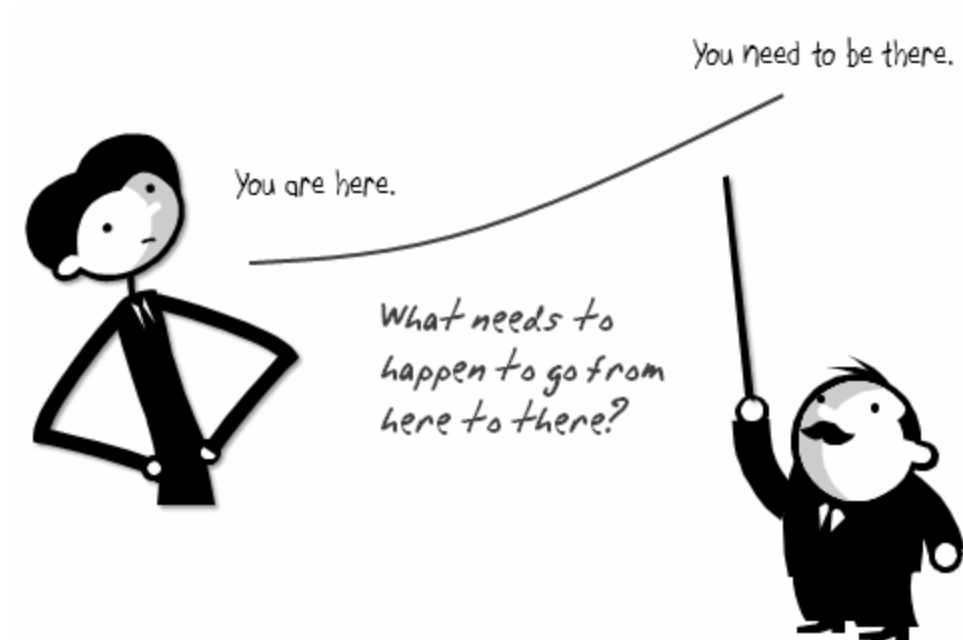


“If you do not know where you are going, you might not like it when you get there.”



Creating the Successful Band or Orchestra Rehearsal

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Successful rehearsals are one of the most important aspects of any performing ensemble. A meticulous plan provides a roadmap to success in all areas of the rehearsal process. Rhea and Sikes will discuss items to consider when developing goals and plans for your daily rehearsals.

CLINIC OUTLINE

- I. Rehearsal preparation: A proven plan for success
 - A. Repertoire – the most important aspect of your planning
 1. Choosing appropriate music for your students
 2. Improving musicianship through repertoire
 3. Repertoire lists
 - B. Score Study – discovering the “whys” of the music and making it more meaningful for your students.
 1. Overcoming your busy schedule
 2. Digging into the music
 3. Identifying issues and solutions prior to standing in front of your students
 - C. Goal setting – plan of attack
 1. Long term goals – “A year from now, you may have wished you had started today.”
 2. Short term goals – “What am I doing during tomorrow’s rehearsal?”
 - D. Additional Considerations – some things that can create anxiety
 1. Are the chairs and stands in the rehearsal hall, or are they on stage with the choir director?
 2. Does your student assistant know how to work the copy machine?
 3. Can the air conditioning only be controlled via central computer?
- II. The rehearsal: A daily roadmap for success
 - A. Rehearsal atmosphere – how to create the best possible learning environment
 1. Setting the tone for success
 2. Defining student expectations
 3. Goals before sound
 - B. Warm-up – focusing and improving fundamentals
 1. Designing warm-ups to promote success with your repertoire
 2. The use of chorales in building ensemble sonority
 3. Don’t forget the percussionists
 4. Importance of sight-reading
 - C. Rehearsing the music – the main event

1. Pacing - keeping your students engaged – “Perhaps I should not spend 35 minutes with the third clarinets or violas on two measures?”
2. The importance of a teaching plan – there is always more than one way to achieve success
3. Keep your ears open – becoming a critical listener
4. Ending the rehearsal on a positive note

III. After the rehearsal: “What just happened?”

- A. Review and evaluation – Recording your rehearsal – “Does my ensemble really sound like that?”
- B. Developing a relationship with a mentor – “I really don’t want anyone to hear my recording.”
- C. Evaluating and adapting your future rehearsal plan and goals

REPERTOIRE

SOURCES FOR BAND REPERTOIRE

- READ – periodicals, books, internet
- LISTEN – CD or MP3 recordings, internet, promotional aids from publishers
- DISCUSS – conventions and colleagues
- STUDY – own your own scores and study them – even those that you might not program

SOME BASIC THOUGHTS

- While certain musical compositions may be of exemplary quality, not all may be appropriate for your ensemble.
- Music does not need to be highly complex to be of worth.
- Your personal taste should be considered in the selection process.
- Good music equals excellent construction and genuine expressiveness. It should be of high quality musically, intellectually, technically, and emotionally.
- Programming should take into consideration the sometimes wide gap between composers & audiences.

PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR CHOOSING REPERTOIRE

- Basic - key signatures, time signatures, rhythmic complexity, melodies, harmonies, textures, and styles
- Instrumentation and ranges – substitutions possible - unusual instruments or parts
- Full score
- Ability to cover well written percussion parts
- Feature strong players while still developing weaker players
- Development of solo skills within the ensemble
- Musical expression contained as well as technique
- Adequate time to prepare the piece – time spent vs. musical reward
- The composition must be musically satisfying
- Ability of the conductor to teach and conduct the piece
- Conductor should benefit from studying, rehearsing and conducting the piece
- Students should benefit from preparing and performing the piece
- Piece should represent one of the finest compositions in the repertoire at that level

TEN PROVEN BAND PIECES AT VARIOUS LEVELS & STYLES FROM TIM RHEA

Marches

Army of the Nile – Kenneth J. Alford
Barnum & Bailey's Favorite – Karl King
British Eighth – Zo Elliott
Colossus of Columbia – Russell Alexander
Crosley – Henry Fillmore

Gallant Seventh – John Philip Sousa
Golden Bear – J.J. Richards
In Storm & Sunshine – John Heed
National Emblem – Eugene Bagley
Under the Double Eagle – Joseph Wagner

Young Band

Alligator Alley – Michael Daugherty
American Riversongs – Pierre La Plante
Cajun Folk Songs – Frank Ticheli
Concord – Clare Grundman
Festival Prelude – Alfred Reed
Longford Legend – Robert Sheldon

On a Hymn Song of Philip Bliss –
David Holsinger
Overture for Winds – Charles Carter
Three Ayres from Gloucester –
Hugh Stuart
Yorkshire Ballad – James Barnes

High School

Aurora Awakes – John Mackey
Blue Shades – Frank Ticheli
Chester – William Schuman
Chorale and Shaker Dance –
John Zdechlik
English Folk Song Suite –
Ralph Vaughn Williams
Festive Overture –
Dmitri Shostakovich/Hunsberger

First Suite in Eb – Gustav Holst
Four Scottish Dances –
Malcolm Arnold/Paynter
Variations on a Korean Folk Song –
John Barnes Chance
Variants on a Medieval Tune –
Norman Dello Joio

Advanced

Ecstatic Waters – Steven Bryant
J'ai ete au bal – Donald Grantham
La Fiesta Mexicana – Owen Reed
Lincolnshire Posy – Percy Grainger
Music for Prague – Karel Husa

Sinfonietta – Ingolf Dahl
Symphony in Bb – Paul Hindemith
Symphony No. 4 – David Maslanka
Symphony No. 6 – Vincent Persichetti
Theme & Variations – Arnold Schoenberg

STRING AND FULL ORCHESTRA WORKS FOR JUNIOR HIGH AND HIGH SCHOOL

(Compiled by Paul Sikes from region honor orchestra performances)

Junior High Full Orchestra Literature

Bacchanale from Samson & Delilah –
Saint-Saens/Isaac
Berceuse and Finale from “The Firebird –
Stravinsky/Isaac
Engines of Resistance – Clark
Farandole – Bizet/Isaac
Fiddle Dance – Fletcher
Finale from “Symphony #2 in C” –
Tchaikovsky/Dackow
Finale to Sym. No. 5 –
Beethoven/Woodhouse

Hopak – Mussorgsky/Isaac
Overture 1812 – Tchaikovsky/Lehmeier
Overture to Nabucco – Verdi/Dackow
Procession of the Sardar –
Ippolitov-Ivanov/Isaac
Radetzky March – Strauss/Isaac
Russian Chorale and Overture –
Tchaikovsky/Isaac
Russian Sailors Dance – Gliere/Isaac
Slavonic Legend – Del Borgo

Junior High String Orchestra Literature

Allegro, Concerto Grosso, Op. 6 No. 1 –
Handel/Dackow
Ashokan Farewell – Ungar/Custer
Brandenburg Concertos –
Bach and by multiple arrangers
Brook Green Suite – Holst/Curwen
Concerto alla Rustica – Vivaldi/Dackow
Rosin Eating Zombies – Meyer
Dia de los Muertos – Meyer
Dragonhunter – Meyer
Drifen – Atwell
Eine Kleine Nachtmusik, 1st Mvt –
Mozart/Isaac

Farandole, L'Arlesienne No. 2 –
Bizet/Isaac
Gaelic Castle – Newbold
Golliwogg's Cakewalk – Debussy/Isaac
Moldau, Themes from – Smetana/Frost
Molly on the Shore – Grainger/Dackow
Moorside Suite for String Orch – Holst
Peer Gynt Suite – Grieg/DelBorgo
Shepherd's Hey – Grainger/Dackow
Ukrainian Folk Songs – Dackow
Warrior Legacy – Newbold

High School String Orchestra Literature

Adagio and Fugue in C Minor, K-546 –
W.A. Mozart
Brandenburg Concerto No. 3 – J.S. Bach
Brook Green Suite – Gustav Holst
Capriol Suite – Peter Warlock
Divertimento for String Quartet, K136-
138 – W.A. Mozart/Karl Füssl
Hoedown from Rodeo – Aaron Copland
Holberg Suite, Suite in Olden Style,
Op. 40 – Edward Grieg
Introduction & Allegro – Edward Elgar
Molly on the Shore – Percy Grainger
October – Eric Whitacre

Rumanian Folk Dances – Bartok/Willner
Serenade for Strings, Op. 11 – Dag Wiren
Serenade for Strings, Op. 20 –
Edward Elgar
Serenade for Strings, Op. 22 –
Antonin Dvorak
Serenade for Strings, Op.48 –
Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
Signs of Life II – Russell Peck
Simple Symphony – Benjamin Britten
Sinfonias Nos. 1-12 – Felix Mendelssohn
St. Paul's Suite – Gustav Holst
Strut – Michael Daugherty

High School Full Orchestra Literature

L'Arlesienne Suite – Bizet

Academic Festival Overture – Brahms

American Salute – Gould

Bacchanale from “Samson & Delilah” –
Saint-Saens

Carmen Suite #1 – Bizet

Egmont Overture – Beethoven

Festival Overture – Shostakovich

Finlandia – Sibelius

Hoe Down – Copland

Hungarian March – Berlioz

March Militaire Francais – Sant-Saens

Marche Slav – Tchaikovsky

Nimrod – Elgar

Overture to Candide – Bernstein

Overture to Nabucco – Verdi

Peer Gynt Suite No. 1 – Grieg

Roman Carnival Overture – Berlioz

Russlan and Ludmilla Overture – Glinka

Slavonic Dance Op.46 – Dvorak

Symphony #9 – Dvorak

SCORE STUDY

The goal of a conductor is to communicate the expressive potential of a piece of music to the ensemble. To do this, the conductor must have a clear, musical image in his or her mind. The only way to do this is through score study.

FINDING TIME

- Plan time equal to or more than the players will spend in rehearsal
- Avoid distractions and interruptions
- Plan ahead
 - Schedule a regular time to study
 - Choose music the summer before your concert season begins

LEARNING THE SCORE

- Learn as much about the piece as possible
 - Composer's biography, style period, why the piece was composed, any extra-musical influences
 - Based on this information, you can then make style, tempo and volume decisions
- Begin studying the actual score by looking through and reading every word – translate any unfamiliar words.
- Number your measures and have your players do the same
- Read through the score following the melody to get an overall feel for the piece and make intuitive decisions about the character of the piece
 - To Listen or Not To Listen - There is some debate to whether a conductor should listen to a recording at this point. My feeling is to do whatever you need in order to create a mental image in your mind. If that means listening to recordings, then do it.
- Analyze the work to discover the overall form
- Analyze the phrases to aid in rehearsal planning and memorization

IDENTIFYING PROBLEMS BEFORE REHEARSAL

- Your ensemble will only sound as good as the individual players can play their parts
 - Go through each individual part so you know exactly what your players will encounter when they see the part
- Mark areas where they are likely to encounter problems
- Formulate solutions to those problems and have them read to pull out in rehearsal
 - Give your players an opportunity to make mistakes before you begin teaching. You may be surprised to learn your students can figure many things out on their own thus saving valuable rehearsal time.
- Write in bowings and alternate fingerings

GOAL SETTING

- Long term vs. short term
- Long term can be a semester, year or longer period of time
 - certain skills by certain age or grade
- Short term is generally a rehearsal, week or month
 - the ability to play a passage with no mistakes for a repeated number of times at a certain tempo
- Goals must be written down and shared with the students
- Progress of goals must be monitored in order to assess progress.
- These goals should determine your rehearsal plan and needed revisions

When determining goals, you must consider your community to include administration, parents, and students. It is important to include students in the decision making process.

Items to be considered:

- Skills/concepts – tonal production/quality, intonation, rhythm, technique, articulation, dynamic range, style, blend, balance
- Private lessons
- Sectionals
- Solos & Ensembles
- Repertoire (curriculum vs. pieces)
- Music History and Theory
- Contests and Competitions
- Development of Independent Musicianship

Friday E-mails

NON-MUSICAL CONSIDERATIONS WHICH CAN AFFECT REHEARSALS

Thinking about and planning the non-musical details surrounding a rehearsal are important. Something as simple as the air conditioning going off can derail a rehearsal quickly. Think through every aspect of the day to ensure your time in rehearsal is the most productive possible.

ROOM

- Set up the room in advance
- Ensure you have enough chairs and stands to accommodate the rehearsal
- Ensure the room is neat and tidy to convey a sense of orderliness
- Locate the music cabinet between the entrance and the rehearsal area
- Instrument room ideally should have one entrance and one exit to facilitate flow
- When rehearsing after normal school hours ensure:
 - Students have access to the room
 - The room is comfortable (air conditioning or heating)
 - The lights and power will remain on for the duration of the rehearsal

MUSIC

- Copied and put in folders in advance
- Write in alternate or unfamiliar fingers in the parts
- Write bowings in the parts
- Write style markings and additional or changed dynamics in the parts
- Save time by placing in students' chairs before rehearsal instead of passing out

CHECKING ROLL AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Take as little time as possible
- Take attendance using a seating chart or student helper or both
- Announcements and rehearsal order should be written in advance on the board or through a rotating PowerPoint

REHEARSAL ATMOSPHERE

Discipline – no need for fear – students must remain focused, but feel comfortable with the ensemble - positive reinforcement tends to yield great results

REHEARSAL ENVIRONMENT

- The director sets the tone for a successful rehearsal – leadership by example – be early and be prepared – just as you should expect from your students
- Consider temperature and order of the rehearsal room
- Procedure for entering the rehearsal should be clearly understood
- Order of music on the board – by composer name

- Consider playing recordings of great ensembles as players enter the rehearsal room
- Start rehearsals on time – if not everyone is there, begin anyway – they will get the message

PLAYER RESPONSIBILITY

- Play with a great tone, in tune, in time, and with great technique
- Bring musical ideas to the rehearsal
- Preparation of their individual part at the highest level – outside of your full ensemble rehearsal time
- Own a personal tuner and metronome
- Own a music stand and have a correct chair for home practice

WARM-UP

Each rehearsal must include a warm-up. As the name implies, the warm-up's main purpose is to warm-up the instruments and the muscles. It also serves as an opportunity for the students to change gears from whatever they were doing before rehearsal and get focused on the musical work at hand. Additionally, the warm-up provides an opportunity for the students to work on tone production, posture, playing position, intonation, blend, dynamics and style. Most importantly, the time in warm-up should always be purposeful and thoughtful and not spent mindlessly going through a routine.

BAND

- Long tones can be used to focus students' attention on tone quality, tuning between individuals and groups of instruments and dynamic control
- Scales and arpeggios can be used to increase technical fluency, flexibility, control, style, and articulation skills
 - Students should practice all major scales and their arpeggios and work to increase the speed and range in which they can play through them
 - Of great importance is the chromatic scale throughout the full range of the instrument
- Chorales can be used to work on ensemble sonority, tuning between sections, the tuning of chords and balance and blend. Chorales are also excellent tools for getting the group to watch the conductor and move together as one ensemble
- Don't forget to include the percussion
 - Long tones can be used for percussionists to focus on their rolls on mallet instruments
 - scales and arpeggios benefit percussionists no less than the wind players
 - Either as part of the full band rehearsal or in sectionals, percussionists should also have an opportunity to practice the rudiments on a snare drum on a regular basis

ORCHESTRA

- Warm-up must focus on tone production and technique
- Long tones used to work on bow control, bow placement and ensuring constant weight and speed are maintained throughout the entire length of the bow
- Scales and arpeggios are critical for learning and refining finger patterns and bowing styles.
- Add speed and range as the students become more capable
- Always challenge your students to go beyond their comfort zone

SIGHT-READING

As an educator, our goal is for our students to become independent musicians. In life after secondary school, it is very difficult for students to be independent if they cannot sight-read.

- Each rehearsal should include time spent on sight-reading
- New music can be used or etudes and exercises designed to increase sight-reading fluency

REHEARSING THE MUSIC

THE DAILY REHEARSAL

Music as craft (left brain)

- tone
- intonation
- rhythm
- technique
- blend
- balance

Music as art (in addition to craft)

- interpretation
- inspiration
- emotion
- style
- mood
- understanding

“There is nothing more unmusical than a wrong note.”

- Have a rehearsal plan – every day
- Treat your ensemble with maturity and respect and they will respond in the same manner
- Daily rehearsals should reflect an appropriate balance of music, sight-reading, and fundamentals

- Make certain your voice is loud enough to be heard - stop the ensemble and immediately make your comments – keep your comments simple - most students have an attention span of only a few seconds – try to talk as little as possible – try to play as much as possible
- Try to keep your comments as positive as possible – “You’re flat” vs. “Could you bring the pitch up a bit?”
- Conduct from the podium – teach off the podium - walk into the players if necessary
- If you are rehearsing musical passages that always sound great, you are working on the wrong material
- Encourage your students to sing by being able to sing yourself – have students sing chorales, scales, and intervals during warm-up – during full rehearsal, sing melodic and counter melodic lines while the remainder of the band plays
- Invite student input during your rehearsals
 - Who has the melody?
 - Who has the second most important part?
 - Who has the least important part?
 - How long is this phrase?
 - How would you shape this phrase?
- Your rehearsal time is precious and valuable - try to find alternate ways of making announcements
- For a change of pace, try rehearsing a piece from the back to the front
- When defining a starting place in a piece – either “count with me” or use the rehearsal markings
- Never blame the ensemble for your mistakes – “I am sorry I missed that meter change. Back to Letter D for me, please.”
- Teach your players that unprepared parts are disrespectful to the composer, not the conductor
- When players leave your rehearsal, they should be emotionally exhausted, but wanting more
- Do not overlook the importance of laughter during a rehearsal
- Keys to success = private lessons and sectional rehearsals

AFTER THE REHEARSAL

What you do after the rehearsal is critically important to the progress of your ensemble. This is the time for review and evaluation and to make your plan for the next rehearsal. You should ask yourself, “What went well, what did not go well, did we reach our goals, where do we need to focus more time, did my teaching techniques work or should I try something new?”

RECORD YOUR REHEARSAL

- Because of the multitude of things to think about during rehearsal, it is difficult, if not impossible, to hear everything that is being played
- Record your rehearsals on a regular basis
- Take time when you’re not in front of the ensemble to evaluate your recording
 - Thoughtfully and critically analyze your ensemble’s performance

- Develop strategies to address shortcomings

HAVE A MENTOR

- Develop a relations with one or more directors whom you trust and want to emulate
- Don't wait until your ensemble is polished before you ask for opinions, "If it was perfect, you wouldn't need me to listen to it."
- Have this mentor listen to your recordings or visit your rehearsals
- Ask them what they hear and how they would go about fixing the problems they perceive

DR. TIMOTHY RHEA is the Director of Bands & Music Activities at Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas. He serves as administrative head of the university band program (1000 students), serves as conductor of the University Wind Symphony, and is the director of the nationally famous “Fightin’ Texas Aggie Band.” Dr. Rhea holds degrees in music education and conducting from the University of Arkansas, Texas Tech University, and the University of Houston. During his tenure at Texas A&M University, Dr. Rhea has conducted the Texas A&M University Wind Symphony for conventions of the Texas Music Educators Association, the College Band Directors National Association, the Midwest International Band & Orchestra Clinic, the Western International Band Clinic, and the American Bandmasters Association. Additional concerts have included Carnegie Hall, the Meyerson Symphony Center, and five European tours with performances in Ireland, England, Italy, Austria, Germany, and the Czech Republic. The TAMU Wind Symphony has released several internationally distributed recordings. In addition to conducting, Dr. Rhea maintains a very successful career as an arranger and composer with an output of over 300 pieces, to include over fifty published works. Dr. Rhea maintains an internationally active schedule as conductor, clinician, and adjudicator. He has received the Citation of Excellence from the National Band Association, was the Outstanding Young Bandmaster of the Year for the State of Texas, and has received the President’s Meritorious Service Award to Texas A&M University. Dr. Rhea currently serves Vice President of The American Bandmasters Association, and serves on the Board of Directors of The John Philip Sousa Foundation. He additionally holds memberships in several related professional organizations.

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