



Key Takeaways from AI-Assisted Music Teaching: Ryan Stahle on Better Prompts, Better Teaching, and Where to Draw the Line

Talk with AI instead of just asking it questions.

Ryan describes the first AI response as often being the worst one. The real value comes from conversation: responding to what it gives you, explaining what isn't right, providing more context, and continuing until the result actually fits your situation.

Practical implications:

- Treat the first response as a starting point, not the finished product.
- Give AI context about your students, goals, repertoire, and constraints.
- Ask follow-up questions and push back when something doesn't work.

Reflection question: Are you using AI like a search engine—or actually having a conversation with it?

Let AI remove friction, not replace your professional judgement.

Ryan uses AI to organize lesson information, turn spoken observations into written student feedback, and build warm-ups around skills students are about to encounter. The musical decisions still come from him; AI helps him carry them out more efficiently.

Practical implications:

- Start with a recurring pain point rather than asking, "What can AI do?"
- Use AI for organization, drafting, formatting, and repetitive tasks.
- Check everything it produces—you still know your students and your subject better than it does.

Reflection question: What part of your work takes time without actually requiring your unique expertise?

Decide deliberately what needs to stay human.

Ryan is comfortable using AI to help with many kinds of communication, but he draws a line at something like a sympathy message to a student. The conversation also raises questions about privacy, disclosure, recommendation letters, websites, and AI-generated creative work.

One useful middle ground: ask AI to evaluate without editing. It can point out something unclear, overly direct, or potentially misunderstood while leaving the actual words yours.

Practical implications:

- Protect student information and understand your school's privacy expectations.
- Consider telling students when AI materially helped create something.
- Distinguish between getting assistance and handing over the human part of the work.

Reflection question: What parts of your work do you want AI to help with—and what parts do you want to remain unmistakably yours?