RW7.6

**A sample Percussion Assignments *worksheet*** ~ By studying the Score (but – better – by examining the percussion *parts),* we can …

* determine how many players will be required to perform a piece
* build a blank template listing the instruments to cover
* discover the extent to which each instrument is used, and
* determine the skill-level required to perform the parts (the level of difficulty)
* ascertain whether one player can cover two or more instruments.

After this discovery process (which will become quick, with experience!), I’ll compile my work into the type of worksheet shown below and then, with careful guidance, I’d assign this basic first-step to my students. Their work *may* stand – if you’re lucky, and if your students are mature – but Directors often need to veto the students’ choices. Still, even if you find you must make the part-assignments unilaterally, this study of the parts will be both *necessary* to your organization, and *helpful* to your teaching.

**Sidebar: My personal philosophy of “*Primary*” and “*Back-up*” assignments** ~ Every student is assigned a primary part, *and* a back-up part. Therefore …

1. No one is “sitting the bench”
2. A student with no primary role in a composition is still standing with another player. The back-up player may be learning from a stronger Percussionist (e.g. Charles doesn’t read *any* pitched music yet, so his back-up allows him to stand with Marcus, who helps teach Charles a basic Chimes part). Or,
3. The back-up player is asked to mentor/tutor the student playing the part (Alex is a level 6 Snare player; his “back-up” assignment of Snare allows him to mentor Sarah, as she works on a level 4 non-rolling Snare assignment).
4. All Percussionists are kept *on task* for the entire time. Directors can, without much (or any!) notice, say, “Charles, can you step in a try the Chimes part at measure 17 please?” The director can and *should* use all primary & back-up players regularly throughout the rehearsal.
5. The Ensemble is more prepared to cover for unexpected absences (*“…but Mr. Smith, I have to pitch in the baseball game tonight!”*) because each part has at least two students trained to play it.
6. Band Directors who have many students in a large percussion section can still feel comfortable playing pieces with fewer parts-than-people. Note: This is for the Band Directors who have noticed behavior issues when their 12-member section has to sit through the rehearsal of “Prelude and Fugue in D Minor”. ☺ Band students do deserve to perform all types of music, including those pieces without ‘busy’ percussion scoring.

**James Horner: Hollywood Blockbusters**

**Primary *Back-up* Written Part Instrument(s)**

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Percussion I SD (M-MA … *Doubled* at meas. 89-101)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Percussion I BD (ME-M)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Percussion I Drum Set (M … *Important*)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Percussion II: Lg Tri / Sus Cymb / Gong

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Percussion II: CrCym, Cabasa

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Percussion II: Wind Ch, Shaker, SD (ME)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Mallet Perc:* Bells (E-ME)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Mallet Perc:* Chimes (E-ME)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Mallet Perc:* Xylophone (E-ME)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Timpani:* (Playing M / Tuning MA)

**Prelude, Siciliano and Rondo**

**Primary *Back-up* Written Part Instrument(s)**

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Percussion I **Xylo** (M-MA)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Percussion I **Bells** (M, but *important*)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Percussion I **Vibes** (M-MA, requires 4-mallet skills)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Percussion II **CrCym, TamTam, Maracas** (M)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Percussion II **SusCym & Tri**

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Percussion III **SD** (MA)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Percussion III **BD** (ME-M)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* **Timpani**  (ME-M)

**Rejouissance**

**Primary *Back-up* Written Part Instrument(s)**

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Percussion I  **Marimba** (M-MA)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Percussion I **Xylo** (M-MA)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Percussion II **Vibes** (M-MA)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Percussion III **Glockenspiel** (M-MA)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Percussion III **Chimes** (ME-M)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Percussion IV **BD** (ME)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Percussion IV **SusCymb** (E)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Percussion V **SnDr** (ME-M)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Percussion VI **TamTam** (E)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Percussion VI **Triangle** (ME)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* **Timpani** Playing level M; *Tuning* level M-MA

**Spirals of Light**

**Primary *Back-up* Written Part Instrument(s)**

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Percussion I **SD** (M)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Percussion I **BD** (ME-M)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Percussion 2 **CrCymb**

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Percussion 2 **Tamb** & **TamTam**

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Percussion 2 **Low Toms**

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Percussion 2 **Sus Cymb**

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Percussion 2 **Whip – WoodBl – WindCh** (m. 77) – **Tri** (need help @ 102, 196)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Mallet Perc **Bells** (M+, *exposed*)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Mallet Perc **Vibes** (ME)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* **Timpani** \*NOTE: Composer’s Tuning instruction is incorrect

**Star Trek Symphonic Suite**

**Primary *Back-up* Written Part Instrument(s)**

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Percussion I  **SD** (ME-M)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Percussion I **BD** (E)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Percussion I **Djembe** (ME)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Percussion II **Rute / Egg Shaker**

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Percussion II **SusCym / TamTam**

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Percussion II **CrCym**

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Percussion II **Tom Toms**

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Mallet Perc\* **Marimba** (MA)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Mallet Perc\* **Chimes** (ME)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Mallet Perc\* **Vibes** (ME-M)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Mallet Perc\* **Xylophone** (ME)

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* Mallet Perc\* **Bells** (ME, but *exposed*)

\*Note – Mallet Percussion parts *can* be played all by one person if required

*\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* **Timpani** Playing level (ME-M) – *Tuning* level (M+)