

PREPARING THE ALL-STATE AUDITION

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I. Preparing the Scales – the “backbone” of your audition!

(Scales are NOT transposed to “concert pitch” in the audition. Ex: Your Bb scale begins on your Bb.)

A. Play at indicated tempo; quarter = 132 for 9/10 Band / quarter = 144 for 11/12 Band. If there is not a tempo indicated, it is an oversight.

1. Faster is NOT better; at indicated tempo and clean is what is required ☺
2. Establish a sense of pulse; use a metronome in practice and solidify tempo.
3. Make sure every note “speaks” – don’t allow notes to be vague.

B. Play with a good characteristic tone throughout full range of your instrument

C. Make sure that you *prepare all scales exactly as you see them* on the GMEA website, no extended range.

D. Use the “10-times” rule; if you can play the scale 10 times in a row with NO MISTAKES, you are on your way to perfecting that scale. If you get to the 9th time and make a mistake, start back at one!

E. Use a “flash card” system to quiz yourself. Don’t always practice the scales in the same order. You will have to play them off in the order that they appear on the sheet you downloaded from the GMEA website.

II. Preparing the Etude

Before you begin, make SURE you have downloaded the *most up-to-date version* of the etude for your instrument and correct grade level from the GMEA website (www.gmea.org).

A. Technique – Make sure that each of the following elements are in place; begin slowly, gradually working your way up to the performance tempo.

1. correct notes and fingerings (alternate fingerings where applicable)
2. correct rhythms – when in doubt, right them in!
3. correct articulation / style markings – check carefully

TIP: practice the technically difficult passages with mixed/dotted rhythms first; this will help with motor skill development down the road!

B. Musicianship – Remember, making music is what this is all about!

1. play with good, characteristic tone (who are you listening to for example?)
2. play proper tempi (faster is not always better – check the metronome)
3. adhere to dynamic markings, shadings, and play with contrast
4. play phrases, not measures

C. Audition Preparation “Tips”

1. When practicing, don’t always start at the beginning; work on what needs your attention.
2. When in doubt about whether or not to take a repeat, DC, or DS, take it!
3. Perform several “mock” auditions before the big day. This is the best way to prepare your nerves! Make sure you work the “three steps to performance confidence:”
 - a. Play it right
 - b. Play it lots of times
 - c. Play it right, under pressure, lots of times
4. Practice sight-reading

Order your sightreading book by calling Music Services Unlimited, 706-548-5144

III. That Saturday in December!

This is the day that can wreak havoc on your nerves. As your band director, I understand your fears about this process and have become familiar with the good and bad aspects of this day. My job is to help you get through it!

Here are some things to remember:

1. This audition is the same audition for All-State Orchestra as well as District Honor band. You will have the option at the audition check-in to choose all state band or orchestra (or no preference, which is recommended).
2. On audition day, don't overplay before your audition. By now the work is done; warm up, run through it a few times, and then GO!
3. When you enter the audition room, make sure you read / understand all instructions thoroughly. If you do not, ask for clarification before you begin.
4. Be prepared to sight-read! All judges have the option of requiring this at any audition. It is required at all-state.
5. Remember, you gain nothing unless you try out. Should you be selected to either the All-State Band or Orchestra, congratulations!!