The Frenzied Instrumental Conductor’s Guide to Score Preparation

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What Every Conductor Should Know About a Piece
Prior to the First Rehearsal
(Taken from the Score & Rehearsal Preparation Worksheet)

1) Background on the Composer
   a. Dates & Locations of Birth and Death
   b. Schools Attended
   c. Former Teachers
   d. Major Instrument(s)
   e. Important Posts Held
   f. Awards, Achievements & Honors
   g. General Compositional Style
   h. List of Significant Works

2) Relevant Info Learned from Printed Text in the Score

3) Duration of the Piece

4) Date of Composition

5) Tempi

6) Level of Difficulty

7) Unusual Instrumentation

8) Glossary of Italian, German or French Terms

9) Numbered Measures in the Score

10) Recordings Studied

11) Relevant Literature on the Work Studied

12) Overall Form of the Composition

13) Keys in Order of Appearance

14) Flowchart of the Entire Piece

15) Marked and Prepared the Score

16) Sang Through, Studied and Marked Each Individual Part in the Score for Phrasing, and Breath Marks

17) Seating Recommendation for the Piece

18) Percussion Parts Determined and Assigned

19) Solo/Soli/Section Parts Assigned

20) Errors Corrected in Score and Parts

21) Anticipated Problem Spots & Rehearsal Strategies

22) Memorized Key Rehearsal Spots

23) Practiced Conducting in Front of a Mirror
TWENTY Highly Recommended Score and Rehearsal Preparation Resources For Wind Band Conductors


Fennell, Frederick. *A Conductor’s Interpretive Analysis of Masterworks for Band*. Galesville, MD: Meredith Music Publications, 2008. (1, 3, 4, 5, 11, 12, 13, 20, 21)

___ ___. *Basic Band Repertory*. Evanston, IL: The Instrumentalist Co., 1980. (1, 3, 5, 7, 11, 12, 21)


___ ___. *Guide to Band Masterworks, Vols. 1*. Galesville, MD: Meredith Music Publications, 1992 - 95. (1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 20, 21)


Neidig, Kenneth L. *Conductor’s Anthology; Vols. I & II*. Northfield, IL: The Instrumentalist Company. 1993. (1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 20, 210

___ ___ ___. *Performance Study Guides of Essential Works for Band.* Galesville, MD: Meredith Music Publications, 2009. (1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 21)


___ ___ ___. *Program Notes for Band*. Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, Inc., 2002. (1, 3, 4, 6, 11)


(* numerals in parentheses correspond with those items on *Score & Preparation Worksheet*)

**Highly Recommended Resources on Leadership:**

**Additional Resource:**

**Recording at Beginning of Today’s Clinic Session:**

*Flourish for Wind Band* by Ralph Vaughan Williams (final A section)
Performed by the *Houghton College Symphonic Winds*
Brian Casey, Music Director, Judy Congdon, Organ
Gary Stith, Guest Conductor
Gary Stith is Conductor Emeritus and recently retired Coordinator of Music Education at the Greatbatch School of Music, Houghton College in Houghton, NY. From 2002 – 2010, he also served as Conductor and Music Director of the Houghton College Symphonic Winds. He holds degrees from The Ohio State University and the Eastman School of Music, as well as the Certificate of Advanced Study in Educational Administration from the State University College of New York at Buffalo. His conducting teachers have included Donald McGinnis, Frank L. Battisti, Charles Peltz, Arnald Gabriel and Frederick Fennell, and he studied timpani and percussion with Cloyd Duff, John Beck, John Rowland, James L. Moore, William Youhass, and George Ward.

Stith taught instrumental music in the Holland and Williamsville (NY) Central Schools for a total of thirty years, also serving as Instructional Specialist for the Fine and Performing Arts in the Williamsville schools from 1993 – 2002. During his tenure in Williamsville, he founded the Williamsville Concert (Community) Band and established the national Williamsville Commissioning Consortium for the commissioning of new works for wind ensemble. Past President of both the New York State Band Directors Association and the New York State Council of Administrators of Music Education, he was the northeast regional recipient of the 1976 ASBDA-Stanbury Award, the Outstanding Educator Award at the 1993 World of Music Festival in Chicago, the 2003 Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra Award for Excellence in Music Education, and the 2010-11 Houghton College Excellence in Teaching Award.

He has authored numerous articles and penned chapters for the Conductors Anthology, The Drum and Percussion Cookbook, and served as Consulting Editor for a compilation entitled Classic Beginning Solos for the Complete Percussionist. His most recent text is entitled Score & Rehearsal Preparation: A Realistic Approach for Instrumental Conductors published by Meredith Music Publications in 2011.