



Band *LIT*erature

Programming for Young Ensembles · Grade 0.5 to Grade 3

West Texas A&M University Band Directors Workshop † **Tuesday, July 13, 2021**

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If our curriculum tells us what to teach, then the music we prepare for performances throughout the year serves as a vehicle through which we teach it.

The importance of selecting quality music for performance cannot be minimized because this music fulfills a multitude of purposes:

- To provide a medium through which we teach the fundamentals of individual musicianship..
- To provide a medium through which we continually teach and develop ensemble skills.
- To provide opportunities for artistic growth for our students.
- To satisfy the requirements of an upcoming performance, contest, festival, etc.
- To entertain and make musical connections with the intended audience.
- To continually grow the appreciation for making and listening to music in our band members.

A daily routine centered around individual and ensemble fundamentals is vital to the growth and development of the band and its players; however, aspiring musicians do not sign up for band to play Concert F's. Especially during the fall semester, strive to program in a way that allows the director to teach fundamentals through the performance music.



Tying aspects of this music to the daily drill, warm-up, etc., will help students to see the relevance of this initial part of class AND make stronger connections between aspects of the daily drill and the music.



For almost every "standard" daily drill exercise or concept (long tones, starts and releases, Remington or other interval exercises, articulation exercises, air flow studies, etc.), there are opportunities to work on the same concept in music being prepared for performance.



Programming With the End in Mind: A Whole Year Approach

Set goals for various points of the year. What do you hope to accomplish within the initial 6-8 weeks of the school year? What rhythms, time signatures, styles, etc., do you hope to have in place by the semester break? What grade level (or specific music) are you hoping to play for this year's contest program?



Build opportunities to teach goal-related concepts into your program through the selection of literature. Program in a way that introduces these concepts and skills in a logical, progressive manner, and incorporate them into your daily routine.

Using a middle school varsity band, here is an example of "programming with the end in mind:"

Fall Concert	Notes	Winter Concert	Notes	Contest Program	Notes
<i>Captain America March</i> , by Silvestri/Vinson	march style	<i>Jingle Bells</i> , arr. by Dawson	sudden changes, exposed sections, differing sections	<i>Valdres</i> , by Hanssen/Patterson	march style, lyrical, playing, solos
<i>The Falling Rain</i> , by Swearingen	lyrical playing, response to conductor	<i>A Solitary Wish</i> , by Balmages	lyrical playing, solos, exposed sections	<i>The Old Red Mill</i> , by Karrick	Lyrical, playing, solos, differing sections
<i>Images of Ireland</i> , by Balmages	multiple time signatures, good for introducing 6/8, solos, differing sections	<i>Music from "The Nightmare Before Christmas"</i> , by Elfman/Brown	multiple time signatures, transitions, solos, differing sections, requires endurance	<i>Pablo!</i> , by Meyer	multiple time signatures, compound time, transitions, solos, exposed sections, differing sections, sudden changes, requires endurance



Programming With the End in Mind: A Whole Year Approach

...and here's another using a middle school non-varsity group:

Fall Concert	Notes	Winter Concert	Notes	Contest Program	Notes
<i>The Bold Brigade</i> , by Brittin Chambers	march style, block ensemble sound	<i>Flourishing Noels</i> , by Weller	3/4 time, fanfare style (similar to march style)	<i>The Band in the Square</i> , by La Plante	march style, exposed sections
<i>Celtic Air and Dance</i> , arr. by Sweeney	lyrical playing, differing sections, exposed sections, response to conductor	<i>An Early English Christmas</i> , arr. by O'Reilly	3/4 time, lyrical playing, exposed sections	<i>Colliding Visions</i> , by Balmages	3/4 time, lyrical playing, exposed sections
<i>Dark Fortress</i> , by Grice	developing articulation, interesting low voice parts, active percussion	<i>The Night Before Christmas</i> , arr. by Swearingen	varying styles, transitions, exposed sections, differing sections	<i>Japanese Pictures</i> , by Mixon	varying styles, transitions, exposed sections, differing sections



"But, what if I am not familiar with my band and students at the beginning of the year?"

My recommendation is to start with one piece of music that, once you have worked with the band for a period of time and have a better idea of the students' capabilities, would seem to be achievable; either right in the "middle" of the band's apparent skill set or even on the easier side. You can then base decisions as to what to program in addition to this work on how quickly (or not) the students progress on this initial work.



I concerts with specific roles in mind for each:

Fall Concert - "How to Be in Band"

Winter Concert - The "Grow-up" Concert that prepares us for what comes next...

Spring Concert - Role varies depending on time left after contest AND the almighty STAAR...



Evaluating Music for Performance (and Purchase)



Is it RELEVANT?

Is the music appropriate for the current ability level of the ensemble?

Will the music contribute to the teaching and performance goals of the director?

Does the music provide opportunities for individual and ensemble improvement?



Is it WORTHWHILE?

Does the music have artistic merit? (Considering the grade level.)

Will it provide for connections with ensemble members and with the intended audience?

Will band members like it? Will the director?



Will it stand the TEST OF TIME?

Will it provide adequate material for the duration of time that the band is preparing for the performance?

Will the students and/or director become bored with it?

Could the director see programming it again in the future?

Additional Considerations:

- Strengths and weaknesses of the ensemble
- Demands in terms of technique, range, articulation, time signature, etc. Has it been taught? If it has not, can it be taught alongside or through the music? Is it better saved for later in the year?
- Available rehearsal time both in terms of the calendar AND how the piece will "mesh" with other selections on this particular program.
- How do the percussion demands "fit in" with other selections on the program? If one piece is already light on percussion, it's best not to program another. If the piece is light on percussion (in number of parts, amount of playing, and/or difficulty) are there ways to keep percussionists involved?
- Student reaction. Band members are more likely to practice music that they enjoy and are excited about playing; however, some pieces may take time for them to "warm up to."



4 Things to Watch Out For...

1. Picking music because the director has always wanted to play it
2. Music that sounds "cool," but only contains engaging material for a few sections in the band.
 - Upper voices may have interesting parts, but middle and lower voices play long tones
 - Some voices may have repetitive parts that only hang out around one or two notes, etc.
3. Music that contains little opportunity for rest/recovery.
 - VERY common, especially in music written at the lowest grade levels
 - Passages of sustained notes can be very tiring.
 - Repetitive, rhythmic parts can also be taxing (the "90's Ostinato")
4. Music arranged in a way that impedes the band's ability to sound great.
 - Horn parts are a common culprit (out of range, weird/difficult intervallic leaps, etc.)
 - Many older pieces tend to be very thickly scored and can be hard to balance.



Favorite Resources

JW Pepper Music (www.jwpepper.com)

- Great resource for recordings.
- Many pieces also contain PDF's of the score.
- Editor's Choice lists are a good place to start each year.

Stanton's Sheet Music (www.stantons.com)

- Also contains a wealth of recordings and score images.
- Each summer, they will list in one place every new piece offered by the major publishers.
- "Stanton's Five Star Features" similar to JW Pepper's Editor's Choice

Band World - WIBC Top 100 (<http://www.bandworld.org/magazine2/Top100.aspx>)

- Annual list of the top 100 new works for band selected by editorial board of Band World magazine, dating back to 2002.
- Searchable by title, composer, arranger, publisher, grade level, and year.
- I keep a list of pieces in our library that have been selected to the WIBC Top 100. Great resource when I just need ideas.

Band Directors Groups on Social Media

- Thousands of band directors and music educators from around the world.
- Directors constantly sharing what they are currently playing, asking questions about literature, etc.
- "Twice Taught List" on Facebook Band Directors group.
- Great way to find out about music from self-published composers and other works that may not be as prominent on the three resources listed above.

Texas Music Forms (www.texasmusicforms.com)

- Programming ideas for contest (especially helpful for me when it comes to non-varsity and sub non-varsity), as well as for which pieces I should be adding to my library.
- A really good resource for marches.



Sample Programming Lists from Three Very Different Years (The Importance of Adaptability)

2018-2019 <i>Last "Normal" Year Before COVID</i>	2019-2020 <i>The Unfinished Year</i>	2020-2021 <i>The "Recover and Survive" Year</i>
Fall Concert (How to Be in Band) <i>Captain America March</i> , arr. by Vinson <i>On The Kerry Shore</i> , by Wilds <i>Witch Hunt of 1692</i> , by Grice	Fall Concert (How to Be in Band) <i>Chasing Sunlight</i> , by Nishimura <i>March in the Shadows</i> , by Kiefer <i>3,2,1...</i> by Balmages	Fall Concert (How to Be in Band) <i>Images of Ireland</i> , by Balmages <i>Music from Les Miserables</i> , arr. by Sweeney
Winter Concert ("Grow Up") <i>West Highlands Sojourn</i> , by Sheldon <i>Silent Night in Gotham</i> , by Giroux <i>Jingle Bells</i> , arr. by Dawson <i>A Christmas Tale</i> , by Standridge	Winter Concert ("Grow Up") <i>Candlelight Carol</i> , by Rutter/Dawson <i>Scenes from "The Louvre"</i> , by Dello Joio/Longfield <i>A Solitary Wish</i> , by Balmages <i>Music from "The Nightmare Before Christmas,"</i> , by Elman/Brown	Winter Concert ("Grow Up") <i>Silent Night in Gotham</i> , by Giroux <i>A Christmas Tale</i> <i>Jing, Jing, Jingle</i> , by Morales
Contest Program <i>American Big Top</i> , arr. by Balmages <i>Blue and Green Music</i> , by Hazo <i>Symphonic Dance No. 3</i> , by Williams	Contest Program (unperformed) <i>Valdres</i> , by Hanssen/Patterson <i>The Old Red Mill</i> , by Karrick <i>Pablo!</i> , by Meyer	Contest Program <i>Midway March</i> , by Williams/Moss <i>Black is the Color...</i> , arr. by Sheldon <i>Accolade</i> , by Himes
Spring Concert (Role Varies...) <i>Liadov Fanfare</i> , by Liadov/Beck <i>Summertime</i> , by Gershwin/Longfield <i>Scenes from the American West</i> , by Wilds	😞 <i>Didn't happen</i>	Spring Concert (Role Varies...) <i>Kvetchers</i> , by Estes <i>Phoenix</i> , by Arcari <i>Scenes from the American West</i> , by Wilds





Band LITerature: Recommendations

* indicates that the work is on the Texas Prescribed Music List

Fall Concert (Grade 2-2.5: "How To Be In Band")

Accolade, by Himes*

Blue Mountain Saga, by Bulla*

Black is the Color..., arr. by Sheldon*

Blue Mountain Saga, by Bulla*

Byzantine Dances, by Brittin Chambers

Chasing Sunlight, by Nishimura

Contrails, by Laney-Rowe

Country Wildflowers, by Daehn

Creed, by Himes

Dance at the Lake of Miramoor, by Kopetz

Dominion, by Standridge

Down by the Salley Gardens, arr. by Sweeney*

Electricity (Race Around the Circuit), by Balmages

The Falling Rain, by Swearingen

The Fortune Teller's Daughter, by Gorham

Highland Legend, by Moss*

Hopak!, by Owens

Horkstow Grange, by Grainger/Sweeney

Images of Ireland, by Balmages

Into the Arctic, by Balmages

Japanese Pictures, by Mixon*

Last Ride of the Pony Express, by Shaffer

"Les Miserables," *Music from*, arr. Sweeney

On the Kerry Shore, by Wilds*

Shackelford Banks (Tale of Wild Mustangs), by Bocook

Shaker Variants, by Del Borgo

Synergies, by Sheldon

The Tell-Tale Heart, by Story

Thunderbird Overture, by Bulla

Travelin' Music, arr. La Plante*

"West Side Story," *Selections From*, by Bernstein/Sweeney

Whispers, by O'Reilly and Clark

Witch Hunt 1692, by Grice



Band LITerature: Recommendations

Winter Concert (Grade 2.5-3.5: The "Grow-up" Concert)

Adventum, by Barnes

Ancient Carol Variants, by Bernotas

African Bell Carol, arr. by Smith

All Through the Night, arr. by Giroux

...And To All a Good Night, arr. Smith

Angels We Have Heard on High, arr. by Morales

Candlelight Carol, by Rutter/Dawson

Carol of the Night, arr. by Saucedo

Celtic Carol, by Smith

Celtic Ritual, by Higgins

A Charles Dickens Christmas, arr. by Ryden

Christmas Sketches, by O'Loughlin

A Christmas Plainsong: Emmanuel, arr. by McGinty

A Christmas Tale (Beware the Krampus), by Standridge

Ciudad de Festivales, by Henry

Gadget, by Standridge

Gallowglass, by Standridge

Imani, by O'Loughlin

Jingle Bells, arr. Dawson

Liadov Fanfare, by Liadov/Beck

Lo, How A Rose E'er Blooming, arr. by Kelcher

"The Nightmare Before Christmas," Music from, by Elfman/Brown

O Come, O Come Emmanuel, arr. by Dawson

Old Brenton Carol, by Holst/Smith

Patapan, arr. by Wallace

Pony Express, by Bernotas

Quad City Stomp, by Sweeney

Scenes from "The Louvre," by Dello Joio/Longfield

Silent Night in Gotham, by Giroux

Simple Gifts: Three Shaker Songs, arr. by Ticheli*

A Solitary Wish, by Balmages

Variants on an American Hymn, by Sweeney

Variations on Scarborough Fair, by Custer*

Wassail, by Vaughn Williams/Smith

West Highlands Sojourn, by Sheldon*



Band LITerature: Recommendations

Marches (Gr. 2-3.5)

American Big Top, by Balmages
Darklands March, by Standridge
Emblem of Unity, by Richards
Foiled Again!, by Wilds
Grays Harbor March, by Hodges
Hillside March, by Standridge
La Banda Nascente, by Braccia/Fennell
Luna y Fuego, by Vargas
Marche Diabolique, by Balmages
March of the Buccaneers, by Flowers
March of the Belgian Parachutists, by Leemans/Wiley
Midway March, by Williams/Moss
Newcastle March, by Vinson
Orion, by Van der Roost
The Tahoka Galop, by Owens
True Blue, by King/Swearingen
Valdres, by Hanssen/Patterson
El Zorro Rojo, by Standridge

UIL Grade 1

Attack of the Colossus, by McBride
Bazaar, by Standridge
Big Sky Roundup, by Sheldon
Cascadia Celebration, by Hodges
Corps of Discovery, by Owens
Fantasy on an Irish Air, by Saucedo
Fortune Favors the Bold, by Putnam
Gathering in the Glen, by Sweeney
Gothic, by Arcari
Little Brazil Suite, by Balent
Lost Woods Fantasy, by Hall
Night Fury, by Brittin Chambers
Pinnacle, by Grice
Storm Mountain Jubilee, by Strommen
A Summer's Knight, by Terry
The Tears of Arizona, by Balmages



Band LITERature: Recommendations

UIL Grade 2 (Approachable)

Colliding Visions, by Balmages
Danza Espana, by Brittin Chambers
Japanese Pictures, by Mixon
Joy, by Ticheli
New Horizons, by Corrigan
On The Kerry Shore, by Wilds
Tanchozuru, by Standridge

UIL Grade 2 (Moderate)

Accolade, by Himes
Blue Mountain Saga, by Bulla
Blue Ridge Rhapsody, by Kinyon
Blue Ridge Saga, by Swearingen
Bosnian Folk Songs, by Allen
Broken Bow, by Strommen
Into the Arctic, by Balmages
Kenya Contrasts, by Himes
Our Kingsland Spring, by Hazo
Prairie Schooner, by Preuninger
Scenes from the American West, by Wilds
Sparks, by Balmages
Travelin' Music, by La Plante

UIL Grade 2 (Lyrical)

Black is the Color..., arr. by Sheldon
Down By The Salley Gardens, arr. Sweeney
Laniakea, by Wilds

UIL Grade 2 (Moving Toward Grade 3)

Blue Ridge Reel, by Balmages
Highland Legend, by Moss
Overture on a Minstrel Tune, by La Plante



Band LITERature: Recommendations

UIL Grade 3

American Riversongs, by La Plante
Butterfly's Ball, by Fraley
Fantasy on a Fiddle Tune, by La Plante
Summer Resounding!, by Balmages
A Walk in the Morning Sun, by La Plante
West Highlands Sojourn, by Sheldon

UIL Grade 3 (Lyrical)

Blue and Green Music, by Hazo
Fantasy on a Theme by Samuel Barber, by Saucedo
Lullaby to the Moon, by Balmages
Rhapsody on the Minstrel Boy, by Farnon
Shimmering Watercolors, by Balmages

UIL Grade 3 (Moving Toward Grade 4)

Dances de Fantaisie, by de Haan
Greek Folk Song Suite, by Cesarini
J.S. Jig, by Karrick
La Bonne Aventure, by La Plante
Latin Folk Song Trilogy, by Himes
Lightning Field, by Mackey
Pipe and Thistle, by Britten Chambers
Simple Gifts: Four Shaker Songs, by Ticheli
Viva!, by Wilds

UIL Grade 4 ("Approachable")

Arirang and Akatonbo, by Yamada
Canarios Fantasia, by Meyer
A Longford Legend, by Sheldon
English Country Settings, by La Plante
Glaciers, by Director
Suite Provencale, by Van der Roost
Symphonic Dance No. 3 (Fiesta), by Williams
Variations on a Korean Folk Song, by Barnes Chance



Band LITerature: Recommendations

Miscellaneous Concert Works (Grade 2 - 3.5)

Aggressivo, by Grice
Arabian Dance, by Barrett
The Blue Orchid, by Owens
The Cave You Fear, by Markowski
Carnival in São Paulo, by Barnes
Chips, and Salsa Too, by Kiefer
Chasing Mercury, by Weller
The Cowboys, by Williams/Bocook
El Tango, by Romeyn
The Great Locomotive Chase, by Smith
Kvetchers, by Estes
Lightning Field, by Mackey*
Lullaby to the Moon, by Balmages*
Mountain of the Sun, by Grice
Phoenix, by Arcari
Rhythm Stand, by Higdon
Suspended Animation, by Burns
Simple Gifts (Three Shaker Songs), arr. by Ticheli*
Summertime, by Gershwin/Longfield
Tripwire, by Harris
Unraveling, by Boysen
Variations on a Shaped Note Tune, by Vinson
West Side Story, Selections from, by Bernstein/Bocook
Yankee Fanfare, by Weller
Zydeco Cajun Crawdad Dance, by Barrett

Very Easy Concert Works (Grade 0.5ish) NV or Sub-NV Band/Beginning Band

Across the Serengeti, by Wilds
The Blue Iguana, by Longfield
El Vaquero!, by Owens
Dance Slav, by Wilds
Celtic Ritual and Dance, by Rogers
Cricket Dance, by Terry
Midnight Madness, by Balmages
Sailor's Holiday, by Williams
The Shadow Warriors, by Gorham
Voyage of the Dragon Armada, by Loest



Band LITerature: Recommendations

Easy Concert Works (Grade 1-1.5) NV or Sub NV Band, Easy Varsity Band

*Attack of the Colossus, by McBride**

Awake the Iron, by Watson

Camel Caravan, by Spinetti

Carnaval, by Sweeney

Chant and Fire Ritual, by Grant

*Colliding Visions, by Balmages**

Creature Feature, by Romeyn

Cubano Bueno, by Rogers

Dark Fortress, by Grice

Dark Frontier, by Pasternak

Dark Ride, by Standridge

Drive!, by Williams

*Egyptique, by Owens**

*Gothic, by Arcari**

In Search of Yeti, by Vogel

Ironheart, by Standridge

Journey on the Yukon Express, by Sterk

*Night Fury, by Brittin Chambers**

Peace, by Ticheli

Samba Time!, by Meredith

Secret Mission, by Taurins

Thrill Ride, by Balmages

Starry Night, by Loest

*A Summer's Knight, by Terry**

*The Tears of Arizona, by Balmages**

Terracotta, by Owens

To Reach the Summit, by Oare

Top Secret!, by Neeck



Band LITerature: Recommendations

Marches (Young Band, Gr. 0.5-1.5)

Activity March, by Bennett/Clark

All for One, One for All, by Brittin Chambers

American Spirit, by Higgins

The Band on the Square (on the Fourth of July), by La Plante*

The Big Circus, by Foster

The Bold Brigade, by Brittin Chambers

Crown Point March, by Nowlin

Crystal Creek, by Putnam

The Flying Tigers, by Shaffer

Highlander Regiment, by Ployhar

Infinity, by Curnow

Japanese War March, by Rath

Legacy March, by Hodges

Pride of America March, by Owens

Pride of the Regiment, by Seward

Streets of Madrid, by Moss

Miscellaneous Holiday Selections (Young Band)

Bell Carol Remix, by Williams

A Christmas Couplet, arr. by Sheldon

An Early English Christmas, arr. O'Reilly

Fanfare Noel, by Shaffer

A Festive Fanfare, by Balmages

Flourishing Noels, by Weller

Jingle Bells and Jungle Drums, arr. by Williams

The Polar Express, by Silvestri/Vinson

Santa Goes Wild West, by Grice

Santa's Midnight Sleigh Ride, by Grice

Three Miniature Nutcrackers, arr. by Story

