

How To Find Success At The Concert MPA With a “Limited Instrumentation” Ensemble

Presented by

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Be smart from the beginning

- Start kids on instruments at the end and/or the beginning of the school year to fill out instrumentation for the future.
- Offer candy, pizza or extra credit. In reality we are getting them to **invest** in the program.
- Ex: move saxes to bassoon or oboe, flute to tuba, saxes to baritone/trombone.
- It can be done, you just HAVE to do it!
- However, if you do not have tubas, you still have to fill the band sound from the bottom up.

Scoring options

- Look for pieces with block scoring. Ex: no more than 2 tpt/cl. parts, 1 horn part, no more than two different low voice parts.
- You can change scoring but not voicing.
- Take all 1st clarinets down an octave but leave one player up.
- Double parts
- If your lower part players cannot handle, do not be afraid to re-assign.
Ex: If 1st part player is silent, they can cover a 3rd part
- Notate changes in score. Don't allow the judges to guess what you are doing, make sure they KNOW what you are doing.

Chordal Analysis

Chordal analysis should happen at least at the transition, cadence points, and areas of accidentals.

Fillmore/Bennett, Sousa, and King marches include the following in their chord scoring:

85% voices on the root

14% voices on the 5th

1% voices on the 3rd - This MUST be changed! The 3rd determines the quality of the chord.

Tip:

1. One way to make your ears better is to make a piano reduction score and play it
2. If there is something on the score you see and don't hear, STOP and focus on it!
3. If you see it you MUST hear it.

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Interchangeable instrumentation

Oboe solo - muted trumpet - clarinet
 Trombone - Baritone - French Horn - Bassoon - Tenor Sax - Bass Clarinet
 Tuba - Bari Sax - Bass Clarinet
 Clarinet - Trumpet
 Alto Sax - French Horn
 Flute - Oboe
 Split clarinet parts to help the French Horns or Trumpets
 Have a Baritone play the 2nd or 3rd trombone part

Tip:

1. Be sure the voicing is correct when interchanging parts
2. Study Marching Band scores to view simple similarities

Transpositions

Transposing instruments finger higher than they sound with the exception of the piccolo which sounds an octave higher than it fingers and the Eb Soprano Clarinet which sounds a minor third lower than it fingers.

Bb Family	Major 2nd	Major 2nd + octave	Major 2nd + 2 octaves
	Clarinet	Tenor Saxophone	Bb Contra Clarinet
	Soprano Sax	Bass Clarinet	
	Trumpet	Baritone Treble Clef	
Eb Family	Down a minor 3rd	Major 6th	Major 6th + octave
	Eb Soprano Clar.	Alto Sax	Bari Sax
		Alto Clarinet	Eb Contra Clarinet
F Family	Perfect 5th		
	French Horn		
	English Horn		

Tip:

Bari Sax can read Tuba parts as long as they change the key signature and the clef sign.
 Trombone/Baritone parts are likewise interchangeable with Alto Saxes. Be aware of the octave difference between the Tbn/Baritone/Alto Sax.

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Rhythmic Changes

Don't be afraid to simplify the rhythm for less experienced players, however, the published rhythm must be completed overall.

Original Rhythm ➡ 

Change to ➡ 

Non-Traditional Seating - Seating For Success

Why do the Tubas have to sit on the back row and why do the Flutes have to sit on the front row?

- Euphoniums sitting in the middle of the band.
- Clarinets sitting on front row
- Flutes sitting on the second row.
- Try to put saxophones behind the French Horn
- French horns should not sit in front of bell front brass i.e. tpts and tbns.
- Put French horns on the left instead of the right.
- If an exceptional player is over balancing the section, place them in the middle of the band. For ex: if only three clarinets, but the 1st player is exceptional, place them behind the other two.
- Why do tubas have to sit on the back row? What about the middle of the 2nd row?

Seat YOUR band however you need to so it will work for you.

Score Preparation

- Score Rehearsal Preparation: A Realistic Approach for Instrumental Conductors by Gary Stith
- We should all strive to become better conductors for our students. It is our responsibility to become the music. We need to visually show them the music.
- Watch YouTube Videos of great conductors.
 - Carlos Kleiber (Beethoven Sym. #4 and #7)
- Attend Conducting Symposiums
- Attend All-State Rehearsals with the intention of watching conductors
- Attend your Concert MPA's to listen to bands and watch conductors.

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Suggested Literature

- Of Emerald Shires – Myers
- All the Pretty Little Horses – McGinty
- Air and Alleluia – Mozart/Kinyon
- Shaker Variants – Del Borgo
- Sea Song Trilogy – McGinty
- Sea Song Fantasy – McGinty
- Two Scottish Dances - Vinson

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