

Designing
and Planning
a Marching Show
for
Small School Bands

by

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Marching Band Workshop

I Selecting the Music-Considerations

- A. Limited Instrumentation
- B. Young players--limited range and technique
- C. Re-writing parts (if it sounds better--do it!)
- D. Custom arrangements--planning for your strengths and weaknesses
- E. Small school music suggestions
 - 1. Flute and Clarinets doubled with trumpets
 - 2. Alto saxes doubled with French horns
 - 3. Trumpets--rarely more than 2 parts (unison whenever possible)
 - 4. Trombones--usually in unison
 - 5. Baritones (Tenors saxes)--sometimes in unison with trombones
 - 6. Tubas (low w.w.'s)--sometimes in unison with low brass
 - 7. Percussion--snare, bass drums (how many--tonal?), quads, cymbals, (Pit?)

II Writing the Drill-Considerations

- A. Identify impact points (highs, lows, transitions)
- B. Sketch ideas in a notebook--develop a show outline
- C. Instrument placement--Keeping the right people in the right place at the right time!
- D. Percussion placement
 - 1. Care when down front
 - a. Problems with balance
 - b. Problems with phasing
 - 2. Care of too much "spread"
- E. Spacing
 - 1. 2-pace interval
 - a. Advantage: Good clarity of forms
 - b. Disadvantage: High exposure to spacing and form errors
 - 2. 3-pace interval
 - a. Advantage: Good clarity of form and less exposure to error
 - b. Disadvantage: Difficult to maintain during follow-the-leader, ~ etc.
 - 3. 4-pace interval
 - a. Advantage: Good for "block" forms, easy to teach, low exposure to error
 - b. Disadvantage: Poor clarity in linear or curvilinear forms
- F. Clarity of lines
 - 1. Front sideline to front hash--8 paces between lines
 - 2. Hash to hash--12 paces between lines
 - 3. Back hash to back sideline--16 paces between lines
- G. Level of difficulty--some problem areas
 - 1. Backward marching (size of step considerations)
 - 2. Horn traverse or slide
 - 3. Size of step (size and age of students)
 - 4. "Outer space" and cheating!!!
 - 5. Use of field (special problems for small bands)
 - 6. Use of color guard (integrating into the drill. blocking for visual impact, size considerations)
 - 7. Small schools--planning for football players
 - 8. Six-man football fields

TBA Convention/Clinic 2003

III Use of Student Leaders

- A. Lead by example (your "rights")
 - **Be at the right place
 - at the right time
 - with the right equipment
 - and the right attitude!
- B. Positive peer pressure
- C. Drum majors (extra eyes and ears during rehearsal)
- D. Drill leaders/Section leaders
- E. Be careful--"A little power is a dangerous thing!"
- F. Band is **NOT** a Democracy--it is a Dictatorship!

IV Time - The Most Precious Commodity

- A. Summer band--attendance is the key
- B. Sample small school summer rehearsal schedule
 - 1. Week 1:

Monday-Wednesday	10:00 -12:00	Flags
	12:00 -1:00	Upper Brass & W.W.'s
	1:00 - 2:00	Lower Brass & W.W.'s
	2:00 - 3:00	Percussion
Thursday-Friday	12:00 -1:30	Full Band
	1:30 - 3:00	Marching Fundamentals
 - 2. Week 2:

Monday- Thursday	12:00 - 1:00	Inside Rehearsal
	1:00 - 3:00	Start Learning 1st Drill
Friday	12:00 - 1:00	Play & March 1st Drill
	1:00 - 3:00	Deadline for memorization of Opener
- C. Night rehearsals
- D. Color guard rehearsals
- E. Section rehearsals
- F. Set a memorization schedule
- G. Work the music outside
- H. Make your practice field efficient

V Controversial Stuff!!

- A. Current trends in marching Band
 - 1. Influence of B.O.A.
 - 2. Selection of Music (classical, jazz, pop, etc.)
 - 3. Level of difficulty and concept of "Intent" (or, we "intended" to have better spacing, but the drill was so hard!!!)
 - 4. State Marching Contest--Pro's and con's!
 - 5. Developing a philosophy of the role of marching band in your band program