

Grace Miller

MUS 3310

### Programming Assignment

My High School, a class C institution, offers a two-level orchestra program designed to accommodate a range of student abilities and experiences. This program includes the White Orchestra and the Purple Orchestra. The White Orchestra primarily enrolls freshmen and sophomores, along with upperclassmen who wish to continue playing in a large ensemble setting without the added demands of challenging repertoire. The Purple Orchestra, in contrast, features mostly juniors and seniors, though it also includes a few highly motivated underclassmen. This group gives students the chance to engage deeply with challenging musical works, often involving more advanced ensemble and chamber music experiences.

Admission into the Purple Orchestra is based on audition and generally involves students who participate in private lessons, youth orchestras, or have gained prior experience in the White Orchestra. The music selected for this group typically falls within Grades 4 through 6. Meanwhile, the White Orchestra does not require an audition and is open to all students with an interest in orchestra. While prior experience, such as participation in a middle school ensemble, is preferred, it is not mandatory. The White Orchestra performs literature that typically falls within the Grades 2 through 4 range.

At present, the White Orchestra includes a total of 26 students: 12 violinists, 6 violists, 5 cellists, and 3 bassists. Violin parts are usually divided equally between firsts and seconds, though this distribution may be adjusted depending on the demands and difficulty of the repertoire. A concern in this ensemble is the limited number of violinists with prior experience or receiving private instruction (only 4 out of 12), which often results in technical challenges when

approaching repertoire that demands difficult extensions and shifts, complex rhythms, and a strong melodic presence. As a result, the violin section sometimes struggles to confidently carry the prominent lines that are often seen in high school-level string orchestra music.

In contrast, the cello section is relatively strong. Three of the five cellists have taken private lessons and maintained consistent playing experience since middle school, making them technically sound and musically capable. However, because the cello parts in the selected repertoire are often less complex and more repetitive, some students become bored and disengaged during rehearsals. This occasionally leads to minor behavioral issues that can disrupt focus and productivity during class.

The bass section brings its own set of difficulties. Two of the three bass players are siblings who frequently miss class, particularly because the White Orchestra rehearses during the first hour of the school day. Their repeated absences make it difficult for the section to stay cohesive. The third bassist is a reliable and skilled player, but the section as a whole requires regular reinforcement to ensure they stay caught up with the rest of the ensemble.

Despite the various challenges presented by the instrumentation and varying experience levels, the White Orchestra continues to serve as a prominent ensemble within the school. The ensemble performs at least three concerts per academic year, providing students the opportunity to showcase their growth and hard work to families and community members. In addition, the group participates in festival, where they commonly receive 1s and 2s. These outcomes reflect the ensemble's potential and resilience, even amid the hardships they face throughout the year.

## **Concert Program**

The first piece of the fall concert is “Dance of the Tumblers” from Snow Maiden by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov and arranged by Sandra Dackow. Structured in traditional sonata form, this piece provides the White Orchestra with an exciting opportunity to explore formal structure and thematic development within the accessible key of C Major. With its energetic articulation and rhythms, this work engages every section.

Though the piece sounds more difficult than it is, it does require thoughtful preparation and focused rehearsal. Distinguishing between staccato and accented articulations is one of the first musical challenges; students must work on using arm weight and bow speed to create clarity and emphasis. Sixteenth-note passages test the ensemble’s rhythmic precision and tempo consistency, offering a technical challenge that also reinforces ensemble listening.

The violin parts are very accessible for the musicians in the White Orchestra. However, trills, sustained tones that require full-bow control, and a main theme that benefits from bow placement near the frog all offer teachable moments in tone production and stylistic shaping. Additionally, energetic moving lines are presented in the Viola, Cello, and Bass sections, maintaining ensemble engagement and providing opportunities to discuss phrasing sequences and musicality.

Despite a few technical demands, this piece is accessible and motivating. It’s a compelling addition to the concert program that helps students grow in both confidence in putting together a full concert cycle.

The second piece on the White Orchestra’s fall concert program is the first movement of Sinfonia in D Major by Carl Stamitz, arranged by Elizabeth Green. This Classical-era work, approximately five minutes in length, provides both stylistic and technical growth opportunities

for the ensemble while accommodating several of its current challenges. Written in the beginner-friendly key of D Major, this arrangement features clear modulations to A Major and E Major, offering students a practical application of the scale work they do during orchestra class. In addition to reinforcing key signatures, the piece serves as a useful tool for introducing and reviewing modulation through the circle of fifths, especially relevant for students who are taking AP Music Theory.

The style of the movement is distinctly Classical, which presents students with an opportunity to refine their bowing techniques in a stylistically appropriate context. The contrast between short-long and long-short articulations, typical of this period, will require players to think critically about phrasing and balance. Hooked bowings (often appearing in dotted quarter–eighth note figures), marcato emphasis, and phrasing through dynamics all contribute to appropriate performance practice. The sequences within the melodic writing and the clear phrase structures offer a natural way to teach shaping and the expressive use of crescendos and decrescendos.

From an instrumentation standpoint, Sinfonia in D is well suited to the White Orchestra's current personnel and needs. The cello section, one of the strongest in the ensemble, benefits from melodically prominent material. These lines also modulate, requiring students to navigate extended positions, an excellent technical challenge! This added level of complexity helps prevent disengagement in the section.

In the violin sections, confidence is boosted by the near-constant doubling between Violin I and Violin II, allowing the players to support each other while reinforcing pitch and rhythm security. A brief duet between the section leaders of the first and second violins offers an additional highlight for the more advanced players!

While not particularly demanding overall, the bass part includes just enough variety and musical interest to keep committed players engaged. Several spots require difficult shifts, allowing students who are committed to grow in their technique and musicianship.

Altogether, Stamitz's Sinfonia in D Major serves as both an effective teaching piece and a satisfying musical experience for students and audience members, making it an ideal fit for this fall concert.

The third piece the White Orchestra will perform is Cantabile from Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 5, arranged by Robert D. McCashin. This five-minute Romantic-era work, written in E minor with a modulation to G major, offers students a chance to explore lyrical expression while navigating rhythmic and technical challenges. The key change allows for a discussion of tonal relationships, and the prevalence of triplet and dotted eighth–sixteenth rhythms encourages rhythmic accuracy and practice in bow control.

Stylistically, the piece calls for warm vibrato, sustained legato lines, and careful attention to dynamic markings included by the composer. The expressive demands, particularly in staccato-tenuto articulations and broad bow strokes, offer an opportunity for musicianship within the ensemble to improve.

Cantabile is well suited to the ensemble's strengths. The cello section plays a leading role with melodic lines that require shifting, extensions, and thoughtful bow distribution. Violins I and II support the texture with countermelodies and rhythmic reinforcement. The relatively strong viola section also gets moments of melodic prominence, encouraging leadership within the inner voices. The bass part remains accessible but includes a few challenges for more focused players.

The White Orchestra’s finale for this concert is Serenade for String Orchestra, a twelve-minute, four-movement suite including Prelude, Fugue, Nocturne, and Cakewalk. Each movement presents a unique character and style, challenging the ensemble to demonstrate an understanding of different styles, ensemble awareness, and musicality.

This is our reach piece because it requires preparation and focus from the entire ensemble, as every section has prominent melodic ideas. Students are challenged by varied bow strokes, including tenuto, legato, and accents. Attention to bow distribution from each section is essential for performing this piece accurately. This piece pushes every player to stretch beyond their comfort zone, contributing equally to a well-done performance experience.

**8-Week Rehearsal Plan: 5 days per week, 50 minutes per day.**

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<p><b>Tune</b>  <b>Warm-up:</b> Scales = C Major and D Major + Accent exercises in Methods Book  <b>Dance of the Tumblers:</b>  Sightread, work on beginning - D = main theme articulation, and slow practice for clarity or rhythm in Viola/Cello/Bass  <b>Sinfonia:</b> Sightread, work on beginning-A</p>	<p><b>Tune</b>  <b>Warm-up:</b> Scales = E Melodic Minor and G Major + long tone exercises in Methods Book  <b>Cantabile:</b>  Sightread, work on M. 1-9 (intonation), hand out main theme to all sections  <b>Serenade:</b> sightread Prelude and Fugue, work on Prelude beginning - A, Fugue beginning - C</p>	<p><b>Tune</b>  <b>Warm-up:</b> Scales = D Major and G Major + scales in sixteenth note-eighth note- sixteenth note rhythm  <b>Serenade:</b>  Sightread Nocturne and Cakewalk, Main theme exercise for all musicians, Rehearse Cakewalk beginning - B undertempo</p>	<p><b>Tune</b>  <b>Warm-up:</b> Scales = C Major, D Major, E Melodic Minor  <b>Dance of the Tumblers:</b>  Rehearse F-G, G-J  <b>Sinfonia:</b>  Rehearse B-E, H-I  <b>Cantabile:</b>  Rehearse M. 9-24, M. 33-49</p>	<p><b>Tune</b>  <b>Warm-up:</b> Scales = D Major and G Major + Accent exercises in Methods Book  <b>Serenade:</b> Rehearse Prelude and Cakewalk</p>
<p><b>Tune</b>  <b>Warm-Up:</b> Scales = C Major and D Major  <b>Dance of the Tumblers:</b>  Rehearse J-M, P-R  <b>Sinfonia:</b> Rehearse I-K, L-end  <b>Serenade:</b> Rehearse</p>	<p><b>Tune</b>  <b>Warm-up:</b> Scales = G Major and E Melodic Minor + long tone exercises in Methods Book  <b>Cantabile:</b> M. 24-33, 49-end  <b>Serenade:</b> Rehearse Nocturne</p>	<p><b>Tune</b>  <b>Warm-up:</b> Scales = D Major + rhythm exercises in Methods Book  <b>Sinfonia:</b> Rehearse C-F, 4 measures before H - H, J-L  <b>Serenade:</b> Rehearse Prelude and</p>	<p><b>Tune</b>  <b>Warm-Up:</b> Scales = C Major and G Major + accent exercises in Methods Book  <b>Dance of the Tumblers:</b>  Rehearse R - end  <b>Cantabile:</b></p>	<p><b>Tune</b>  <b>Warm-Up:</b> Scales = D Major and A Major  <b>Sinfonia:</b> Rehearse beginning -F  <b>Serenade:</b> Rehearse Nocturne and Cakewalk</p>

Fugue		Cakewalk	Rehearse 49-end, 24-39 <b>Serenade:</b> Rehearse Fugue	
<b>Tune</b> <b>Warm-up:</b> Scales = C Major and D Major + hooked bowing exercises in Methods Book <b>Dance of the</b> <b>Tumblers:</b> Rehearse N-end <b>Sinfonia:</b> Rehearse D-F <b>Cantabile:</b> Rehearse M. 33-49 <b>Serenade:</b> Rehearse Cakewalk	<b>Tune</b> <b>Warm-up:</b> Scales = E Minor + Dynamic contrast exercises in Methods Book <b>Sectionals:</b> Violins/Violas = difficult melodies in Sinfonia and Serenade Cello/Bass = Sinfonia and Cantabile	<b>Tune</b> <b>Warm-up:</b> Scales = G Major + triplet rhythms <b>Serenade:</b> Rehearse Nocturne and Fugue <b>Sinfonia:</b> Rehearse E-J <b>Cantabile:</b> Rehearse beginning -39	<b>Tune</b> <b>Warm-up:</b> Scales = D Major and A Major + long bow exercises in Methods Book <b>Cantabile:</b> Rehearse 39-end <b>Serenade:</b> Rehearse Prelude and Cakewalk	<b>Tune</b> <b>Warm-up:</b> Scales = C Major and E Minor <b>Dance of the</b> <b>Tumblers:</b> Play through, rehearse spots <b>Sinfonia:</b> Play through, rehearse beginning - E <b>Serenade:</b> Rehearse Nocturne
<b>Tune</b> <b>Warm-up:</b> C Major and G Major + accent exercises in Method Book <b>Serenade:</b> Rehearse Fugue <b>Cantabile:</b> Rehearse M. 26-27, M. 30-32, 39-49	<b>Tune</b> <b>Warm-up:</b> E Minor and G Major + long bow exercises in Method Book <b>Dance of the</b> <b>Tumblers:</b> Play through, rehearse N-end <b>Sinfonia:</b> Play through, rehearse C- F, J- L <b>Serenade:</b> Rehearse Cakewalk	<b>Tune</b> <b>Warm-up:</b> C Major and G Major <b>Serenade:</b> Rehearse Prelude and Nocturne <b>Cantabile:</b> Rehearse 39-end	<b>Tune</b> <b>Warm-up:</b> D Major and A Major <b>Sinfonia:</b> Rehearse beginning to J, Four before H - H <b>Serenade:</b> Rehearse Fugue <b>Dance of the</b> <b>Tumblers:</b> Rehearse beginning - D	<b>Tune</b> <b>Warm-up:</b> Scales = G Major and E Minor + long bow exercises in Methods Book <b>Cantabile:</b> Beginning - 33 <b>Serenade:</b> Rehearse Cakewalk
<b>Tune</b> <b>Warm-up:</b> Scales = C Major and D Major + accent exercises in Method Book <b>Dance of the</b> <b>Tumblers:</b> Play through, rehearse spots <b>Sinfonia:</b> Play through, rehearse D-F, J-end	<b>Tune</b> <b>Warm-up:</b> Scales = E Minor + bow distribution exercises in the Method book <b>Sectionals:</b> Violins/Violas = difficult melodies in Sinfonia and Serenade Cello/Bass = Sinfonia and Cantabile	<b>Tune</b> <b>Warm-up:</b> Scales = C Major and D Major <b>Dance of the</b> <b>Tumblers:</b> Rehearse N-end <b>Cantabile:</b> Rehearse M. 33-49	<b>Tune</b> <b>Warm-up:</b> C Major and G Major + hooked bowing exercises in Methods Book <b>Serenade:</b> Rehearse Prelude and Nocturne <b>Cantabile:</b> Rehearse 39-end	<b>Tune</b> <b>Warm-up:</b> E Minor and G Major <b>Dance of the</b> <b>Tumblers:</b> Play through and spot check <b>Sinfonia:</b> Play through, rehearse C- F, J- L <b>Serenade:</b> Rehearse Cakewalk
<b>Tune</b> <b>Warm-up:</b> Scales = G Major and E Minor + triplet	<b>Tune</b> <b>Warm-up:</b> Scales = C Major and D Major	<b>Tune</b> <b>Warm-up:</b> D Major and A Major + accent exercises in	<b>Tune</b> <b>Warm-up:</b> C Major and G Major + long bow exercises in	<b>Tune</b> <b>Warm-up:</b> Scales = D Major and A Major + bow

<p>rhythms  <b>Cantabile:</b> play through, rehearse spots  <b>Serenade:</b> Play through and rehearse Nocturne and Fugue  <b>Sinfonia:</b> Rehearse E-J</p>	<p><b>Dance of the Tumblers:</b> Play through and rehearse  <b>Sinfonia:</b> Rehearse beginning and J-end  <b>Cantabile:</b> Rehearse M. 33-49  <b>Serenade:</b> Rehearse Cakewalk</p>	<p>Methods Book  <b>Sinfonia:</b> Rehearse beginning to J, Four before H - H  <b>Serenade:</b> Play through and rehearse Fugue</p>	<p>Methods Book  <b>Serenade:</b> Play through and rehearse Prelude and Nocturne  <b>Cantabile:</b> Rehearse M. 26-27, M. 30-32, 39-49</p>	<p>distribution exercises in Methods Book  <b>Sinfonia:</b> Play through, rehearse beginning -F  <b>Serenade:</b> Rehearse Nocturne and Cakewalk</p>
<p><b>Tune Warm-up:</b> Scales = D and G Major + slurred bowing exercises in Methods Book  <b>Serenade:</b> Full run-through, and rehearse spots  <b>Dance of the Tumblers:</b> Run-through and spots</p>	<p><b>Tune Warm-up:</b> Scales = E Minor + bow distribution exercises in the Method book  <b>Sectionals:</b> Violins/Violas = difficult melodies in Sinfonia and Serenade  Cello/Bass = Sinfonia and Cantabile</p>	<p><b>Tune Warm-up:</b> Scales = D Major and A Major  <b>Sinfonia:</b> Run through and troubleshoot  <b>Cantabile:</b> Run through and troubleshoot</p>	<p><b>Tune Warm-up:</b> Scales = C Major and G Major  <b>Dance of the Tumblers:</b> Run through and troubleshoot  <b>Serenade:</b> Runthrough and troubleshoot  Cakewalk</p>	<p><b>Tune Warm-up:</b> Scales = D Major and G Major  <b>Serenade:</b> Full run-through, recording, and class discussion</p>
<p><b>Tune Warm-up:</b> Scales = G Major and E Minor + long bow exercises from Methods Book  <b>Cantabile:</b> Full run-through and trouble shoot  <b>Sinfonia:</b> Run through</p>	<p><b>Tune Warm-up:</b> Scales = D Major and G Major  <b>Serenade:</b> Run through  <b>Dance of the Tumblers:</b> Run through</p>	<p><b>Tune Warm-up:</b> Scales = D Major and A Major  <b>Sinfonia:</b> Run through  <b>Cantabile:</b> Run through</p>	<p><b>Tune Warm-up:</b> Scales = C Major and G Major  <b>Serenade:</b> Run through  <b>Dance of the Tumblers:</b> Run through</p>	<p><b>Tune Warm-up:</b> Scales = D and A Major + Dynamic contrast exercise in methods book  <b>Full run-through of all pieces.</b></p>

### Detailed Rehearsal Plan for Day 3, Week 5

- **Tune**
- **Warm-up:** Scales = C Major and D Major
  - **C Major:** 2/4 time signature rhythm with two eighth notes + accented quarter per pitch. Rhythm and scale for **Dance of the Tumblers**
  - **Accent exercise** = wiggle wiggle push with bow hand, work on well-executed accents to elevate the performance of **Dance of the Tumblers**
  - **D Major:** 4/4 time signature rhythm with eight eighth notes per pitch. Rhythm

and scale for **Sinfonia**

- **Dance of the Tumblers:** Rehearse N-end
  - Emphasize clear articulation of the primary rhythmic motive (two eighth notes followed by a quarter note) in measures 109–116.
  - Rehearse from Rehearsal Letter O with a focus on:
    - Tone color shift and expressive contrast
    - Identification of melodic line and which section should be heard
    - Accuracy of entrances across all sections
  - In measure 126, work on spiccato bowing technique:
    - Differentiate clearly between spiccato eighth notes and regular eighth-note articulations
  - Address syncopation in measure 129:
    - Ensure rhythmic alignment between the syncopated accompaniment and the melodic line
  - Ending:
    - Unify ensemble execution regarding entrances, stylistic approach, dynamics, and articulation for a cohesive conclusion
- **Cantabile:** Rehearse M. 33-49
  - Emphasize molto espressivo playing; reinforce the use of dynamic terracing and encourage students to identify and highlight the primary musical line in each phrase.
  - At the poco più animato section, practice ensemble awareness by reinforcing the importance of watching the conductor for tempo changes.
  - Reinforce the use of broad, sustained bow strokes
  - Practice ensemble awareness at rallentandos in measures 44 and 48
  - Highlight the call-and-response exchange between Violin I and Cello beginning at measure 45; encourage students to bring out these lines and listen across the ensemble for musical dialogue.