

# Planning for Rehearsals

Where are you going?

Where are you coming from?

# CONCERT PLANNING

- ❖ Ideal to plan the concert repertoire first.
- ❖ However, not always possible.
- ❖ Don't be afraid to change repertoire if too difficult but don't give up too soon.
- ❖ Remember that the concert is an outgrowth of the educational experience. Unless a pops concert, use your core repertoire, significant literature, as much as possible.

# CONCERT PLANNING

- ❖ Mix fast and slow music.
- ❖ Mix challenging and easier music, maybe one challenging piece
- ❖ Start and end strong
- ❖ Plan where to feature soloists
- ❖ Plan how to save brass chops
- ❖ Think of logistics, stage movement

# Where are you going?

- ❖ Number of rehearsals to concert.
- ❖ Amount of time in rehearsals
- ❖ Conflicts in school calendar (sports, etc.)
- ❖ Students missing for certain reasons
- ❖ Which pieces and sections will take the most time in rehearsal.
- ❖ Individual or sectional help time needed? Available?

# Plan backwards for rehearsals

- ❖ Concert date
  - ❖ Dress rehearsal(s)
    - ❖ Rehearsals with soloists
      - ❖ Rehearsals with guest conductors
        - ❖ By week
          - ❖ By day

# Music

- ❖ Don't skimp on music parts, if possible
- ❖ Get full scores and use whenever available
- ❖ Mark your scores carefully
  - ❖ Phrases, Cues, Important harmonies and rhythm

# The Rehearsal Experience

- ❖ If at all possible...
- ❖ Have the room setup correctly
- ❖ Have announcements on stand or on overhead
- ❖ Have new music on stands
- ❖ Have a routine established for them coming in and warming up.
- ❖ Be ready yourself so you can greet and answer questions.

# Daily Rehearsal

- ❖ Plan somewhat like a concert.
- ❖ Mix fast and slow music
- ❖ Mix working with individual sections and tutti
- ❖ Give everyone something to do during the rehearsal
- ❖ End with something that goes well, even if only part of a piece.



# Daily Routine

- ❖ Can include tuning, chorales, sight-reading, scales, and scale exercises.
- ❖ Important to have everyone do this well, thinking!
- ❖ Must be the same every day for developing muscle memory but must be varied enough to not become stale
- ❖ When possible, integrate parts of the repertoire into the daily routine...bowing problems on scales, march trios slowed down as chorales to build intonation skills, etc.

# Rehearsal Order

- ❖ Build on the last rehearsal.
- ❖ Standard psychologically sound order is:
  - ❖ Daily routine (warmup)
  - ❖ Short review piece or chorale that will sound good
  - ❖ White Heat - new music or work hard on some difficult passage
  - ❖ Wrapup - something the students do well and like to play

# Recording Rehearsals

- ❖ One of the most important things you can do to help your rehearsals and performances.
  - ❖ Audio often
  - ❖ Video of your conducting sometime in the middle
- ❖ Plan your next rehearsals based on what you heard on the recording.

# Basic Rehearsal Techniques

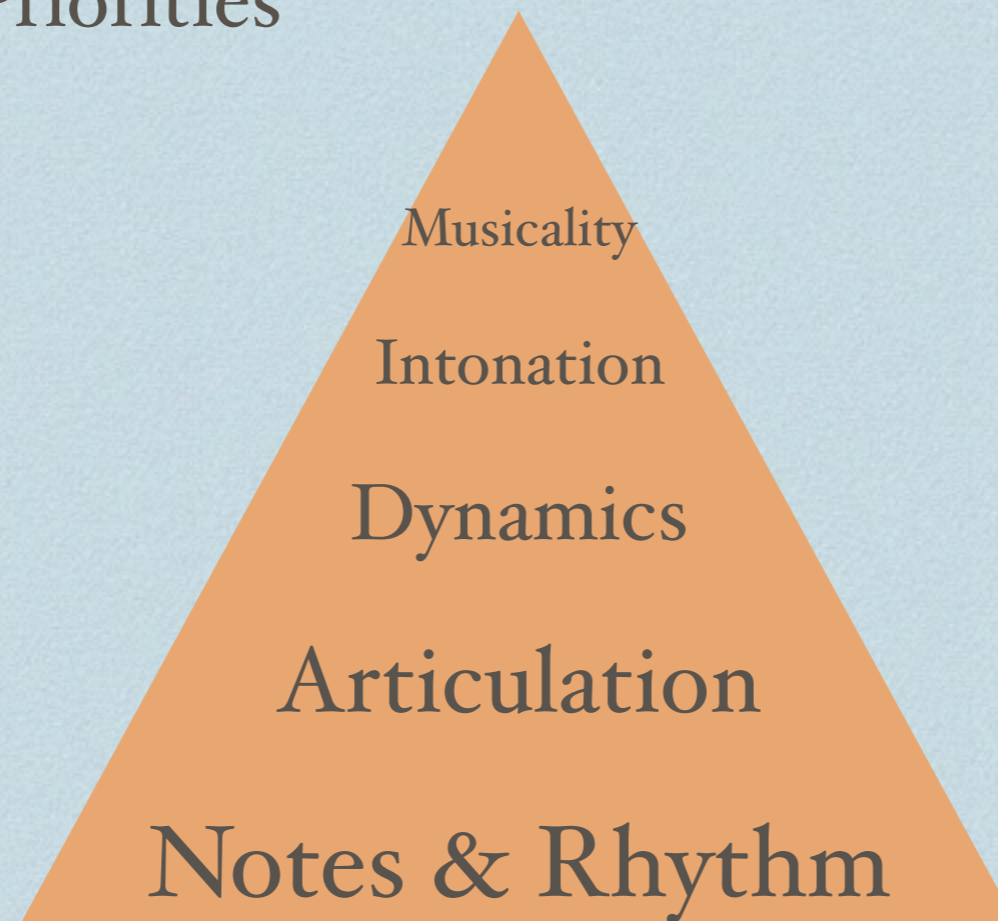
1. Macro-Micro-Macro: Zoom-in
  1. Play section of the piece tutti
  2. Become more and more specific isolating a problem
  3. When found fix
  4. Play section of the piece tutti again
2. Macro-Micro-Macro: Process of elimination
  1. Hear section of the piece tutti
  2. Hear just bass line, then melody, then upper woodwinds, etc.
  3. When mistake is found, fix
  4. Play section of the piece tutti again

# Communicating with the Ensemble

1. WHO are you addressing, WHERE in the music, WHAT you would like them to do. (examples page 188)
2. “For better or worse, critical feedback is the most common way to communicate with the ensemble.
  1. What are some ways to do this?
  2. What are some things to avoid?
3. Use of “we” or “the composer” or “the music” versus “I”
4. What are some ways to engage the entire ensemble during a rehearsal and yet fix individual problems?
5. Keeping percussion and basses involved. (examples p. 191)

# Lesson Planning for the Rehearsal

1. Announcements at beginning or end?
2. What makes a good warmup (routine)? (page 192)
3. Pyramid of Priorities



# Practice or Rehearse?

- What is the difference?
  - Skill acquisition?
  - Understanding the music?
  - Enjoying the music?
- Individual versus corporate
- Amount of practice with repetition can vary by experience level of the ensemble as well as difficulty of the piece, and amount of rehearsal

# Macro-Micro-Macro

- Play a section-Fix the problems-Play it again
- Diagnosis-Prescription-Checkup
- Planning and conducting a rehearsal is essentially *problem-solving*



# Diagnosis

- Most important is to know what you want to hear (score study)
- Anticipate common problems and, before the rehearsal, plan your way of fixing them
- HEAR when you conduct...if you can't, stop conducting--it is probably less important than really hearing
- RECORD rehearsals to allow you to listen for problems without worrying about conducting

# Divide and Conquer

- When you hear a problem, ask a small section or even individual to play it
- Spend as little time as needed to fix this one problem, then, have everyone play that section again
- If problem not fixed, try different prescription
- Modeling (singing, playing, gestures) and analogies often work best