

Benjamin Lee

Professor Gowen

Sec. Inst. Methods

7 October 2020

### Rehearsal Outline

**Music Selection:** J.S. Bach & Frank Erickson - "Aria on a Bach Prelude" from Alfred's Growing Band Series

**Information about the piece:** This composition by Erickson was written from the direct inspiration of the first prelude of J.S. Bach's, "Well-Tempered Clavier." It consists of arpeggio figurations (Clarinets) and is rhythmically consistent throughout. "The simple construction may be the reason for the popularity of the piece" (Alfred Publishing). Erickson made some subtle changes in this composition including changes made in the form, and the key has been changed from C major to Bb major. "However, the original figurations and harmonies have been retained" (Alfred Publishing). The grade level for this piece is medium easy and could be played well by a middle school band.

#### **Rehearsal Day 1 (12 min)**

- 1. Warm-up (2 min):** The musicians tune to Concert Bb. BbMAJ scale (ascending, descending, half-note, unison). The focus of this warm-up is intonation precision. Bb is a comfortable scale for growing band musicians and is also the key of the musical selection.
- 2. Introduce the piece and sightread (5 min):** Play 30-60 seconds of the recording to get the musicians ears familiar with the music. Give a short explanation of Bach's greatness and Baroque musical characteristics (flowing melodic lines with ornamentation, counterpoint, & dynamic contrast). Sightread the piece at a playable tempo.
- 3. Measure 21 and on at a slow tempo & Feedback (5 min):** Start the ensemble at measure 21 at a slow tempo to ensure that the clarinets can get a feel for the arpeggiated lines. I would explain to them that practicing these lines at a slow tempo will benefit them immensely. Also, I would explain to the accompanying parts that they matter just as much as the arpeggiation and melody. Intonation is important for the long held notes and that is why it was the focus for the warm up. After this, I would ask the students what this piece makes them feel like or what thoughts come to mind. I would also ask them what they think the biggest challenges of this piece will be so they become musically aware and independent.

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### **Day 2 (12 min)**

- 1. Warm-up (2 min):** The musicians tune to a Concert Bb triad in which they each choose and play Concert Bb, D or F. Once they have chosen their note, have them play it on a long tone. Signal up or down to let them know to move notes along the Bb Scale.
- 2. Measure 21 and Arpeggiation focus (5 min):** Instruct the ensemble to start at measure 21. Ask them who they think has the melody (trumpets) and let them know not to overpower that. Then, focus on the clarinet arpeggiation to make sure the clarinet players are confident and know what they need to work on independently.
- 3. Dynamic / Expressive focus (5 min):** Explain to the ensemble that the dynamics have a gradual increase throughout and that the song should have dynamic motion. Instruct them to start the piece and go to measure 21 with the correct dynamics and motion.

### **Day 3 (12 min)**

- 1. Warm-up (2 min):** Musicians tune to Concert Bb. Bb scale ascending-descending with crescendos and decrescendos. The focus of this warm up is dynamic contrast.
- 2. Measures 29-47 (5 min):** Focus on the low voices (tuba, bar., trombones, and bassoon) lining up with the clarinet arpeggiation. Address any rhythmic challenges for these measures.
- 3. Measure 47 to the end and playthrough (5 min):** Focus on dynamics and expression on the last 8 measures. Answer any questions from the students. Play through the entire piece while conducting proper cues/expression/dynamics etc.