

## **Score Study Matters**

An approach to meaningful score study for the classroom teacher

What to mark? What to study?

How to translate this into useful knowledge

Communicating this with your students

My Ideal Sequence: Marking, Singing and Studying, Interpretation

What to mark? In general:

Measures (every, every line, 5, 10)

Phrasing and Form

Tonality, Harmony

Color, Texture, Balance

In how much detail?

### **Studying and Marking Systems**

Dr. Richardson (University of the Incarnate Word) suggests that you Elevate your "Readiness" in just 45 minutes:

1. Read every word in the score (5 minutes)
2. Explore the form of the work (5)
3. Analyze key areas and large cadential moments (5-7)
4. Delineate important entrances and emotional peaks (5)
5. Indicate significant changes in dynamics and articulation (5)
6. Notate (and translate) challenging rhythmic figures (5)
7. Evaluate areas that should be addressed early in the rehearsal process (5)
8. Systematically craft and...
9. ...Successfully execute a rehearsal plan. (5-7)

Studying the Full Score - Dr. James Neilson and Dr. Holvik (from BandDirector.com)

1. Seek out and sing every melody, melodic counterpoint, and contrapuntal arc in the score
2. Now analyze the harmonic background of all melodies and relate this to the phrase structure
3. Now pencil the phrase structure in the score and mark the breathing places
4. Now analyze the rhythmic structure of all melodic lines
5. Now study the key relationships
6. Now analyze the basic rhythmic structure of the entire work.
7. Now study the works intellectual form and content
8. Now study the works emotional content

Anthony Maiello Suggests:

1. Who, What, When, Where, Why, hoW
2. Format: transpositions and keys
3. Solfeggio: sing lines horizontally, and move between lines. Find doublings and harmonies.
4. Transpositions: Get comfortable, especially for band.
5. Form: Overall architecture, sections, phrases
6. Harmonic Analysis: traditional (ii V) vs functional Eb6
7. Rhythmic Analysis: find variations, and silences
8. Marking the Score: decide what is important, be the composer's advocate

9. Title Page: write out some general research and impressions.
10. Interpretation: How are the phrases shaped? How do they fit together? What is the balance?

### Color pencils: how many and why?

Sooooo many colors:

Red: intense dynamics, outline hairpin crescendo, underline mf and cresc., circle f, box ff

Orange: Articulations (marcato, accent, staccato, tenuto, etc)

Yellow: Important things to notice, differences between repeats

Light Green: Color effects – ponticello, muted, stopped, etc

Green: Tempo changes (arrows to indicate accel → or decel ←, @ for a tempo, etc), meter changes (large numbers in the score, or a symbol up top like a triangle for 3 and a box for 4), fermata, etc

Light Blue: Small phrasing, phrasing shape or direction

Blue: softer dynamics, outline hairpin decrescendo, underline decresc/dim and mp, circle p, box pp

Purple: Interesting harmonic moments

Brown: Form: Large sections like exposition or just an A section.

Black: Harmonic analysis, notes

Highlighter: Footnotes, notes to the director, etc

Few colors:

Red: entrances, important moments, tempo changes, fermata

Blue: all dynamics

Black: everything else

Dr. Richardson:

Blue: Form

Yellow: Cues and Entrances

Red: dynamics and articulation

Black: everything else

Symbols are powerful and we can interpret them faster than reading words. Come up with symbols and abbreviations to de-clutter your work.

Abbreviation suggestions:

Piccolo	Pic
Flute	Fl
Oboe	Ob
English Horn	EH
Clarinet	Cl
E♭ Clarinet	E♭
Bass Clarinet	BCl
Bassoon	Fg
Alto Sax	AS
Tenor Sax	TS
Bari Sax	BS
Trumpets	Tr

Horn	Hn
Trombone	Tb
Euphonium	Eu
Tuba	Tu
Percussion	Prc
Marimba	Ma
Glockenspiel	Gl
Xylophone	Xy
Vibraphone	Vi
Snare Drum	Sn, SD,
Bass Drum	BD
Gong	Gn
Timpani	

Crash Cymbals	
Strings	Archi
Violin 1	I (or VL)
Violin 2	II
Viola	VA
Cello	VC
Bass	Cb
Melody	M
Hauptstimme	
Counter melody	CM
Harmony	Ha
Bass line	B

Kevin Noe MSU - "Tools of interpretation" - Priority to study and to make decisions

### Harmony

- Lead to tension: I64, dim, sec dom. Away from weak/boring, I, esp I6

### Length

- Think of a long as a stress. Treat music more rhetorically

### Register

- Look for changes in registration of the line, and the thickness of the group as a whole.

### Orchestration

- Esp look for differences in repeats. The flute had it the first time, now the viola does.

### Markings

- Move things like "stacatto" down the priority list of study and marking

### Intuition

- While we often have a feeling of how "we like it to go", this leads to things like Canon in D that is toooooo slooooooowww
- This is a good spot for the "natural" rules of phrasing like driving/insisting or releasing repeated groups, cresc ascending and vice versa.
- You can override the composer if you really truly feel you must. But maybe only once per piece

### **Other**

- space or connect large gaps?
- Look for first occurrences, loudest and softest points, repetition vs variety.
- Math: Golden Mean esp.
- Numerology: 3 vs 4 vs 5 vs 6
- Keys and their moods (CM is pure, DM is triumphant, fm is deep depression)

### Engaging Student Musicianship

- Bass line comes alive - weak inversions, strong cadences, often opposite dynamic of melodic roles
- Harmonic inner voice - half step leaning
- Melodic function - cresc up, decresc down.
- The more you are prepared to ask these questions and look for answers, the more you will be able to coach your students to listen for these same things.

### **In practice: Mozart *Symphony No. 40 Mvmt. 1***

### Tools

- Black Pencil - That's it
- Other colors of pencil
- Straight Edge
- Music Dictionary
- Metronome
- Pitch/Drone Generator
- Audio Timeliner
- Scores

### People say things!

“Music notation is like a road map or GPS. If you stare at a road map while driving, you might go off the road” – Michael Hopkins

“How do you know if what you are hearing is what is printed on the page?” – Anthony Maiello

“Tell me and I forget, show me and I remember, involve me and I understand” – Chinese Proverb

“Score in the head, not head in the score” – Toscanini

“Where the REAL difficulty arises is when the dear, talented conductor, armed with his precious, marked score hasn’t grasped the style” – Carlos Kleiber

### Suggested Reading

Battisti, Frank *On Becoming a Conductor* - Concise, organized, lots of ideas for planning

Stith, Gary *Score Rehearsal Preparation* - Short. Good ideas for entry level score analysis. Great ideas for rehearsal planning.

Meier, Gustav *The Score, The Orchestra, and the Conductor* - Lots of suggestion of how to conduct specific parts of music. Great analysis and commentary on the music.

Donnington, Robert *A Performers Guide to Baroque Music*

McGill, David *Sound in Motion* - A great read on phrasing and musicianship

Green, Douglass *Form in Tonal Music* - If you need any examination of form and structure

Blum, David *Casals and the Art of Interpretation*

Merryman, Marjorie *The Music Theory Handbook*

Absil, Frans *Musical Analysis: Visiting the Great Composers*. An incredible volume of formal and harmonic analysis.

Sparkynotes Online Music Theory Reference

MusicTheory.net Online Music Theory Practice

### Sources

Maiello, Anthony. “Score Study Approaches.” Presentation, Texas Music Educators Association Conference, San Antonio, 2018.

Neilson, Dr. James and Holvik, Dr. Karl. “Studying the Full Score.” BandDirector.com.  
<https://banddirector.com/article/pg-conducting/studying-the-full-score---part-i-> (1/11/2016)

Noe, Kevin. “Score Study.” Lecture, Michigan State University, Lansing, 2018.

Richardson, Dr. Brett. “Make Your Mark: Steps Towards Better Score Study.” Presentation, Texas Music Educators Association Conference, San Antonio, 2018.

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