

***“EDITING” for Concert Band, Part 3***  
*by John Kirsch, Rudder Middle School*

*This is a continuation of editing concepts from the previous TBA Journal. These techniques may help improve the overall sound of your band.*

15. Cues: Make sure the cue notes are in a logical instrument. In other words, in an instrument that sounds similar and can give a close imitation stylistically. In “Creed” by Himes, there is a light staccato part written at measure 57 in the Low Woodwinds and cues in the French Horn. These cues would be more effective in the Clarinets. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Clarinet part is in the Alto.



16. Solo: If the solo tests the extremes of the instrument and if you have the slightest doubt in your player, put the solo in another instrument. For example, in Kinyon’s “Romantic Essay”, the Alto is playing high “D’s”. This solo would sound great on a Clarinet.

17. Is your harmony in the way of your melody? Look at “Kilkenny Brigade” below. If you eliminate the harmony notes that are in the way of the melody notes, you’ll get a much cleaner sound. In other words, we’re going to create a two note chord instead of a three note chord in the harmony part. (Once in awhile, you might have to use one of the melody notes in the harmony.)



Also in this example, since we have created a two-note harmony, and since the harmony is the same in the French Horns and the Trombones, I’d put the French Horns on the upper notes and the Trombones on the lower notes, making this a lot easier to teach.

Next, notice the melody line at the double bar. There are three different instruments playing it. The Clarinet looks like the easiest one to keep in tune. So, I would let it be the main color, while adding only a good Alto that can blend. The Baritone scares me because it sits a long way away from the Clarinets, creating an increased chance of tuning and precision problems. Again, using only one might be a good idea especially with the “high F” in the part. A good French Horn could be substituted on this part. What you do is dependant on your instrumentation.

18. Sometimes composers will take a line and divide it between the different parts in a section. In “Festival Variations” by Claude Smith, there is a 16<sup>th</sup> note battle taking place between the Trombone parts. Where this normally would be a great teaching tool, for contest, consolidation of the parts would be a safer road to take. In another example, at measure 30 of “Ballet Music for Faust” arranged by Mark Williams, the triplet line is divided between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Clarinets. I would consolidate the triplet line and give it to all of the Clarinets. The 1<sup>st</sup> Clarinet part is written in the 1<sup>st</sup> Alto. This would also keep the triple part in one section and the dupe part in the others.

19. In “Greenwillow Portrait” by Mark Williams, musically I had a problem going from measure 15 to 19. After noticing that the Clarinets stopped in 14 and that their part was the same as the Trombones, I had the Clarinets continue all the way to 19. My transition problem into 19 was fixed.

20. On “Idyllwild Fantasy” by O’Reilly, at measure 15, I was having trouble getting the 8<sup>th</sup> notes in the Trombone-Baritone part (Bb Bb Ab Ab Bb) to gel. I changed the notes to the 5<sup>th</sup> of each chord (F F Eb Eb F) and the sound locked in. They just have a better sound in the middle of their range than at the bottom.

21. At the end of a piece, when the Trumpets are tired, you might want to let the 1<sup>st</sup> Clarinet play the high 1<sup>st</sup> Trumpet note and voice the Trumpets on lower chord tones.

22. How do you set up your band? I like to have mine in like sounding cells. For example: Tubas, Baritones, Trombones, French Horns together, with the Low Woodwinds close to their respective brass group. Next, I put the Altos between the French Horns and the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Clarinets (Clarinets on the left and French Horns on the right). That way they can easily blend with either group. Next the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Trumpets are behind the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Clarinets. The 1<sup>st</sup> Trumpets are in the middle of the Band in the Back (same row as 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>s). And finally the 1<sup>st</sup> Clarinets, good Oboes, and 1<sup>st</sup> Flutes in the first row.

23. Balancing Chords: The root needs to be the strongest, the 5<sup>th</sup> is next while the 3<sup>rd</sup> has the weakest presence. You can help this by controlling the number of people or instruments on each pitch. I like to have the Baritone, Tuba and sometimes lower Trombones on the root to help establish a strong bottom. (Low Woodwinds in like manner.)

The image shows a musical score for a concert band, divided into two sections: "Original Voicing" and "Revoiced". The instruments listed are Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bass Clarinet, Alto, Tenor, Bari Sax, Horn, Trumpets, and Trombones. The score is in 4/4 time and B-flat major. The "Revoiced" section includes annotations such as "control the number on the high 'F'" and "one up".

If you're getting too much of a high sound, maybe the scoring is out of wack for your Band. Rescore some of the parts downwards to darken your sound especially instruments on the high extremes of their ranges.

24. Sometimes our chords involve extensions (7ths, 9ths, 11ths, or 13ths). Generally an extension needs a third below it. For example, if the top note is a 9<sup>th</sup> of the chord, you'll need a 7<sup>th</sup> for better support and balance. You might have to experiment with the distribution of the other chord tones to get the color you want.

The image shows a musical score for five chords: Eb 9, Fm11, Bb maj 7, Eb maj 9, and F69. The notes are written on a grand staff with treble and bass clefs. The chords are: Eb 9 (Eb, Gb, Ab, Bb, Cb, D), Fm11 (F, Ab, Bb, Cb, D, Eb, F), Bb maj 7 (Bb, C, D, Eb, F, G), Eb maj 9 (Eb, G, Ab, Bb, C, D, Eb, F), and F69 (F, Ab, Bb, C, D, Eb, F, G, Ab).

*There are exceptions*

25. Sometimes I'll have a dominant 7 chord (major chord with a b7), and not like the way it musically sounds. So, I'll get rid of the 7<sup>th</sup> and get that pretty sound I'm looking for. I think this really helps the sound of the small group. Also you don't always have to have the fifth of the chord. Having the root and the 3<sup>rd</sup> will work and sometimes gives a softer touch.

Well, this is all for now. I hope this has opened up some doors for you. Basically, score the instruments where they have a good sound, try to avoid bad tuning notes, and alter the scoring to enhance the sound of your band.

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