

Noelle McCarthy

October 3, 2018

Secondary Instrumental Methods

Folk Dances by Dmitri Shostakovich

Level Four Band- for Junior and Senior Band

Day 1

A few days after giving the students this piece, the band would be doing a lot of warmups like scales and arpeggios with a steady beat. This piece uses a lot of those techniques and knowing those basics will really help them master Folk Dances better. I would put on a metronome in class and we would play the piece at the beginning tempo and focus on being together. Where there are lots of off beats, making sure that everyone is playing the same length so as not to drag. This is important for them to have down because they are the base of the song and without them the runs will not sound good

Day 2

Work with the runs. More often or not they are in the higher parts and have a tendency to be rushed. While making sure that the other parts are keeping their rhythms, have the higher parts to do the runs to see where they fit in (students should already know the notes so there should be more rhythm work and not so much as shedding notes). Throughout this rehearsal, gradually speed up the tempo (doesn't have to be concert tempo) just so they get an idea as to how and where it will speed up.

Day 3

On this rehearsal, we would be focusing on getting that Russian sound. The students will most likely be sounding a little too bright and this is a good way for them to see that not all countries and cultures sound the same even in band pieces. I would have them listen to a recording and see what they hear that is different to them. Also I would give them a history of the piece and what time period it was written in and how those events may have shaped the piece and if anything is reflected in this piece. At this point the rhythms and the runs should be easier for them and this rehearsal is dedicated to the feel of the piece. Focus on dynamics and growth in the phrases.

Day 4

Start from the end and work backwards. Sometimes the end is not as polished as the beginning. I would not necessarily go the concert speed at the beginning of the rehearsal but if we get through half the piece then I would speed up as needed.

Day 5

Not much to this rehearsal except that we would run the whole piece and then focus on sections that we were having troubles on. This rehearsal would ideally be about a week before the concert.