

Tips for LGPE Preparation

Music Terms and helpful sayings for festival/concert prep:

March Style – Separated, emphasis on the strong beats.

Chorale Style – song-like, legato, full value, smooth and connected.

Decay Accents – (>) compressed and separated; 75% value, 25% space.

Marcato accents – (^) should be compressed and separated, 50% value, 50% space; the heaviest emphasis.

“More pressure; less volume - increased air pressure (breath support) improves intonation, improves tone quality, and aids extended range.

Day to-day” - Dotted eighth/sixteenth note pattern ().

“Syncopation means separation” – Always put space between syncopated figures.

Pulse – You must be able to find the pulse (foot pat beat and sub-division) in order to keep a steady tempo.

“Long note – strong note” – The longer the note the more emphasis it receives.

Brass players buzzing the mouthpiece – Encourages air to the embouchure and trains the ear for accurate pitch; eliminates the “Hit, Miss, Hope and Pray” system of playing.

Intonation – Remember that playing with good intonation is a process, not a one-time event. Constantly listen and adjust.

Natural Dynamics – When chorale style passages have no specific dynamic notation you can (and should) apply the rule of *natural dynamics*; when the line ascends it should be played louder and when the line descends it should be played softer. **Do not allow a musical passage to lie static (sterile, unemotional), make music out of it.**

Rule of Rhythmic Motion – In a musical passage the fastest moving rhythmical line is the most important.

“The tune is the most important part – Always!”; you must know where the melody (or tune) occurs and allow it to dominate at all times.

“Tension is created by dissonance”. Music is a constant flow of tension and release/consonance and dissonance. You must know how dissonance is created and emphasize it where necessary.

“Percussion can make or break the ensemble.” The rhythmic pulse and color that percussion can contribute will give an ensemble the extra sparkle and brightness that many groups do not have. Proper rehearsal and performance habits and etiquette (in addition to the proper instruments) are essential for a dynamic performance at concert or contest. “You perform the way you practice”; mature players, regardless of age, create good performance habits, not sloppy ones.

“The 10 Per Cent Rule” – Only 10% of all high school bands perform with the correct style; and style is (primarily) created with the correct use of separation. Don’t fall into the 90% category.

Augmentation and Diminution: A compositional technique that takes a melodic statement and rhythmically expands (augments) or reduces (diminishes) the statement from its original form.

Terraced/Layered Dynamics: A technique for achieving dynamic contrast by adding (or subtracting) sections or groups of instruments to the harmonic structure.

Transparent Dynamics: A technique for allowing the melody (‘the tune’) to shine through while additional instruments or sections are added to the harmonic structure. Each supporting section should play their written dynamics until an additional section/group is added and then lower the written dynamic to allow the new section to be heard and also to allow the melody (primary statement) to be heard over the entire ensemble.

“Tongue and Finger the pattern very aggressively” – technique for aligning the tongue with the fingers that improves accuracy even for slurred passages.

Put the emphasis on the right syllable! Don’t allow a musical line to lie static and dull, make something out of it!