

“It’s All In The Deets!”

Arranging Considerations for

Beginning and Young Concert Bands

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Key Elements to Great Beginning and Young Band Works

- Memorable melodies, counter-melodies and/or hooks
- Varied orchestration
- Development
- “Peak” moment
- Interesting harmonic content
- You want to play the piece - regardless of “the grade level”

Appropriate Instrument Ranges & Considerations

- Grade .5
- Grades 1-1.5
- Grades 2-2.5

Basic Writing Concepts

Block Writing - is ensemble chordal writing. This term is applied to soli, sectional and full ensemble harmony.

Linear Writing - the use of two or more melodic lines. Lines can happen simultaneously in melody and countermelody format or in a call and response in a conversational format.

Advanced Voicing Concepts

Closed Voicings vs. Open Voicings

The Tune Itself

- Standard lead sheet
- Key Center – will the key center & chord structure work with young players?
- Chordal structure considerations (complexity of chord changes, harmonic rhythm, original changes vs. re-harmonization)
- Study historically significant recordings
- Create new lead sheet

Structuring the Arrangement

Develop a plan for the arrangement on paper using **words**. The plan should include:

- an outline of the form of the chart (number of choruses, intro, ending, etc.)
- technical considerations of the ensemble
- orchestration notes (full ensemble, vs. small group, soloists, etc.)
- ideas for development (rhythmic & melodic)

Constructing the Arrangement

Putting the **word** plan in notation in two phases:

- The actual orchestration of the tune using the overall form/structure, voicings and technical considerations.
- Carefully notating the details: dynamics, articulations, phrase markings, rehearsal markings, text directions, etc.

Improvisation & Guide Solos

- Guide solos are important for younger players
- Guide solos should be written in the style of the tune
- Use non-symmetrical phrasing
- Outline the 3rd & 7th of chords in the solos

- Encourage students to use the guide solos as a springboard to begin improvising by embellishing the written solos

Final Phase

- generate score & parts
- have the arrangement read
- revisions
- performance