

Sight Reading Guidelines For First Orchestras

(String and Full Orchestras)

MSHSAA

The composition criteria for MSHSAA sight reading selections was revised in 2002-2003, when music expanded from four to five classes.

As a result, the committee determined that it would be beneficial to music directors throughout the state to have this criteria available to assist in preparations for sight reading. With this information in hand, directors will have a better understanding of the difficulty of the selection that will be used and will know what to expect in regard to rhythms, ranges, time signatures, etc.

To see the composition criteria for string and full orchestras, see below:

Key Signatures

- Key Signatures will be limited to the following:
C, G, D, A, F, B-flat major, and relative natural minors.
- There should be at least one key signature change per piece.

Meters

- Meters will be limited to the following:
2/4, 3/4, 4/4, Cut Time, 6/8, Mix Meters (7/8 3+2+2)

Tempo

- Tempi will be no slower than 60 beats per minute and no faster than 120 beats per minute.
- For continuous pieces, there will be at least one tempo change, but no more than two.

Clefs And Transpositions

- Viola can have limited use of treble clef.
- Cello can have limited use of tenor clef.
- Bassoon and Trombone will use bass clef only.
- All horns will be in F.
- All clarinets will be in B-flat
- All trumpets will be in B-flat

Position Work For Strings

- 3rd position and minimal use of 5th position may be used in the violin 1 part only.
- Minimal 3rd position work may be used in the violin 2 and viola part.
- Half, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th position work may be used in the cello.
- Half position to thumb position work may be used in the bass.

Divisi

- Limited use of divisi parts may be written.

Repeats

- 1st and 2nd endings may be used.
- D.C., and D.S. may be used.
- Fine may be used.

- All signs and instructions will be clearly marked.

Bowings

- Refer to a standard level two method book for appropriate bowing use. (ie. *Essential Elements For Strings* [Hal Leonard]).
- For example: detache, staccato, slurs, hooked bowing.

Rhythm

- Whole, half, quarter, eighth, including dotted values, and straight 16th note patterns will be used. Simple syncopation and limited use of tied notes over barlines may be used.

Length Of Piece

- The piece will be 3-5 minutes in length.

General Page Layouts

- All directions will be clearly marked.
- Music will be of published type-set or computer generated quality.
- There will be no page turn problems.