



Band

The Music Performance Assessment Rubric: A tool for learning

Vincent Burgoyne • UMEA Band Vice President

The music performance assessment rubric and adjudication form is often viewed as a summative assessment. A summative assessment is a measure of learning while a formative assessment is a tool for learning.

A summative assessment is usually administered periodically to examine the level of learning or progress that has been made up to a certain point. The performance assessment rubric, connected with the adjudication form, does this by rating the musician or music ensemble in each area of music performance. Boxes are marked where the musician or music ensemble is performing in each concept or area of consideration, and an overall rating is assigned. These concepts, or areas of consideration, are tone quality, intonation, rhythm, balance/blend, technique, interpretation and performance factors. This is an assessment of learning that has (or has not) already taken place.

The music assessment rubric can also be used as a formative assessment or assessment (tool) for learning. There are many ways that we can use this rubric for improving student learning and performance. The following are some ideas for using this rubric as a tool for learning.

Assessment through recording

Having the students listen to a recording of their own performance is often an astonishing reality check for ensemble members. Using the assessment rubric as they listen can guide students to solutions for improvement.

1. Provide all students with a copy of the music performance assessment rubric.
2. Examine with the students all levels of performance for each of the areas of consideration: Tone Quality, Intonation, Rhythm, Balance/Blend, Technique, Interpretation, and Performance Factors.
3. Record the ensemble performing a composition currently being rehearsed.
4. Play the recording back to the students and ask them to mark the box (or level) where they think the band is performing for each area of consideration. This can be done during the rehearsal or assigned as homework for the ensemble member to listen and rate the group at home.
5. Gather the adjudication rubrics and average the results to

present to the ensemble.

6. Open a discussion by presenting the results for each area of concern and exploring what needs to be done to improve in each area.

Rehearsal assessment of individual concepts

Working on every aspect of the performance assessment rubric can be overwhelming for students at first. Working on one concept or area of consideration at a time can help students understand each concept and the method for improvement.

1. Provide a copy of the assessment rubric to the ensemble members.
2. Focus this section of your rehearsal on one concept or area of concern. Review the levels of performance for that area of consideration.
3. Have part of the ensemble members listen and rate another group or section of the ensemble in the area of consideration on a short section of music. This is most simply done by asking for a raise of hands to find out where the students rate the section after listening.
4. Discuss and rehearse ways in which the ensemble can improve that particular concept.

For example: Have the upper woodwinds play a passage of music that is highly technical. Invite the rest of the band members to listen to and rate the section with regard to technique, using their music performance assessment rubrics. Poll the performance results for that technique aspect. Discuss and rehearse methods to move the technique rating to a higher box. This method can engage all members of the ensemble in the rehearsal and learning even though their section may not be playing the passage.

Student Self-Assessment

Students can be asked to rate their own performance with regard to the music being rehearsed. This can be done in the rehearsal or at home. At home, it is more difficult to rate some areas like balance/blend. In this case, it may be more advantageous to use the instrumental solo performance assessment rubric. Of course, this method definitely can be used as students prepare for region or state solo festival.

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Advocacy

A call for advocacy: Share your story!

Angela Pontious • UMEA Advocacy Chair

First of all, thank you to Shannon Kelly, NAFME Director of Advocacy Capacity Building & Communications and to the UMEA members who came to the advocacy session during the UMEA Mid-winter Conference. It was an insightful discussion that included ideas from Shannon and feedback from the members regarding what they would like to see happen with advocacy in Utah. I am still looking for teachers who would like to be involved with the committee. You can be involved by helping with a state advocacy newsletter, coming up with ideas for the website, writing the advocacy article for the UMEA Journal, creating posters, and in any other way you would like to contribute to the committee. Please contact me at angela.pontious@slschools so we can start promoting music education in Utah.

Spring is always a great time to advocate for music education, as we have plentiful resources from NAFME for Music In Our Schools Month (MIOSM) during March. I hope you took some time to remind your administrators, legislators and community members about the importance of music education.

Lastly, another current NAFME advocacy initiative is “Share Your Story” through Groundswell. Sharing our stories about why we love and support music education is incredibly important to its continued success and its survival in our schools. Sharing your story can have a positive impact at the local, state and national levels. Consider sharing your story now to celebrate MIOSM and to let your legislature members know how much you and your community value music education. Also, invite students and teachers at your school, along with parents and other community members, to also share how the school music experience changed their lives. To share your story at the national level, you must be a member of NAFME’s Groundswell (<http://advocacy.nafme.org/join>) and then log-in to post your story and to see other stories from across the country. You can email your story directly to NAFME via email to shareyourstory@nafme2.org. I am also collecting stories to post on the UMEA website and to keep for our next state legislative session. Find out more about how to share your story at <http://advocacy.nafme.org/share-your-story/>.



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1. Give students a copy of the music performance assessment rubric.
2. Review each of the areas of consideration: Tone Quality, Intonation, Rhythm, Balance/Blend, Technique, Interpretation and Performance Factors.
3. Ask them to take time at home to play through one composition being rehearsed and circle the box that best reflects their performance ability for each area of consideration.
4. Have them devise and submit a plan for improving their performance in each area of consideration. This can include plans such as: “Daily practice technique with a metronome on mm. 10-33; slowly first then gradually increase the tempo,” and “Be more aware of my level and improvement on each area of concern during band rehearsal.” For some of the better players or section leaders, their submitted plan could include “hold a section

rehearsal to help struggling section members with the more difficult passages.” You could require a very detailed plan that covers all concepts on the rubric or limit their plan to just one or two concepts.

These are just a few suggestions to use the music performance assessment rubric for learning. Music teachers should collaborate often to share and develop more ideas on strategies to enhance student learning and performance. Adjudication forms with accompanying Music Performance Assessment Rubrics can be obtained on the Utah High School Activities Association website at: <http://www.uhsaa.org/activities/music.html>

Making students aware of the music performance assessment rubric can help them understand concepts and be more invested in the rehearsal. Using methods like these can appropriately shift the responsibility for improvement from the director to the students. The desired result is that not only is the adjudication form used as an assessment of learning but also used as an assessment tool for learning.

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