

**The Good, the Bad and the Ugly! :**  
**What the Judges are Looking**  
**For and Hearing**

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## **Tone Quality**

**Tone needs to be pure, clean and resonant in all ranges, all dynamics, and in fast, technical passages both articulated and slurred.**

### **Problem**

### **Suggestion**

Tone in high ranges tend to be louder, brighter, forced, out of focus & harsh

Do Remington exercises. Relax upper body, soft shoulders, throat and neck. Use and think a taller vowel in mouth—more open (Ahh vs. Eee). Remind students to make best sound.

Tone in low register tends to be weak, softer, less energized, not centered and grainy

Do Remington exercises. Hold face still, fast steady air with firm corners. Think of blowing air through instruments more & away from body. Think resonance, not just louder.

Loud dynamic tone is spread, forced, out of tune and not characteristic.

Match energy volume of person on either side and fit sound into each other. Don't ever go past point of resonance or characteristic sound. Think  $\longrightarrow$ , not  $<$  on crescendos.

Soft dynamic tone is weak, less energized and again not characteristic.

Faster air but with less volume. Match energy with persons on either side. Must practice as part of warm-up.

Tone of fast, tongued, short passages tend to be either too tutty (too much tongue & not enough air) or too mushy (not enough tongue to support air)

Use an articulation study as part of daily drill. Don't try to play short, just articulate firmly and use lots of air. Must put tongue in the same spot with same air. The tempo will take care of the style. If mushy, just use a firmer articulation with fast air. Practice slowly with various articulations and use metronome.

Tone on slurred passages tend to rush, weaker tonally

Softer fingers—use more air, not less. Practice all tonguing slowly, with metronome. Try to make small notes sound big or fat.

## Tone Improvement Warm-up

1. Must be developed by daily drill -- Remington!!
2. No short cuts
3. Remington : 4/4 whole notes, 4/4 whole rest, quarter note = 88 with metronome
4. Down & up
5. F to decide range-- maturity of demand of music
6. Posture
7. Body physically soft
8. Breathe in rhythm
9. Don't hold air
10. "Dah" start
  - a. no bump
  - b. no decay
  - c. square sound
  - d. flat tongue
  - e. no color change
11. Hold face & body still
12. Make beginning and end of note sound like the middle of the note
13. Match energy--fit sounds into each other
14. Remind tone extreme ranges already covered

### **Lead Exercise**

Bb scale in half notes -- up and down (1 octave)  
move and sound alike up & down the scale

## **Pitch**

### **Needs to be matched and in tune within sections and between sections**

A lot of pitch problems occur between 1st flutes, 1st clarinet & 1st trumpets. Teach students pitch tendencies of their instrument!

- alternate fingerings
- instruments should be tuned properly (in tune with themselves)
- sing the passage

### **Ensemble tuning**

"F around the room" by individuals and sections  
Match start, energy, pitch & release. Make seamless.  
Individual—also great for tone improvement

Play unison line by sections. Remember to fit sound into each other 1/3, 1/3, 1/3! This is amazing the way it helps pitch.

Add other sections—Flutes fit sound into clarinets, and flutes & clarinets into trumpets.  
Remember match energy—loudness first & pitch second. Then reteach.

Tune out of tune note in line. Example: C concert—tune individuals if necessary.  
Don't pull or push on individuals' out of tune notes. Mark it and have all play. Then go back and play phrase from beginning & play to & hold trouble note. Match energy first, pitch second.

## Style

**We want to hear consistent style from person to person and section to section--style that represents what is written and what the composer intended.**

### Problem

### Suggestion

Over-stylized, especially on marches

Play on your own instruments and see if that's how you would play it. Listen to good recording. Get off podium and be a clinician.

Styles not same person to person & section to section on like parts.

Try telling students to match energy, style, and articulation by playing on "F" concert only. Practice with metronome and no metronome, then play on the notes as written & play like they did on the "F".

Legato playing not smooth

Play all slurred, then as written. Play part on "F" concert. Be sure not to bump start & try not to let ends of notes decay. Then play part as written. Think of leading note to note. 4 to 1 and 2 to 3 in 4/4, 3 to 1 in 3/4, and 2 to 1 in 2/4. Think of no bar lines and think the whole phrase. Use a chorale as part of warm up.

Ends of phrases either accented, rushed, weaker or clipped short

Remind students to take full breath at start of phrase. Mark breaths in music. Stagger breathing, practice with metronome & no metronome.

Starts of phrases not together

Prepare to play earlier. Watch director. Breathe in rhythm.

Lightbulb starts or ballooning

Start air as fast as you are going to play at front of note. Daily drill--Remington!!

## **Rhythm**

### **Rhythms must be accurate!**

Director must be able to hear or recognize the problem, then decide how to fix it and then fix it. Reteaching is a must.

Duple vs. triple—easy to dilute the two where it's not either one!

Most incorrect rhythms:

dotted quarter - eighth  
dotted eighth - sixteenth  
triplet  
quarter - eighth in 6/8

Give rhythm sheet to students or put on board. Count and clap aloud. Foot tap, amplified metronome.

Rhythms tend to morph over time.

The ideal: The right note in the right place, in the right style, at the right volume, in tune with a beautiful sound!

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## **Balance**

### **The melody line must be heard at all times**

Melodies tend to be covered, especially low brass harmony vs. woodwind melody. Give a number to the order of importance:

#1--melody  
#2--counter melody  
#3--harmony

Think black notes melody or moving important--white notes harmony less important.

Careful with setup. Tubas on outside tend to be too loud.

Cut individuals as a last resort!!