



# Walla Walla Public Schools Classroom Close-Up



TEACHER NAME: Julia Woods

SCHOOL: Pioneer Middle School

Position: Orchestra Teacher

YEARS IN DISTRICT: 9 years

Q. What are students in the 7th/8th grade orchestra class working on?

A. We are preparing our music for the holiday concerts. We typically have 10-30 students in this class. This year we have high numbers so we split the 7th & 8th grade group into two class periods.

Q. Do students need a musical background to enroll in this class?

A. Typically students start in the fifth grade orchestra program. We also have a 6th grade beginning orchestra class. These students have played anywhere from one to three years prior to enrolling in this class. Many of the students have also had private lessons in town. This year I have one 7th grade student in 6th grade orchestra. A student may also take private lessons for a year or so before they join our school program.

Q. How important is it for students in the orchestra program to work together?

A. It's extremely important for the students to work together. If one student is off or isn't listening to the other group, it can throw off the entire group. Team work and playing together is a big part of what we do.

I will often pass out the first violin part to the cello section, and the bass and cello parts to the violin group. Students are learning both parts and they know what to listen for from the other group.

Q. Why is it important for students to have a musical background?

A. Music helps their brain develop. It offers a creative outlet and the arts speak to who we are as a people. Music, art, dance and drama help kids experience and let out their emotions, which is especially important in middle school.

Over



MOMENTS & MEMORIES FROM  
JULIA'S CLASS:



COMMENTS FROM JULIA...

We find a lot of our music students are excelling in their studies and are in advanced placement classes. Music helps the brain connections develop, as well as encouraging the kids who are already advanced to maximize their potential.

I graduated from Aberdeen High School and attended Central Washington University for my undergraduate degree. This is where I fell in love with orchestra.



I play bass in the Walla Walla Symphony, as well as a couple other regional symphonies. I am also passionate about children in Jamaica and I go there during school vacations and breaks.