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# Student-Centered Interpretation and Expression in the Large-Group Secondary Band Class

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STUDENT-CENTERED INTERPRETATION AND EXPRESSION IN THE LARGE-  
GROUP SECONDARY BAND CLASS

by

Mike Fedyszyn

A Thesis Submitted in  
Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Music

at

The University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee

August 2014

## ABSTRACT

### STUDENT-CENTERED INTERPRETATION AND EXPRESSION IN THE LARGE- GROUP SECONDARY BAND CLASS

by

Mike Fedyszyn

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2014  
Under the Supervision of Professor Scott Emmons

In this study, the learner-centered instruction of the interpretation of expressive elements in a large-group band class is closely examined in order to determine if secondary-level students primarily learning in a large-group setting are able to utilize their own interpretations in applying expressive elements to their own performances. During the spring of 2014, a focus group of 11 students from an eighth-grade band in southeastern Wisconsin were assessed by a panel of six evaluators who are experienced Wisconsin band directors. Evaluations consisted of audio-recorded performances of two short melodies, one being actively studied in the large-group classroom setting and one not being rehearsed, before and after a nine-week teaching period.

Using a mixed-method approach, quantitative scores and qualitative comments were received from evaluators for each pre- and post-treatment performance. In addition, qualitative feedback was gathered from student written reflections and formative teacher observations. Results indicated student growth in overall levels of expression and interpretation, as well the clarity of all expressive elements (rubato, dynamic contrast, and tension and release) focused upon during the study in both compositions. The amount

of growth, however, was not as large in the composition not being rehearsed in the classroom setting.

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Five years ago, I had what many would call a revelation regarding my career as a music teacher. I felt that there was too much mediocrity in the world. Not wanting any part of this, I set forth to make myself an even better teacher. At this point, I also began to question how (and even, in some cases, “if”) the art of emotion in music is being taught. Over time, this topic has become one of my true passions and has, in my opinion, made me a better teacher in the process. Thank you to everyone who has helped me during this journey.

## Chapter 1

### Statement of the Problem

#### Introduction

Performing music with expression has long been one of the most fundamental skills of a musician. In the words of Juslin (2003), “expression is largely what makes music performance worthwhile” (p. 274). The level of expression and emotion found in a performance is looked at as the defining factor in what makes a superior musician (Brenner & Strand, 2013; Woody, 2000). Additionally, the ability to interpret music is also vital to making informed expressive decisions, even if those decisions are largely subjective. Therefore, it should be no surprise that the absence of expression is severely detrimental to the performance of music. The ability to apply expression empowers performers of all ages to be creative and artistic on their own merits. In short, expression and emotion help make music an art form that is indispensable.

The foundational elements of expression, including those pertaining to dynamics, tempo, and phrasing, are included in most music curriculums. Of course, all musical works have varying amounts of expressive elements included in their scores by composers. Other expressive elements that are not necessarily implied by the composer can be included in performances based on informed interpretative decisions. In large-group, performance-based ensemble classes, however, it is usually implied that the conductor makes these types of decisions (Holsberg, 2009; Scruggs, 2009b). In that case, what is the student’s role in this teacher-centered environment? If educators are to expect students to be truly expressive and perform with emotion, they must be given opportunities to make these interpretative decisions on their own. How can truly

individual, expressive musicianship occur when student musicians who primarily study in a large-group setting often do not have the opportunity or proper training to do so?

### **Purpose of Study**

Through this study, I examined how secondary-level band students primarily being taught in the performance-based, large-group ensemble class can use the tools necessary to make their own interpretative decisions regarding expression in their own music making. The purpose of the study also included determining if expressive and interpretative decisions can be made by students on music that is not being actively studied, rehearsed, or performed. Using a mixed-method approach, this study included quantitative and qualitative evaluations of student performances by a panel of secondary-level band teachers both before and after a nine-week period in which various expressive and interpretative elements were introduced and explored. By assessing the performances of students before and after the large-group teaching of these concepts, the determination was made whether or not growth occurred.

### **Need for Study**

Most band students in the secondary school setting participate solely in large-group, performance-based ensemble courses. In some schools, a small-group sectional or lesson (or even a one-on-one individual lesson) is incorporated into the curriculum of the large-group band class to provide more focused and differentiated instruction. However, the time spent in a large-group ensemble rehearsal is often far more significant than these smaller groups. In addition, many schools that originally included smaller group instruction have discontinued this curricular offering due to a variety of reasons, including budgetary cuts and the desire to increase instruction time in other academic

subjects. This means that the teaching of expression and interpretation at a more abstract level, something that is often implied to be taught in a studio lesson or small-group lesson situation (Kaplan, 2003; Karlsson & Juslin, 2008; Woody, 2000), must be taught in a large-group classroom in order for all students to receive a complete education in music.

When expression becomes the focus of instruction, students in the large-group performance-based classroom often do not have the opportunity to become truly expressive on their own merits. This can be attributed to the prevalence of teacher-centered instruction, the basis of the traditional model of instrumental music education (Holsberg, 2009; Scruggs, 2009b). Scruggs (2009a) describes this phenomenon in an article regarding learner-centered practices in the orchestra environment:

The arrangement of chairs and stands in the string orchestra classroom is a telling indicator of teacher as leader. All chairs and stands face the teacher. The podium is the epicenter of the classroom. Generally off limits to students, the podium is figuratively a throne for the monarch of the classroom. This typical classroom arrangement is indicative of the rehearsal style of many conductors. (p. 54)

A teacher-centered model of instruction in the large group classroom largely strips students of any of their own interpretative or expressive decisions in music and gives those decisions back to the ensemble director. Holsberg (2009) states that “when the band director ‘micromanages’ all facets of the performance to present a polished product, such a pedagogy is likely to realize the musical vision of one person in the room: the band director” (p. 16). Essentially, the interpretative and expressive decisions made by the conductor in a teacher-centered learning environment often become the law of the land.

How do students transfer the ability to interpret music into their own individual performances of music? Frequently, students are asked to “take their own liberties” on interpretative matters regarding expression (i.e. dynamics, rubato, etc.) that are not explicitly stated by the composer. This is especially true when students are studying solo or chamber literature. One must wonder, in an educational climate in which student-centered, constructivist ideals are valued, how can students make the decisions necessary to craft interpretative decisions about expression when they have never had the chance to do so in a primarily teacher-centered environment?

### **Research Questions**

The following questions were examined in order to guide the research for this study:

1. Can secondary-level instrumental music students learn to make interpretative decisions regarding music expression after being taught to do so in the large-group, homogeneous ensemble class setting?
2. If students can make those decisions after instruction on one composition in the large-group setting, can they apply this knowledge of interpretation and expression to a performance of a composition that has not been previously studied?

### **Definition of Terms**

Due to the abstract nature of many of the elements of this study, it is integral to define many of the terms that will be used throughout the course of discussion within the scope of this study.



**Expression:** The act of performing with feeling and meaning through the use of a variety of musical elements and techniques.

**Interpretation:** The application of an individual's expressive decisions in a musical performance.

**Treatment:** The nine-week period in which students in the large-group, homogeneous band class setting will be taught expressive techniques that can be applied in their performance.

**Secondary:** The highest level of compulsory education in the United States. This level can refer to a number of different grade levels. While students in this study were in the eighth-grade, the implications of the study are designed to reach a vast range of students. For the purposes of this study, secondary will refer to students in Grades 6-12.

### **Limitations**

This study was designed to measure growth in the areas of interpretation and expression after a nine-week treatment period. This treatment period consisted of a variety of teaching strategies designed to introduce to students techniques for expression and ways to create their own interpretations of music. The primary elements of expression taught include dynamic contrast, rubato, and the overall concept of tension and release.

Because all educators teach using different styles with their students, and these concepts can be taught using a variety of methods, it is unrealistic to expect that the treatment phase of this study can be fully replicated. Instead, the aim of this study was to examine the teaching of selected expressive elements in a more learner-centered

environment that encourages students to actively apply their own musical interpretations. Thus, the treatment phase of this study serves as a model that is not necessarily designed to be reproduced.

### **Organization of Study**

This study is compiled in five chapters. Chapter 2 features a review of literature pertaining to various aspects in the study. Chapter 3 serves as a discussion of the methodology of the study. Finally, Chapters 4 and 5 offer an analysis of the results of the study, as well as conclusions and implications for future research.

## Chapter 2

### **Review of Literature**

It is clear that the ability to perform expressively and to effectively interpret music is valued amongst musicians. However, the methods in which performers, especially young students, achieve these types of goals deserve to be further examined. The following review of literature focused on various themes that relate to expression pedagogy and interpretation, especially as it applies to a teacher vs. student-centric environment. Other areas explored include the selection of band literature and affective outcomes in comprehensive musicianship, which were partially explored in the treatment phase of this study.

#### **Expression Pedagogy**

Due to its abstract nature, expression has long been a topic that musicians and music educators have found difficult to discuss (Brenner & Strand, 2013; Elliott, 2005; Juslin, 2003; Kazee, 2010). Thus, expression, while viewed as integral to music education (Elliott, 1995; Juslin, 2003; Woody, 2000), is an area which must be better understood. Utilizing a psychological approach to expression in music performance, Juslin (2003) aimed to “explain performance expression in order to provide a solid foundation for teaching of expression in music education” (p. 274). Kazee (2010) found that teachers valued expression, yet also found it difficult to define. One teacher involved in Kazee’s study stated, “If we say this is something students should be able to do, but we don’t define it, how do we know they are getting it?” (p. 129).

Expression in music is a largely subjective element which often generates debate concerning application (Elliott, 2005). Because of this, assessment of expression is a

topic which contains numerous questions. Models for the assessment of expression have been devised by many researchers (Broomhead, 1999; Hoffren, 1964; Steinberg & Raith, 1985), while others (Kazee, 2010) have found it difficult to assess. In an attempt to create an achievement test designed to evaluate general rules of expression, Hoffren (1964) stated, “Even if rules of expressive performance can be formulated, is it feasible or practical to devise a test to measure this ability?” (p. 159).

When teaching the concept of expression, educators have successfully utilized a number of specific techniques (Brenner & Strand, 2013). Modeling, whether it is via teacher performance or the use of recordings, is often cited by researchers as a best practice in the teaching of expression (Elliott, 2005; Simpson, 2000; Woody, 2000). It has been found that metaphors or imagery are also used quite frequently to teach expressive techniques (Braun, 2012; Elliott, 2005; Kaplan, 2003). The use of language and vocabulary in teaching has also been suggested by researchers to affect student understanding of expression (Braun, 2012; Broomhead, Skidmore, Eggett, & Mills, 2012; Elliott, 2005; Simpson, 2000). Brenner & Strand (2013) recommend the application of music theory instruction and score study by students to effectively teach expression. Others have found merit in using techniques often found in theater education (Kaplan, 2003), as well as the use of a book of musical excerpts that are “overtly emotional” (Simpson, 2000, p. 4) in private studio instruction. Another frequently cited method of teaching expression involves the use of teacher classroom discussion (Karlsson & Juslin, 2008; Woody, 2000). Research seems to suggest the selection of repertoire is an important element in students experiencing success in performing with expression. Duke & Simmons (2006) believe repertoire assigned must be within the technical abilities of

the performer. Elliott (2005) recommends teachers deliberately select works that offer clear examples of emotions in music. In short, repertoire must be based on more criteria than just technique in order to be successful in teaching expression (Brenner & Strand, 2013).

Much of the literature presented above focuses on teaching expression either a) in a private studio setting and/or b) at the collegiate level. Karlsson & Juslin (2008) videotaped five teachers and 12 college students to analyze how expression is taught. Their findings indicated that teaching was more dependent on technique and the written score. They also found that expression and emotion were taught implicitly rather than explicitly. A smaller number of studies, however, have explored the teaching of expression in the large-group, performance-based classroom in the secondary school setting. Broomhead (2001) examined the relationship between individual expressive achievement and technical performance, ensemble achievement, and musical background. There was no substantial evidence discovered to suggest ensemble expressive achievement could be an effective and meaningful indicator of individual expressive achievement.

### **Music Interpretation**

Expression in musical performance is closely related to the process of musical interpretation. However, the interpretative process relates more closely to the ability to make individual musical decisions, which is one of the major questions of this study. Researchers agree on the need to teach student musicians the ability to interpret music. Elliott (2005) believes the attention of students needs to be focused on instances of musical expression, followed by presenting interpretive problems to students in order to

solve in performance projects. Others have formed various questions to consider when teaching students how to interpret music (Lisk, 1996; White, 2009). In order to effectively interpret music, students must be taught to expand their general knowledge base beyond just musical technique and create their own interpretations (Silverman, 2008).

In a large-group performance ensemble class, however, the students are not in charge of the majority of interpretative decisions. This role instead is assumed by the ensemble conductor (Freer, 2006; Holsberg, 2009; Scruggs, 2009b; Silverman, 2008). As a result, the relationship between conductor and musician becomes, in the eyes of Khodyakov (2007), a form of “hierarchical control.” Commonly found in the business world, the concept of hierarchical control “stifles creativity, fosters dissatisfaction, and demotivates employees” (Adler and Borys, 1996, p. 61). When hierarchical control occurs in a creative organization, artists’ views can be stifled and the final product may ultimately suffer (Khodyakov, 2007). In the professional music arena, research suggests the conductor-as-leader approach lowers the morale of musicians as compared to a conductor-less method; a study by Allmendinger, Hackman, and Lehman (1996) showed symphony orchestra musicians have a lower sense of general satisfaction in their careers than members of a professional string quartet. This view is supported by Ross & Judkins (1996), who believe ensembles lacking conductors are often embraced and valued by musicians.

Perhaps the most prominent example of an ensemble celebrated for its lack of a conductor is the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra. An ensemble based in New York and founded in 1972, the members of Orpheus take pride in their collaborative approach to

music making that has become known as the “Orpheus Process.” As a result, the ensemble governs itself and benefits from this social control (Khodyakov, 2007). Members consistently rave about their level of involvement in the group. “Orpheus keeps me involved,” says founding member and double bassist Don Palma, who had left Orpheus for a short time to perform with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and felt “powerless” to affect musical change (Seifter, 2001, p. 40). In Orpheus, Palma believes he has “some measure of participation in the direction the music is going to take” (Seifter, 2001, p. 40). The interpretation of music in this ensemble is very democratic; members share and rotate leadership roles while all contribute interpretative ideas and constructive criticism. The result is a large-group ensemble setting where multiple performing members, rather than one conductor, are the musical leaders.

In the educational realm, however, the conductor-as-leader approach to interpretation still reigns supreme. This can possibly be related to the strong tradition of performing music courses in schools since the turn of the century (Holsberg, 2009; Scruggs, 2009b) and based on the work of influential conductors/educators in the field, such as William Revelli (Holsberg, 2009). As a result, the literature has focused on the conductor’s role in interpretation (Battisti & Garofalo, 1990; Kirchoff, 2009; Scruggs, 2009b), leaving a shortage of published material focusing on the student’s role in interpretation in a large-group ensemble.

### **Teacher vs. Student-Centered Instruction**

The music educator or conductor serving as the interpretative leader is a form of teacher-centered instruction (Freer, 2006; Holsberg, 2009; Scruggs, 2009b). A learning model largely outdated (King, 1993), it has been the primary vehicle of instruction in

large-group performing ensemble classes for decades (Holsberg, 2009; Scruggs, 2009b). A large wave of criticism of this method began in the early 1980s at the collegiate level of education. King (1993) compared the teacher-centered educator as a “sage on a stage” and argued this method would not be effective to successfully prepare students for the twenty-first century. Many researchers (Freer, 2006; McCombs & Whistler, 1997; Scruggs, 2009a) agree that teacher-centered instruction does not engage students properly.

As a result, researchers began to develop a variety of instructional methods focused on the learner. Although each of these theories is unique in its own way, the central focus is to place students in control of their learning, a concept favored by numerous contemporary educators (Bonwell & Eison, 1991; Freer, 2006; King, 1993; McCombs & Whistler, 1997; Webster University, 2009). Many forms of student-centered (also known as learner-centered) instruction began to appear, especially under a term known as “active learning.” Bonwell & Eison (1991) provide an authoritative report on active learning geared towards college educators where they define the method as “anything that involves students in doing things and thinking about the things they are doing” (pg. 19). King (1993) also explores the ideas of active learning, encouraging the teacher to become more of a facilitator, or “guide on the side.” Proponents of active learning models believe higher order thinking skills are nurtured due to the student’s ability to analyze and synthesize content rather than merely memorize it (Bonwell & Eison, 1991; King, 1993).

The philosophy which drives learner-centered instruction models can be traced back to the beliefs of various influential names in education, including the democratic



classroom approaches of Dewey (1916) and the concept of discovery learning by Bruner (1961). The emergence, translation, and subsequent spread of the work of Vygotsky (1978) and the theories of social constructivism were major factors that helped popularize the learner-centered instruction movement. Constructivism is based around the concept of individuals building upon their own knowledge based on their past experiences to understand new material. The model puts students first and in the center of the learning process while they make meaning for themselves (King, 1993).

The philosophy of learner-centered instruction has gained acclaim in the K-12 education setting and is now an integral element taught in teacher-training programs (McCombs & Whistler, 1997; Webster University, 2009). Instruction strategies that can be considered learner-centered often are considered to utilize the elements of active learning. Researchers have provided numerous example strategies for classroom use (Bonwell & Eison, 1991; King, 1993; Webster University, 2009) and have cited studies that demonstrate the merits of learner-centered instruction (Holsberg, 2009; McCombs & Whistler, 1997; Scruggs, 2009b). There are few studies devoted to learner-centered instruction in the large-group performance music classroom.

### **Band Literature Selection**

The selection of band literature to be performed can have a significant effect on the ability for students to perform expressively. Music being performed in an educational setting must be of the highest quality (Margolis, 1986; Margolis, 1993; Miles, 1997; Miles, 2001; O'Toole, 2003; Rush, 2006; Sheldon, 1996). In addition, the technical level of the music cannot be more difficult than the ensemble is able to perform, a problem that many teachers experience, especially in their formative years in the profession (Rush,

2006). There are a number of grading systems utilized by band directors in order to assess the level of difficulty of a work for band (American Band College, 2000; Belwin Concert Band, 2013). While attempts have been made to assess the difficulty level of the musicality found in works for band (Akey, n.d.), the grade level of a work largely refers to its technical difficulty.

Music that is too difficult limits the opportunities to truly focus on expression (Brenner & Strand, 2013; Duke & Simmons, 2006). By choosing music that is less technically challenging, the concept of expression can be effectively explored with students (Duke & Simmons, 2006).

### **Comprehensive Musicianship Through Performance**

Comprehensive musicianship has been advocated in the large-group ensemble setting for decades (Benner, 1972; Garofalo, 1983; Labuta, 1997; O'Toole, 2003; Reimer, 2000). In addition, there are various comprehensive musicianship models that concentrate on the expressive qualities of music. In *Blueprint for Band*, a venerable publication that created a template for band directors to apply comprehensive musicianship into their curriculum (George, Schmid, & Sindberg, 2010), Garofalo (1983) defines musicianship as “one’s knowledge and understanding of the creative and expressive qualities of music as revealed through the application of musical skills”; the author also references the “affective domain” as an important byproduct in the process.

Garofalo’s work in applying affective elements into comprehensive musicianship can also be found as part of the Wisconsin CMP Project, an initiative established in 1977. This model is one of the most celebrated programs for comprehensive musicianship in the nation and has been used as a template for similar projects in other states. The five-

point model includes creating affective/aesthetic outcomes for student learning. A response for this type of outcome can include a student making a meaningful emotional connection with the music (O'Toole, 2003). While the affective development of students in the classroom can be difficult to nurture (O'Toole, 2003; Sindberg, 2007), it remains an element that is valued in the classroom (Sindberg, 2007) and, through the choice of quality music, will provide opportunities for experiences that are memorable (Schlafer, 2007).

### **Summary**

The review of literature indicates the value which music educators place on expression and interpretation. Additionally, numerous instructional methods regarding the pedagogy of expression and interpretation have been revealed. However, the vast majority of these findings have been practiced in an individual or small-group instructional setting, with the affective models for comprehensive musicianship not directly pertaining to expression pedagogy. The literature examined also suggests the interpretative decisions of expressive performance in a large-group classroom are largely the domain of the teacher or conductor, not the student. This teacher-centered learning environment has been suggested to have an impact on the lack of student-led expressive decisions in music. It is clear that the teaching of expression and interpretation to secondary-level band students in the large group classroom setting should be further explored.

## Chapter 3

### **METHODOLOGY**

In this study, I aimed to examine the effectiveness of teaching interpretation and expression in the large-group band classroom setting. After a review of the literature, the following questions were posed:

#### **Research Questions**

1. Can secondary-level instrumental music students learn to make interpretative decisions regarding music expression after being taught to do so in the large-group, homogeneous ensemble class setting?
2. If students can make those decisions after instruction on one composition in the large-group setting, can they apply this knowledge of interpretation and expression to a performance of a composition that has not been previously studied?

During this study, learner-centered teaching strategies in the large-group classroom were also utilized to incorporate and encourage interpretative decisions regarding expression by students.

#### **Setting**

A middle school band program from a medium-sized city in southeastern Wisconsin was the focus of this study. The school's eighth-grade band, an ensemble consisting of 37 members, was the large-group ensemble chosen for the study. As the school's band instructor, I served as the teacher of the ensemble in addition to my role as researcher. Thus, teacher-directed research, which is sometimes referred to as practitioner-based research, was utilized for this project; this has been a methodology

used in many research studies pertaining to music education (Davidson, 2004; Fung, 2009; Holsberg, 2009).

The vast majority of students in this ensemble had performed on their primary instruments for between three and four years. The students in this ensemble received academic credit for this course and met every other day for 41-minute class periods during the regular school schedule. In addition, once per week, students received small group instruction (SGI) time during a 30-minute time block. This time was designated by the school as “intervention/enrichment time”, a portion of the schedule where students could receive additional help on their coursework and/or take enrichment courses in a variety of topics. The SGI time often served as a sectional for smaller sub-sections of the band (i.e. woodwinds, brass, and percussion) and served as a portion of their overall grade in the course. The ensemble studied music indicative of a typical eighth-grade band in Wisconsin, performing literature between a Grade 2 and Grade 3 skill level (on a scale of 1-6, with “1” being the easiest).

This ensemble was chosen for a variety of reasons. As a middle school band teacher, I had access to ensembles in Grades 6, 7, and 8. Because the focus of the study pertains to secondary students, I wanted to utilize the ensemble with the oldest, most experienced musicians to ensure that the students involved in the study would be more centered in the generally accepted age range of secondary students (Grade 6-12). In addition, this particular ensemble contained many reliable students who were self-driven, possessed strong leadership skills, and had an exceptional interest in their own musical endeavors. For these reasons, it made even more sense for me to make this class of students the group to be studied.

A small focus group consisting of students in the eighth-grade band were chosen prior to the start of the study. Focus groups have also been utilized in other studies pertaining to the pedagogy of music expression (Braun, 2012; Broomhead, 2001). Prospective members of this focus group were asked if they were willing to participate in this phase of the study and permission was sought from the parents of these students (Appendix A). In addition, the students asked to participate in the study represent a mixture of ability levels and instruments; this was done to represent a cross section of a typical secondary-level band class grouped by grade level. Overall, 11 students agreed to participate as a member of the focus group. These students agreed to perform and audio record two melodies before (pre-treatment) and after (post-treatment) a nine-week treatment period of classroom instruction.

### **Evaluation Panel**

The use of evaluator panels has been successfully employed in many research studies in music education (Blanton, 1994; Broomhead, 2001; Smith, 2004). An evaluation panel was also utilized for this project in order to assess the level of expression and interpretation students in the focus group employed in their performance before and after treatment. Before the study began, I contacted six colleagues who served as band directors throughout the state of Wisconsin. After being asked to serve on the evaluation team for this study, they volunteered to help. Each of these individuals have taught band students in public schools for ten years or more and represented various career stages; one had just recently retired. In addition, the six evaluators came from a variety of teaching backgrounds; two were exclusively middle school (Grade 6-8) teachers, three were high school (9-12) directors, and one taught both middle school and

high school students in their current position. The common bond between these individuals is they all have taught in superior band programs throughout the state. Professionally, the six evaluators are well-known and respected educators; their accomplishments include presenting or conducting at state and national music conferences, serving on the executive boards of professional development associations in the field of music education, and writing and publishing articles and books on music education.

### **Repertoire Selected**

*Psalm 42*. All students in the eighth-grade band class utilized for this project studied *Psalm 42*, a work by composer Samuel Hazo (2004). This composition is a four-part chorale setting of *The Water is Wide* that contains numerous suspensions and non-chord tones preceded by an unaccompanied solo of the well-known song. The composition appears on multiple state festival lists (Louisiana Music Educators Association, 2013; North Carolina Bandmasters Association, 2013; West Virginia Bandmasters Association, 2013), as well as in recommended literature guides for wind band (Miles, 2001).

Hazo dedicated *Psalm 42* to the McCurrie family of Upper St. Clair, Pennsylvania in response to the death of the family's youngest child. Five-year-old Gregory McCurrie was diagnosed with Deletion 13-Q Syndrome, a rare chromosomal disorder that makes its sufferers reliant on others for the simplest of physical tasks or communication. Hazo, who had taught trumpet to Gregory's three older brothers, had built a special bond with the family, as shared in the program note for the composition:

“Every time I saw Mrs. McCurrie at the school, she always had Gregory in her arms. Even as he aged, his growing body never seemed heavy to her. It always seemed that her love for him provided her with an admirable and unflinching strength that only mothers have. Watching the McCurrie family raise Greg with an unfathomable number of challenges, and finally sharing in their grief at his funeral, provided me with the opportunity to see people whose sense of love and faith were most deserving of admiration.” (Hazo, 2004, p. i)

The composition is part of the Windependence series of music published by Boosey & Hawkes and is graded by the publisher at the “apprentice” level of difficulty (on a scale of three difficulty levels – apprentice, master, and artist). Other resources utilized by music educators have graded the technical degree of difficulty of this work at “Easy” (J.W. Pepper, 2014) or at a “1” on a scale of 1-6, with “1” being the easiest (Miles, 2001). The composition, technically speaking, is very accessible, especially for students in their third or fourth year of instruction. The musical value found in this piece, though, is extremely high. This was the ultimate reason why this work was chosen for this study. At the onset of studying this work in class, I informed students that the major learning objectives during the study of this piece would not involve the concrete elements of notes and rhythms. Instead, the target would be to explore the expressive and interpretative merits of the work. The relative simplicity of the written music provided a perfect vehicle to teach the concepts of expression and interpretation.

As part of their pre-treatment and post-treatment recordings, students in the focus group performed the opening solo to *Psalm 42*, the unaccompanied setting of *The Water is Wide*. As before, this section was chosen due to its easier degree of difficulty. It should



be noted that oboe and French horn students were given the option to perform these melodies in an alternate key or octave in order to better accommodate for range considerations at their skill level. In addition, the well-known melody provides numerous expressive and interpretative opportunities for musicians. The music for the solo part was transcribed for all instruments using Finale (2009) music notation software and was modified to contain only one expressive marking, a tempo/style marking at the onset of the work simply asking students to perform “Expressively” (Appendix B). This was done intentionally by myself to encourage students to create their own interpretation of the work rather than one of a composer or other individual.

*Amazing Grace*. The second composition utilized in this study is the melody of one of the world’s most recognizable songs, *Amazing Grace* (Newton, 1779). This work was not studied in the eighth-grade band class before or during any point of this study. Members of the focus group were the only students who had any interaction with this composition; this occurred on the day of the pre-treatment and post-treatment recordings. Because students received this music on the day of their pre-treatment and post-treatment recordings and were instructed to return the music directly after completion of the recordings, they were unable to practice the work (except for an approximately three-minute period of individual study directly before their recording session). In addition, prior to each recording session, they were unaware this work would be performed.

In order to determine if student musicians can make interpretative decisions regarding expression on music not being actively studied, it was imperative to find a melody for students to perform which would be accessible and well-known while being technically easy enough to perform expressively with very little preparation time. The

selection of *Amazing Grace* allowed for these requirements to be met. The work was transcribed in a key (E-flat major) that would ensure minimal range considerations for all instruments. Oboe and French horn students again received the option of performing from music in an alternate key or octave. As was the case with *Psalms 42*, students in the focus group performed *Amazing Grace* from music transcribed in Finale (2009) that was intentionally written by myself to include only one expressive marking, a tempo/style marking of “Expressively” (Appendix C).

### **Rubric Design**

The use of rubrics in studies pertaining to music education has been advocated by many researchers (Hickey, 1999; Wesolowski, 2012; Whitcomb, 1999). To assess the level of expression and interpretation students in the focus group utilized in performance, a rubric was also created for this study (Appendix D). The rubric contained two multiple part questions designed to gather quantitative data through a Likert-type scale, a common tool utilized in many research studies in music education (Napoles, 2009; Russell, 2010; Smith & Barnes, 2007). Additionally, a comment section was also included for evaluators to give qualitative feedback. This rubric could be found on a special Internet web site for evaluators (Appendix E).

The first question was “In your opinion, how clear were the following elements of music in the performance?” Evaluators then answered three sub-questions using a Likert-scale model of 1-5, with “5” being defined as “Very Clear”, “4” being defined as “Somewhat Clear”, “3” being defined as “Less Clear”, “2” being defined as “Minimally Clear”, and “1” being defined as “Not Clear, No Evidence”. The elements of music being examined in this question included “Dynamic Contrast”, “Rubato”, and “Attention to

Tension & Release Points in Music”. These areas represented the primary expressive elements of music to be focused upon during the treatment stage.

The second question on the rubric was “On a scale of 1-5, please rate the level of evident student interpretation and expression found in the performance.” Evaluators answered the question for each area represented in the above question – interpretation and expression – using a Likert-scale model of 1-5, with “5” being defined as “Highest” and “1” being defined as “Lowest”.

The final responsibility of the evaluator was to provide comments regarding the performance. Prior to listening to recordings, evaluators were supplied with directions regarding their role in the study (Appendix F). They were given the following guidelines regarding comments:

Please write comments in the box provided. These comments should pertain to the topics of dynamic contrast, rubato, and/or overall student interpretation/expression. Comments regarding other areas, including accuracy in notes/rhythms, can be made only if they pertain to the overall focus of expression and interpretation. There is no requirement on how many comments you write, but more comments written will help provide valuable qualitative data to more accurately answer the research question.

Evaluators were asked to complete this rubric for each student performance of *Psalm 42* and *Amazing Grace* during the Pre-Treatment and Post-Treatment phase.

### **Activities Prior to Start of Study**

Prior to the beginning of this research, students in the eighth-grade band class had learned about various foundational elements of expression through method books,

concert repertoire, and various supplemental exercises in the classroom. This had occurred since I had become their teacher and, for students who started on their instruments in Grade 5, presumably began with their beginning band teacher at their respective elementary school. These foundational elements primarily consisted of various terms related to dynamic contrast and tempo. Most students could recognize various dynamic and tempo markings in music and apply them to their own performance. They had received an introduction to dynamic contrast as it applies to the tessitura of the melodic line in seventh-grade band, but this concept was only briefly presented during one class period in conjunction with a composition studied and performed in class during that school year. Some students who previously performed solos and chamber music during the school district's annual solo and ensemble music festivals also received instruction on melodic tessitura from me, but these experiences were also very limited due to the primary instructional focus lying in other musical areas. Aside from these brief experiences, students involved in this study did not have much experience in interpreting their own music.

Before the pre-treatment recordings, all students in the eighth-grade band class received the music to Hazo's *Psalm 42*. In addition, students received the aforementioned transcribed music for the unaccompanied solo in the beginning of the work. Originally written for trumpet, Hazo (2004) permitted the performance of the unaccompanied solo by any instrument, which was how this piece was ultimately performed. The solo part featured very little in terms of written expressive markings; this was done purposefully in order to encourage students to make interpretations in the music, especially during the treatment phase of the study.

On the day in which music for *Psalm 42* was handed out to students, the ensemble studied their parts for about 1-2 minutes; they were instructed to primarily focus on correct notes and rhythms while sight-reading the music. This was followed by a complete performance of the work. It should be noted that all students performed the solo section in unison. After the performance, the ensemble refined errors pertaining to the key signature and followed this process with another performance of the composition. No mention was made to any interpretations of expressive ideas on the part of myself as conductor or by the students, as the main teaching objective for this 10-minute segment of rehearsal was to ensure the correct performance of notes and rhythms in this work.

### **Data Collection**

There were three phases of data collection during the course of this study, including Pre-Treatment, Treatment, and Post-Treatment.

**Pre-Treatment.** Approximately one week after the first reading of *Psalm 42* in large-group rehearsal, the 11 students in the focus group were asked to assemble in the band room during their small-group instruction (SGI) time. Serving as the proctor for this assessment, I informed students of their expectations for this portion of the study.

Students were instructed to take out the solo part for *Psalm 42*, a work of music they already received in class. As discussed above, this arrangement of the melody also served as the music to be utilized in the study. Students were also instructed to perform this work as expressively as possible. They were directed to use whatever techniques or means necessary to achieve this goal. Finally, students were reminded that this was not being graded and that this served as a pre-assessment, as students are familiar with this concept from other academic classes. They were told to simply, “Do their best.”

At that point, music for *Amazing Grace* was released to students. The same instructions that were used for *Psalms 42* were given to students for *Amazing Grace* in regards to performing expressively, as well as the reminder of this serving as a pre-assessment. As a small group, students were then led in a sight-read performance of *Amazing Grace*.

Students received approximately three minutes to individually practice any areas of either *Psalms 42* and/or *Amazing Grace*. After this period of time was complete, students entered an adjacent classroom one at a time to audio record their performance. As the proctor, I would again remind each student of the instructions, especially the element of playing with expression. After directions were given and a brief sound check was conducted, I would enable the recording device and the student began by performing *Psalms 42* for the audio recorder. At the conclusion of their *Psalms 42* performance, the same series of steps were completed with *Amazing Grace*.

After students completed their series of pre-treatment recordings, they returned their sheet music to *Amazing Grace*. No student was informed that they would later see this same work during the post-treatment recordings.

**Treatment.** Data collection during the nine-week treatment phase consisted of various written activities completed by students (Appendix I), as well as my formative observations of musical performance in the large-group classroom setting. These types of qualitative evaluations have been used in numerous studies pertaining to the teaching of expression (Holsberg, 2009; Karlsson & Juslin, 2008; Kazee, 2010; Scruggs, 2009b).

***Interpretation of Tension and Release.*** During the treatment phase, students were introduced to the concept of tension and release not only in music, but in other forms of

art. The terms were defined and students were encouraged to think of their own examples of tension and release occurring in everyday life. By making the concept relatable, the transfer was then made to tension and release being found in music. At this point, the natural laws of musical expression devised by Lisk (1996) were introduced to students.

These guidelines consisted of the following:

1. Low searches for high (p. 31)
2. High searches for low (p. 33)
3. Short looks for long (p. 37)

Another guideline, “long looks for short”, was added by myself and presented to students.

After these concepts were introduced, they were practiced in a large-group setting by performing the solo part to *Psalms 42*. Musicians were encouraged to use various elements of expression they already knew, including dynamic contrast and tempo alterations, when applying these guidelines. They were instructed to perform these elements in any way that they saw fit while remembering the ideals of tension and release in music. Thus, students were able to experiment with different interpretations in their performance.

Based on the review of the literature, it can be suggested that modeling is an effective method to teach expression (Elliott, 2005; Simpson, 2000; Woody, 2000). Thus, modeling was utilized during this phase; I would perform various interpretations of the solo for students. After I modeled an interpretation, I would often ask students to determine what expressive elements were present and how they were used. This was done to give students a better understanding of how the elements they already knew could be used to their advantage. Students would also model for each other, as they would often

perform the solo for their peers while being encouraged to apply their own interpretations. Again, interpretations would be analyzed by others to determine why a particular musical decision was (or, in some cases, was not) effective.

Later in the treatment phase, students applied prior knowledge of expressive elements in determining where tension and release spots occurred in music being performed. To aid in this process, students studied the harmonic concept of non-chord tones, including the use of neighbor tones and suspensions (Gleason, 2006). Students would later study the full score of *Psalm 42*, as well as perform from each part in the four-part texture, to better understand the expressive possibilities in the composition. The performance of the four-part version of *Psalm 42* would serve as a warm-up chorale in the large group class during the final three weeks of the treatment phase.

***Incorporation of Comprehensive Musicianship.*** Elements of the Comprehensive Musicianship through Performance (CMP) model were incorporated during the treatment phase, especially those that related to affective outcomes. Through the use of affective outcomes in the model, students are able to reflect on their place in the world and their values through music (Bowman, 2014; Sindberg, 2012). These types of affective outcomes often rely on metaphors and imagery, which the review of literature indicates is a best practice in the teaching of expression (Braun, 2012; Elliott, 2005; Kaplan, 2003). Therefore, it is not surprising that expression has played an integral role in the comprehensive musicianship model (O'Toole, 2003; Wisconsin Music Educators Association, 2014). Additionally, it has been suggested affective concepts relate closely with expressive musical performance (Laszlo, 1968).



Because the application of an affective goal to music provided potential benefits to the expressive ideals explored in this study, students explored affective elements of expression and the composition of *Psalms 42* as a whole during the treatment phase. Each lesson described above included a writing prompt which asked students to give their thoughts and opinions on the concept. Reflective questions included ones based on the absence of release in an everyday situation, as well as the importance of expression in music. Students also studied the background of Hazzard's arrangement by reading his program notes. In response to the reading, they reflected in writing on Hazzard's use of non-chord tones in *Psalms 42*, as well as the possible thoughts of the McCurrie family after Gregory's death.

**Post-Treatment.** After the nine-week treatment period ended, the students in the focus group again were asked to audio record performances of *Psalms 42*, as well as a composition that was unknown to them at the time (*Amazing Grace*). Due to scheduling conflicts inherent during the time of the school year in which these recordings occurred, the post-treatment recordings were completed over the course of one week (as opposed to the pre-treatment recordings being completed in one day). Students came in to complete their recordings during free time in their schedule throughout the week.

When students arrived to complete their post-treatment recordings, I would ask them to again take out the solo part for *Psalms 42* and would also hand them music for *Amazing Grace*. They would have approximately three minutes to warm-up and individually prepare for their performance. At this point, students would enter the adjacent classroom and undergo the same procedure that was followed for the pre-

treatment recordings. Again, students who were visibly and audibly anxious were given a second chance at the discretion of myself, the proctor.

During both the pre-treatment and post-treatment phases of the study, students were recorded in a typical school classroom using a Zoom H2 Handy Recorder mounted on a boom-style microphone stand placed approximately five feet from the performer. The built-in microphone on the device was used for recordings; the microphone setting implemented was the front-facing, 90-degree option with medium mic gain. Audio was recorded in 16-bit stereo WAV format with a 44.1kHz frequency. Once complete, original recordings were cropped to only include music performances; this was done in order to ensure student confidentiality. In addition, to ensure that audio files would not be too large to download on the Internet for evaluator use, WAV files were converted to 256kbps MP3 format files. For confidentiality purposes, student names were de-identified and coded as “Student A”, “Student B”, and so forth; these titles were then applied to each file name.

**Evaluator Feedback.** Because evaluators were located across the state of Wisconsin, it was necessary to place all evaluation materials on the Internet. After the post-treatment phase was complete, I contacted each member of the evaluation team and supplied them with a link to the pre-treatment recordings for both *Psalm 42* and *Amazing Grace*. Evaluators had the choice of which composition they would hear first. Once they were finished with all 11 student pre-treatment recordings for one composition, they were supplied a link for the pre-treatment recordings for the other selection. Upon completion of all pre-treatment recordings, I sent them another link with all post-treatment recordings. The above process was repeated for the post-treatment recordings. Evaluators

were finished with their role in the study after all post-treatment recordings were complete.

In the study, evaluators listened to one recording at a time; they were not able to actively compare pre-treatment and post-treatment performances of a given student. Therefore, it can be assumed that any qualitative comments during the post-treatment phase that directly refer to pre-treatment performances are based on the evaluator's memory of the pre-treatment performance. Furthermore, evaluators could not complete all pre-treatment and post-treatment recordings in one sitting. This was partially by design and done so evaluators would not become fatigued or listen mistakenly to post-treatment performances before evaluating the pre-treatment performance of each student.

Each individual student recording was placed on its own web page. On each page, the recording was embedded into a built-in MP3 player. It should be noted that evaluators only had access to one recording per page; they were not able to compare recordings, especially when it came to examining pre- and post-treatment recordings of one student. Additionally, a link to the sheet music students performed from would be on the page. After listening to the recording, evaluators would then complete the rubric of two multi-part questions, provide written comments, write their name, and click on a link to the next student recording.

Quantitative and qualitative data from evaluators was collected using Google Forms. For each student recording (i.e. Student A *Psalm 42* Pre-Treatment Recording), a separate Google Form was created. After all 44 Google Forms were created (11 students in the focus group multiplied by the pre- and post- treatment phases of two musical selections), the HTML code for each page was modified to include the embedded audio

and link to the sheet music. In addition, HTML code was modified to provide evaluators with a link to the next student's recording. Data from each Google Form was then transferred to a spreadsheet on a local machine for analysis. Evaluators were also de-identified and coded as "Evaluator 1", "Evaluator 2", and so forth.

### **Summary**

This research study was designed to investigate the teaching of student expression and interpretation in the large-group band classroom to determine if students could apply their own expressive and interpretative decisions in their individual performance of two compositions. The study consisted of a focus group of 11 students from an eighth-grade band class in southeastern Wisconsin who audio recorded two short melodies both before and after a nine-week treatment period. An evaluation panel of six current and retired middle and high school band directors gave quantitative and qualitative feedback on all recordings. The following chapter presents the results of the data gathered from the pre-treatment and post-treatment recordings to determine whether there was student growth in the areas of expression and interpretation, as well as the elements of musical expression focused upon during the treatment phase in this study.

## Chapter 4

### Results

To determine student growth in expression along with interpretation in student performance, collecting quantitative and qualitative data seemed crucial. Using the research questions as a guide, the data from this study was analyzed by examining the relationship between the pre-treatment and post-treatment student performances. Results are organized by the research questions that have guided the direction of this study. Included with the results are an analysis of the data provided by evaluators for each sub-question on their rubric, the comments provided by evaluators, the written reflections of students in the focus group, and the formative observations I made during the treatment stage.

Anecdotally, it appears there is strong inter-rater reliability amongst the evaluators for this study. Some evaluators seemed to give higher or lower scores than their peers; this can be expected in the evaluation of subjective material, such as the recordings of student performances in this study. It did not appear, however, there was a difference in evaluator scores that would invalidate the research.

During the treatment phase of the study, it should be noted that two students (Students C and D) in the focus group were not present for numerous large-group classroom sessions. This was due to their concurrent enrollment in the school's eighth-grade chorus (Student C) and eighth-grade orchestra (Student D). Because band, chorus, and orchestra all met during the same time period in the school day, students who were enrolled in more than one ensemble alternated between what class they would attend. Ultimately, this meant students enrolled in two ensembles would be in a given ensemble

class once every four school days, as opposed to students in one ensemble being present once every other day. While these students were in chorus and orchestra, it is possible they received teaching pertaining to expression and individual interpretation, but it would have differed from the material presented in their band class during the treatment period.

This fact was known when Students C and D were originally approached and invited to be a part of the study; the activities which constituted the majority of the treatment phase were planned to take place when both of these students were present in band at the same time. Due to other scheduling concerns and conflicts that arose which were out of the hands of students or myself, the two students in multiple ensembles missed a considerable amount of time in the band classroom during the treatment phase. This was especially true for Student C, who also had a medical concern which caused further absences; this student was only available for band for approximately three weeks of the nine-week treatment phase.

In an attempt to utilize the most valid data within the scope of the research questions guiding this study, the data analyzed below will focus on the nine students of the focus group who were in attendance for all (or nearly all) class sessions during the treatment phase. Following this analysis will be a brief overview of the data from Students C and D and how their results compared to other students in the focus group.

### **Research Question 1 (*Psalm 42*)**

The first research question investigates the ability of students to make their own interpretative, expressive decisions while performing music after being taught to do so in a large ensemble setting. The musical composition *Psalm 42* served as the primary teaching vehicle in completing this task. As such, the research question is answered

through examination of the relationship between pre-treatment and post-treatment recordings of focus group student performances of the work (Appendix H).

***Psalm 42, Pre-Treatment.*** Sub-questions answered by evaluators were scored on a Likert-scale model of 1-5, with “5” serving as the high score for each question. Using the same 1-5 scale, the average element scores for each sub-question were between 2.26 and 2.74, with a mean score of 2.45, as demonstrated in Table 4.1.

**Table 4.1** *Psalm 42* Pre-Treatment Performance Data

	Average of Evaluator Scores <i>Student</i>									Average Element Score
	A	B	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	
Clarity - Dynamic Contrast	2.7	2.0	3.7	3.8	1.7	2.0	2.7	2.2	1.7	<b>2.48</b>
Clarity - Rubato	2.3	2.0	3.7	2.8	1.8	1.7	2.3	2.0	1.7	<b>2.26</b>
Clarity - Tension/Release	3.2	2.2	4.5	3.8	1.7	2.5	2.7	2.3	1.8	<b>2.74</b>
Interpretation	2.8	2.0	4.0	3.3	1.7	1.8	2.5	2.0	1.3	<b>2.39</b>
Expression	2.5	2.0	3.8	3.5	1.5	2.0	2.3	2.3	1.3	<b>2.37</b>
<i>Student Average Score</i>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>2.45</b>

When considering the three questions regarding clarity of various expressive elements, it became clear that students did not have as strong of a grasp of the concept of rubato. The average score for this element was 2.26; only Student E received a score of “5”, given by Evaluator 6, who succinctly wrote, “Nice rubato.” 17 out of a possible 54 evaluator responses to the rubato question received a score of “1”. A number of evaluator comments about individual pre-treatment recordings reflected the absence of this element. When speaking of Student A’s performance, Evaluator 4 wrote, “The performance, while accurate, did not display much variance in tempo or dynamic.”

Evaluator 3 speaks to the absence of rubato in the performance of Student F, a percussionist performing their selections on the marimba in this study. While it “could be the nature of the instrument prohibiting [this]”, the evaluator believed the performance “lacks any rubato or major expressive qualities.”

Another area that was demonstrated to be an area of student weakness was dynamic contrast. To me, this weakness was relatively surprising, as dynamics seem to be one of the most prominent expressive elements taught to young musicians. Nonetheless, the execution of dynamics as a whole by the focus group was not overly apparent. Student F was the only student who received a score of “5” in the element of dynamic contrast, receiving the mark from both Evaluators 5 and 6. Others made unnatural attempts at applying dynamics. Evaluator 5 offers this belief on Student H’s performance: “It sounded like at the end, the student thought, ‘Oh, that’s right, I’m supposed to add expression. Let me quick do a decrescendo!” The majority of students, however, appeared to neglect applying dynamics to their performances.

This was especially true in performances of students who were believed by some evaluators to be having problems with the physical and fundamental elements of their instrument. When given initial directions on their role in the study, evaluators were specifically asked to only address areas outside of dynamic contrast, rubato, or tension and release if they had a direct impact on the elements focused upon in the study. Students who were cited as having these sorts of performance issues had some of the lowest average scores in all five sub-questions; the area of dynamic contrast seemed to produce the worst scores. Students B and G, both French hornists, had some of the lowest scores in the category of dynamic contrast (2.00 and 1.67, respectively). Not surprisingly,



evaluators cited the difficulty of these students performing the correct partial, a common problem among young horn players. “It sounded like [Student B] was focused more on pitch rather than expression,” wrote Evaluator 5. Student G also had similar issues; Evaluator 3 believed this musician was “struggling physically with the instrument.” Student I, a tubist, had difficulties with air support that affected the expressive qualities of the performance; this was addressed by three of the six evaluators.

In all of the performances referenced above, most evaluators believed students to be focused purely on the notes and rhythms on the page, with their own interpretation of expression being an afterthought. “[Student G] sounded too worried about pitch and not yet ready for interpretation,” asserted Evaluator 5. When speaking of Student B, Evaluator 2 affirmed, “The student appeared to be struggling a little bit to get the notes . . . playing the notes took priority over musicality.” Evaluator 3 agreed: “This student [Student B] . . . is not thinking about interpretation/expression. They are simply lining up their fingers with notes and rhythms indicated on the page. Expression is non-existent.” When speaking of Student I, Evaluator 3 succinctly wrote, “Playing notes and rhythms. No expressive qualities.”

Evaluators believed the students’ perceived focus on the concrete elements of notes and rhythms came at the expense of the abstract notion of performing expressively. Student H’s performance was described as “flat” by Evaluator 1 and as “another mostly accurate performance without much personal choice directing it” by Evaluator 4. Student K’s performance was viewed similarly by evaluators as “straight” by Evaluator 6. Evaluator 3 simply wrote, “Notes and rhythms.” “This sounded like just notes and rhythms,” Evaluator 5 concluded. “There was no expression to take it to the next level.”

Even Student A, who earned one of the highest average element scores in the area of interpretation (2.83), received comments regarding the neglect of expression in favor of accuracy. “Aside from the notes and rhythms,” Evaluator 3 wrote, “this student is not demonstrating any kind of phrasing or movement in the musical line.”

The sub-question that received the highest average element score (2.74) pertained to the clarity of tension and release in the music. By nature, the concept of tension and release is achieved in music performance in a number of ways. Any of the aforementioned expressive elements (dynamic contrast and rubato) as well as many others not being focused upon in this study can contribute to the level of repose in music. Additionally, non-performance factors, such as the manner in which a work is composed, can affect the listener’s perception of tension and release found in performance. Because tension and release is a more abstract concept to measure, it was more difficult to evaluate the qualitative comments of evaluators pertaining to this issue.

The only students who received a score of “5” in the category of tension and release were Student E (given by three of six evaluators) and Student F (given by one evaluator). The common bond that connected these two students was the fact they seemed to perform at a much higher level in all areas than their peers. “I found this performance to be very pleasing,” said Evaluator 2 when speaking of Student E’s performance, which earned the highest overall average score (3.93) of any student. Evaluator 1 believed “this student seemed to have an idea of musicality.” Many evaluators chose to praise this student’s use of vibrato, a technique the student acquired outside of their regular school band classes. Other evaluators commented positively on elements of phrasing, specifically the shape of phrases (Evaluator 4) and “lifts” between phrases (Evaluator 5).

Student F's performance on marimba included a number of rolls on sustained notes that Evaluator 2 described as "nice, clear, and even"; this effect was not notated in the written music. While Evaluator 1 was "a bit confused as to what this student was going for in the rolls and [their] intensity," they felt that "the student was trying to pull out musical aspects." "The connection of rolls," writes Evaluator 4, "[led] to a nice sense of direction to the line."

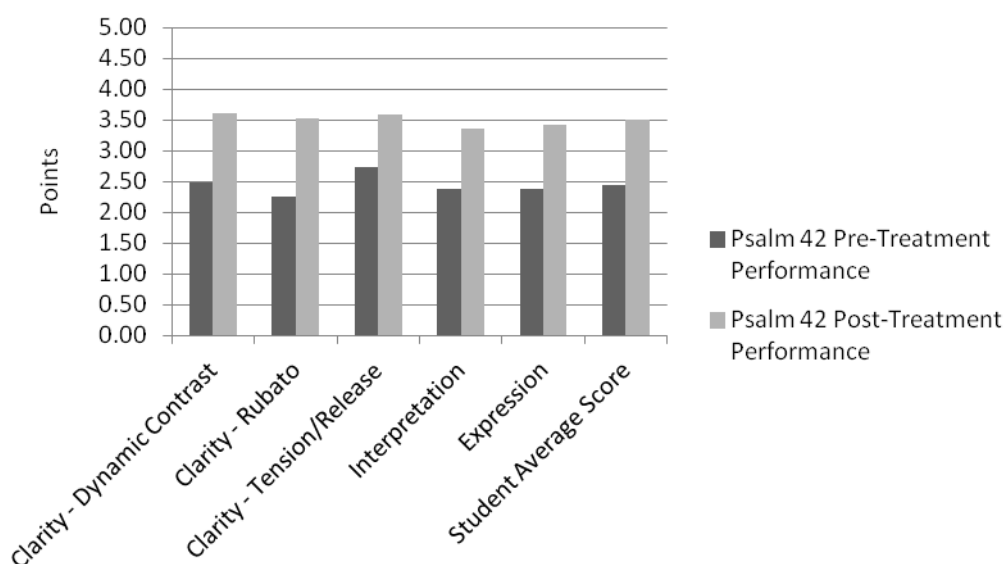
At any rate, the two students with the highest overall scores, not surprisingly, received the highest scores in tension and release. When the scores of Students E and F are removed from the overall tension and release average, the tension and release average element score falls to 2.33, which is much more similar to the scores in the other sub-questions. It would be interesting to further explore each evaluator's viewpoints on their personal meaning of tension and release. Additionally, it seemed that students who received high scores in other questions also received high scores in tension and release; it is unclear whether or not this is merely coincidental or has some sort of other meaning.

Scores for the sub-questions pertaining to the level of interpretation and expression in the performance seemed to mirror each other. No evaluator gave a score in either area that was more than a 1-point difference between both areas. In fact, 33 out of a possible 54 responses by evaluators produced the same score for interpretation and expression. Thus, it is no surprise that the average element score in interpretation (2.39) was very similar to the score for expression (2.37).

Overall, the students' performances of *Psalm 42* during the pre-treatment stage demonstrated some understanding and application of the expressive elements focused upon during this study. However, deficiencies were apparent in the application of

expressive qualities in the majority of recordings. Instead, students seemed to focus more on concrete elements of accuracy, such as notes and rhythms, in their performances.

***Psalm 42, Post-Treatment:*** After analysis of post-treatment data provided by the evaluation panel, it became apparent there was considerable growth in all expressive elements measured and in the overall areas of interpretation and expression. Figure 4.1 visually indicates this amount of growth.



**Figure 4.1** Comparison of *Psalm 42* Pre-Treatment and Post-Treatment Data

Utilizing the same scale used during the pre-treatment phase and as illustrated in Table 4.2, the average element scores for each sub-question were between 3.35 and 3.61, with a mean score of 3.50. There was no decrease in score in any of the sub-questions.

**Table 4.2** *Psalm 42* Post-Treatment Performance Data & Evidence of Growth

	Average of Evaluator Scores <i>Student</i>									Average Element Score	Pre to Post Growth	% Change
	A	B	E	F	G	H	I	J	K			
Clarity - Dynamic Contrast	3.3	3.5	4.0	4.2	2.3	4.0	3.7	3.5	4.0	<b>3.61</b>	<b>1.13</b>	<b>46%</b>
Clarity - Rubato	3.7	3.0	4.5	3.7	2.2	3.8	4.3	3.8	2.7	<b>3.52</b>	<b>1.26</b>	<b>56%</b>
Clarity - Tension/Release	3.8	3.2	4.5	4.0	2.5	3.5	3.8	4.0	3.0	<b>3.59</b>	<b>0.85</b>	<b>31%</b>
Interpretation	2.8	2.8	4.3	3.7	2.0	3.7	4.2	3.8	2.8	<b>3.35</b>	<b>0.96</b>	<b>40%</b>
Expression	3.3	3.2	4.0	3.8	2.3	3.7	3.7	3.5	3.3	<b>3.43</b>	<b>1.06</b>	<b>45%</b>
<i>Student Average Score</i>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>3.50</b>	<b>1.05</b>	<b>43%</b>

Only two students (Students A and E) showed a 0% individual change in growth in a given sub-question; these occurred in the areas of level of interpretation and clarity of tension and release, respectively. Thus, out of a possible 45 sub-question average scores, there were 43 instances of individual growth, with six instances showing more than 100% growth. The overall average score of one student (Student K) was 102% higher than their pre-treatment rating.

The expressive element that showed the most growth (56%) between the pre-treatment and post-treatment recordings was the clarity of rubato in student performances. Student H was among the participants who showed the most overall growth (87%); their level of growth in the area of rubato was 2.17 points, or a 130% increase. Though Evaluator 1 commented the “pulse is occasionally lost”, it is later said that the rubato is “very clear” and the overall performance is “very musical.” The post-treatment performance of Student J also demonstrated a high increase (1.83 points, improvement by 92%) in rubato. “Putting a slight rubato at the beginning was a beautiful start,” wrote Evaluator 5. Evaluators 2 and 4 both comment on a “nice” rubato/ritardando at the end of the performance.

Student I's performance on tuba elicited a positive response regarding rubato from Evaluator 1: "I think that this player has shown the most rubato and added places that were held out that no other player did up to this point." Student I had the second-highest average element score in rubato (4.33). The performer with the highest average element score in rubato (4.50) and the overall highest average score (4.27) was Student E. "Rubato is clear," Evaluator 3 concluded. "This person has an understanding of the phrase." Even students who were at the opposite end of the spectrum in terms of overall average scores were able to create musical moments involving rubato – even if they were only valiant attempts. Student B (3.13 overall average score) performed, in the words of Evaluator 4, "a nice ritardando in the penultimate measure – a musical decision!" Perhaps the most profound comment regarding rubato in this set of recordings came from Evaluator 4 when speaking of Student K's performance. Although this student showed the highest level of overall growth, they still ranked towards the bottom in terms of overall rubato score (2.67). Evaluator 4 wrote:

"A good attempt at a ritardando at the end. I think young players often go through a phase of 'musicality' seeming contrived before it feels natural, authentic, and organic. With this particular student, the ritardando did not seem very natural, but this is where musical playing begins!"

In the eyes of Evaluator 1, Student K also missed some areas that, in the evaluator's opinion, would be optimal spots to apply rubato. While Student K seemingly missed the mark on rubato in the eyes of some evaluators, the majority of students not only were able to apply the concept, but interpreted appropriate spots in where to apply the tempo

changes. It was evident that the application of rubato was much improved in student post-treatment performances.

The average score in clarity of dynamic contrast grew by 1.13 points, a 46% change from the pre-treatment performances. Again, Student H, the same student who Evaluator 5 believed hastily added in a decrescendo during the pre-treatment performance, had the highest average element score in dynamic contrast with a 4.00, doubling their pre-treatment rating. “Some good attempts at shaping the line,” Evaluator 4 wrote. “Dynamic contrast within each phrase and throughout the excerpt were evident.” Evaluator 3 believed there were “good attempts at phrase line (and) good sound at the louder dynamic.” Student K tied Student H with a 4.00 in dynamic contrast; Student K showed the most overall growth in this area (140%). Student K again misfired on their interpretation, however; Evaluator 1 believed “the dynamics [were] very apparent” in the performance, “but a bit explosive.” Evaluator 5 commented Student K ‘seemed to play a pretty narrow range of dynamics.’ This is not to say the contrast didn’t occur; Evaluator 6 felt Student K’s performance had “nice dynamic contrast.”

There was evidence of dynamic contrast being applied to a number of musical situations. According to Evaluator 5, Student F had a “good approach to dynamics, especially (the) crescendos on the long tones.” This indicates the student interpreted the long tones as leading to the shorter notes, a concept covered during the treatment phase. Others applied dynamics as the tessitura of the melody rose and fell. Student E performed with “nice growth though the pickup notes, leading toward the downbeat,” according to Evaluator 4. Student H also applied this technique, as Evaluator 4 noted, “Some good attempts at shaping the line!”

The sub-question pertaining to the clarity of tension and release received an overall average score of 3.59, or a 31% increase; this was the smallest increase in all areas. During the post-treatment phase of *Psalm 42*, there were more concrete references to the concept of tension and release by evaluators. Evaluator 1 wrote about the absence of “tension areas” in Student K’s performance “that would really help push him/her into the ‘4’ category.” The data for clarity in tension and release again seemed to be a cumulative mark of any kind of expressive concept. The highest scores in the area of tension and release went to the students with the highest overall average scores. This included Students E and F, who scored the highest during the pre-treatment phase. However, Students I and J also scored high average marks (3.83 and 4, respectively) on tension and release during the post-treatment phase. All of the students mentioned above also had the highest scores for overall level of interpretation. Student J in particular received much praise for their interpretation in performance. “I felt the tension and release points,” stated Evaluator 2 when speaking of Student J’s performance. It seems that the higher level of student interpretation meant a higher clarity of tension and release in one’s performance.

Not all evaluators were in agreement with the top four in tension and release, however. Evaluator 3 gave relatively low marks to Student I on all sub-questions and provided the comment, “Struggling with physical aspects of instrument.” By not counting the scores Evaluator 3 offered in the overall average, Student I would have received an average score of 4.4 points, which would have given this student the highest overall average score amongst students in the focus group.



As was the case during the pre-treatment phase, the overall average scores for levels of interpretation and expression present seemed to be intertwined between each other. No evaluator gave a score in either area that was more than a 1-point difference between both areas. It should be noted that expression grew by a larger rate than interpretation (45% vs. 36%) and had a higher overall average score (3.43 vs. 3.35). Perhaps this is due to the added emphasis by students given to the expressive concepts of dynamic contrast and rubato, which showed the highest amount of growth between the pre- and post-treatment performances.

Overall, students demonstrated a higher ability to apply their own interpretations to *Psalms 42* during the post-treatment performances. As a result, students were able to implement many more areas that were deemed expressive. Through the analysis of pre- and post-treatment data, it is evident that secondary-level instrumental music students can learn to make interpretative decisions regarding music expression after being taught to do so in a large-group class setting.

### **Research Question 2 (*Amazing Grace*)**

Because the research has suggested that students can learn to make their own interpretative decisions regarding music expression after being taught to do so in a large-group class setting, the second research question, which pertains to whether students can make their own interpretative, expressive decisions while performing music that is not currently being studied, can be explored. The data analyzed in this section will help determine whether students can transfer the knowledge acquired regarding interpretation and expression and apply it to the individual performance of a work that is not being actively practiced or taught.

The traditional song *Amazing Grace* serves as the primary element in completing this task. Again, this research question can be answered by examining the relationship between pre-treatment and post-treatment recordings of focus group student performances of the work (Appendix I).

***Amazing Grace, Pre-Treatment.*** The same evaluation process that was employed in *Psalms 42* was also used for *Amazing Grace*. As shown in Table 4.3, analysis of the data suggests similar findings to the data found in the pre-treatment performances of *Psalms 42*. The average scores for each sub-question ranged from 2.15 to 2.57, with a mean score of 2.4.

**Table 4.3** *Amazing Grace* Pre-Treatment Performance Data

	Average of Evaluator Scores <i>Student</i>									Average Element Score
	A	B	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	
Clarity - Dynamic Contrast	3.2	1.7	3.2	3.8	2.2	2.7	2.5	2.0	2.0	<b>2.57</b>
Clarity - Rubato	3.0	1.5	3.0	2.7	1.5	2.2	1.8	2.0	1.7	<b>2.15</b>
Clarity - Tension/Release	3.2	1.7	3.8	3.2	1.8	2.8	2.3	2.3	2.0	<b>2.57</b>
Interpretation	2.8	1.5	3.3	2.8	1.5	2.7	1.8	2.2	2.0	<b>2.30</b>
Expression	2.8	1.5	3.7	3.3	1.7	2.5	2.2	2.2	1.8	<b>2.41</b>
<i>Student Average Score</i>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>2.6</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>2.40</b>

Again, the sub-question with the lowest average element score (2.15) was the question pertaining to clarity in rubato. When examining evaluator comments, very little was discussed regarding this expressive concept. Student A, who was one of two students who had a higher average score in rubato in their *Amazing Grace* pre-treatment performance than their *Psalms 42* pre-treatment performance, was cited by Evaluator 1 as

having “some nice rubato” in their performance. The other student to have a higher rubato score during *Amazing Grace* was Student H, who seemed to struggle with rhythmic pulse. “Perhaps the missed rhythms (were) an attempt at interpreting the solo,” stated Evaluator 2. “This student used good tone,” wrote Evaluator 1, “but an uneven pulse. There was no sense of exactly what was going on in the piece. Rubato could not be established because the listener was unsure of the speed of the piece to begin with.”

Other students, however, seemed to fully neglect this element of expression. Coincidentally, both French horn players (Students B and G) tied for the lowest average element score in rubato (1.50). Student B’s performance prompted Evaluator 3 to write, “Any ‘rubato’ sounds like it would be on accident.” Evaluator 1 believed Student G’s performance had an “overall rushed feel” and later wondered if this was “maybe because it is a known melody.” The lack of rubato in numerous pre-treatment performances not only in *Amazing Grace*, but *Psalm 42* as well, prompted Evaluator 4 to make a very powerful statement:

“Having listened to a number of these now, a trend that I am noticing is that no student has made use of rubato to shade a phrase. This makes sense as we teachers return to steady pulse and correct, consistent rhythms as an ensemble goal so often that it is rare for a student to feel comfortable playing with time to communicate a musical nuance.”

It is clear that the viewpoint stated here is very much in the spirit of the overall purpose of this study.

Most of the same trends found in *Psalm 42* pre-treatment data regarding clarity of dynamic contrast were also evident in pre-treatment recordings of *Amazing Grace*. The

overall average element score in dynamic contrast for *Amazing Grace* pre-treatment performances was 2.57. While slightly higher than the dynamic contrast average element score in *Psalms 42*, it was still evident that most students struggled to consistently apply this element of expression in their performances. This was even the case with Student F, who received by far the highest overall average score in dynamic contrast (3.83) and was the only musician to receive a score of “5” for dynamic contrast from any evaluator. While the student received numerous comments regarding their ability to shape the overall melodic line, there were aspects of the student’s execution of dynamic contrast that evaluators questioned. Positive comments included one from Evaluator 5: “Some expression in the rise and fall of the lines.” “A nicely-paced crescendo to the apex note, then back down,” stated Evaluator 4. “This student also seemed to shape individual half-note rolls . . . [but] not necessarily in the context of the shape of the phrase.” Also questioning Student F’s intent was Evaluator 1, who believed the performer’s rolls “seemed to ‘explode’ and cause the piece to lose its intended style . . . I am glad to hear dynamic contrast, but it wasn’t always appropriate to what was intended.”

Some attempts at the execution of dynamics were believed to be accidental. Evaluator 4 wondered if Student A’s attempt of dynamic contrast was “perhaps an errant burst of air.” Evaluator 2 thought Student I performed with “nice clear tone,” but was not sure if the tuba player performed with dynamics or was “running out of breath.” This also occurred in Student G’s performance; Evaluator 5 noticed “there was some expression added to the higher sections, but that may have simply been increased air support.” The majority of students, however, seemingly neglected to include dynamics in their performance. Student K had one of the lowest average scores in dynamic contrast (2.00)

and received a number of comments regarding the lack of dynamics. “Not much shape here,” offered Evaluator 1. “Very straight,” stated Evaluator 6. These types of comments would consistently appear in other student evaluations. Evaluator 2 noticed Student J performed with “very nice tone,” but there was “not much in regards to contrast.” Even Student E, who had the highest overall average score in the pre-treatment performance of *Amazing Grace* (3.40), would not even be able to escape comments pertaining to the absence of dynamic contrast. Their performance “[needed] more dynamic contrast” (Evaluator 6) and “[lacked] contrast expression in the line” (Evaluator 3).

Students who had the highest overall average scores also tended to do well in the element of tension and release, a sub-question that received an average score of 2.57. However, no student was able to truly excel in this area in the eyes of evaluators; there were no scores of “5” given and only 14 instances of a score of “4”. Of those 14 scores of “4”, 11 were earned by the three students with the highest average scores in this set of performances (Students A, E, and F). “It sounded like (Student E) knew the song and what it was telling,” wrote Evaluator 5. There were no comments that directly referred to tension and release in this set of performances; this again could be due to the more abstract nature of the concept, as well as the fact being that a number of aspects involved both in the performance of the music and the composition altogether can affect a listener’s perception on the execution of tension and release.

Results pertaining to the level of interpretation and expression found in the *Amazing Grace* pre-treatment performances again seemed to mirror one another. The average score for expression was 2.41, while the average for interpretation was 2.30. According to the evaluators, most students were not able to effectively convey these

concepts. Evaluator 3 noted that all performances, except for the one by Student E, “lacked expressive qualities.” This evaluator was not alone; comments such as “no expression” (Student B, Evaluator 6), “not much here” (Student G, Evaluator 2), “I didn’t hear any expression added to the music” (Student K, Evaluator 5), and “no evidence of expression” (Student H, Evaluator 5) appeared multiple times.

This also was the case regarding the concept of interpretation. While it was evident some students made attempts (Evaluator 2 wondered if Student H’s “missed rhythms” were “an attempt at interpreting the solo), many had lower scores for the level of interpretation. No scores of “5” were earned and only nine instances of “4” appeared. The highest average element score in interpretation was 3.33 and earned by Student E. Evaluators did not offer as many comments regarding the absence of interpretation as they did for the lack of expression. Evaluator 5 noted Student B’s performance “sounded like no interpretation of the music beyond notes and rhythms.” In general, evaluators commented on this perceived focus on accuracy in notes and rhythms in many performances, a trend that also appeared in the analysis of *Psalm 42* pre-treatment data. Student B “played correct notes and rhythms,” Evaluator 1 believes, “but did not add anything extra to the performance.” Student H “simply played notes and rhythms,” stated Evaluator 5.

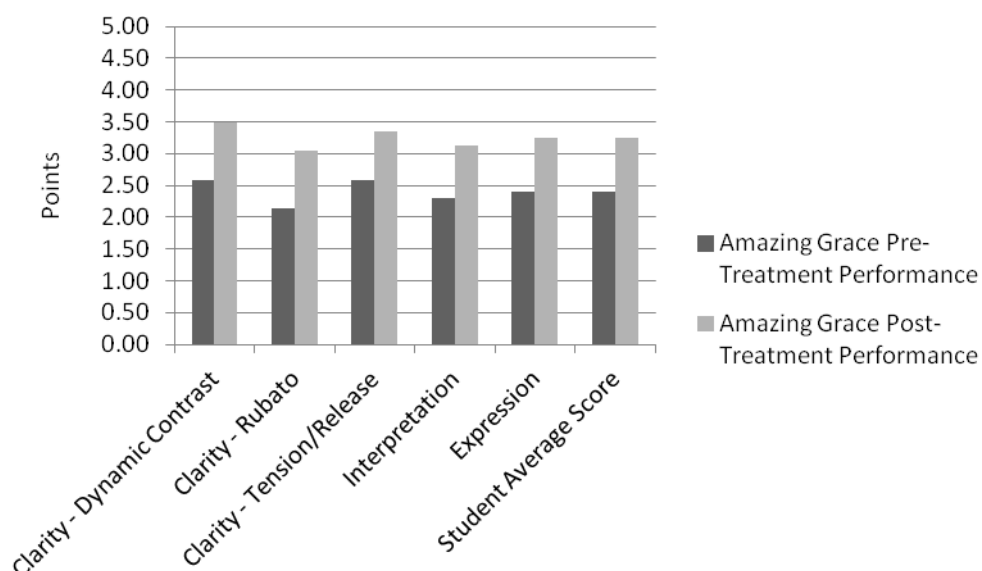
Overall, student pre-treatment performances of *Amazing Grace* appeared to be similar in nature to the pre-treatment performances of *Psalm 42*. According to evaluators, there was little evidence of student interpretation and application of expression. While attempts were made in some cases, the concepts were largely neglected.

**Amazing Grace, Post-Treatment.** Analysis of *Amazing Grace* post-treatment data suggested growth in all expressive elements measured, as well as in the areas of interpretation and expression. As shown in Table 4.4, the average scores for each sub-question were between 3.06 and 3.50, with a mean score of 3.26.

**Table 4.4** *Amazing Grace* Post-Treatment Performance Data & Evidence of Growth

	Student									Average Element Score	Pre to Post Growth	% Change
	A	B	E	F	G	H	I	J	K			
Clarity - Dynamic Contrast	3.5	2.8	4.7	4.3	2.3	4.5	3.3	3.5	2.5	3.50	0.93	36%
Clarity - Rubato	3.3	2.3	4.2	3.3	1.8	3.8	3.3	3.0	2.3	3.06	0.91	42%
Clarity - Tension/Release	3.5	2.5	4.7	4.2	2.2	3.8	3.3	3.2	2.8	3.35	0.78	30%
Interpretation	3.2	2.3	4.3	4.0	2.0	3.7	3.0	3.2	2.5	3.13	0.83	36%
Expression	3.5	2.5	4.5	4.3	2.0	3.7	3.2	3.0	2.5	3.24	0.83	35%
Student Average Score	3.4	2.5	4.5	4.0	2.1	3.9	3.2	3.2	2.5	3.26	0.86	36%

All students showed growth in each sub-question; the average amount of growth was 0.86 points, or a 36% difference from pre-treatment data, as evidenced in Figure 4.2.



**Figure 4.2** Comparison of *Amazing Grace* Pre-Treatment and Post-Treatment Data

However, the amount of growth was not as pronounced as the growth found in the post-treatment recordings of *Psalm 42*. There was no sub-question that had a higher level of growth than its *Psalm 42* post-treatment counterpart.

The expressive element that numerically improved the most was the clarity of rubato. Even though the sub-question pertaining to this topic produced the lowest average score (3.06), the level of growth (a 42% change from pre-treatment data) was the highest rate of improvement. Six out of nine students earned an average score of “3” or higher on this element; this is compared to only two students who earned that score during pre-treatment performances. Student I improved their average rubato score by 1.5 points, an 82% difference between their pre-treatment score and the highest amount of growth amongst their peers. It appeared this tuba player was focusing on the concept, especially during the end of the performance, which was praised by Evaluators 2 and 5. Evaluator 1, however, thought “sometimes the rubato . . . was a bit too much . . . the player held on to things a bit too long.”

Student H also made great strides in the execution of rubato, earning an average element score of 3.83. However, it is interesting to note Student H was noted for a trend that would recur in the qualitative data for this set of performances. “There are a few places where this is rushed and the tension is lost,” Evaluator 1 stated, “but overall this was very musical.” Evaluator 1 also noticed this phenomenon in the performances of Students A and G. “I felt that (Student A’s) recording had some evidence of musicality, but it was a bit rushed. This affected the rubato.”

Dynamic contrast improved by the highest amount of points (3.5, a 0.93 difference between pre-treatment data). Four students improved their score in dynamic



contrast by more than one point, including Student H; the clarinetist increased their average element score by 1.83, the highest amount compared to their peers. “Overall, this was very musical,” said Evaluator 1. “Dynamics played a big part in this.” Evaluator 4 noted, “Some real gusto on those dynamic shapes!” While Evaluator 3 believed there were “great attempts at expressive elements,” they stated there were “very short bursts of dynamic changes.”

According to evaluators, there were other students who included dynamic contrast for brief areas in their performances. “There was a moment or two with nice dynamic contrast,” wrote Evaluator 2 after listening to the performance of Student J. Evaluator 4 sensed in Student K’s performance “a bit of direction leading from pickup notes to downbeats.” Others made even more limited gains in applying dynamic contrast. Student G had the lowest average element score in dynamic contrast (2.33), but still improved their score by 8%. “The contrast in dynamic levels was pretty limited,” wrote Evaluator 5. This comment can be interpreted in a variety of ways; however, it should be noted that Evaluator 5 issued a higher dynamic contrast score for this student than for the pre-treatment performance.

Much like in the tension and release data for *Psalm 42* post-treatment data, evaluators could not always seem to agree on the presence of dynamic contrast in a given performance. For instance, Student B, one of the four students to increase their dynamic contrast score by more than one point, performed in a way that elicited Evaluator 1 to say, “Dynamics were more evident in this recording.” However, Evaluator 6 disagreed, writing, “Contrast not enough to be effective.” This was also the case with Student A,

who, according to Evaluator 6, had a “nice start to contrasts,” but “not a lot of contrast” in the eyes of Evaluator 2.

Scores for the clarity of tension and release in post-treatment performances were also higher than those during the pre-treatment phase, although not as high as its *Psalm 42* post-treatment counterpart. There was a 30% growth in this expressive element, a 0.78 point improvement. Student B, a performer who consistently had earned lower scores across the study, surprisingly had the highest amount of growth by percentage (50%). With one of the lowest post-treatment tension and release average scores (2.50), however, evaluators had little to say about the player’s application of the concept.

The highest average element scores in tension and release again belonged to the students with the highest overall average scores. In fact, when all student tension and release average scores are ranked, they appear in the same order of ranking as the overall average scores of students. Student E had the highest average score in this area (4.67); they received a perfect score of “5” from four of the six evaluators in tension and release in a performance described as “very musical” (Evaluator 1) and “beautiful” (Evaluator 6). There were not many comments that directly cited tension and release; the exceptions to this rule were separate mentions of the concept by Evaluator 1 in the comments for three students. Like before, it seemed scores in tension and release in this set of performances were more indicative of the overall levels of all other sub-questions. If a student was able to successfully interpret other elements of expression in their performance, their tension and release score usually was higher.

The level of interpretation and expression in student performances each increased by 0.86 points, or a 36% and 35% change, respectively, from pre-treatment data on

*Amazing Grace*. When analyzing both quantitative and qualitative data, it can be suggested students made growth in both of these areas. The lowest percentage gains in interpretation and expression belonged to Student A, who had been among the highest achievers in the focus group. While Evaluator 4 felt it was “a sweet, ‘semplice’ performance,” other evaluators seemed to think dynamic issues detracted from the overall musicality of their work. This is puzzling when considering this student had the fourth-highest average scores in interpretation and expression, placing the student in the upper half of their peers.

The overall picture becomes even more confusing when examining the pre-treatment data for this student. Evaluator 5 believed the performance did not have “much in the way of dynamic rise and fall,” even though in the pre-treatment comments, the same evaluator stated Student A did “nice work on rise and fall.” While one may think by looking at this comparison of comments that the student may have actually regressed in terms of expression, it can be strongly argued this is not the case. Evaluator 3, who, based on the scores given was the most stringent adjudicator, believed Student A’s pre-treatment performance “lacks expressive qualities” and noted the post-treatment recording is “much improved.” This seems to be perhaps the most notable case of evaluator disagreement as of yet. Even though the average post-treatment score given by Evaluator 2 to Student A decreased when compared to pre-treatment, all other evaluators gave average scores that were either the same (in one instance, Evaluator 6) or higher.

Another student who seemingly had more trouble with expression and interpretation was Student G. Even though the student increased their expression score by 20%, the French hornist was, in the words of Evaluator 3, “struggling with physical

aspects of [the] instrument.” The low score in expression could also have been attributed to the student interpretation of performing with a faster tempo. “It was a bit rushed and lost the pulse because of it,” wrote Evaluator 1. “This changed the interpretation to something other than intended.” Similar to Student A, one evaluator’s average scores (Evaluator 6) were lower than pre-treatment, two stayed steady (Evaluators 2 and 3), while the rest increased. Perhaps in a nod to the decision to quicken the tempo, the student’s average element score in interpretation had the larger percentage growth (33%) when compared to expression.

While Students A and G arguably made limited gains in interpretation and expression, most other students excelled. Student B, another student who usually had placed scores on the lower end of the spectrum, increased their average element score in expression by a full point and interpretation score by 0.83 points, a 67% and 56% increase, respectively. These increases were among the largest in the focus group. While the amount of expression present was questioned by evaluators, it can be suggested expression was still evident in small amounts; this is in comparison to the pre-treatment recording, where most evaluators commented on the lack of expressive elements. Student I made similar gains, improving their average scores by 64% (interpretation) and 46% (expression) when compared to pre-treatment data. The student with the most dramatic overall gains in *Psalm 42* post-treatment data, Student H, also made large gains in interpretation and expression in *Amazing Grace*. While the increase in scores in *Amazing Grace* was not as pronounced as *Psalm 42*, it is clear the student improved. “Great attempts at expressive elements,” wrote Evaluator 3. “Beautiful attention to expression,”

noted Evaluator 6. Evaluator 4 was especially impressed with Student H's ability to interpret the music:

“This student was willing to take some risks and attempt some musical choices, which is neat to hear from a young player. Here is a rare performance where I would rate interpretation higher than expression. I don't know that the choices were necessarily the most appropriate, but this student made it his/her own!”

Other evaluators commented on interpretative choices made by Student H, including Evaluator 5's praise of the approach to the end of the performance “with a slight lift before the softer final measures.”

Overall, through the analysis of *Amazing Grace* post-treatment data, it can be suggested students were able to apply more expressive elements into their post-treatment performances of *Amazing Grace*. However, growth was not of the same level as found in post-treatment data of *Psalms 42*. Furthermore, the inclusion of expressive elements was incorporated by students, in many cases, only for brief moments into performances.

### **Other Findings**

This study's main research focus revolves around the two research questions discussed above. However, after analysis of the data, there are other noteworthy findings.

**Focus Group Students Not Receiving Full Treatment.** As discussed at the onset of this chapter, Students C and D did not receive a vast portion of the treatment in the large-group class setting due to their concurrent enrollment in additional music courses. When analyzing the data, it was found that the performances of these two students did not exhibit the amount of growth found in the performances of other students in the focus group.

According to Table 4.5, when including the average scores of Students C and D into the overall average scores, the totals slightly decreased:

**Table 4.5** Comparison of Students C & D Data with Other Data

	<b>Overall Average WITHOUT Student C &amp; D Data</b>	<b>Overall Average WITH Student C &amp; D Data</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<i>Psalm 42</i> Pre-Treatment	2.45	2.35	-0.1
<i>Psalm 42</i> Post-Treatment	3.5	3.39	-0.11
<i>Amazing Grace</i> Pre-Treatment	2.4	2.3	-0.1
<i>Amazing Grace</i> Post-Treatment	3.26	3.02	-0.24

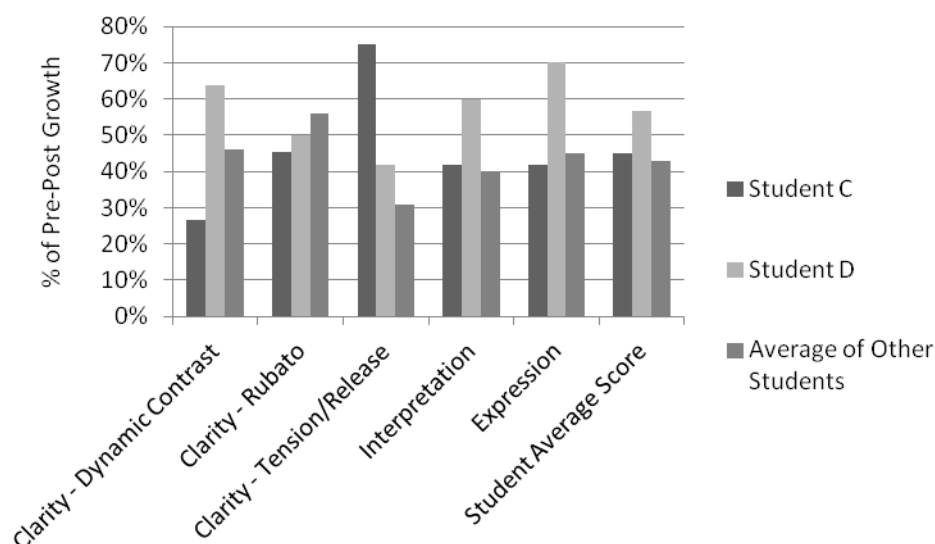
One factor that could explain the decrease in scores was the fact Students C and D produced scores in all phases of the study that are among the lowest in the focus group. Nonetheless, there was still a drop in the overall totals.

Because these students missed much of the teaching of expression and interpretation during the treatment phase, the post-treatment data is of particular interest to us. When examining Students C and D's average evaluator scores in Table 4.6, data suggests there was overall growth in the expressive and interpretative performance of *Psalm 42* during the post-treatment phase.

**Table 4.6** *Psalm 42* Performance Data – Students C & D

<b>Psalm 42 Data: Students C &amp; D</b>	<i>Avg. Eval. Scores</i> <b>Student C</b>		<i>Pre to Post Growth</i>	<i>% Change</i>		<i>Avg. Eval. Scores</i> <b>Student D</b>		<i>Pre to Post Growth</i>	<i>% Change</i>
	<b>Pre</b>	<b>Post</b>				<b>Pre</b>	<b>Post</b>		
Clarity - Dynamic Contrast	2.5	3.2	<b>0.67</b>	<b>27%</b>		1.8	3.0	<b>1.17</b>	<b>64%</b>
Clarity - Rubato	1.8	2.7	<b>0.83</b>	<b>45%</b>		1.7	2.5	<b>0.83</b>	<b>50%</b>
Clarity - Tension/Release	2.0	3.5	<b>1.50</b>	<b>75%</b>		2.0	2.8	<b>0.83</b>	<b>42%</b>
Interpretation	2.0	2.8	<b>0.83</b>	<b>42%</b>		1.7	2.7	<b>1.00</b>	<b>60%</b>
Expression	2.0	2.8	<b>0.83</b>	<b>42%</b>		1.7	2.8	<b>1.17</b>	<b>70%</b>
<i>Student Average Score</i>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>0.93</b>	<b>45%</b>		<b>1.8</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>57%</b>

This growth (45% for Student C and 57% for Student D) was similar and in line with other students in the focus group, as evidenced in Figure 4.3.



**Figure 4.3** Growth Comparison of Student C, Student D, and Others: *Psalm 42*

Both students struggled with including expressive elements in their *Psalm 42* pre-treatment recordings, eliciting many of the same types of comments from evaluators found in similar performances. “Not many decisions made beyond what was indicated on the page,” wrote Evaluator 4 after listening to the pre-treatment recording of Student C. Evaluator 1 believed “the notes were played correctly, but that was all the student put into this playing.” Student C, however, was able to play with a limited sense of expression and interpretation, according to Evaluator 2. “This student played with a nice mature sound and I felt there was some degree of interpretive style.” Evaluator 3 agreed; “There are a few nice attempts at expression and dynamic change here.” Student D, in large part, was not able to convey expressive concepts into their performance. Many previous trends again appeared. An oboist, Student D appeared to be “struggling physically with the reed

and instrument and is not able to focus on musical interpretation,” according to Evaluator 3. Evaluator 1 shared the same views, as they believed “instrument difficulty posed limitations for this student.” Other evaluators were very concise in their assessment of the performance. The performance was “very straight” (Evaluator 6) and “very stiff” (Evaluator 5), with “not much to comment on here” (Evaluator 4).

Both students were able to make considerable growth in their *Psalms 42* post-treatment performances. This was especially true for Student D, who increased their overall average score by one full point, a 57% difference. While Evaluator 3 still asserted the student had “struggles with (the) physical instrument” that made it “difficult to move into interpretative elements of music,” other evaluators offered much praise. There was a “good start to dynamics” in the eyes of Evaluator 6, while Evaluator 1 commented on how the consistent pulse “helped with the rubato and release points.” Student C made similar gains while increasing their overall average score by 0.93 points, or a 45% difference. Many comments were made regarding the student’s prowess in performing with dynamic contrast. “Dynamics were more interpretative as the song went along,” said Evaluator 5. “The ending was quite lovely.” “I could definitely hear the rise and fall of dynamics in this recording,” offered Evaluator 1. Overall, these findings seem to represent similar findings to the nine students who did not miss substantial portions of the treatment.

The narrative begins to change, however, when considering *Amazing Grace* data. Both students had similar pre-treatment performances for *Amazing Grace* that were marked by comments of limited expression and presence of solely notes and rhythms. Their overall average scores (1.9 for Student C, 1.77 for Student D) support this claim.



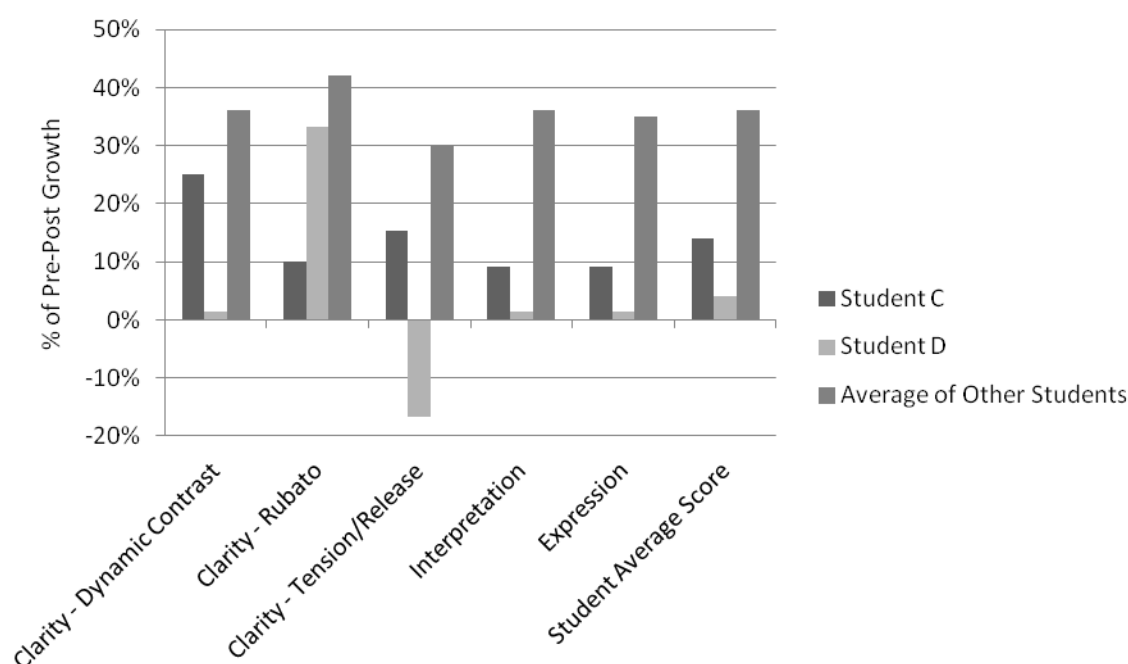
While post-treatment overall average scores did increase, they did so at very low levels, as shown in Table 4.7.

**Table 4.7** *Amazing Grace* Performance Data – Student C & D

<b>Amazing Grace Data: Student C &amp; D</b>	<i>Avg. Eval. Scores</i> <b>Student C</b>		<i>Pre to Post Growth</i>	<i>% Change</i>		<i>Avg. Eval. Scores</i> <b>Student D</b>		<i>Pre to Post Growth</i>	<i>% Change</i>
	Pre	Post				Pre	Post		
Clarity - Dynamic Contrast	2.0	2.5	<b>0.50</b>	<b>25%</b>		1.8	1.8	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0%</b>
Clarity - Rubato	1.7	1.8	<b>0.17</b>	<b>10%</b>		1.5	2.0	<b>0.50</b>	<b>33%</b>
Clarity - Tension/Release	2.2	2.5	<b>0.33</b>	<b>15%</b>		2.0	1.7	<b>-0.33</b>	<b>-17%</b>
Interpretation	1.8	2.0	<b>0.17</b>	<b>9%</b>		1.8	1.8	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0%</b>
Expression	1.8	2.0	<b>0.17</b>	<b>9%</b>		1.7	1.7	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0%</b>
<i>Student Average Score</i>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>0.27</b>	<b>14%</b>		<b>1.8</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>0.03</b>	<b>2%</b>

This was especially true in the case of Student D. While this performer's rubato score saw a high increase which caused their overall average score to show a 2% increase, their scores in most other sub-questions stayed the same. In the sub-question pertaining to clarity of tension and release, Student D showed a regression that was 17% less than the pre-treatment score. Evaluator 5 felt it "was a pretty rigid performance [with] no expression at all." "This student seems to be playing a series of notes rather than letting notes serve a phrase," stated Evaluator 4. Student C was not able to fare much better, only showing a 14% increase between pre-treatment and post-treatment data. Evaluator 2 "didn't hear much in regards to expression" in the performance and Evaluator 3 heard "no expressive qualities that fit the style of the music." Student C's ability to interpret was also questioned. "I'm not sure what happened here . . . phrases had a 'clipped' feel," wondered Evaluator 1. Evaluator 4 also noticed this change. "This student made some interesting choices with note length! The staccato on some notes impeded musicality."

Students C and D were able to show growth from both pre-treatment performances. This was especially true in *Psalm 42*, where they made gains similar to other students. Their overall level of growth in the work not studied or rehearsed in a large-group setting, *Amazing Grace*, was considerably lower than the gains made by other participants in the focus group, as referenced in Figure 4.4.



**Figure 4.4** Growth Comparison of Student C, Student D, and Others: *Amazing Grace*

**Student Qualitative Data.** The reflections and viewpoints of students in the focus group collected during the treatment phase provide a unique perspective to this research. Through examining this data, inferences can be made about beliefs on the topics presented during the treatment phase in order to determine if they possibly affected the outcomes of the two performance-based research questions that have guided this study.

On the day of the class period where the concept of tension and release was introduced, students completed a brief reflective activity as they entered class. Students were asked to determine their thoughts if they were watching a suspenseful movie that stopped prematurely. This was done in part to relate the concept of tension and release to everyday life. Most students expressed their discomfort and displeasure to such an event occurring. Student F stated they would want their “money back” and that it was a “waste of popcorn.” Student A wrote, “If this were to happen to me, my first instinct would be to blurt out, ‘What?’” “I would think that’s unacceptable and I would be on edge,” thought Student D. “Frustrated about the lack of closure,” Student E would also be angry “because all of the rising action never falls again – it just stops.” Student H was the only student who did not seem to be fazed by the movie ending too soon, saying, “I would be waiting with excitement for the next movie to come out.” This is particularly interesting to note, as Student H would later make some of the most dramatic gains in all phases of the study. Also of note was Student I’s transfer to *Psalm 42*, even though this activity was conducted in the first week of the treatment phase. “I would wonder what happened and disappointed [sic] . . . this would be a waste of time. So in *Psalm 42* we must play up to the high note and continue up strong.”

Later in this lesson, after learning about the overall concept, students had the opportunity to provide examples of tension and release in everyday life. While some students seemed to represent a developing understanding of the concept, others demonstrated a firm grasp on the topic. It was clear Student F did not understand the concept during this activity, only offering the examples of “TV” and “roller coaster”; the latter was an example provided by myself during instruction. This was not true for

Student G; they provided examples pertaining to “doing a really hard test” and then finishing, as well as “a checkup at the doctor’s office” followed by being given “a lollipop.” Student J also demonstrated understanding of the concept, comparing tension and release to “sitting in the office waiting to talk (to) the principal” and then “getting done talking to the principal.” Students A and E both compared tension and release to the concept of potential energy (tension) and kinetic energy (release) in physics. It is likely these students, who are both alto saxophonists and sat next to each other in the large-group class setting, collaborated together on this cross-disciplinary connection.

When students explored the program notes to *Psalm 42* and learned of the unfortunate events leading Mr. Hazo to compose the work, it was clear students had a firm grasp of the affective implications of the story. Asked to describe what the family members of five-year-old Gregory McCurrie might have felt when they heard Mr. Hazo’s arrangement of *Psalm 42*, students were able to provide a number of powerful thoughts. “The family members must have still been grieving,” Student H believed. “However, the toll would probably be lightened for the thought of caring . . . the mom and dad must have felt good to have a piece of Gregory to hold on to.” Student I felt the family would have conflicting feelings of joy and sadness because of “memories of their lost one.” While they didn’t fully answer the question, Student F provided a unique perspective. “The loss of a child is terrible, especially when he was only five. The song represents this very well, and I am glad we are playing this.” The story of *Psalm 42* is undoubtedly a powerful one filled with emotion; students were able to effectively convey their feelings and thoughts on this topic.

All students in the focus group had strong feelings on why expression and emotion were necessary in performing music. This question was asked in the early stages of the treatment phase after students were introduced to the application of tension and release in music, as well as the Lisk rules of expression discussed in Chapter 3. “Without [expression and emotion], music wouldn’t be as exciting or interesting,” stated Student E. Student J had a similar view. “Expression and emotion are necessary in performing music because otherwise the song wouldn’t be as exciting. Also, we need emotion to move people with our music.” Student G believed expression and emotion in music “helps tell a story and makes a piece sad, angry, or uplifting.” Choosing to focus on the role of the listener, Student A thought expression is necessary to keep them interested and to “[have] them feel emotion through the piece.” Student K echoed other students’ comments with a very succinct phrase: “Expression is the way that you play music.”

It should be noted that a written reflection planned regarding the use of non-chord tones in *Psalms 42* was not completed due to time constraints during the end of the treatment phase. Thus, there is no qualitative student data on this topic. A corresponding question in this reflection again pertains to the McCurrie family, a topic that, as documented, was already reflected upon.

Student written reflections mostly indicated an appreciation for expression in music, as well as a general ability to relate expressive concepts to everyday life. In addition, they were able to articulate their thoughts not only on the importance of expression and emotion, but also on feelings that can directly impact the meaning of a work of music.

**Teacher Observations.** Because the purpose of this study pertained to the individual assessment of expression and interpretation, my role in evaluating students as a band teacher was limited mostly to formative assessments and observations in a large-group setting. The only time I was able to hear students perform individually during class time was when the solo section of *Psalm 42* was being rehearsed, as well as some warm-up activities that were associated with this solo part. Not all students in the focus group performed individually during the class setting; as a result, my observations represent a relatively small sample size. In addition, students usually would only perform one of the four-measure phrases in the solo. This was done to give more students a chance to participate and to replicate performance conditions; concert performances of *Psalm 42* featured four soloists presented in this manner.

When students in the focus group performed individually, I noticed many of the same things evaluators noticed in post-treatment performances. This was especially true in dynamic contrast. It was clear that many students were able to shape the melodic line of *Psalm 42* in order to create an expressive moment. While the intensity of dynamics wasn't the same in all student performances, the effort was still given. I noticed students added very little rubato, however, to their classroom performances. It was evident to some extent, but it felt as though students were still beholden to the pulse, which was established by whoever was playing the first phrase.

In large-group performances of the solo part of *Psalm 42*, dynamic contrast was again very evident as an ensemble. When students were encouraged to incorporate other rules of expression besides shaping the line according to the melodic tessitura, students had some trouble doing this. Because it is impossible to hear individual interpretations in

a large-group setting, I would routinely allot approximately two minutes of class time for students to create their own interpretations while I formatively assessed their progress by walking around the classroom. I found most students still focused on dynamics that were shaped around the tessitura and not focusing on any other ideas. Again, this was especially true in the area of rubato.

Other large-group performances included performances of the work in a four-part chorale setting. When encouraged to add expression to non-melodic parts, the same attention was given to dynamic contrast as before; students generally focused on the shape of the line. After the non-chord tones were identified in the overall composition, students were able to emphasize these non-chord tones in performance, but they often sounded more like accented notes that seemed to burst out too much for them to fit within the scope of the style of music.

Overall, it occurred to me that students were able to easily grasp more manageable and concrete expressive techniques, but had difficulty in applying concepts that were more abstract and had multiple answers. For example, measure 11 of the solo part of *Psalm 42* (Figure 4.5) could be interpreted in a variety of ways in terms of dynamic contrast.



**Figure 4.5** Measure 11, *Psalm 42*

Besides playing strictly based on the tessitura of the melodic line, performers could easily provide a slight crescendo highlighting the tension and leading to the moment of repose, the sustained note in measure 12. A rubato in this spot would provide the same effect. While students were encouraged to explore these types of alternate interpretations, they very rarely did so and stuck to what seemed easiest.

### **Summary**

Based on the data collected throughout this study, it is apparent that students were able to perform music with better expression and with more individual interpretation after learning about these concepts in a large-group setting. This was especially true when considering pre-treatment and post-treatment performances for the composition that served as the main teaching vehicle for these expressive and interpretative concepts, *Psalms 42*. Students also exhibited growth in these concepts in the post-treatment performances of *Amazing Grace*, but these gains were not as large. While post-treatment performances of both works produced a higher expressive output, in many cases, students were not able to sustain their interpretations throughout their entire performance.



## Chapter 5

### Conclusions and Recommendations

This study has examined whether expression and interpretation can be taught to secondary band students in a large-group, homogeneous classroom setting. In addition, the study has explored whether students can transfer this knowledge and make their own interpretations regarding expression into the individual performance of a work being rehearsed in the classroom setting, as well as one that is not being currently studied. Key findings from this study indicate:

- Individual student performances after the treatment phase in both the work being actively rehearsed (*Psalm 42*), as well as the composition not being studied (*Amazing Grace*), showed overall improvement in the expressive elements focused upon in the treatment phase (rubato, dynamic contrast, and tension/release).
- Student growth was higher in the work being actively rehearsed (*Psalm 42*) than in the composition not being studied (*Amazing Grace*).
- Students showed the most growth in the expressive element of rubato in both sets of post-treatment performances.

These findings were introduced in Chapter 4. In this chapter, I will provide a more conclusive discussion to these findings, as well as provide implications for teaching and future research.

### Student Growth

*Psalm 42*. By all measures, there was a large amount of student growth in the post-treatment performances of *Psalm 42*. The expressive elements focused upon in class

were transferred to performance. This, in a way, could be somewhat expected when considering *Psalm 42* was the composition used to help demonstrate these concepts. Nevertheless, the demonstration of concepts does not mean students will apply those concepts. Students were able to apply their own interpretations after the treatment phase was complete, albeit in small bursts of expressive playing. The ideas they communicated with listeners were their own. While they were certainly given ideas of ways to interpret their performance in the classroom setting, each post-treatment performance was individualistic to a certain degree. This was the intended goal of the study. With further study of other expressive concepts in a large-group class setting, I have no doubt students would continue to find new ways to interpret their individual performances in order to make them even more expressive.

*Amazing Grace*. The growth found in the performances of *Amazing Grace* was notable. It can be suggested students are able to transfer the ideas of expression and interpretation to the individual performance of another composition. If students are equipped with the proper tools to perform musically, they will easily do so, an idea championed even at the earliest levels of band instruction by Duke & Byo (2011). Students did not keep the music for *Amazing Grace* between the pre-treatment performance and post-treatment recording and were unaware after the pre-treatment recording that they would perform the work again. If students had been able to practice the music or knew they would again be assessed on their performance of the work, the results would more than likely mirror those found in the data of *Psalm 42*. The growth made in student performances of *Amazing Grace* further solidifies the thought that

interpretation and expression can and should be taught in the large-group classroom setting.

**Rubato.** The growth of clarity in rubato in both sets of post-treatment performances was very encouraging, but also raised some questions. This is a skill that can be easily modeled within a large-group class setting by the conductor. However, these tempo changes become the conductor's interpretation. This is a form of teacher-centered instruction, a concept not recommended by numerous researchers (King, 1993; Freer, 2006; McCombs & Whistler, 1997), especially in the field of music education (Holsberg, 2009; Scruggs, 2009b). Much like Evaluator 4 wrote, teachers often "return to steady pulse and correct, consistent rhythms as an ensemble goal," making it difficult to pass these skills onto students in a large-group setting. Even in the formative observations I made during the treatment phase, I saw little attention to rubato in solo student performances.

In that case, how were students able to perform with rubato in their post-treatment performances, especially considering the concept is a difficult one to practice applying one's own interpretation in a large-group class? Could there be another force that caused students to not perform with rubato in solo situations in the classroom? Perhaps students were timid around their peers in performing with an optimal amount of expression. While it can be suggested students in the focus group had a general appreciation for expression in music, this may not have been the case with non-focus group students. Maybe there is a certain level of trust involved in performing with expression around one's peers. This could be especially true with adolescent students, who are already hyper-sensitive to what

others think of themselves. It would then seem to make sense that a heightened sense of expression would appear on performances recorded with no other students present.

**Application of Expressive Concepts.** Another trend worth exploring is the student application of more concrete expressive concepts. In many cases during post-treatment performances, dynamic contrast was noted by evaluators as following the tessitura of the melodic line. While this method of performing dynamics is certainly acceptable, it is not the only way. Students were able to interpret using a visual cue – the melodic line. However, it seemed they did not interpret other elements found in the composition in a way dynamically that would affect the level of expression in the work. These more abstract concepts would definitely help increase the level of interpretation in these students' performances.

### **Implications for Teachers**

The ability to individually interpret expressive musical ideas needs to become more of a focal point in the teaching of band classes at the secondary level. The inclusion of expression in music performance is believed to be integral by the majority of musicians, but students rarely get the opportunity to perform their own musical interpretations, as most expressive ideas are dictated to students by either the composer's intentions and/or their conductor.

The composer's intentions, of course, are very important to consider when performing music, as their inclusion of various musical elements play a vital role in the ability for a work of music to be expressive. Too often, however, there is little room for the performer to create their own interpretation, especially in music for secondary-level bands. While the inclusion of expressive elements in repertoire can provide for excellent

opportunities to teach students a particular expressive concept, the overuse of expression markings in music can simply take away the power of interpretation and leave it primarily in the hands of the composer.

Based on the findings of this study, it can be suggested students can perform expressive interpretations of music with minimal expressive markings. Band teachers at the secondary level should take great care in choosing repertoire that does not contain too many expressive markings. By doing this, students will have more opportunities to interpret music; this is provided their teacher makes those opportunities available in the large-group classroom. In turn, students will be able to transfer these interpretative skills to their own performances of music.

This is not to say that all works chosen should follow this guideline. There are numerous exemplary band compositions in the standard literature that arguably contain many expressive markings. The performances of these masterworks can provide sources of expressive modeling for students through the musical mind of the composer.

Perhaps the most important implication for teachers from the findings of this study is the need to make the secondary band classroom a more student-centered environment, which was also suggested in the review of the literature (Holsberg, 2009; Scruggs, 2009b). The teaching of student-led interpretation in a large-group classroom can be a tremendous paradigm shift for many band teachers, as the conductor-as-leader tradition has been strong in rehearsal rooms for generations. If this trend continues to be the norm in secondary band instruction, classrooms can become devoid of student creativity. Students need to be able to have the opportunity to apply their own interpretations to music; without this skill, their individual performances can sound less

expressive and are not truly original works. Opportunities for student-centered instruction, especially in the area of interpretation, need to happen in the large-group classroom more frequently in order to give students true ownership in the process of music making. This change should occur while still respecting the tradition of the teacher-centric model, which arguably is a foundational element of the large-group ensemble model of instruction.

### **Areas of Further Study**

The data in this study has suggested that secondary band students can create their own expressive interpretations after being taught to do so in a large-group classroom setting. However, there are other ideas relating to this study that need to be further explored and researched.

**Expression/Interpretation Scope & Sequence.** In Chapter 1, it was noted that expressive elements are a routine part of most instrumental music curriculums. Thus, even beginning-level students are able to execute more straightforward elements of expression, such as a crescendo or an accelerando. These elements become, more or less, commands that students identify within the written music they are performing.

For individual musicianship to further increase, students must be able to interpret music on their own in order to play expressively. The findings of this study suggest this could be achieved with secondary-level students. There are many generally accepted scopes and sequences for young musicians to teach expressive concepts, including those found in numerous contemporary method book series for band (Lautzenheiser et al., 1999; Pearson, 1993; Sheldon, Balmages, Loest, & Sheldon, 2010). However, a scope and sequence pertaining to interpretation of these expressive concepts for students of all

experience levels is not readily available. Research that helps create this type of document would be of great service to music educators interested in expression and interpretation.

**Additional Expressive Elements and Interpretative Skills.** This study was designed to assess the student growth in the interpretation of three expressive elements that can help constitute a musical performance and included rubato, dynamic contrast, and clarity of tension and release. The brevity of the treatment period in which to teach and further hone these concepts, as well as the level of experience of students involved, made the teaching of more advanced concepts unreasonable.

There are many other elements of expression that can go well beyond the scope of this study. The use of vibrato, which was already evident in Student E's performance, is definitely a concept that can contribute to an expressive performance. Other elements can include the use of articulations, phrasing, and correct style. While these are all concepts that are certainly taught to young students in a strong band program, the element missing in many cases is how students can interpret this type of style on their own. Future research can use this study as a guide to evaluate other methods in which students can make their own interpretations in performing expressively, especially in settings where students are more experienced musicians.

**Incorporation of Study into Younger Classrooms.** This study illustrated that secondary-level band students primarily being taught in the large-group classroom can make their own interpretative choices regarding expression in their own individual performances and also transfer that knowledge into other musical works. Is this also true for even younger instrumental students? The study of individual interpretation regarding

expressive choices could also be completed with elementary-level band students while teaching expressive and interpretative elements that are age-appropriate. This type of research could even be applied to elementary general music classrooms where various melodic instruments, such as the recorder, are a part of the curriculum.

**Rubato in the Large-Group Classroom.** In a large ensemble of musicians, the responsibility of applying tempo changes in a performance usually falls to one person – the conductor. The rationale for this is somewhat self-explanatory; there needs to be an individual who helps keep everyone together. As a result, the expressive element of rubato becomes an area that cannot easily be practiced by students in a large-group classroom.

One of the reasons *Psalm 42* was chosen to be the composition utilized for the treatment phase in this study was the unaccompanied solo in the beginning of the work. It was my opinion that an unaccompanied solo could surely encourage students to transfer knowledge of rubato into performance. Based on my formative observations in the classroom, this did not happen. Perhaps students are too accustomed to a pulse being established for them. As Evaluator 4 asserted during the study, band teachers make “steady pulse and correct, consistent rhythms an ensemble goal so often that it is rare for a student to feel comfortable playing with time to communicate a musical nuance.”

For rubato to become more inherent in the musical performances of students, there need to be more opportunities for students to practice the concept in a large-group classroom atmosphere in order to achieve mastery. The nature of a large-group performance class, the setting of the treatment phase, can possibly have an effect on the lack of rubato in the classroom. At any rate, new teaching methods should be developed



for the large-group band classroom that can help highlight the interpretations of rubato in individual student performances.

**Expression in Adolescent Students and Peer Pressure.** During the treatment phase of the study, I made formative observations of student performances in the classroom. When students would perform the unaccompanied solo in *Psalms 42* with the rest of the class listening, there was usually no indication of rubato in performances. This is in stark contrast to post-treatment performances, where rubato consistently was the expressive element with the highest amount of growth. It was evident students knew to perform with rubato and were able to execute the concept, but this performance was completed in an empty classroom with myself being the only other person present. Could the absence of expressive elements be related to some sort of student anxiety relating to peer pressure when performing around others? This relates to the general concept of performance anxiety studied by many researchers (Green & Gallwey, 1986; Ortiz Brugués, 2011; Perdomo-Guevara, 2014), as well as the prevalence of peer pressure amongst adolescents (Brown, Lohr, & McClenahan, 1986; Clasen & Brown, 1985). Further research should be conducted to explore the feelings of adolescent students when performing music around classmates, especially as it applies to expression.

## **Conclusion**

The need to perform with expression and emotion will always be valued amongst musicians, as these elements help make music truly indispensable and creative. However, without the ability to interpret, the individual musician cannot fully partake in the creative process. Without creativity and expression in performance through interpretation, music becomes overly technical and rigid.

As a teacher, I have often noticed my students being concerned about all aspects of their performances (notes, rhythms, dynamics, style, etc.) being correct. One of the primary goals of being a musician is indeed to perform accurately, but there is so much more that is necessary in order to have a truly musical performance. While the importance of concrete elements in music cannot be denied, it is the abstract that makes music special. The findings in this study highlight the fact that the interpretation of expressive concepts in music is integral in the development of students. When student musicians are afforded the opportunity to create their own musical ideas and decisions, we are only then truly teaching them how to make music.

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## APPENDIX A: Initial Letter to Parents of Focus Group Students



100 N. Peters Ave.  
Fond du Lac, WI 54935

## Sabish Middle School BANDS

Mike Fedyszyn | Director of Bands  
(920) 929-2800 ext. 2512 | fedyszynm@fonddulac.k12.wi.us

February 2014

Dear Parent/Guardian:

As many of you know, I have spent the last several years working towards earning my Master of Music Education degree from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. I am writing to request permission for your child to participate as a member of a focus group for a research study entitled "Student-Centered Interpretation and Expression in the Large-Group Secondary Band Class." Data gathered during this research study will serve as the basis for my master's thesis research.

Throughout my career in music education, I have viewed performing with expression and emotion as one of the most important elements in music performance. It has always been my focus to teach my students how to play with expression, or to help make music come alive. The purpose of this study is to give band students primarily being taught in the performance-based, large-group ensemble class the tools necessary to make interpretative decisions regarding expression in their own music-making.

Students in the focus group will be asked to audio record two short melodies in both February and May of this year. These recordings will take place during the hours of the regular school day. Recordings will then be evaluated by a panel of instrumental music educators based on elements of music that pertain to expression and interpretation. Data gathered during this study will be kept completely confidential; the names of students will not appear in my master's thesis, nor will they be revealed to anyone on the panel of instrumental music educators. (All data will be coded and de-identified as "Student A", "Student B", etc.)

This research depends on the voluntary participation of 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Band students at Sabish Middle School. Students may choose not to take part in this study, or if they decide to take part, they can change your mind later and withdraw from the study. There are no risks to participating in this study beyond the amount of risk students normally experience in a learning setting.

Attached is a Parent Consent and Child Assent Form, which is a permission slip to be a part of this research project. More information about this study is included in the contents of this form. Please sign and return the last page of this form by **Monday, February 17**. If you have questions about the study or study procedures, you are free to contact the investigators at the addresses and phone numbers listed in the Parent Consent and Child Assent Form. If you have questions about your rights as a study participant or complaints about your treatment as a research subject, contact the Institutional Review Board at (414) 229-3173 or [irbinfo@uwm.edu](mailto:irbinfo@uwm.edu).

I look forward to conducting this research. It is my hope that information gathered in this study will help instrumental music educators become better teachers when it comes to teaching expression and interpretation in the classroom. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me. Again, thank you very much for your time and support!

Sincerely Yours,

Mike Fedyszyn  
Director of Bands  
Sabish Middle School

## APPENDIX B: Examples of Music – *Psalm 42*

## Psalm 42 - Melody

Clarinet in B $\flat$ 

**Samuel Hazo**

**Expressively**

Expressively

2 3 4

5 6 7 8

9 10 11 12

13 14 15 16

## Psalm 42 - Melody

Oboe

Samuel Hazo

Expressively

The musical score for the Oboe part of Psalm 42 - Melody, by Samuel Hazo, is written in 4/4 time and key of B-flat major. The melody is marked "Expressively" and consists of 16 measures. The score is divided into four systems, each containing four measures. The melody is characterized by a series of eighth and quarter notes, often grouped with slurs. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1 through 16 above the notes. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of measure 16.

Measures 1-4: Measure 1 starts with a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note B-flat, a quarter note C, and a quarter note D. Measure 2 has a quarter note E, a quarter note F, and a quarter note G. Measure 3 has a quarter note A, a quarter note B-flat, and a quarter note C. Measure 4 has a quarter note D, a quarter note E, and a quarter note F.

Measures 5-8: Measure 5 has a quarter note G, a quarter note A, and a quarter note B-flat. Measure 6 has a quarter note C, a quarter note D, and a quarter note E. Measure 7 has a quarter note F, a quarter note G, and a quarter note A. Measure 8 has a quarter note B-flat, a quarter note C, and a quarter note D.

Measures 9-12: Measure 9 has a quarter note E, a quarter note F, and a quarter note G. Measure 10 has a quarter note A, a quarter note B-flat, and a quarter note C. Measure 11 has a quarter note D, a quarter note E, and a quarter note F. Measure 12 has a quarter note G, a quarter note A, and a quarter note B-flat.

Measures 13-16: Measure 13 has a quarter note C, a quarter note D, and a quarter note E. Measure 14 has a quarter note F, a quarter note G, and a quarter note A. Measure 15 has a quarter note B-flat, a quarter note C, and a quarter note D. Measure 16 has a quarter note E, a quarter note F, and a quarter note G.



## Psalm 42 - Melody

Mallets-Oboe LOW

Samuel Hazo

Expressively

2 3 4

5 6 7 8

9 10 11 12

13 14 15 16

## Psalm 42 - Melody

Alternate F Horn

Samuel Hazo

Expressively

2 3 4

5 6 7 8

9 10 11 12

13 14 15 16

## APPENDIX C: Examples of Music – *Amazing Grace*

## Amazing Grace

Clarinet in B $\flat$

Traditional

Expressively

Musical score for Clarinet in B $\flat$ , titled "Amazing Grace". The score is written in 3/4 time and consists of 16 measures. The tempo/style marking is "Expressively". The key signature has one flat (B $\flat$ ). The score is divided into four lines of four measures each, with measure numbers 1 through 16 indicated above the notes. The melody is as follows:

- Measure 1: Quarter note G $\flat$  (B $\flat$ 4).
- Measure 2: Quarter note A $\flat$  (B $\flat$ 4).
- Measure 3: Quarter note B $\flat$  (B $\flat$ 4).
- Measure 4: Quarter note C $\flat$  (B $\flat$ 4).
- Measure 5: Quarter note D $\flat$  (B $\flat$ 4).
- Measure 6: Quarter note E $\flat$  (B $\flat$ 4).
- Measure 7: Quarter note F $\flat$  (B $\flat$ 4).
- Measure 8: Quarter note G $\flat$  (B $\flat$ 4).
- Measure 9: Quarter note A $\flat$  (B $\flat$ 4).
- Measure 10: Quarter note B $\flat$  (B $\flat$ 4).
- Measure 11: Quarter note C $\flat$  (B $\flat$ 4).
- Measure 12: Quarter note D $\flat$  (B $\flat$ 4).
- Measure 13: Quarter note E $\flat$  (B $\flat$ 4).
- Measure 14: Quarter note F $\flat$  (B $\flat$ 4).
- Measure 15: Quarter note G $\flat$  (B $\flat$ 4).
- Measure 16: Quarter note A $\flat$  (B $\flat$ 4).

**Amazing Grace**

Oboe Traditional

Expressively

The musical score is written for Oboe in 3/4 time, featuring a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The tempo/style marking is 'Expressively'. The score consists of 16 measures, numbered 1 through 16. Measures 1-4 are on the first staff, 5-8 on the second, 9-12 on the third, and 13-16 on the fourth. The melody is characterized by a slow, expressive feel with many half notes and some quarter notes. A slur covers measures 7 and 8, and another slur covers measures 15 and 16. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of measure 16.

1 2 3 4

5 6 7 8

9 10 11 12

13 14 15 16

**Amazing Grace**

Opt. French Horn Traditional

Expressively

1 2 3 4


5 6 7 8

9 10 11 12

13 14 15 16

NOTE: The optional oboe part is not shown, as both oboe players in the study opted to perform the regular oboe part for *Amazing Grace*.

## APPENDIX D: Sample Evaluator Rubric

<h2 style="margin: 0;">Student A</h2> <p style="margin: 0;">Pre-Treatment Performance - <i>Psalm 42</i></p>		
		<a href="#" style="color: blue; text-decoration: underline;">View Sheet Music</a>

**In your opinion, how clear were the following elements of music in the performance? \***

	5 (Very Clear)	4 (Somewhat Clear)	3 (Less Clear)	2 (Minimally Clear)	1 (Not Clear, No Evidence)
Dynamic Contrast	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rubato	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attention to Tension & Release Points in Music	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**On a scale of 1-5, please rate the level of evident student interpretation and expression found in the performance. \***

	5 (Highest)	4	3	2	1 (Lowest)
Interpretation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Expression	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Please write any comments regarding dynamic contrast, rubato, and/or overall student interpretation/expression in the space below. \***

**Please type your first and last name in the space below. \***

Next

Please click "Next" to move on to the next recording. DO NOT click the Back button on your browser.

## APPENDIX E: Evaluator Directions – Web Site Screenshot

**Student-Centered Interpretation and Expression in the Large-Group Secondary Band Class**

by Mike Fedyszyn

***Recordings****(Pre-Treatment)*

[Psalm 42 - Pre-Treatment Recordings](#)  
[Amazing Grace - Pre-Treatment Recordings](#)

Dear Evaluation Panel Member,

THANK YOU very much for participating in this research project!

*A bit of background on this project...*

As part of my thesis for my Master of Music degree in Music Education from UW-Milwaukee, I am conducting a research study meant to investigate the teaching of student expression and interpretation in the large group band classroom. The study consists of a focus group of 11 students who have audio recorded two short melodies both before and after a 9-week treatment period (completed between February and April). The goal of this study is to discover new instructional methods to empower students in making interpretative decisions in



## APPENDIX F: Evaluator Directions – Full Text

Dear Evaluation Panel Member,

THANK YOU very much for participating in this research project!

### *A bit of background on this project...*

As part of my thesis for my Master of Music degree in Music Education from UW-Milwaukee, I am conducting a research study meant to investigate the teaching of student expression and interpretation in the large group band classroom. The study consists of a focus group of 11 students who have audio recorded two short melodies both before and after a 9-week treatment period (completed between February and April). The goal of this study is to discover new instructional methods to empower students in making interpretative decisions in their own music-making (as opposed to directors/conductors dictating to students what interpretative decisions to make in a performance). The students performing in these recordings are currently in 8th Grade and have received between 3-4 years of instruction in a typical middle school band setting. It should be noted that each student in these recordings is at a different overall ability level; this was done to represent a cross section of a typical middle school band class grouped by grade level.

Each melody includes only one expressive marking - a tempo/style marking at the onset of the work simply asking students to perform "Expressively." Before students recorded the melodies, they were also verbally reminded to perform expressively. The two melodies used in this project include:

- *Psalm 42* (Samuel Hazo) - Students in the focus group have been studying this work in their 8th Grade Band class. The work serves as the main teaching vehicle for the expressive and interpretative concepts taught during the treatment phase of this study. The work, a four-part chorale setting of *The Water is Wide* that contains numerous suspensions and non-chord tones, features an unaccompanied solo of the melody. While Hazo intended this solo to be for trumpet, he states in his program notes that it can be performed by any instrument. All students in 8th Grade Band received and learned the solo part (transcribed in Finale). The Pre-Treatment recordings heard here feature students performing the solo part after having studied the part (and overall piece) for parts of two class periods before the treatment period began (where expressive and interpretative concepts were heavily explored and presented).
- *Amazing Grace* (Traditional) - Students are sight-reading this famous melody in the recordings heard here. They did not know they would be performing this melody prior to the Pre-Treatment recordings. They were given approximately 3

minutes to individually study the work before their recording. The focus group did not perform this melody before or after their recordings in any band class. This work was selected to determine if the concepts of expression and interpretation taught during the treatment phase of the study could be applied to a work that was not currently being studied or performed. As such, great care was taken to select a melody that would be accessible and relatively easy to sight-read by students in the focus group in order to ensure students could still focus on performing with expression.

**Directions:** Please listen to each recording and answer all questions for both the *Psalms 42* Pre-Treatment recordings, as well as the *Amazing Grace* Pre-Treatment recordings. If you would like to view the sheet music performed by students, please feel free to click on the "View Sheet Music" link. (Note: Oboe and French Horn students were given the option to perform these melodies in an alternate key or octave in order to better accommodate for range considerations at their skill level; you will be able to see if these students opted to perform the alternate arrangement by viewing the sheet music.)

After listening to each recording, please answer the accompanying questions. These questions pertain to:

- The clarity of dynamic contrast in the performance
- The clarity of rubato in the performance
- The attention given to tension and release points in the music
- The overall level of expression in the performance
- The overall level of student interpretation in the performance

Each of these questions are based on a 1-5 scale, with 5 being the highest score.

In addition, please write comments in the box provided. These comments should pertain to the topics of dynamic contrast, rubato, and/or overall student interpretation/expression. Comments regarding other areas, including accuracy in notes/rhythms, can be made only if they pertain to the overall focus of expression and interpretation. There is no requirement on how many comments you write, but more comments written will help provide valuable qualitative data to more accurately answer the research question.

There are 11 recordings for each selection; each will take about 2-3 minutes to complete. Please complete the evaluations of these Pre-Treatment recordings by Sunday, May 17.

When you are complete with both sets of Pre-Treatment recordings, I will E-mail you the link for the Post-Treatment recordings.

## APPENDIX G: Examples of Student Reflective Activities

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please answer this question before class starts  
today in at least 2-3 complete sentences...**

You are at the movie theater with your friends and are watching a scary movie filled with suspense. Towards the end of the movie, you are about to find out if the main character escapes from the villain. At the very moment where you find out, the movie stops, the credits begin to roll, and the lights in the theater turn back on.

If this happened to you, what would you be thinking?

Please give this to Mr. Fed when he asks for this sheet at the end of class. (This is a graded assignment.)

## **TENSION & Release**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Folder Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Musicians, composers, authors, artists, filmmakers, comedians – any type of person who creates and/or performs – depend on TENSION and RELEASE in order to build interest and suspense.

**TENSION** – a feeling of nervousness, excitement, or fear that is created in some type of art form (song, book, movie, etc.)

**RELEASE** – the need for relief or relaxation from some sort of fear, anxiety, or trouble

**Examples of TENSION and RELEASE in everyday life**

- Going up the hill of a roller coaster, getting to the top of the hill (TENSION) and then moving down the hill (RELEASE)
- Feeling worried about an upcoming test (TENSION) and then taking the test (RELEASE)
- An action movie where the good guys and bad guys fight toward the end of the story (TENSION) and the good guy wins and lived happily ever after... (RELEASE)

What are some examples of TENSION and RELEASE in everyday life you can think of?

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**How does this work in music?**

TENSION and RELEASE provides the foundation for expression and emotion in music.

- Low notes search for high notes (Going up the roller coaster hill...)
- High notes search for low notes (Moving down the roller coaster hill...could there be TENSION in moving down the hill?)
- Short rhythms search for long rhythms
- Long rhythms search for short rhythms

Music also provides TENSION and RELEASE moments in harmonic structure (i.e. what notes/chords are used). Notes/chords that sound pleasing to the ear is what is called CONSONANCE, while the opposite – notes/chords that are jarring – is what is called DISSONANCE.

- Dissonance searches for consonance

**WRITTEN QUESTION – Please answer this question in 1-2 complete sentences.**

In your own words, why is expression and emotion necessary in performing music?

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## Non-Chord Tones Found in Psalm 42

A **non-chord tone** is a note in a piece of music which is not in the chord that is formed by the other notes; for example, if a piece of music is currently on a C Major chord, the notes C-E-G are members of that chord, while any other note played at that time is a non-chord tone. A non-chord tone is a dissonance and is required to resolve to a chord tone. There are many ways composers can create dissonance using non-chord tones. Here are two examples:

### Neighbor tone

A **neighbor tone** or **auxiliary note** is a non-chord tone which is preceded by a chord tone directly above or below it and resolves to the same tone:



### Suspension

A **suspension** occurs when the harmony shifts from one chord to another, but one or more notes of the first chord are temporarily held over into the second in which they are non-chord tones before resolving to a chord tone.

Suspensions may be further described using the number of the interval forming the suspension and its resolution; i.e. **4-3 suspension**, **7-6 suspension**, etc. Most suspensions resolve downwards; the example shown above, a **7-8 suspension**, is a rare example of an upwards resolution (also called a **retardation**). A suspension must be *prepared* with the same note (in the same voice) using a chord tone in the preceding chord; otherwise it is an **appoggiatura**. The notes are often tied, but this is optional.



**Directions:** Look at the score to Psalm 42 and observe what instruments have non-chord tones and when they occur. Then, listen to the recording of the music and follow the score, listening to these non-chord tones.

**REFLECTION** – Why did Mr. Hazo use so many non-chord tones in his arrangement? How does it relate to the family it is dedicated to?

APPENDIX H: *Psalm 42* Individual Student Data

Student A	Psalm 42							AVG	Psalm 42							AVG	Pre to	
	Pre-Treatment							Elem.	Post-Treatment							Elem.	Post	%
	Alto Saxophone	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Growth	Change	
Dynamic Contrast	3	2	2	2	3	4	2.67		4	2	2	3	4	5	3.33	0.67	25%	
Rubato	4	2	2	2	1	3	2.33		4	4	3	3	3	5	3.67	1.33	57%	
Tension/Release	4	2	4	2	3	4	3.17		4	4	3	3	4	5	3.83	0.67	21%	
Interpretation	4	3	2	2	2	4	2.83		3	2	2	2	3	5	2.83	0.00	0%	
Expression	3	2	2	2	2	4	2.50		3	2	3	3	4	5	3.33	0.83	33%	
Student AVG Score	3.6	2.2	2.4	2.0	2.2	3.8	2.70		3.6	2.8	2.6	2.8	3.6	5.0	3.40	0.70	26%	

#### Psalm 42 Pre-Treatment Comments

Ev1	It seemed as though this student used a good sound on their instrument. Their style (in tone coming out of their instrument) was quite good. They did seem to have difficulty holding on to the longer notes--some loss in support.
Ev2	Realizing of course that the student has played this with minimal preparation to the details of the music, I found this to be fairly typical of how most students would play this.
Ev3	Aside from the notes and rhythms, this student is not demonstrating any kind of phrasing or movement in the musical line. The entrance and release points are generally there.
Ev4	The performance, while accurate, did not display much variance in tempo or dynamic.
Ev5	I heard a couple attempts at decrescendo, but it sounded like the student was concerned about losing tone quality by getting too soft. There was little to no change in tempo.
Ev6	Nice start to expression.

#### Psalm 42 Post-Treatment Comments

The student had some dynamic contrast, but not on the sustained notes. Also, the sustained notes weren't held quite to full value, and thus, the rubato wasn't as clear.
With a simple melody there is so much that can be done with this musically. The notes are not an issue.
Much slower but still lacking line/direction in the phrase.
Some attention paid to longer notes!
Very sensitive playing, especially the phrasing.
Nice dynamics



**Student B**

**Psalm 42** AVG  
**Pre-Treatment** Elem.

<b>French Horn (ALT)</b>	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score
Dynamic Contrast	3	2	1	2	2	2	2.00
Rubato	3	3	1	2	1	2	2.00
Tension/Release	2	3	1	2	3	2	2.17
Interpretation	3	2	1	2	2	2	2.00
Expression	3	2	1	2	2	2	2.00
<i>Student AVG Score</i>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>2.03</b>

**Psalm 42** AVG  
**Post-Treatment** Elem. Pre to Post %

Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Growth	Change
4	4	2	3	4	4	3.50	1.50	75%
4	4	1	4	2	3	3.00	1.00	50%
3	4	2	3	4	3	3.17	1.00	46%
3	3	2	3	3	3	2.83	0.83	42%
3	3	2	3	4	4	3.17	1.17	58%
<b>3.4</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>3.13</b>	<b>1.10</b>	<b>54%</b>

**Psalm 42 Pre-Treatment Comments**

Ev1	Again, holding on to the longer notes seemed to be difficult for this French Horn player. Overall style in playing smoothly was pretty good.
Ev2	The student appeared to be struggling a little bit to get the notes and therefore playing the notes took priority over musicality.
Ev3	This student, aside from hitting the accurate notes/fingerings, is not thinking about interpretation/expression. They are simply lining up their fingers with notes and rhythms indicated on the page. Expression is non-existent.
Ev4	Aside from the technique, accuracy issues, this player tended to play phrases rather short without much attention to line.
Ev5	It sounded like the student was focused more on pitch rather than expression.
Ev6	Minimal expression.

**Psalm 42 Post-Treatment Comments**

Dynamic contrast was quite evident, but not always at the appropriate times. Also, the lack of slurring did affect the interpretation and overall expression. However, this recording was more musical than the performers first attempt before the treatment.
I heard a nice start on the attempt to play the piece musically.
Didn't notice much of a difference.
A nice ritardando in the penultimate measure - a musical decision!!
Beautiful rise & fall of the dynamics.
Nice dynamics and good start on other areas.

Student C	Psalm 42							AVG	Psalm 42							AVG	Pre to	
	Pre-Treatment							Elem.	Post-Treatment							Elem.	Post	%
	Trumpet	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Growth	Change	
Dynamic Contrast	2	3	3	2	2	3	2.50		4	3	2	4	3	3	3.17	0.67	27%	
Rubato	2	3	2	2	1	1	1.83		4	3	1	4	2	2	2.67	0.83	45%	
Tension/Release	2	3	2	2	1	2	2.00		4	3	3	4	4	3	3.50	1.50	75%	
Interpretation	2	3	2	2	1	2	2.00		4	3	2	2	3	3	2.83	0.83	42%	
Expression	2	3	2	2	1	2	2.00		4	3	1	3	3	3	2.83	0.83	42%	
Student AVG Score	2.0	3.0	2.2	2.0	1.2	2.0	2.07		4.0	3.0	1.8	3.4	3.0	2.8	3.00	0.93	45%	

#### Psalm 42 Pre-Treatment Comments

Ev1	This student seemed to play more on the "flat" side. There were minimal elements of style, dynamics, etc. The notes were played correctly, but that was all the student put into this playing.
Ev2	This student played with a nice mature sound and I felt there was some degree of interpretive style.
Ev3	There are a few nice attempts at expression and dynamic change here. This student lacks an overall understanding of the bigger musical line. Any dynamic changes are demonstrated as quick bursts in the sustained whole notes as opposed to the entire line.
Ev4	Not many decisions made beyond what was indicated on the page.
Ev5	It sounded like the student did a rise / fall in the dynamics leading to the D, but that may have been more air support for the high note than expression.
Ev6	Starting to feel tension and release.

#### Psalm 42 Post-Treatment Comments

I could definitely hear the rise and fall of dynamics in this recording. The pulse was lost a bit, and affected the tension and release, but overall it was much more musical.
There was a spot where I heard some dynamic contrast.
Didn't notice a difference.
I am noticing a bit of a trend in the first three recordings - they all seem to be phrasing the same way with breaths after the sustained notes. I think all students this far are using a tempo that allows for more potential expression!
Dynamics were more interpretive as the song went along. The ending was quite lovely.
Some difference but not overly noticeable.

Student D	Psalm 42							AVG	Psalm 42							AVG	Pre to	
	Pre-Treatment							Elem.	Post-Treatment							Elem.	Post	%
	Oboe	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Growth	Change	
Dynamic Contrast	2	3	1	2	2	1	1.83		3	4	2	2	3	4	3.00	1.17	64%	
Rubato	2	3	1	2	1	1	1.67		4	3	1	2	3	2	2.50	0.83	50%	
Tension/Release	3	3	2	2	1	1	2.00		4	3	2	2	3	3	2.83	0.83	42%	
Interpretation	2	3	1	2	1	1	1.67		3	3	2	2	3	3	2.67	1.00	60%	
Expression	2	3	1	2	1	1	1.67		3	3	2	2	3	4	2.83	1.17	70%	
Student AVG Score	2.2	3.0	1.2	2.0	1.2	1.0	1.77		3.4	3.2	1.8	2.0	3.0	3.2	2.77	1.00	57%	

Psalm 42 Pre-Treatment Comments		Psalm 42 Post-Treatment Comments	
Ev1	Instrument difficulty posed limitations for this student. Overall, this student used decent tone, but lacked support in the sound, which, in turn, affected the rubato, tension, etc.		Pulse was pretty consistent and helped with the rubato and release points.
Ev2	There was a limited degree of musicality expressed in this performance.		There was a nice attempt at dynamics.
Ev3	This student is struggling physically with the reed and instrument and is not able to focus on musical interpretation.		Struggles with physical instrument, difficult to move into interpretive elements of music.
Ev4	Not much to comment on here...		More so than the previous three recordings, this student seemed to be playing note to note, rather than playing a line.
Ev5	Not very expressive at all. Sounded very stiff ... needs to relax and play.		Some expression, but I think I only heard it because I was listening for it. Not sure what others would hear.
Ev6	Very straight.		Good start to dynamics.

Student E	Psalm 42							AVG	Psalm 42							AVG	Pre to	
	Pre-Treatment							Elem.	Post-Treatment							Elem.	Post	%
	Alto Saxophone	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Growth	Change	
Dynamic Contrast	4	4	3	3	4	4	3.67		4	3	4	4	4	5	4.00	0.33	9%	
Rubato	4	4	2	3	4	5	3.67		5	4	4	4	5	5	4.50	0.83	23%	
Tension/Release	4	4	5	4	5	5	4.50		5	4	4	4	5	5	4.50	0.00	0%	
Interpretation	4	4	3	3	5	5	4.00		5	3	4	4	5	5	4.33	0.33	8%	
Expression	4	4	3	4	4	4	3.83		5	3	3	4	4	5	4.00	0.17	4%	
Student AVG Score	4.0	4.0	3.2	3.4	4.4	4.6	3.93		4.8	3.4	3.8	4.0	4.6	5.0	4.27	0.33	8%	

#### Psalm 42 Pre-Treatment Comments

Ev1	This student reminds me a lot of the first alto sax player. Nice beginning use of vibrato! This student seemed to have an idea of musicality. I am guessing that they have had lessons or training in what to do on the "long" notes. Also, style aspects were very accurate.
Ev2	Nice vibrato and I found this performance to be very pleasing.
Ev3	Good attempts at dynamic and expressive qualities but still lacks direction in the musical line. Sustained notes need spin/direction.
Ev4	Sensitively played. Nice shape on ends of phrases.
Ev5	Nice interpretation of the rise & fall of the melodic lines. Could hear the "lift" between phrases.
Ev6	Nice rubato.

#### Psalm 42 Post-Treatment Comments

This was a very musical performance for a middle school student! For my taste there could have been a bit more dynamic contrast, but all other categories were superior. Very enjoyable and fitting for the piece.
Very nice controlled vibrato and that gives a feeling of expression, but not much in regard to dynamic contrast.
Rubato is clear and this person has an understanding of the phrase.
Nice growth through the pickup notes, leading toward the downbeat! Also, nice attention to the the shape of the release - very appropriate for the style of the excerpt.
Very nice playing overall ... very sensitive.
Well done.

Student F	Psalm 42							AVG	Psalm 42							AVG	Pre to	
	Pre-Treatment							Elem.	Post-Treatment							Elem.	Post	%
	Marimba	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Growth	Change	
Dynamic Contrast	4	3	3	3	5	5	3.83		5	4	3	4	4	5	4.17	0.33	9%	
Rubato	3	3	1	3	3	4	2.83		5	4	2	3	3	5	3.67	0.83	29%	
Tension/Release	4	3	4	3	4	5	3.83		5	4	3	3	4	5	4.00	0.17	4%	
Interpretation	3	3	2	3	4	5	3.33		4	4	3	3	3	5	3.67	0.33	10%	
Expression	4	3	3	3	3	5	3.50		4	4	3	3	4	5	3.83	0.33	10%	
Student AVG Score	3.6	3.0	2.6	3.0	3.8	4.8	3.47		4.6	4.0	2.8	3.2	3.6	5.0	3.87	0.40	12%	

#### Psalm 42 Pre-Treatment Comments

Ev1	I was a bit confused as to what this student was going for in the rolls and intensity in rolls. However, it seemed that the student was trying to pull out musical aspects. There were variances in dynamics and notes were held to full value (except maybe the first note of each phrase).
Ev2	Nice, clear and even rolls with a nice steady tempo.
Ev3	Lacks any rubato or major expressive qualities. Could be the nature of the instrument prohibiting that.
Ev4	Connection of rolls lead to a nice sense of direction to the line.
Ev5	The interpretation improved as the song went along. The ending decrescendo was nicely performed.
Ev6	Nicely done.

#### Psalm 42 Post-Treatment Comments

This student still has some "explosive" parts to his/her rolls. However, they are much less. The rubato is very clear. I feel that this was quite expressive, but could be a bit more delicate in approach to receive a "5" in the interpretation and expression.
It's harder to be expressive on mallets but I did here some attempt at dynamic contrast.
Much improved.
I think choosing to roll only on slurred notes inhibited the musicality of this performance - at this tempo I think it would be appropriate to roll every note. A good mallet choice, and some nice connection of sequential rolls.
Good approach to dynamics, especially crescendos on the long tones.
Very well done.

Student G	Psalm 42							Psalm 42								
	Pre-Treatment							Post-Treatment								
	French Horn							French Horn								
	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Pre to Post	%
Dynamic Contrast	1	3	1	2	2	1	1.67	3	2	2	2	3	2	2.33	0.67	40%
Rubato	2	4	1	2	1	1	1.83	4	2	1	2	3	1	2.17	0.33	18%
Tension/Release	1	2	3	2	1	1	1.67	3	2	2	3	3	2	2.50	0.83	50%
Interpretation	2	3	1	2	1	1	1.67	3	2	1	2	3	1	2.00	0.33	20%
Expression	1	3	1	2	1	1	1.50	3	2	1	3	3	2	2.33	0.83	56%
Student AVG Score	1.4	3.0	1.4	2.0	1.2	1.0	1.67	3.2	2.0	1.4	2.4	3.0	1.6	2.27	0.60	36%

#### Psalm 42 Pre-Treatment Comments

Ev1	This student played right through the notes. There was minimal attention to note values, and that pulled away from the musical elements all together. Tonguing and slurring were also quite a bit over the board.
Ev2	The student made some effort to play this musically.
Ev3	Still struggling physically with instrument. Accurate notes and rhythms.
Ev4	Rhythmic inaccuracies aside, this student seemed unsure what to do on all those sustained notes.
Ev5	This student sounded too worried about pitch and not yet ready for interpretation.
Ev6	Bland.

#### Psalm 42 Post-Treatment Comments

It is nice to hear the slurs in this horn player. However, they are running out of breath and cannot make the end of the phrase or add dynamics. This affected everything else as well.
Not much expression.
No difference.
I sensed that this student had a general concept of musical line/phrase (some nice direction from quarter notes to whole notes). I think the musicality of this performance was inhibited a bit by a still developing sense of pulse control and/or breath control.
There was more dynamic expression near the end. Otherwise, it seemed pretty mezzo- in the beginning and middle phrases.
No clear distinction.

Student H	Psalm 42							AVG	Psalm 42							AVG	Pre to	
	Pre-Treatment							Elem.	Post-Treatment							Elem.	Post	%
	Clarinet	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Growth	Change	
Dynamic Contrast	2	4	1	2	2	1	2.00		5	4	2	4	4	5	4.00	2.00	100%	
Rubato	2	3	1	2	1	1	1.67		5	3	3	3	4	5	3.83	2.17	130%	
Tension/Release	2	4	3	3	2	1	2.50		4	3	2	3	4	5	3.50	1.00	40%	
Interpretation	3	3	1	2	1	1	1.83		5	3	2	3	4	5	3.67	1.83	100%	
Expression	2	3	2	3	1	1	2.00		5	3	2	3	4	5	3.67	1.67	83%	
Student AVG Score	2.2	3.4	1.6	2.4	1.4	1.0	2.00		4.8	3.2	2.2	3.2	4.0	5.0	3.73	1.73	87%	

## Psalm 42 Pre-Treatment Comments

Ev1	This was a somewhat flat performance. The player used good support behind their sound, but didn't pay a lot of attention to note values. The technical difficulties took away from the musicality. There was little feeling of attention to musicality.
Ev2	Nice sound, and there was some indication of musicality.
Ev3	Lacks expressive qualities. Good entry/release points.
Ev4	Another mostly accurate performance without much personal choice directing it. Some evidence of phrase awareness.
Ev5	It sounded like at the end, the student thought "Oh, that's right, I'm supposed to add expression. Let me quick do a decrescendo!"
Ev6	No expression.

## Psalm 42 Post-Treatment Comments

This clarinet player has shown a huge improvement from the last recording. The sound is full and clear at appropriate places. The rubato and dynamics are very clear. Pulse is occasionally lost, but overall it is very musical.
There were some nice moments of expression and dynamic contrast
Good attempts at phrase line. Good sound at the louder dynamic.
Some good attempts at shaping the line! Dynamic contrast within each phrase and throughout the excerpt were evident. Truncated whole notes inhibited connection of phrases.
The decrescendos were quite lovely. The crescendos seemed a little abrupt. Overall, very expressive.
Nicely done.

Student I	Psalm 42							AVG	Psalm 42							AVG	Pre to	
	Pre-Treatment							Elem.	Post-Treatment							Elem.	Post	%
	Tuba	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Growth	Change	
Dynamic Contrast	3	4	1	2	2	4	2.67		4	5	2	3	4	4	3.67	1.00	38%	
Rubato	3	3	1	2	1	4	2.33		5	5	2	4	5	5	4.33	2.00	86%	
Tension/Release	2	4	3	2	1	4	2.67		4	5	1	3	5	5	3.83	1.17	44%	
Interpretation	3	3	1	2	2	4	2.50		4	5	2	4	5	5	4.17	1.67	67%	
Expression	3	3	1	2	1	4	2.33		4	5	1	3	4	5	3.67	1.33	57%	
Student AVG Score	2.8	3.4	1.4	2.0	1.4	4.0	2.50		4.2	5.0	1.6	3.4	4.6	4.8	3.93	1.43	57%	

Psalm 42 Pre-Treatment Comments		Psalm 42 Post-Treatment Comments	
Ev1	This tuba player had some good starts to dynamics and expression, but lacked support behind their sound. This made it difficult to tell if the really knew what to do with expression, because it seemed like they were just about to do something great with expression, but then they ran out of air.		This player also shows a big improvement. Although he/she is still having some difficulty playing full phrases (breathing), I can still hear dynamic changes and rubato. In fact, I think that this player has shown the most rubato and added places that were held out that no other player did up to this point.
Ev2	This student appears to be a musician with fairly strong musicianship.		Very nicely done with good attention to detail
Ev3	Playing notes and rhythms. No expressive qualities.		Struggling with physical aspects of instrument.
Ev4	This student's still developing breath control lead to truncating each phrase. Without any marking to guide them, it is understandably difficult for young players to make a musical moment on an excerpt with so many sustained notes!		This performance seemed "delicate" to me, and I mean that in a good way! It seemed like this player was really trying to play with musical sensitivity.
Ev5	The tuba player generally ran out of air before any end-of-note expression could be performed. The higher section in the middle sounded a little louder but I'm not sure if that was dynamic-driven or only air support.		Very beautiful interpretation. I enjoyed the ending with the rubato almost sounding like fermatas.
Ev6	Nice start.		Very expressive.



Student J	Psalm 42							AVG	Psalm 42							AVG	Pre to	
	Pre-Treatment							Elem.	Post-Treatment							Elem.	Post	%
	Oboe (ALT)	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Growth	Change	
Dynamic Contrast	2	3	3	2	2	1	2.17		4	4	2	4	4	3	3.50	1.33	62%	
Rubato	3	3	2	2	1	1	2.00		4	4	3	4	5	3	3.83	1.83	92%	
Tension/Release	3	3	3	3	1	1	2.33		4	5	3	4	5	3	4.00	1.67	71%	
Interpretation	3	3	2	2	1	1	2.00		4	4	3	4	5	3	3.83	1.83	92%	
Expression	3	3	2	3	2	1	2.33		4	4	2	4	4	3	3.50	1.17	50%	
Student AVG Score	2.8	3.0	2.4	2.4	1.4	1.0	2.17		4.0	4.2	2.6	4.0	4.6	3.0	3.73	1.57	72%	

Psalm 42 Pre-Treatment Comments		Psalm 42 Post-Treatment Comments	
Ev1	There are some great sounds coming from this oboe. I think with minimal training, there could be a lot of good musical things happening. There was good attention to note values and sustaining notes correctly.		This oboe player shows much more attention to rubato, pulse, and dynamics than the first time around. He/she also shows more attention to the style of the piece, and therefore, used better support and had better tone because of it!
Ev2	Very nice tone quality, but not much contrast.		Pretty good. I felt the tension and release points., and very nice rubato at the end.
Ev3	A few attempts at expression, dynamic changes but very minimal.		Still lacks direction in line of the phrase but good expressive attempts.
Ev4	There is some evidence here of the three-note pickup figure leading to the whole note - some sense of direction of the line.		Nice connection of phrases! Appropriate breaths! A good sense of direction and a nice ritardando at the end. Well done. I think the next step for this player would be to develop an overall concept of the shape of the entire excerpt (where is the climax?), and let each phrase serve that intent.
Ev5	The only dynamic change I heard was at the very end. The rest of it sounded like all one level.		The opening phrase was nicely interpreted. Putting a slight rubato at the beginning was a beautiful start.
Ev6	Very straight.		Starting to develop, but not real noticeable.

Student K	Psalm 42							AVG	Psalm 42							AVG	Pre to	
	Pre-Treatment							Elem.	Post-Treatment							Elem.	Post	%
	Trumpet	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Growth	Change	
Dynamic Contrast	1	3	1	2	2	1	1.67		5	5	2	3	4	5	4.00	2.33	140%	
Rubato	2	3	1	2	1	1	1.67		3	3	1	3	3	3	2.67	1.00	60%	
Tension/Release	2	3	2	2	1	1	1.83		3	4	1	3	3	4	3.00	1.17	64%	
Interpretation	1	2	1	2	1	1	1.33		3	3	1	3	3	4	2.83	1.50	113%	
Expression	1	2	1	2	1	1	1.33		3	4	1	3	4	5	3.33	2.00	150%	
Student AVG Score	1.4	2.6	1.2	2.0	1.2	1.0	1.57		3.4	3.8	1.2	3.0	3.4	4.2	3.17	1.60	102%	

Psalm 42 Pre-Treatment Comments		Psalm 42 Post-Treatment Comments	
Ev1	Again in this student, there lacked support in their sound, and this affected the musicality. Note values were correct, but lack of support made the trumpet sound like it was fading away. Also, there were no slurs, only tonguing.		The dynamics are very apparent, but a bit explosive. This player has improved in the style (interpretation, expression) overall, but is rushing the tempo and skipping some rubato and tension areas that would really help push him/her into the "4" category.
Ev2	I didn't sense much contrast.		There were some moments that were quite good with musical contrast.
Ev3	Notes and rhythms.		Rushed through. Not much of an expressive attempt.
Ev4	The students weren't provided much to guide their interpretation, but they were provided some articulation markings which would have helped connect some notes into longer ideas. As this student tongued each note, it really seemed like a series of notes rather than a series of phrases.		Another student playing longer phrases, which is nice to hear! A good attempt at a ritardando at the end - I think young players often go through a phase of "musicality" seeming contrived before it feels natural, authentic, and organic. With this particular student the ritardando did not seem very natural, but this is where musical playing begins!!
Ev5	This sounded like just notes and rhythms. There was no expression to take it to the next level.		Seemed to play a pretty narrow range of dynamics.
Ev6	Straight		Nice dynamic contrast.

APPENDIX I: *Amazing Grace* Individual Student Data

Student A	Amazing Grace							AVG	Amazing Grace							AVG	Pre to	
	Pre-Treatment							Elem.	Post-Treatment							Elem.	Post	%
	Alto Saxophone	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Growth	Change	
Dynamic Contrast	3	4	1	3	4	4	3.17		4	3	3	4	3	4	3.50	0.33	11%	
Rubato	4	4	2	2	2	4	3.00		4	3	2	4	3	4	3.33	0.33	11%	
Tension/Release	4	4	2	2	3	4	3.17		4	4	3	3	3	4	3.50	0.33	11%	
Interpretation	3	4	2	2	2	4	2.83		4	3	2	3	3	4	3.17	0.33	12%	
Expression	3	4	1	2	3	4	2.83		4	3	3	4	3	4	3.50	0.67	24%	
Student AVG Score	3.4	4.0	1.6	2.2	2.8	4.0	3.00		4.0	3.2	2.6	3.6	3.0	4.0	3.40	0.40	13%	

#### Amazing Grace Pre-Treatment Comments

Ev1	There was some nice rubato in this playing. Some "explosive" sounds in here, but I was happy to hear some dynamic change!
Ev2	I heard some expression
Ev3	Lacks expressive qualities.
Ev4	Accurate and an attempt at dynamic contrast (or perhaps an errant burst of air!)
Ev5	Nice work on rise & fall (a little abrupt in places, though). Very musical towards the end.
Ev6	Nicely done.

#### Amazing Grace Post-Treatment Comments

I felt that this recording had some evidence of musicality, but it was a bit rushed. This affected the rubato, tension, and opportunity for dynamic contrast.
Not a lot of contrast or musicality.
Much improved.
A sweet, "semplice" performance!
While it was played well, there wasn't much in the way of dynamic rise & fall.
Nice start to contrasts.

**Student B****Amazing Grace  
Pre-Treatment**AVG  
Elem.**Amazing Grace  
Post-Treatment**AVG  
Elem. Pre to  
Post %**French Horn (ALT)**

	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Growth	Change
Dynamic Contrast	3	2	1	2	1	1	1.67	4	2	2	3	4	2	2.83	1.17	70%
Rubato	2	2	1	2	1	1	1.50	3	2	2	3	2	2	2.33	0.83	56%
Tension/Release	3	2	1	2	1	1	1.67	3	2	2	3	3	2	2.50	0.83	50%
Interpretation	2	2	1	2	1	1	1.50	3	2	2	3	2	2	2.33	0.83	56%
Expression	2	2	1	2	1	1	1.50	3	2	2	3	3	2	2.50	1.00	67%
<i>Student AVG Score</i>	2.4	2.0	1.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.57	3.2	2.0	2.0	3.0	2.8	2.0	2.50	0.93	60%

**Amazing Grace Pre-Treatment Comments**

Ev1	This was a fairly "flat" performance. The student played correct notes and rhythms, but did not add anything extra to the performance.
Ev2	Not much if any contrast
Ev3	Any "rubato" sounds like it would be on accident. Lacks expressive qualities.
Ev4	Not much to comment on here...
Ev5	Sounded like no interpretation of the music beyond notes & rhythms.
Ev6	No expression.

**Amazing Grace Post-Treatment Comments**

Dynamics were more evident in this recording. Still, the lack of slurring took away from the overall expression. It felt more like the player was trying to get through the notes instead of taking time to express them.
Perhaps a touch of contrast, but not much.
Not much of a difference.
Articulation seemed too forceful for the style of the melody and inhibited the musicality of the performance.
Wasn't played very expressively. It got quieter quite abruptly at the end, but that was about it.
Contrast not enough to be effective.

Student C	Amazing Grace							AVG	Amazing Grace							AVG	Pre to	
	Pre-Treatment							Elem.	Post-Treatment							Elem.	Post	%
	Trumpet	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Growth	Change	
Dynamic Contrast	3	2	2	2	1	2	2.00		4	2	3	3	2	1	2.50	0.50	25%	
Rubato	3	2	1	2	1	1	1.67		2	2	1	3	1	2	1.83	0.17	10%	
Tension/Release	2	2	4	3	1	1	2.17		2	2	2	3	3	3	2.50	0.33	15%	
Interpretation	3	2	1	3	1	1	1.83		2	2	2	3	1	2	2.00	0.17	9%	
Expression	3	2	1	2	1	2	1.83		2	2	2	3	2	1	2.00	0.17	9%	
Student AVG Score	2.8	2.0	1.8	2.4	1.0	1.4	1.90		2.4	2.0	2.0	3.0	1.8	1.8	2.17	0.27	14%	

#### Amazing Grace Pre-Treatment Comments

Ev1	There was pretty good tone in this performance, but it was quite rushed. This took away from any tension and release feel.
Ev2	All the right notes, very little contrast.
Ev3	Notes and rhythms there for the most part. Lacks expressive qualities.
Ev4	This student seemed at times to be organizing music into phrases, with their corresponding moments of emphasis and repose.
Ev5	No expression was added to the music.
Ev6	straight with a little dynamic contrast

#### Amazing Grace Post-Treatment Comments

I'm not sure what happened here. This player played very differently than the first time, and had some different style choices. I could hear dynamics, but there was not much rubato and the phrases had a "clipped" feel.
I didn't hear much in regards to expression.
No expressive qualities that fit the style of the music.
This student made some interesting choices with note length! The staccato on some notes impeded musicality.
Not very expressive at all. I think the release points were purely oxygen-based, rather than phrased.
No noticable changes.

Student D	Amazing Grace							AVG	Amazing Grace							AVG	Pre to	
	Pre-Treatment							Elem.	Post-Treatment							Elem.	Post	%
	Oboe	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Growth	Change	
Dynamic Contrast	2	2	2	2	2	1	1.83		4	2	1	2	1	1	1.83	0.00	0%	
Rubato	2	2	1	2	1	1	1.50		4	2	1	2	1	2	2.00	0.50	33%	
Tension/Release	3	2	3	2	1	1	2.00		3	2	1	2	1	1	1.67	-0.33	-17%	
Interpretation	3	2	2	2	1	1	1.83		3	2	2	2	1	1	1.83	0.00	0%	
Expression	3	2	1	2	1	1	1.67		3	2	1	2	1	1	1.67	0.00	0%	
Student AVG Score	2.6	2.0	1.8	2.0	1.2	1.0	1.77		3.4	2.0	1.2	2.0	1.0	1.2	1.80	0.03	2%	

#### Amazing Grace Pre-Treatment Comments

Ev1	This student played a "flat" performance as well. There was good tone and support, but the sound did not "go anywhere."
Ev2	Again very limited expression.
Ev3	Notes and rhythms there for the most part. Lacks expressive qualities.
Ev4	This student seemed to be playing a series of notes rather than a line; there weren't any different shadings, volumes, etc.
Ev5	The end did get quieter, but I'm not sure if it was purposeful expression or a lack of confidence.
Ev6	straight

#### Amazing Grace Post-Treatment Comments

There was some evidence of dynamics and rubato, but this was also quite rushed and had some "clipped" ends to phrases.
I didn't hear much in contrast or dynamics.
Struggling with physical aspects of the instrument. Any expressive qualities are unintentional.
Again, this student seems more to be playing a series of notes rather than letting notes serve a phrase.
Was a pretty rigid performance. No expression at all.
Rubato - not sure it intentional or not.

Student E	Amazing Grace							AVG	Amazing Grace							AVG	Pre to	
	Pre-Treatment							Elem.	Post-Treatment							Elem.	Post	%
Alto Saxophone	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score		Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Growth	Change	
Dynamic Contrast	4	3	3	3	3	3	3.17		5	4	4	5	5	5	4.67	1.50	47%	
Rubato	3	3	3	3	2	4	3.00		5	4	3	4	4	5	4.17	1.17	39%	
Tension/Release	4	4	4	4	3	4	3.83		5	4	4	5	5	5	4.67	0.83	22%	
Interpretation	4	4	2	3	3	4	3.33		5	3	4	4	5	5	4.33	1.00	30%	
Expression	4	4	3	4	3	4	3.67		5	4	3	5	5	5	4.50	0.83	23%	
Student AVG Score	3.8	3.6	3.0	3.4	2.8	3.8	3.40		5.0	3.8	3.6	4.6	4.8	5.0	4.47	1.07	31%	

**Amazing Grace Pre-Treatment Comments**

Ev1	This student had the most musicality again. Overall tone and attention to note value helped show the intended feel of the music. There were a few places the student ran out of breath and cut things short, but it never sounded "clipped."
Ev2	The vibrato really helps to give the solo a feeling of expressiveness.
Ev3	Notes and rhythms present. Vibrato is nice, lacks contrast expression in the line.
Ev4	A well-played performance - a relatively clear concept of phrase organization, nice use of vibrato to add interest to sustained notes, and an overall "shape" to the entire excerpt.
Ev5	I heard moments of musical expression. It sounded like the student knew the song and what it was telling.
Ev6	needs more dynamic contrast

**Amazing Grace Post-Treatment Comments**

Very musical!
This young player has potential, and once again the vibrato shows expression, with a little bit of dynamic contrast.
Good expressive qualities in this person's playing.
This student plays very well! It almost seemed as though he/she was trying at times to be too delicate rather than playing "cantabile." (I know it wasn't marked as such...). Nicely shaped musical lines!
Very sensitive expression. Dynamics were appropriate and the phrasing was lovely.
Beautiful!



Student F	Amazing Grace							AVG	Amazing Grace							AVG	Pre to	
	Pre-Treatment							Elem.	Post-Treatment							Elem.	Post	%
	Marimba	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Growth	Change	
Dynamic Contrast	4	4	3	4	3	5	3.83	5	5	3	4	4	5	4.33	0.50	13%		
Rubato	3	4	2	3	1	3	2.67	5	3	1	4	2	5	3.33	0.67	25%		
Tension/Release	4	4	3	4	1	3	3.17	5	5	3	3	4	5	4.17	1.00	32%		
Interpretation	3	4	2	4	1	3	2.83	5	5	3	4	2	5	4.00	1.17	41%		
Expression	3	4	2	4	3	4	3.33	5	5	3	4	4	5	4.33	1.00	30%		
Student AVG Score	3.4	4.0	2.4	3.8	1.8	3.6	3.17	5.0	4.6	2.6	3.8	3.2	5.0	4.03	0.87	27%		

Amazing Grace Pre-Treatment Comments		Amazing Grace Post-Treatment Comments	
Ev1	Like the last performance, this student had some good ideas, but the rolls seemed to "explode" and cause the piece to lose its intended style. I am glad to hear dynamic contrast, but it wasn't always appropriate to what was intended.		This recording did not have the explosive rolling like the others. I thought it was very musical!
Ev2	The use of nice clear rolls give the impression of musicality.		Very musical performance
Ev3	Lacks expressive qualities in the larger phrases.		Expressive qualities are there but in very short bursts. The longer expressive line is lost.
Ev4	A nicely-paced crescendo to the apex note, then back down. This student also seemed to shape individual half-note rolls, not necessarily in the context of the shape of the phrase.		This student always puts some shape/shading into sustained notes which is great to hear! I think an appropriate next step would be to experiment with variations or changes in that shading in order to serve the shape of the entire melody.
Ev5	Some expression in the rise & fall of the lines.		Very nicely played. I like how the player approached the natural decrescendos in the lines.
Ev6	nice start		Nicely done.

Student G	Amazing Grace							AVG	Amazing Grace							AVG	Pre to	
	Pre-Treatment							Elem.	Post-Treatment							Elem.	Post	%
	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Growth	Change		
<u>French Horn (ALT)</u>	3	2	1	2	2	3	2.17	3	2	2	3	3	1	2.33	0.17	8%		
Dynamic Contrast	2	2	1	2	1	1	1.50	3	2	1	3	1	1	1.83	0.33	22%		
Rubato	2	2	3	2	1	1	1.83	3	2	1	4	2	1	2.17	0.33	18%		
Tension/Release	2	2	1	2	1	1	1.50	3	2	2	3	1	1	2.00	0.50	33%		
Interpretation	2	2	1	2	1	2	1.67	3	2	1	3	2	1	2.00	0.33	20%		
Expression	2.2	2.0	1.4	2.0	1.2	1.6	1.73	3.0	2.0	1.4	3.2	1.8	1.0	2.07	0.33	19%		
Student AVG Score																		

Amazing Grace Pre-Treatment Comments		Amazing Grace Post-Treatment Comments	
Ev1	This had an overall rushed feel. (maybe because it is a known melody?) This student had some good expression ideas, but just went through them too fast to be able to tell for sure.		This recording was slurred (which was nice to hear), but it felt "flat" otherwise. It was a bit rushed and lost the pulse because of it. This changed the interpretation to something other than intended.
Ev2	Not much here.		I didn't hear much in contrast.
Ev3	Lacks expressive qualities.		Struggling with physical aspects of instrument.
Ev4	Some longer lines here, but without much variance within them.		This student chose a bit faster tempo, but I liked it as it allowed him/her to breath less often and connect phrases together.
Ev5	There was some expression added to the higher sections, but that may have simply been increased air support.		The contrast in dynamic levels was pretty limited.
Ev6	some contrast		No real attention to expressive elements.

**Student H****Amazing Grace  
Pre-Treatment**AVG  
Elem.**Amazing Grace  
Post-Treatment**AVG  
Elem.Pre to  
Post %

<b>Clarinet</b>	<b>Ev1</b>	<b>Ev2</b>	<b>Ev3</b>	<b>Ev4</b>	<b>Ev5</b>	<b>Ev6</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Ev1</b>	<b>Ev2</b>	<b>Ev3</b>	<b>Ev4</b>	<b>Ev5</b>	<b>Ev6</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Growth</b>	<b>Change</b>
Dynamic Contrast	3	3	2	3	1	4	<b>2.67</b>	5	4	4	5	4	5	<b>4.50</b>	<b>1.83</b>	<b>69%</b>
Rubato	2	3	1	3	1	3	<b>2.17</b>	5	4	2	4	3	5	<b>3.83</b>	<b>1.67</b>	<b>77%</b>
Tension/Release	2	3	3	4	1	4	<b>2.83</b>	4	3	3	4	4	5	<b>3.83</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>35%</b>
Interpretation	3	3	2	3	1	4	<b>2.67</b>	4	3	3	4	3	5	<b>3.67</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>38%</b>
Expression	2	3	2	3	1	4	<b>2.50</b>	4	3	3	3	4	5	<b>3.67</b>	<b>1.17</b>	<b>47%</b>
<i>Student AVG Score</i>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>2.57</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>3.90</b>	<b>1.33</b>	<b>52%</b>

**Amazing Grace Pre-Treatment Comments**

Ev1	This student used good tone, but an uneven pulse. There was no sense of exactly what was going on in the piece. Rubato could not be established because the listener was unsure of the speed of the piece to begin with.
Ev2	Perhaps the missed rhythms was an attempt at interpreting the solo
Ev3	Lacks expressive qualities. Notes and rhythms present.
Ev4	Here is an instance of technique hindering musicality- the student is still developing fluency across the break, and the A-C exchanges threw him/her off what was a nicely musical performance!
Ev5	Simply played notes & rhythms. No evidence of expression.
Ev6	good start

**Amazing Grace Post-Treatment Comments**

There are a few places where this is rushed and the tension is lost, but overall this was very musical. Dynamics played a big part in this (supported sound!)
I heard some nice attempts in this selection at playing with musicality.
Great attempts at expressive elements. Very short bursts of dynamic changes.
Some real gusto on those dynamic shapes! This student was willing to take some risks and attempt some musical choices, which is neat to hear from a young player. Here is a rare performance where I would rate interpretation higher than expression. I don't know that the choices were necessarily the most appropriate, but this student made it his/her own!
I like how the player approached the ending, with a slight lift before the softer final measures.
Beautiful attention to expression.

Student I	Amazing Grace							Amazing Grace							Pre to	
	Pre-Treatment						AVG	Post-Treatment						AVG	Pre to	
							Elem.							Elem.	Post	%
	<u>Tuba</u>	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Growth
Dynamic Contrast	2	3	1	2	4	3	2.50	4	3	2	3	4	4	3.33	0.83	33%
Rubato	2	3	1	2	2	1	1.83	4	4	1	4	3	4	3.33	1.50	82%
Tension/Release	2	4	3	2	2	1	2.33	4	3	2	3	4	4	3.33	1.00	43%
Interpretation	2	3	2	2	1	1	1.83	4	2	2	3	3	4	3.00	1.17	64%
Expression	2	3	1	2	3	2	2.17	4	2	2	3	4	4	3.17	1.00	46%
Student AVG Score	2.0	3.2	1.6	2.0	2.4	1.6	2.13	4.0	2.8	1.8	3.2	3.6	4.0	3.23	1.10	52%

	<i>Amazing Grace Pre-Treatment Comments</i>	<i>Amazing Grace Post-Treatment Comments</i>
Ev1	This as a very "flat" performance. Again, I wonder if it is because it is a well-known melody? Note values were accurate, which could have lead to great musicality. However, it just had a feeling of being rushed.	Sometimes the rubato and attention to tension, etc. was a bit too much. The player held on to things a bit too long. However, this recording was much improved from the first one.
Ev2	Nice clear tone, not sure if those were dynamics or running out of breath.	Very nice ending.
Ev3	Lacks expressive qualities.	Didn't notice much difference.
Ev4	Entrances after breaths were nicely in time! That tuba requires a lot of air, and this student is still developing the needed control/pacing/etc to be able to play longer phrases.	Some nice attempts at connecting smaller phrases together! Not easy for young tuba players.
Ev5	I heard some rise & fall in dynamics in the lines. The tempo was very rigid.	Nice use of the crescendo to help carry the higher pitches. Also, nice work in getting slower and softer at the end.
Ev6	small start to dynamics	Good start to all elements.

Student J	Amazing Grace							AVG	Amazing Grace							AVG	Pre to	
	Pre-Treatment							Elem.	Post-Treatment							Elem.	Post	%
	Oboe	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Growth	Change	
Dynamic Contrast	3	3	2	2	1	1	2.00		4	4	3	4	3	3	3.50	1.50	75%	
Rubato	3	3	2	2	1	1	2.00		4	2	3	3	3	3	3.00	1.00	50%	
Tension/Release	3	3	3	3	1	1	2.33		4	3	3	3	4	2	3.17	0.83	36%	
Interpretation	4	3	2	2	1	1	2.17		4	3	3	3	3	3	3.17	1.00	46%	
Expression	3	3	2	3	1	1	2.17		4	3	3	3	3	2	3.00	0.83	38%	
Student AVG Score	3.2	3.0	2.2	2.4	1.0	1.0	2.13		4.0	3.0	3.0	3.2	3.2	2.6	3.17	1.03	48%	

Amazing Grace Pre-Treatment Comments		Amazing Grace Post-Treatment Comments	
Ev1	This was a somewhat "flat" performance, but yet, I felt the student held notes to full value. Releases were in the style called for. interpretation was pretty good, but it lacked the change in dynamics that would help it sound more musical.		The attention to tension and release was good with this player. Phrases were not clipped at all.
Ev2	Very nice tone, but not much in regards to contrast.		There was a moment or two with nice dynamic contrast.
Ev3	Lacks expressive qualities.		Good start to phrasing.
Ev4	There was some nice direction from pickup note to downbeat from this player. Having listened to a number of these now, a trend that I am noticing is that no student has made use of rubato to shade a phrase. This makes sense as we teachers return to steady pulse and correct, consistent rhythms as an ensemble goal so often that it is rare for a student to feel comfortable playing with time to communicate a musical nuance.		A very smooth performance, save for one little chipped note. I would have loved to hear some variation on the sustains - a little vibrato, some growth, some decay, etc.
Ev5	While the tone and melodic line was well-played, there was no evidence of expression.		Seemed like at the beginning, the player intended on doing a lot of expression but it fell by the wayside as the song progressed.
Ev6	not in evidence		Some small attention to detail.

Student K	Amazing Grace							AVG	Amazing Grace							AVG	Pre to	
	Pre-Treatment							Elem.	Post-Treatment							Elem.	Post	%
	<u>Trumpet</u>	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Ev1	Ev2	Ev3	Ev4	Ev5	Ev6	Score	Growth	Change	
Dynamic Contrast	3	3	2	2	1	1	2.00		4	2	2	3	2	2	2.50	0.50	25%	
Rubato	2	3	1	2	1	1	1.67		4	2	1	3	2	2	2.33	0.67	40%	
Tension/Release	2	3	3	2	1	1	2.00		3	2	2	4	4	2	2.83	0.83	42%	
Interpretation	3	3	2	2	1	1	2.00		4	2	2	3	2	2	2.50	0.50	25%	
Expression	2	3	2	2	1	1	1.83		3	2	2	3	3	2	2.50	0.67	36%	
Student AVG Score	2.4	3.0	2.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.90		3.6	2.0	1.8	3.2	2.6	2.0	2.53	0.63	33%	

Amazing Grace Pre-Treatment Comments		Amazing Grace Post-Treatment Comments	
Ev1	There was good tone in this performance, however, because the student tongued the entire piece, it took away from the overall expression. This was especially evident in the tension & release points in the piece.		Some of the sustained notes felt "flat" throughout this recording. However, I could hear dynamic contrast and some rubato.
Ev2	Very nice tone makes it pleasing, but again not much in regards to contrast.		I didn't hear much if any contrast.
Ev3	Lacks expressive qualities.		Played literally...not much attempt at expressive qualities.
Ev4	Not much shape here...		I did sense a bit of direction leading from pickup notes to downbeats.
Ev5	I didn't hear any expression added to the music.		Not much expression until the very end. The final decrescendo was nicely played.
Ev6	very straight		Some start to expressive elements.

## AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

Mike Fedyszyn is the Director of Bands at Sabish Middle School in Fond du Lac, WI and is responsible for three bands, a jazz program, and various exploratory music courses. He has also served as a music teacher in the districts of Arrowhead, Hartford, and Germantown and has also taught as an adjunct lecturer at the University of Wisconsin – Fond du Lac. Mike frequently serves as a clinician throughout the state of Wisconsin. He often leads presentations, seminars, and graduate-level courses on topics such as instrumental music pedagogy and technology in the music classroom throughout the state and country. Most notably, he was selected to present at the Midwest International Band/Orchestra Clinic in Chicago. As an author, his articles on music education have been published in numerous magazines and newsletters in the music education field, including the *Wisconsin School Musician* and *The Instrumentalist*.

An accomplished musician, Mike's primary instrument is trumpet. Mike has performed with numerous bands, orchestras, jazz ensembles, and chamber ensembles throughout Wisconsin. Mike is the President of the Wisconsin Youth Band Directors Association (WYBDA) and serves on the Council of the Wisconsin Music Educators Association (WMEA) as the State Technology Chair. He is active in numerous other professional organizations, including the National Band Association (NBA) and National Association for Music Education (NAfME).

Mike resides in southeastern Wisconsin with his wife (Beth) and son (Ryan). His family also has two cats (Tiger and Puffs). When he's not in the classroom, Mike enjoys playing music, following the Brewers, and spending time with family and friends.