

MUSIC SELECTION CLINIC

Mike Croom

I. TIPS FROM OUR MENTORS

Witherspoon –

Performance quality usually goes back to picking music

Janzen –

Too many notes to learn can leave too little time for tuning and balance

Langston –

What I want to play and what we can play are usually two different things

Work up some pieces about 70% and pick from that

Brandon –

For contest music selection, I want to have several options

Cooper –

The largest high school classification bands should play a grade V piece

Current music requirements may need revision

Shepherd –

Pick challenging music that can be learned in the rehearsal time you have

II. CONSIDERATIONS

-Ranges

-Strengths & Weaknesses

-Technique/Rhythm

-Length & Endurance

-Key Signatures

-Musical Value

-Harmony

-Band Sound

-Soloists

-Actual Rehearsal Time

III. CONCERT CONTEST MUSIC

1. Does the music require new playing skills?
2. Does everyone have a challenging part somewhere in the program?
3. Are lead players featured as soloists?
4. Are strong sections responsible for solo parts?
5. Does instrumentation meet music requirements?
6. Are varied musical styles represented in the program?
7. Is the march similar in difficulty to the concert pieces?
8. Will the music hold player interest throughout the rehearsals?
9. Does size of the band lend itself favorably to the music selections?
10. Do the students think the music is worthy of their time?

IV. SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Foundations For Superior Band Performance, Williams & King, pub. Kjos

Intermediate Band Method, Rusch, pub. Hal Leonard

Advanced Band Method, Rusch, pub. Hal Leonard

204 Progressive Sight Reading Tunes, Winslow, pub. Gore

V. MARCHING CONTEST MUSIC

1. Will the music 'carry' outside – Are there too many short notes?
2. Can the music be played well while moving?
3. Are the notes in an easy range for good impact?
4. Do the percussion parts need to be edited?
5. Does the music have contrasting dynamics?
6. Will brass endurance be a problem – Is there a 'breather' before the closer?
7. Are there spots for woodwind or percussion features?
8. Will the audience appreciate the music selections?
9. Can the players and guard understand the music and 'sell it' to an audience?
10. Does the music sequence make sense – Is there a common link between tunes?

VI. SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

A standard march to be played in the stands or on the field

A march size scale sheet

A warm up including lip slurs and long tone chordal tuning

VII. TIPS

1. Picking music for clinics and camps is different
(Consult former directors and past programs)
2. Concert music sequences could be:
March/Transcription/Original Band Piece
or
March/Slow Tune/Overture
or
March/Suite/Original Band Piece
or
March/Theme & Variations/Transcription
3. Always have a good back up tune
4. When looking at the music list, start with the composer index
5. Some 'old standards' are often overlooked that are well written and work
6. Some of the new music is very good, while other new tunes can be played with limited skills and are thinly scored
7. After looking at the score briefly, associate an individual part with the student who is going to play it
8. A small segment of the band can be used outside of the rehearsal period to read through a piece before passing it out to the full band
9. Careful part editing can improve playability of difficult parts
10. Justifiable soloist substitutions can be made to solve an instrumentation problem