

The "IT" Factor in School Orchestra Literature

December 17, 2015
The Midwest Clinic: An International Band and Orchestra Conference
Chicago, Illinois
McCormick Place / Room W187
12:00 to 1:00pm

Presented by:

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WHY IS REPERTOIRE SECELECTION IMPORTANT?

"Yes, the fact that music may evoke strong emotions is a mystery, which has fascinated scholars since ancient Greece."

-Malcolm Budd

"Students can learn to play musically from the very beginning if you teach them that way."

-Michael L. Allen

"Selecting music that is too hard will cause the teacher to spend too much time teaching the students how to play the right notes instead of how to play the notes right: that is with the correct style and expression."

-Merle J. Isaac

"Although skill and knowledge outcomes are the easiest to define, to observe and to assess, they are not the real essence of the musical experience."

-Patricia O'Toole

"Skills and knowledge are not the reason most students sing in a choir or play an instrument."

-Patricia O'Toole

"I think you will all agree with me when I say that selecting the right music for an orchestra is one of the most important responsibilities of the orchestra director. Selecting the right music - at the right time - involves the likes and dislikes of the teacher, the students, and the community."

-Merle J. Isaac

HOW PROPERLY SELECTED REPERTOIRE IMPACTS STUDENTS

EMOTIONAL CONNECTIONS

- “Confident, strong and proud”
- “Made me feel good about my abilities.”
- “Emotional...I could tell exactly how Grieg wanted me to feel in writing this piece and what emotions he wanted me to convey. It was sad, reflective, hopeful, nostalgic, resigned, energetic, lively, and beautiful. I loved it.”
- “Made me feel like Jackie Chan.”

MUSICAL CONNECTIONS

- “This is my favorite piece I have ever played. Everything about it is gorgeous, from the melodies to dynamics and style.”
- “It looks easy, but it’s the hardest piece I have ever played.”
- “The piece was very beautiful and romantic with so much sadness.”
- “It was beautiful and full of art.”

MUSIC THEORY SONG

THE MUSIC THEORY SONG

The image shows three staves of musical notation in 4/4 time, each with lyrics and chord symbols. The first staff has lyrics: "Oc - tave mov - ing to the me - di - ant Ma - jor 6th step - ping down to do". The second staff has lyrics: "Ma - jor sec - onds be - ing sung by a choir, Chro - ma - tic al - ter - a - tions of the scale, Di - a - ton - ic". The third staff has lyrics: "scale, de - scend - ing scale to min - or third Ma - jor 6th ii V - 7 of IV".

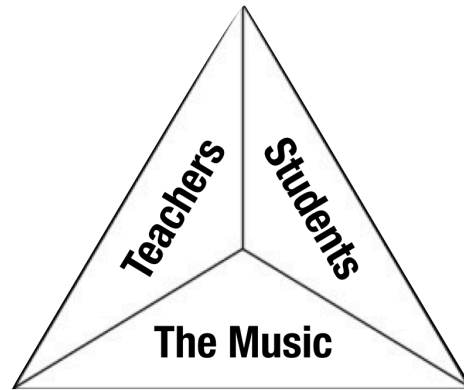
Chord symbols for the first staff: CMA7, DM7, EM7, FMA7, CMA7, GM7, C7, F, E7.

Chord symbols for the second staff: AM7, Fm6, F#m7, B7, EMAT7, FM7, Bb7, EbMAT7, DM7, G7.

Chord symbols for the third staff: CMA7, DM7, EM7, FMA7, CMA7, GM7, C7, F, E7.

*Original idea and lyrics by David Rakowski and friends. Additional lyrics by Dave Swenson.

THE TRIANGLE OF SUCCESSFUL MUSIC SELECTION



OTHER RESOURCES AND STRATEGIES

SCHOOL ORCHESTRA AND STRING TEACHERS' FACEBOOK GROUP

- Over 5,000 members who discuss a variety of topics.
- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/OrchestraTeachers/>
- To join the group, send a request from your Facebook account email to: schoolorchestrastringteachers@gmail.com

STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING YOUR STUDENTS TO PLAY MUSICALLY

- Learn large motor skills, then small motor skills.
- Think of phrasing as punctuation.
- Teaching what it is by what it isn't.
- Model for your students.
- Hearing and/or watching a professional ensemble.
- Breathing - both physically and mentally
- Get physically involved with movement.
- Play effortlessly - use less muscles.
- Sing and conduct the music.
- Play at the appropriate tempo.

RESOURCES

Barnes, G. V., Balmages, B., Gruselle, C. L., & Trowbridge, M. (2013). *Measures of success for string orchestra: A comprehensive musicianship string method book 1*. Fort Lauderdale: FJH Music Company.

Barnes, G. V., Balmages, B., Gruselle, C. L., & Trowbridge, M. (2015). *Measures of success for string orchestra: A comprehensive musicianship string method book 2*. Fort Lauderdale: FJH Music Company.

Budd, M. (1985). *Music and the emotions: The philosophical theories*. London: Routledge.

O'Toole, P. (2003). *Shaping sound musicians*. Chicago: GIA Publishing.

Keynote Presentation: <http://tinyurl.com/ItFactorMidwest>