout chorus** - a climactic chorus of a band arrangement.

**stop time** - when the rhythm section stops playing for part of one or more bars, while the soloist continues unaccompanied.

**swing eighths** - a triplet subdivision feel where the first eighth note is held longer than the second (although written the same).

## Suggested Articulations

♩ - DAH - long  
 ♪ - TUT - short accent

♩ - DIT - short  
 ♪ - DAHT - long-stop

♩ - TAH - long accent  
 ♪ - DOO-DAH - swing

# Role of the Rhythm Section

The rhythm section (drums, bass, piano and optional guitar) is key. These players keep the time, provide the harmony and create the groove for each piece.

**TIME** - keeping the time steady; creating the pulse

**GROOVE** - providing the sub-division for the style; creating rhythmic interaction with the band

**HARMONY** - providing the harmonic progression for the melody or improvisation

## Drums

- supply the stylistic foundation
- lock in the groove with the bass
- embellish the rhythm with the guitar and piano

## Bass

- creates the groove with the drums
- provides the harmonic progression

## Guitar

- creates a harmonic groove by providing the progression, while playing a rhythmic groove
- has a delicate relationship with the piano

## Piano

- creates harmonic groove with the guitar, but the two should not conflict with each other
- uses comping rhythms

# Jazz Styles

## Swing

- characterized by a triplet subdivision and uses 'uneven' eighth notes
- subtle stress of beats 2 and 4

## Rock

- relies on a solid backbeat (emphasis on beats 2 and 4)
- straight eighth subdivision
- repeated patterns

## Shuffle

- a cross between swing and rock styles by stressing the backbeat and using the triplet subdivision
- groove primarily created by bass and drums

## Mambo

- Afro-Cuban style with stress on the 'and of 2'
- straight-eighth subdivision

## Samba

- a light, Brazilian-based style with stress is ON beat 3
- relies on straight-eighth subdivision and a *partito alio* (chordal) rhythm

## Funk

- sixteenth note subdivision and syncopation, particularly in the bass
- beats 2 and 4 prominent in snare drum
- often complex, unison lines performed by horns

## Ballad

- a slow tempo, jazz ballad flows seamlessly through various subdivisions (straight-eighth, triplet, or double time)
- needs space; laid back feel