



IT'S SYMPHONY TIME! DEVELOPING AND WORKING WITH THE YOUNG FULL ORCHESTRA

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WHY CREATE A FULL ORCHESTRA?

- Play music of the world's greatest composers
- Play music to sound as the composer intended (most of the time)
- Collaboration among band & orchestra
- Create a unique experience
- Challenge students

WHEN SHOULD I START?

- NOT in the first year!
- Generally in the 3rd year is adequate
- Some pieces geared at 2nd year players

WORKING WITH YOUR SCHOOL'S BAND DIRECTOR

- Collaborative, collegial environment
- Join forces
- Share strengths, learn from each other
 - Sectionals
- Ask him / her to conduct the ensemble too
- Switch roles

BENEFITS TO THE BAND PROGRAM

- Increased musicianship for those in the ensemble
 - sharp keys
 - increased self-confidence
 - new awareness of balance, blend, and tone
- Benefits for the band students who aren't participating

SCHEDULING

- During the school day
 - Top orchestra and band meet at same time
- Before school
- After school or evening rehearsals
- Regularly scheduled - takes time to develop

ADMINISTRATION

- If necessary, “sell” it to your administration
- Get their full support
 - Will need to purchase additional music, instruments, etc.
- Take both wind & string students to a symphony concert

WARM-UP AND TUNING

- Tune strings first
- Wind instruments are preparing reeds, putting instruments together
- Be sure to tune wind / brass players when they are warm!
 - Allow winds to get used to tuning A440, but also have them tune to the pitches they are accustomed to
- Scale based on literature, helps tune around a base pitch, key familiarity

“OUT OF TUNE” OR “OUT OF TONE?”

- Being out of tune is often mistaken for bad tone
- Bad tone quality is impossible to tune
- Good warm-ups that focus on sound are important
 - Tetrachords or 5 note patterns, ascending and descending
 - Address the notes less familiar with students
 - Use the strength of each instrument to reinforce each

WINDS & BRASS

- Instrument transpositions - why is it like this??
- Must explain the differences to the students
- Be empathetic and kind!
- Compare / contrast use of the bow and air use
 - Articulation, Movement, etc.
- Be sure sound is supported with fast, warm air

PERCUSSION

- Must be sensitive to the music, explain the differences from band percussion
- Dynamic markings
- Should generally play softer than in concert band
- Timpani are a must!
- Be particular in regards to mallet type, area of the drum head struck, etc.

WHAT, NO BASSOONS?

- Doubling wind parts is okay - this isn't the NY Philharmonic!
- Be flexible and creative
- Re-orchestrate - add parts in when others are resting
- Substitute missing instruments
- More bass instruments will increase fullness

SCORE PREPARATION

- Good score prep a must, particularly with the new instruments
- Write in concert pitches / analysis where necessary

REPERTOIRE SELECTION

- Finding the right balance of difficulty levels for wind & strings
- Down time
- Musically and educationally worthwhile
- Technical issues
- Orchestration / doublings
- Performer & audience appeal

REPERTOIRE RESOURCES

- Lucks Music
 - Offers transposed parts for some standard repertoire
 - Has organized lists of full orchestra music
- Check state lists - lots of standards
- Reference recordings / scores are sometimes more difficult to find
 - “Old” arrangements (like Isaac, Alshin, etc.) are gems!
- Alfred’s “First Philharmonic” series is GREAT for very young groups

CONCLUSION

- Full orchestra is awesome
- Great benefit to all students, music department, and school
- Allows everyone to work as a team for a common cause

SPECIAL THANKS



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