



Everyone Can Arrange: Building a Jazz Song Block By Block

Presented by **PLAYBOOK**:

How do we motivate our music students?

We empower them to be creators!

What's the difference between a song and an arrangement?

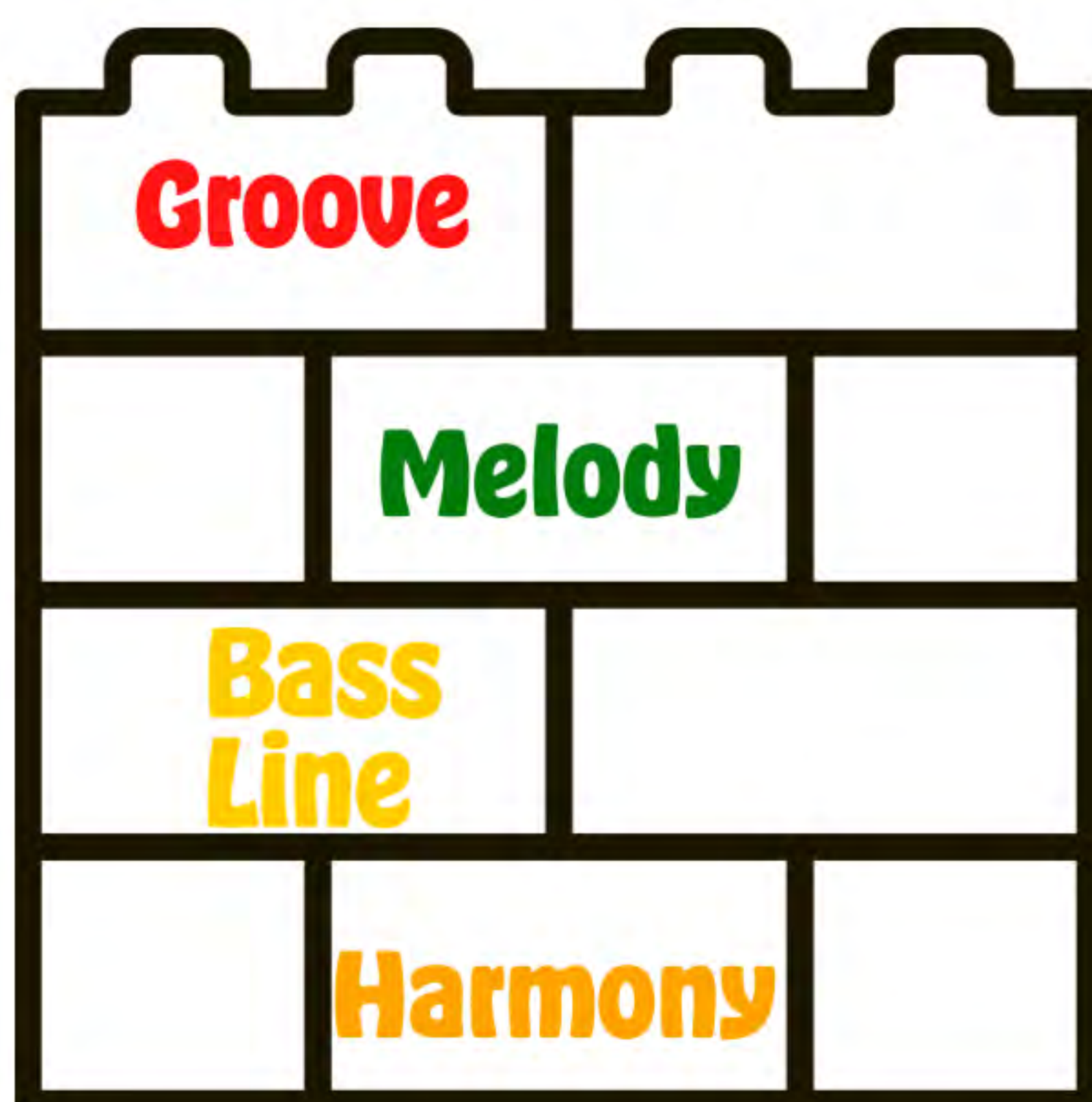
The Playbook method teaches the **SONG**
before building an **ARRANGEMENT**.

THE SONG is the story.
THE ARRANGEMENT is the way you tell that story.



THE FOUR BUILDING BLOCKS OF A SONG:

Once you know these four building blocks, you can build a unique **ARRANGEMENT**.
You have to build the house before you can paint the walls.



With each building block, we not only learn part of the music, but also a piece of history (story). We listen for the ways this new information builds upon what we already know.

GROOVE

The rhythmic foundation upon which we build a **SONG**.
Musically, it determines the rhythmic feel, the pulse, the subdivisions; technical aspects that tie into performance. It also forms the foundation of our musical function or setting.

Historical Context

Where did this groove come from (Time and Place)?
Is this the appropriate feel for the function of this song?
A great opportunity to tie in listening as well!

MELODY

The Melody is often the first thing we recognize when we hear a **SONG**.
- The Melody is the Main Character of our story.
- Melodies are made up of musical "phrases" or "statements," similar to how a paragraph is made up of different sentences.

Improvisation & Self-expression

As much as possible, we sing every melody before we play it! (especially if the song has lyrics)





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MELODY CONT.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

How has this melody been performed in the past?

HOW DO WE FIND OUR VOICE?

We can change the rhythms or the notes to make the melody our own. Without changing either, we can ask ourselves, "What character/emotion should I play with?"

HARMONY

The Harmony gives color to our feeling of tension and resolution.

- A Chord is three or more notes played together at the same time.
- A Chord Progression is a series of chords that accompany the Bass Line to create the Home and Away sounds.

Learning the Neighbor Notes or Guide Tones helps students write backgrounds, develop melodic ideas, and hear the form of the song.

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BASS LINE

While the drums are the locomotive driving the band, the Bass Line is the track keeping the song moving in the right direction.

The Bass Line begins to establish a feeling of Tension and Resolution or Home and Away.

TENSION AND RESOLUTION

All songs have a **HOME** sound that's heard at the beginning and end of every Song. Throughout the journey of the Song, we may go **AWAY** from **HOME** but we always work our way back. It's like going to our neighbor's house, but always coming home to go to bed.

We can hear this in the bass line we just learned. We're playing Just a Closer Walk in the key of Concert Eb Major. Eb is the first and last note in our bass line. Sometimes we go away, but we always come back!

NOW THAT WE HAVE OUR FOUR BUILDING BLOCKS, WHAT DO WE DO?

Every song has a form. Just A Closer Walk With Thee is 16 measures, 4 phrases. Now we can build an arrangement by repeating that form!

- Listening: Let's listen to the arrangement we're playing and road map it. Where do you hear the melody? Who is playing it?
- Creating: Let's create our own road map!

