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Repertoire Selection for High School Band Assessment

Miranda Cook

A thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty of

JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

IN

Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the degree of

Master of Music Education

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Abstract

Selecting repertoire is one of the most dynamic responsibilities music educators face, as it often serves as the music curriculum for band directors. Selecting high quality repertoire for students that achieves musical, educational, and culturally responsive goals is vital as part of their ensemble experience. When selecting repertoire for assessment, band directors must determine what repertoire their ensemble can perform well according to the Virginia and Band and Orchestra Directors Association performance rubric, while demonstrating musical and educational growth. The purpose of this study is to examine elements used by high school band directors when choosing repertoire for assessment. Research questions are: 1) What factors do band directors use in selecting repertoire for assessment?, 2) How much research do band directors conduct when choosing this repertoire?, 3) What are the main goals band directors hope their students achieve in repertoire selection?, 4) Do band directors consider their musical preferences in repertoire choice?, and 5) Does the process change as assessment approaches? Acknowledging the responses of high school band directors in a district of Virginia can enlighten the process behind repertoire selection, and to help improve repertoire selections for the music curriculum.

Keywords: Music education, repertoire selection, diversity, musical preferences, high school band directors, assessment

Introduction

Repertoire selection is a vital decision of a music educator. This process is viewed as a primary part of their music education curriculum. Band directors must consider the ensemble size, instrumentation, current musical achievement levels, repertoire analysis, and curriculum expectation when selecting repertoire. Repertoire should be deemed of quality, teachable to the ensemble, and appropriate for the context. Challenging students with a variety as repertoire can build upon musicianship, musical knowledge, expressive skills, technical skills, ensemble skills, and artistic understanding and appreciation. The musical possibilities of repertoire are vast, and methods of student-centered, culturally responsive, and social justice teaching can lead to awareness of various situations and can lead to deepening and broadening repertoire selection (Allsup & Shieh, pp. 246).

Various studies have been conducted regarding repertoire selection, such as using it as part of the music curriculum, recommendations and factors for selecting repertoire, perceptions of new music educators on the practice of selecting repertoire, ensemble size, diversity of composers and styles representative of their students, and what defines “quality” music. Research regarding repertoire selection ranges from elementary to the collegiate level, focusing on music curriculum and factors of repertoire selection.

In terms of assessment, previous wind band literature research has been emphasized. These elements include finding melody, harmony, rhythm, dynamics, articulation, and style. State assessment lists have also been analyzed for their structure, grading systems, composers, and publishers. Results have been analyzed for middle and high school levels, with data demonstrating how many pieces have been performed by the schools within the state, the amount of repertoire

being published by a company, and the type of repertoire (if it is a transcription, diverse, new, or considered standard repertoire).

Research has been conducted regarding repertoire selection and assessment, however, not music that focuses on both topics at the high school level. Prior research does not include factors that band directors utilize when selecting repertoire for assessment. Several factors contribute to the decisions a high school band director makes when selecting repertoire for assessment. Ascertaining what high school band directors believe will benefit their ensemble, as well as the approaches they use, can lead to new perspectives on repertoire selection. Analysis of assessment ratings can assist band directors regarding repertoire selection, and rehearsal strategies implemented in the months preparing for assessment.

In a world where changes are occurring more frequently, it is important to study ways music education has evolved in recent years. An interpretative lens will provide insight regarding how high school band directors select repertoire, and what they may consider for the future. This will build upon previous research conducted, as well as add considerations regarding repertoire selection for assessment. Understanding the repertoire selection process for assessment can benefit high school band directors, music teachers, students, and music education. It would be interesting to gain perspective regarding how high school band directors choose repertoire for assessment, and how they can improve the process in the future.

The purpose of this study is to acknowledge different factors high school band directors use to select repertoire for assessment. This research will include ensemble size, ability of the performers, and musical preferences of high school band directors. Analyzing practices high school band directors use when selecting repertoire for assessment can provide insight regarding how the repertoire selection process is conducted, and what actions band directors can take to make

sure their students are successful. The research questions are: 1) What factors do band directors use in selecting repertoire for assessment?, 2) How much research do band directors conduct when choosing this repertoire?, 3) What are the main goals band directors hope their students achieve in repertoire selection?, 4) Do band directors consider their musical preferences in repertoire choice?, and 5) Does the process change as assessment approaches? The results of this study provide insight regarding how band directors in the geographical area studied chosen repertoire for assessment in spring of 2023. This can lead to more reflective practices and conscious decisions when determining repertoire for assessment. These include musical goals, enriching students with a diverse repertoire, and enhancing the band program at their respective schools.

Review of the Literature

Curriculum & Teaching

Repertoire is often viewed as part of the music curriculum for large ensembles. H. Robert Reynolds, a well-known musician and conductor, states that repertoire selection can serve as a framework of the curriculum (Reynolds, 2000). It is up to the music educator to determine the repertoire chosen to be performed, as well as those not chosen. One can simplify the repertoire selection process by creating a list of repertoire that is standard band literature, and that one has personally performed. They may also look at lists from state and music organizations, gain exposure to the new repertoire through concerts, and network with other music colleagues. Repertoire needs to be technically achievable, as well as engaging for the students and audience. As long as one is willing to learn and change through professional development one will be successful when selecting repertoire for their students (Reynolds, 2000).

Selecting repertoire for ensembles is part of choosing literature that aligns with the 2014 National Standards of Music for ensembles (NAfME, 2021). Band directors then ensure the

repertoire can achieve the learning objectives. The goals music educators set assist students as they develop musical skills. Some main factors in selecting repertoire are based on “good quality”, repertoire that is teachable to the ensemble, and appropriate for the context (Apfelstadt, 2000). Challenging students with a repertoire that expands upon a range of time, cultures, traditions, styles, and musical elements are essential to musical growth and understanding, as well as leading to an overall appreciation of music (Apfelstadt, 2000).

Despite this emphasis on the importance of repertoire, there are young instrumental music teachers who are not confident in this process. According to a study by Forrester in 2017, participants understood the role and function of repertoire in bands but lacked confidence in the pedagogical decisions of selecting repertoire. In this study, participants had previously selected repertoire from performances, recommendations, reading sessions, workshops, repertoire lists, and personal experiences. Some recommendations from the study include putting pedagogical approaches to repertoire selection within the undergraduate curriculum, as well as expanding upon experiences with repertoire (Forrester, 2017). This demonstrates that while previous experiences have helped guide young instrumental music teachers, there still needs to be more of a pedagogical approach to encourage music teachers to have confidence and understand the repertoire selection process. Connecting the skills they have learned as well as increasing knowledge of quality repertoire can assist in improving repertoire selection.

The norms of selecting repertoire are often disputed between music educators, as there is a difference in opinion based on musical and educational goals. Due to the collegiate ensemble experience and the core repertoire being programmed, a debate emerged on what repertoire should be performed by middle and high school ensembles. Addressing the tension can help music educators evaluate and choose repertoire without pressure to perform certain works (Mertz, 2018).

Musical preference can also create tension in the repertoire process, as a study by Droe in 2008 demonstrated higher approval ratings of certain repertoire has an impact on student preference compared to those with lower approval ratings (Droe, 2008). Music educators should strive to choose music with a variety of factors and help increase musical preferences of students by listening to excerpts of different pieces.

Repertoire selection can vary based on the size of the ensemble. Smaller bands have the challenge of fitting the needs and instrumentation without sacrificing musical demands or the composer's intent. It was recommended by Dziuk in 2018 that band directors examine pieces to see if they are accessible for a small ensemble based on the structure of the melody, harmony, and bass line. Flex band arrangements are becoming popular, but mainly apply to pieces that are grades 2.5 and below. In terms of higher grade literature, understanding the group's musical potential as well as score study can allow students to develop musicality and technique along with learning about standard repertoire of wind band (Dziuk, 2018). Larger bands have the instrumentation to perform standard band repertoire, but some students may lack motivation to perform pieces if the high-quality repertoire chosen does not match the musical and technical level of the ensemble. Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) and Csikszentmihalyi's Flow Theory, suggested by Hopkins in 2013, can serve as frameworks for student motivation and continued participation in the ensemble. These frameworks stimulate critical thinking and an appropriate balance of musical skill and challenge (Hopkins, 2013). Finding that balance of technical and aesthetic approaches in music education can help with advocating for ensembles, as well as making students more balanced with their musical and nonmusical skills.

In terms of assessment and ensemble size, there are no major effects on tone quality, intonation, musicianship, expression, rhythm, and articulation for ensemble size; although there

was a significant impact on repertoire difficulty. Based on a study conducted by Silviera and Silvey in 2020, more challenging repertoire was rated more positively with listener perceptions of the performances. While each ensemble performs different grade levels, it is recommended there is a sight-reading component with screened evaluations and “test pieces” to accurately determine the ensemble’s performing level. Assessment is often viewed as a reflection of what has been taught throughout the year, however, other factors play a role in ensemble ratings. Some examples include the context of the performance, performer and evaluator characteristics, evaluation criteria, and musical/extra-musical factors. These examples demonstrate that ratings can be influenced by adjudicators and their experiences. Establishing a method that asks all bands to perform the same music for a portion of the assessment can provide adjudicators with the information they need about the ensemble and their performance capabilities (Silviera & Silvey, 2020).

Repertoire Selection

Rotjan (2018), found there are several approaches and perspectives to repertoire selection, ranging from using repertoire as the curriculum and the end goal, to being part of the curriculum rather than the whole. Some perspectives that Rotjan mentions based on his experiences are technical, aesthetic, musicianship, critical, creative, and alternative. The technical perspective uses repertoire as a curricular tool to improve student playing ability. The aesthetic approach focuses on open discussion and questioning for students to determine what they like and feel is “good” and “quality” music. The musicianship approach is the technique that students apply when playing and developing their musicianship skills. The critical approach critiques current cultural approaches to teaching and challenges a more diverse approach to repertoire selection. The creative approach focuses on student improvisation and student-centered learning. Finally, the alternative approach focuses on the music educator’s own perspective on repertoire (Rotjan, 2018). There is no correct

approach, and music educators are likely to utilize several perspectives that apply to their process of repertoire selection.

There have been multiple studies based on repertoire selection processes with various factors viewed as important to the process. A multiple case study by Backes in 2010 examined six band directors: two from the collegiate level, two from the high school level, and two from the middle school level. At each level quality of music was rated important and directors used form, harmony, scoring, variety, and unpredictability as characteristics. Music was selected in accordance with the ability level of the ensemble. This served to challenge students and allow them to be successful, as well as vary composers and styles for musical appeal. The two high school band directors mentioned educational learning and student growth were important factors when determining repertoire (Backes, 2010). Another study by Crochet, in 2006, suggests the repertoire selection process proved less successful with band directors who did not utilize these processes. Survey results stated that optimal repertoire selection influences were musical quality, outside elements, musical appeal, cost-effectiveness, the ensemble's ability, and educational content. Crochet deduced more successful band directors are more likely to have more experience teaching. These directors also consistently selected repertoire through colleague recommendations and recordings of band music (Crochet, 2006).

The middle school level does not have a prominent core repertoire selection process compared to high school repertoire pieces as staples in a variety of repertoire lists from state and music organizations. A lot of sources for repertoire selection come from publishing companies, live performances, and recordings. Quality of music, technical considerations, and the ability of the ensemble were considered factors for selecting repertoire (Howard, 2001). In some countries such as Canada and Norway, there are no specific guidelines for repertoire selection. Two different

studies were conducted to explore the quality and difficulty level of music, and the practice of incorporating diverse music. These two areas of quality and difficulty were viewed as challenges (Chen, 2018). Music teachers often choose music that students can relate to in terms of both teacher and student preference. However, “the freedom to choose does not always equate to inclusion, even in music education (Nielsen, Jordhus-Lier, & Karlson, 2022, pp. 18).” It is vital in music education that conscious research is conducted, and decisions are being made in order to incorporate music of other cultures.

There have also been several studies regarding quality of repertoire in school music programs. There are disputes that band music is formulaic and fails to inspire students with the lack of artistic merit, how the term “quality” is subjective, and that there is a pedagogical need to match technical abilities of students (Budiansky & Foley, 2005). Wind literature at the high school level has been investigated in the past to evaluate quality of literature being performed and sources utilized to choose the literature. From a combination of a survey and the Repertoire Evaluation Inventory, a tool to determine the quality of repertoire, Young, Blatti, et al. (1998) determined that almost half the compositions chosen by high school band directors were not at a “quality” level. The survey mentioned groups that received lower scores used music publishing advertisements to select their music. Meanwhile, groups that received higher scores mostly based their decisions of repertoire on musical quality of the piece and knowledge about the composer (Young, 1998). This is an older study and the amount of sources a band director can utilize has expanded over time, such as networking with other band directors on social media, attending workshops at music conferences, and personal research on repertoire selection.

Different instructional strategies can be applied as music educators choose quality repertoire. Arnes (2020) explained backward design as one method that can be used to select

repertoire. Backward design begins with a learning outcome and then creates instruction to achieve that objective. This method uses the learning outcome to define what the repertoire teaches with a focus on short and long-term goals. There is a subjectiveness to the term “quality” of music due to technicality, musicality, expressiveness, and aesthetics. However, by utilizing backward design, directors can plan how to teach the repertoire and provide students the opportunity to be empowered through learning and engagement (Armes, 2020).

Background & Diversity

A band director’s personal background can affect repertoire selection. A Pennsylvania study was conducted regarding the backgrounds of high school band directors and what qualifies as quality repertoire (Sheehan, 2015). About 40% of band directors surveyed stated quality was a factor in repertoire selection, however, their background and experiences led to different definitions of what “quality” is in terms of repertoire. Educational value was listed as more of an important factor than quality, and musical challenges and appeal were prominent during the repertoire selection process. The study suggested directors use a variety of sources when selecting repertoire and that there should be workshops on what quality repertoire is and procedures for repertoire selection (Sheehan, 2015).

Diversity is important and has been made more aware in music education, and there are ways for it to be incorporated into band repertoire. Band directors who are aware of diverse repertoire and are flexible with their selections can help create a responsive student-centered approach to the band setting. Music educators should learn how to effectively diversify cultural learning needs for individuals while creating a comprehensive music education to engage all students musically (Bennett, 2020). There is not currently a definitive process to choose appropriate and culturally sensitive repertoire, however, conducting research that includes a wide

representation of composers students can identify with is beneficial. Music educators need to have the appropriate tools that allow them to teach diverse music appropriately and authentically (Beeler, 2021). Interviews with general music teachers suggest that a familiarity with the music may affect multicultural repertoire selection as well as the need to provide students with a global perspective. However, in these studies, Western music concepts were the primary focus when considering diverse repertoire as a way to vary overall repertoire (Lee, 2018).

The diversity of composers is also important in repertoire selection, whether that includes gender, race, or sexual identity. In a study regarding female composers, 12 state repertoire lists in six regions of the United States were analyzed. In total, there were 359 compositions by women identified in the repertoire lists, which makes up about 2.3% of the repertoire lists. This demonstrates a lack of awareness regarding female composers, and that there is a need for more intentionality when programming pieces by female composers within state repertoire lists. As this is a recent study, there are plenty of ways for band directors and state associations to help diversify repertoire lists (Russo, 2021).

On the other side, there are arguments for preserving American music in the wind band repertoire. Folk songs and marches are often associated with American music. Kindschi Walter defined American music as “many genres that have been brought to or created in the United States (pp. 2).” The reason they believe that American heritage should be important in the modern-day classroom is to help promote a sense of unity among students (Kindschi Walter, 2017). However, while it is important to recognize American music, it is hard to define what classifies as American as there is a mixture of cultures involved.

Other Perspectives

Other types of performing ensembles represent different perspectives on repertoire selection, though they are pretty similar to the Western Art Music tradition. Middle school and high school orchestra directors rate pedagogical and musical criteria crucial to the repertoire selection process. As with band repertoire selection, three main factors that affect repertoire selection are technical considerations, ability of the ensemble, and musical skills that can be taught through music. Repertoire can be found through networking, school library, and recommended literature lists. There was a correlation between teacher experience and repertoire selection practices, with more experience leading to more personal happiness and personal preference when choosing repertoire (Gruber, 2021).

At the collegiate level, the college band can be viewed as a catalyst for teacher preparation and repertoire exposure. Based on surveys from Peterson (1986) about the college band experience, it was stated that 20th century tonal music composed the majority of the repertoire. Philosophically, college band repertoire helps lead to exposure of repertoire from different eras and musical styles as compared to the high school level. Performance skills are also taught at the collegiate level (Peterson, 1986). Another study by Cumberledge and Williams (2022) focusing on collegiate students studied whether college band repertoire is culturally responsive and is representative of their self-identities. Overall, respondents believe their repertoire was representative and supportive, and the quality of repertoire, ability level, and appeal should be on the same tiers as culturally responsive teaching. The conductor should consider the many purposes of music education as well as teaching the values and development of identity across all musical cultures (Cumberledge & Williams, 2022).

Assessment

Repertoire selection for band assessment focuses on previous research about wind band repertoire. Utilizing Dr. Acton Ostling and Dr. Frank Battisti's method of selection of band repertoire (Chandler, 2014), it was suggested that choosing music with clear melodic content, contrasting rhythms, and contrasting tonal textures is advisable. A survey on assessment in terms of musical demographics, the influence of others on programming, educational factors, and aesthetic values demonstrated, was conducted. Results showed there is debate regarding choosing repertoire for educational purposes or for performing well at assessment. Results suggested that overall educational value was more important in repertoire selection (Chandler, 2014).

Another study by Brewer analyzes the content of recommended band repertoire lists and the names of composers recommended most often. Composers known for educational purposes, as well as composers known for contributions to Western classical music, were most prominent on the list. Brewer's research illustrates the historical roots of band repertoire today, as there is a lack of diversity. Standardization of literature grading and appropriate credit for compositions on traditional materials is something else that can be improved (Brewer, 2018).

There have also been descriptive overviews regarding how state music lists at the high school level are structured, the commonality of repertoire between lists, and the grading systems established. A research study by Herlihy utilized tight different state lists with findings indicating core information such as the title, grade level, composer/arranger, and publisher despite different layouts. The majority of the repertoire is shared across state lists, and that repertoire matched grading level and the amount of repertoire for different grade levels (Herlihy, 2019).

Analysis of repertoire being performed in middle school band assessments had been conducted by Hash in Northern Illinois (2005). The repertoire was analyzed by frequency

performed, publication dates, publishers represented, and inclusion of titles. Of the 243 compositions performed by 81 concert bands from 72 schools, the results showed that 46% of the repertoire was composed by just 9.9% of the composers and arrangers represented. Approximately a third of the literature was composed within the past three years, as well as another third of the repertoire was published by one company. Transcriptions made up 7.8% of the repertoire, 1.6% of pieces represented a non-Western culture, and 48.1% of repertoire were inclusive in the music lists examined. There are some suggestions to broaden the repertoire programmed for middle school assessment to meet state and national standards, such as creating a recommended list that can provide more freedom in choosing repertoire. Hash proposes longitudinal studies that examine music selection over a multitude of years to see if repertoire changes and learning standards help shape the music education curriculum (Hash, 2005).

Concluding Thoughts

Research has been conducted regarding repertoire selection and assessment, however, not music that focuses on both topics at the high school level. Several factors contribute to a high school band director selecting repertoire for assessment. Ascertaining what high school band directors believe will benefit their ensemble, as well as the approaches they use, can lead to new perspectives on repertoire selection. Analysis of assessment ratings can assist band directors regarding repertoire selection and rehearsal strategies implemented in the months of preparing for assessment. As music educators, it is vital to continually analyze teaching practices and formulation of the music curriculum. Determining the best practice for repertoire selection for assessment can provide a sense of achievement for the students, band director, and community.

Methodology

A phenomenological approach was used to build on the knowledge already available regarding repertoire selection processes and to investigate reasons why high school band directors select a specific repertoire for assessment. The purpose of using a phenomenological approach is to seek high school band directors' perspectives on their experiences of selecting repertoire and assessment, and how they feel about the process before and after concert band assessment. This will provide in-depth descriptions of the repertoire selection process through employing a survey as a control and two interviews to expand upon the results. This will allow the researcher to compare and contrast the perceptions of band directors in the region. A survey was distributed among high school band directors in Virginia Band Director and Orchestra Association (VBODA) District V, with random sampling from the surveys completed. Once survey results were analyzed, four band directors were selected to interview and elaborate on responses to the survey. The interviews provided opportunities for more in depth discussions surrounding repertoire selection for assessment. After assessment and scores were available, follow up interviews with the same selected band directors were used to reflect on their practices.

VBODA has a specific grading form for concert band assessment for their performance. Adjudicators are provided these grading sheets as they listen to the bands perform. The categories on the rubric are Tone Quality, Intonation, Technique, Rhythm, Balance, Musicianship, and General Factors. Each category has indicators that list the criteria of each category, as well as key words to provide additional information. There is a brief description of each category in the comment section. Below in Table 1 is the rubric that is provided illustrating the criteria for each category. Adjudicators then grade each category on a letter scale of A through F. A is "performers consistently," B is "performers frequently," C is "performers occasionally," D is "performers

rarely,” and F is “performers almost never.” There is a section for comments, and the overall rating should reflect the grades assigned (Concert Assessment Forms/Rubrics).

Table 1. VBODA Performance Assessment Rubric – Concert Band

<i>Category</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Key Words (+/-)</i>
Tone Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Produce a dark, characteristic tone quality ● Produce a focused, controlled sound in all ranges and registers ● Demonstrate proper use of vibrato ● Produce a quality sound on percussion instruments through proper technique and choice of equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Breath Support ● Upper range ● Lower range ● Embouchure
Intonation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Produce uniform tonal focus throughout the ensemble ● Demonstrate careful attention to tuning and pitch processes ● Understand chordal and harmonic structures ● Adjust any perceived pitch issues ● Demonstrate percussion tuning to match the ensemble 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Listening for pitch ● Adjusting pitch issues ● Unisons ● Melodic pitch
Technique	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meet technical demands with precision ● Demonstrate an understanding of styles of articulation ● Demonstrate dexterity in performing technical passages ● Start and stop together, within sections and across the ensemble 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Finger precision ● Light tonguing ● Slurring ● Accent, marcato ● Legato articulation

Rhythm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstrate control of rhythms– accuracy and precision ● Maintain a tempo ● Produce a natural feel to rhythmic passages ● Demonstrate control in multi-metered passages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dotted rhythms ● Agogic pulse ● Vertical alignment ● Subdivision
Balance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Produce correct balance in all sections of the music ● Demonstrate balance between inner and outer voices ● Demonstrate the melodic line as the prevalent voice ● Understand the supportive relationship between the percussion and wind sections in the ensemble 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Environment ● Placement
Musicianship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstrate attention to detail ● Demonstrate the music’s expressive features ● Shape phrases using dynamics, articulation, and direction ● Produce effective moods and emotions ● Demonstrate an understanding of musical style 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sensitivity ● Training
General Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide evidence that selected literature is appropriate for the ensemble ● Present a variety of idioms ● Demonstrate appropriate appearance and demeanor ● Radiate confidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Quality of literature ● Instrumentation ● Recognition ● Recovery from error

High school band directors within the Virginia Band Directors and Orchestra Association (VBODA) District V were sampled for this project. There are twenty-four band directors within the district, with some of them teaching multiple bands. Each band director received an email to participate in the survey via the District V chair. If a band director taught multiple ensembles, they discussed the specifics of choosing repertoire for each ensemble. After the survey timeline, randomly selected participants had the opportunity to speak regarding their practices. Survey data was collected via Qualtrics, with a t-test conducted to find the mean of the results as well as any trends. Data results were kept on a separate flash drive, with results being deleted once the research project was complete. Appendix A pertains to the cover letter for the surveys. The first section of the survey also has a consent form, where participants can choose “Yes, I consent to participating in the survey.” or “No, I do not consent to participating in the survey.” If the latter is selected, it takes the participant to the last page of the survey. If they selected yes, participants were led to the survey.

The survey questions consisted of (1) how many years has the participant been a band director (2) approximately how many students attend the high school where they teach, (3) how many students are in the band program, (4) what is the highest level of education the participant has, (5) how participants classify their community, (6) the number of students that play in each section of the band, (7) what month participants begin to consider selecting repertoire for assessment, (8) what pieces participants chose for assessment listing the title, composer and/or arranger, and the grade level of the piece, (9) choices that influenced participants’ decisions in selecting repertoire for assessment, (10), what rating they estimate their band will receive at assessment, and (11) what sources they use to learn new repertoire. The consent form is found in Appendix B and the survey questions in Appendix C.

In the survey, band directors provided the repertoire and program that they performed at assessment. Typically schools in Virginia host a pre-assessment concert that is open to the public, potentially receive feedback from guest adjudicators, and then make any final adjustments prior to assessment. As stated in the adjudicators sheet, “all selections performed by the ensemble will be adjudicated towards the final rating. This includes the march by the wind bands and warm-up selection by the orchestras” (Concert Assessment Forms/Rubrics). For this research, the focus was primarily on the two pieces selected to be graded, as well as some information about the march if the interviewee decided to go into detail.

Four band directors from District V were selected to participate in two interviews. The first interview was before the state assessment, asking clarifying questions about results that have been received from the survey. These questions are: (1) How long have you been teaching high school band?, (2) What ratings have you received at previous assessments?, (3) What is your repertoire selection process like?, (4) What are the main factors you consider when selecting repertoire?, (5) For this year’s assessment, why did you select the repertoire you have chosen?, (6) What are the goals you plan to teach with this repertoire, and how will you accomplish them?, and (7) How do you predict your ensemble will perform at assessment?.

After the state assessment and scores are available, the same band directors participated in a follow-up interview to discuss the results and reflected on their practices of teaching and repertoire selection. The questions for this interview were: (1) What growth did you see with your ensemble from when you first started rehearsing the repertoire until assessment?, (2) How do you think your ensemble benefitted from the repertoire?, (3) Was the rating your ensemble received expected?, and (4) If you were to change anything about your repertoire selection process, what

would you consider? The consent form for interviews is found in Appendix D, and the interview guide with questions before and after the assessment is found in Appendix E.

Interviews were scheduled via email contact, and were conducted via Zoom recording and transcription, as well as email interviews. After the recording and transcript were available, the transcription was compared with the recording for accuracy. The recording was then deleted from both the Cloud, as well as the downloaded version. The transcription was used as a reference for the paper. Email interviews were conducted via Word documents due to timing of participants not being able to participate on Zoom. These documents served as transcripts and were downloaded, with the emails being deleted. Once the research study was complete, the transcriptions were deleted. If there were email interviews, that data was copied to a document, with the email being deleted. To analyze interviews, initial immersion, coding, and categorizing/theming were used.

The data from the survey and the two interviews were analyzed to determine categories or trends that arose. This can demonstrate whether band directors in District V had similar perceptions regarding repertoire selection for assessment, or if this varied based on their personal experiences. This provided insight into repertoire selection practices and can assist band directors as they learn from their experiences.

Results

Survey

The surveys were distributed for two weeks by the district chair. Directors were given two weeks to complete the survey. In total, ten surveys were submitted. One participant did not consent to participate in the survey. Five consented to participate, though the survey questions were not answered. Four surveys were completed. These are designated as follows: Respondent 1, Respondent 2, Respondent 3, and Respondent 4.

In response to the first question “How many years of experience do you have as a band director?”, there were a range of answers. Respondent 1 had “10-14 years”, Respondent 2 had “5-9 years”, Respondent 3 had “20-24 years”, and Respondent 4 had “0-4 years” of experience. The mean for this data is 2.75, the standard deviation is 1.48, and the variance is 2.19. This demonstrates a wide range of teaching experience across the district. Experience can influence decisions a band director makes in choosing repertoire, and according to the literature, band directors with less experience have less confidence in the repertoire selection process. Table 2 lists each response as well as the mean, standard deviation, and variance for the amount of experience teaching high school band.

Table 2. Years of Experience Teaching High School Band

<i>Respondent 1</i>	10-14 years
<i>Respondent 2</i>	5-9 years
<i>Respondent 3</i>	20-24 years
<i>Respondent 4</i>	0-4 years
Mean = 2.75, SD = 1.48, var = 2.19	

Questions 2 and 3 ask about the demographics of the school population, and how many students are in the band program. Question 2 asks, “Approximately how many students attend the high school where you teach?” The most common response was “501-1000 students.” Respondents 2 and 3 selected this as the number of students who attend schools. Respondent 1 stated that they had “1501-2000 students” and Respondent 4 stated they had “0-500 students” in total for their respective schools. The mean was 2.25, the standard deviation being 1.09, and the variance as 1.19. This exemplifies there is variance in the population of total students at the schools

where the respondents teach. Table 3 shows the responses for how many students attend the high school that respondents teach.

Table 3. Approximate Student Population at High School

<i>Respondent 1</i>	1501-2000 students
<i>Respondent 2</i>	501-1000 students
<i>Respondent 3</i>	501-1000 students
<i>Respondent 4</i>	0-500 students
Mean = 2.25, SD = 1.09, var = 1.19	

Question 3 asks, “How many students are in your band program?” Two responses, Respondents 2 and 4, state they have 26-50 students in their band program. Respondent 1 said they have 101-125 students in their band program, and Respondent 3 said they have 51-75 students in their band program. The mean was 3.00, the standard deviation is 1.22, and the variance is 1.50. As for Question 2, there is a variance in the number of students that participate in their school’s band programs. It should be made aware this could be addressing one ensemble or the entirety of the band program if there are multiple ensembles. Table 4 addresses the number of students that participate in their respective band programs.

Table 4. Student Population Participating in Band Program

<i>Respondent 1</i>	101-125 students
<i>Respondent 2</i>	26-50 students
<i>Respondent 3</i>	51-75 students
<i>Respondent 4</i>	26-50 students
Mean = 3.00, SD = 1.22, var = 1.50	

Question 4 asks the band directors “What is your highest level of education?”, with the purpose of this question evaluating to see if band directors are pursuing a higher degree to improve their pedagogy. Respondents 1, 2, and 3 have received their Master’s degrees, while Respondent 4 received their Bachelor’s degree. The mean is 1.75, the standard deviation is 0.43, and the variance is 0.19. This exhibits many band directors may have had prior teaching experience before receiving a master’s degree. Table 5 lists the responses to the highest level of education the band director has achieved.

Table 5. Highest Level of Education

<i>Respondent 1</i>	Master’s Degree
<i>Respondent 2</i>	Master’s Degree
<i>Respondent 3</i>	Master’s Degree
<i>Respondent 4</i>	Bachelor’s Degree
Mean = 1.75, SD = 0.43, var = 0.19	

Question 5 pertains to what the band directors perceive as the demographic area where their school is located: urban, suburban, or rural. According to the responses, Respondents 1 and 3 stated that they consider their school to be in a suburban area, and Respondents 2 and 4 consider their schools to be in a rural area. The mean is 2.50, the standard deviation is 0.50, and the variance is 0.25. The band directors seem to have similar thoughts about the kind of area that their school is in, either suburban or rural. Table 6 illustrates the results of this question.

Table 6. Type of Area That School is Located

<i>Respondent 1</i>	Suburban
<i>Respondent 2</i>	Rural

Respondent 3 Suburban

Respondent 4 Rural

Mean = 2.50, SD = 0.50, var = 0.25

Question 6 asks the band directors to list the number of students in each section in score order. With Respondent 1, Table 7 lists the number of students in each section, in score order. Each response had varied numbers for each section but is aligned with the number of students in their band program. It should be noted that if there are multiple bands in a program, the instrumentation could be split to provide a more balanced ensemble. The number of students in each section could influence repertoire selection based on musical strength.

Table 7. Number of Students in Each Section

	<i>Respondent 1</i>	<i>Respondent 2</i>	<i>Respondent 3</i>	<i>Respondent 4</i>
<i>Flute/Piccolo</i>	7	5	4	0
<i>Oboe</i>	2	0	0	1
<i>Bassoon</i>	2	0	1	0
<i>Clarinet</i>	16	4	7	4
<i>Bass Clarinet</i>	3	0	2	0
<i>Alto Saxophone</i>	7	2	4	3
<i>Tenor Saxophone</i>	3	0	1	1
<i>Baritone Saxophone</i>	2	1	1	1
<i>Trumpet</i>	13	6	6	5
<i>Horn</i>	8	0	2	1
<i>Trombone</i>	8	5	8	6
<i>Euphonium</i>	8	1	2	3
<i>Tuba</i>	5	2	4	2

<i>Percussion</i>	25	8	8	8
<i>Other</i>		2*		
<i>Total</i>	109	36	50	35
*Guitar and Bass				

Question 7 asks what month band directors begin to consider selecting repertoire for assessment. Each response was different; Respondent 1 began their repertoire selection in October, Respondent 2 began their repertoire selection in December, Respondent 3 in November, and Respondent 4 in January. The mean is 4.50, the standard deviation is 1.12, and the variance is 1.25. While these are in a similar timeframe, it is important to note that Respondent 4, who had the least amount of teaching experience, began the process in January. It would be expected that the response with the most amount of teaching experiences would begin the earliest, but that is not the case. Table 8 has the responses for this question.

Table 8. Month When Repertoire Is Selected for Assessment

<i>Respondent 1</i>	October
<i>Respondent 2</i>	December
<i>Respondent 3</i>	November
<i>Respondent 4</i>	January
Mean = 3.00, SD = 1.22, var = 1.50	

Question 8 asks the repertoire being performed for assessment for each band. The table below lists the repertoire that the band directors selected. In Virginia, there is a list of repertoire and their grade levels. The grade levels listed are according to the Virginia Band and Orchestra Directors Association (VBODA). The first piece performed for assessment is a march to serve as

a warm-up; the bands are not graded on this performance. For this research, the focus was primarily on the two pieces graded, following the march. These pieces of music are selected by the band director. Respondent 1 selected *Sounds of Spring Concert March* by Shizuka Sato and Naoya Wada as the march, *Candide Suite* by Leonard Bernstein and arranged by Clare Grundman, and *Strange Humors* by John Mackey. *Candide Suite* and *Strange Humors* are grade level six for VBODA. *Candide Suite* is a five-movement piece that encompasses songs from the musical *Candide*, and *Strange Humors* is a fusion of musical cultures with modal melodies and syncopated rhythms from Middle Eastern music, and percussive accompaniment from African drumming. Respondent 2 selected *Arsenal* by Jan Van de Roost as the march, *Pusztta* by Jan Van de Roost, and *Variations on a Korean Folk Song* by John Barnes Chance. *Pusztta* and *Variations on a Korean Folk Song* are grade level five for VBODA. *Pusztta* is a piece that highlights the various moods of nomadic gypsies in eastern Hungary, and *Variations on a Korean Folk Song* is based on the folk song *Arirang*, which is a song of love and heartbreak. Respondent 3 selected *Amparito Roca* by Jaime Texidor as the march, *Toccata for Band* by Frank Erickson, and *K2: "The Savage Mountain"* by Julie Giroux. *Toccata for Band* and *K2: "The Savage Mountain"* is grade level five for VBODA. *Toccata for Band* is a piece with two contrasting sections: a fast and rhythmic, then slow and lyrical. *K2: "The Savage Mountain"* is based on the mountain of the same name that is the second tallest mountain in the world, and how people are beckoned to climb it despite the challenge, and if they make it to the top, their lives are changed with the beauty of the view. Respondent 4 selected *Courage* by Harold Bennett (under the pseudonym of Henry Fillmore) and arranged by Larry Clark as the march, *Sheltering Sky* by John Mackey, and *Moscow, 1941* by Brian Balmages. *Sheltering Sky* and *Moscow, 1941* are grade level three for VBODA. *Sheltering Sky* has a folksong quality that is inspired by *Danny Boy* and *Shenandoah* but maintains its own original

melody, and *Moscow, 1941* is based on the Russian song *Meadowlands* which discusses the success of the Russian army during the German invasion during World War II.

Table 9. Repertoire for Assessment

<i>Respondent</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Composer/Arranger</i>	<i>Grade Level (According to VBODA)</i>
1	Sounds of Spring Concert March	Shizuka Sato & Naoya Wada	
	Candide Suite	Leonard Bernstein, arr. Grundman	VI
	Strange Humors	John Mackey	VI
2	Arsenal	Jan Van der Roost	
	Pushta	Jan Van der Roost	V
	Variations on a Korean Folk Song	John Barnes Chance	V
3	Amparito Roca	Jaime Texidor	
	Toccata for Band	Frank Erickson	V
	K2 “The Savage Mountain”	Julie Giroux	V
4	Courage	Harold Bennett, arr. Clark	
	Sheltering Sky	John Mackey	III
	Moscow, 1941	Brian Balmages	III

Question 9 states, “Select up to five choices below that you use to select repertoire for assessment.” This question reveals some factors band directors might consider when selecting

repertoire for assessment. Table 10 shows the results from each respondent. All four respondents selected “student appeal of the music” and “ability and limitations of the ensemble that performs this music.” This leads to the conclusion that the focal point of repertoire selection is a focus on the students based on their playing ability and what kind of music they would like. The next commonly selected factor was “instrumentation of the ensemble,” which was selected from Respondents 1-3. Since these respondents have more experience with teaching and have achieved a higher level degree of education, this could be something veteran high school band directors consider. The next factors selected by two of the responses were “personal appeal to the music” and “the musical maturity of the ensemble that performs this music.” Personal appeal and musical maturity can be connected with a band director enjoying a piece of music and wanting to share it with their ensemble. Other factors that were chosen were “instrumental performance skills that can be taught through the music (phrasing, balance, tone quality, intonation, staccato, legato, etc.)”, “technical considerations of the music (range, fingerings)”, “size of the ensemble that performs this music”, “gender, ethnicity, or other status of the composer”, and “grade level.”

Table 10. Factors When Selecting Repertoire for Assessment

	<i>Respondent 1</i>	<i>Respondent 2</i>	<i>Respondent 3</i>	<i>Respondent 4</i>
<i>Instrumental performance skills that can be taught through the music (phrasing, balance, tone quality, intonation, staccato, legato, etc.)</i>				X
<i>Historical elements of the music (musical period, historical period, style)</i>				
<i>Social elements of the</i>				

music (multicultural, social influences of the time, relation of history to society)

Music to fit the program (cohesive and contrasting assessment program)

<i>Student appeal of the music</i>	X	X	X	X
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<i>Personal appeal to the music</i>	X			X
-------------------------------------	---	--	--	---

<i>Technical considerations of the music (range, fingerings)</i>		X		
--	--	---	--	--

Rhythmic considerations of the music (rhythms, patterns, ostinatos, etc.)

Aesthetic appeal or value of the music

Recently heard another band perform music

<i>Ability and limitations of the ensemble that performs this music</i>	X	X	X	X
---	---	---	---	---

<i>Instrumentation of the ensemble</i>	X	X	X	
--	---	---	---	--

<i>Size of the ensemble that performs this music</i>			X	
--	--	--	---	--

<i>The musical maturity of the ensemble that performs this music</i>	X	X		
--	---	---	--	--

The music appeared on the program of an honor, district, or all-state type program

The music is new

The music is older or has an established place in repertoire of this level

Gender, ethnicity, or other status of the composer

X

Cost of the published score and parts

Grade level

X

Question 10 asks, “What rating do you estimate your band will receive at assessment?” The results in Table 11 are listed below. It is important to note each Respondent interpreted the question differently whether that would be words or numbers. To reference the Adjudicator Instructions, the final ratings are used with Roman numerals and gradings with letter grades. Final ratings and gradings are as follows: I - Superior, II - Excellent, III - Good, IV - Fair, and V - Poor (Concert Assessment Forms/Rubrics). Respondents 1 and 2 believed their ensembles would receive a superior rating (I), Respondent 3 believed their ensemble would receive an excellent rating (II), and Respondent 4 believed their ensemble would receive an excellent (II) rating.

Table 11. Estimate Rating that Band Will Receive at Assessment

<i>Respondent 1</i>	Superior
<i>Respondent 2</i>	I
<i>Respondent 3</i>	2

The final question of the survey, Question 11 asks, “What sources do you use to learn new repertoire? (select all that apply)” This question determines how high school band directors pursue learning new repertoire. This can be in the context of learning new repertoire that is currently being published, or repertoire that band directors have not heard before. Table 12 lists the responses. The sources selected by all respondents were “lists of recommended literature (for contest/competition)”, “listening to performances of other bands”, and “conversations with other directors or mentor teachers”. This exhibits that band directors look at the list of repertoire on the VBODA website, listen to other performances of other bands (whether in-person or virtually) to learn about repertoire and determine whether their ensemble can perform, and collaborate with other high school band directors or their mentor teachers to make the best decisions. “School library” was the next selected choice for sources used, with three of the respondents selecting this choice. This is a source that is easily accessible for high school band directors as they can examine the repertoire in their libraries and make decisions that can be more cost-effective. Only two respondents selected “reading sessions at conferences for professional development finding literature is just one of many professional functions.” Some professional development opportunities could include literature from music educator conferences like the Virginia Music Educators Conference or the Midwest Clinic International Band, Orchestra, and Music Conference. Other responses include “reading sessions at other functions where finding literature is the primary purpose of the event (such as being sponsored by the publisher)” and “looking through and listening to promotional materials sent to you by publishers.” It appears from this

research data that selecting repertoire from a publisher-sponsored event or materials may be used, but not as frequently as other sources.

Table 12. Sources Used to Learn New Repertoire

	<i>Respondent 1</i>	<i>Respondent 2</i>	<i>Respondent 3</i>	<i>Respondent 4</i>
<i>Professional journals</i>				
<i>Lists of recommended literature (for contest/competition)</i>	X	X	X	X
<i>School library</i>		X	X	X
<i>Listening to performances of other bands</i>	X	X	X	X
<i>Reading sessions at other functions where finding literature is the primary purpose of the event (such as being sponsored by the publisher)</i>	X			
<i>Reading sessions at conferences for professional development finding literature is just one of many professional functions</i>	X		X	
<i>Looking through and listening to promotional materials sent to you by publishers</i>	X			
<i>Conversations with other directors or mentor teachers</i>	X	X	X	X

Interviews

There were two rounds of interviews conducted with those who participated in the survey: the first round of questions were asked before assessment, and the second round of questions were asked after assessment. The four survey respondents participated in the interviews. For consistency of the survey, these interviews will be clarified as Respondent 1, Respondent 2, Respondent 3, and Respondent 4. This is to line with the survey responses. Respondent 2 and Respondent 4 were able to be interviewed on Zoom, while Respondent 1 and Respondent 3 elected to participate in an email interview due to time constraints. All respondents will be referred to with gender-neutral pronouns and any identifying information will be removed. All of the transcriptions can be found in Appendices F-M.

Experience Teaching and Assessment (Interview Part One)

The first two questions of the interviews were to ask about the teaching experience each band director had, as well as the ratings they received at previous assessments. Respondent 1 stated they were in their 11th year teaching at the same school, Respondent 2 stated they are in year 9 and have taught at the same school for their entire career. Respondent 3 stated 23 years, and Respondent 4 stated this was their first year teaching. There is a variety of teaching experience among respondents, but the majority of Respondents stated they have stayed at the same school. This could be due to them enjoying the environment in their school community, specifically for Respondents 1 and 2.

For ratings at assessment, Respondent 1 stated they have received superior ratings, or 1's, each year they have taken an ensemble for assessment since 2015. Both Respondents 2 and 3 said they have received overall superior ratings or excellent (2's). Respondent 2 went into detail that generally they have earned more 1's than 2's for their ensemble. Meanwhile, this is Respondent

4's first year, and they had not had any ratings for assessment at the time of the first interview. It appears Respondents 1, 2, and 3 have done well at assessment and were prepared to teach their ensemble to the desired performance level for their respective ensembles and received superior or excellent ratings.

The Repertoire Selection Process

The next three questions of the interview ask what the repertoire selection process is like, the main factors considered when selecting repertoire, and why they have chosen the particular repertoire for this year. For the question, "what is your repertoire selection process like?", there were both similarities and differences between the Respondents' answers. Respondents 1 and 3 mentioned having a list of literature they have and use, and consistently looking for new repertoire to add to their literature lists. Respondent 1 stated they have a list of repertoire they personally would like to program, while Respondent 3 stated their list of literature consists of what could be appropriate for the two levels of band they have at their school. Respondent 3 has additional lists and they keep a personal list of what they would want to listen to, and for assessment, they have a short list of music that will work by the beginning of January, and they sight read this literature with their ensemble to narrow the choices that will be performed at the assessment. Respondent 3 noted each year their ensembles have a little different instrumentation, soloists, stronger sections, sections that need more support, and they consider all of these factors. Respondent 1 mentioned they have some pieces that have been performed before and cannot wait to program again, while there are some pieces they do not want to program again. Meanwhile, Respondents 2 and 4 do not have specific lists to choose from, and opt for student choice. Respondent 2 mentioned they used to pick every piece, but decided it would be better if students would take ownership of a piece, as they would be more likely to invest more time in the piece. Respondent 2 gives students an option

of 6-7 pieces that could be used for assessment, and after reading through the repertoire, students vote on a piece for assessment, and then the band director picks a piece that complements it. Respondent 4, even though in their first year, wanted to opt for student choice. They looked through what was in the music library and took note of what was performed the year prior for assessment. When sight reading *Sheltering Sky*, the students did not like it because it was slow and lyrical, and Respondent 4 chose *Sheltering Sky* to play in a style unfamiliar to the students. For their second piece, they had programmed a different piece but realized the piece was too difficult for them. As a group, they decided to perform the more difficult piece for the spring concert, rather than the assessment. A student showed Respondent 4 a different contrasting piece, they rehearsed it with the ensemble. The ensemble enjoyed that piece. Respondent 4 also mentioned it would be easier to put together in time for assessment, and seemed like a good contrasting piece.

The interview question “what are the main factors you consider when selecting repertoire?” had similar answers such as instrumentation, student engagement, highlighting strong soloists and sections, and exposing students to styles and composers unfamiliar to these students. Instrumentation was a main factor as some ensembles did not have the necessary instrumentation to perform some of the pieces. As a result, respondents would have to re-write those parts for another section, using flexible band arrangements, and avoiding pieces that may not have parts doubled. Student engagement was mentioned in several ways, such as being achievable but not playing it safe, picking repertoire that challenged students and pushed them for high achievement, and working on musical elements that could be improved. Respondents wanted to feature stronger soloists and sections to highlight their musical achievements. Diversity of modern music, composers, and styles of music was important as Respondents wanted to expand the horizons of students with the varied repertoire present. Respondent 1 mentioned “respectable repertoire”,

which can be subjective depending on the factors considered. They also mentioned repertoire should be a challenge not only to students but to themselves as a way to grow professionally and musically. Respondent 2 mentioned it is not part of their philosophy to choose easier music for assessment to achieve better ratings. Respondent 3 mentioned the overall size of the ensemble being a factor as it can contribute to different parts being highlighted.

When queried regarding repertoire selection for this year's assessment, statements were unique to each Respondents' personal experience. For example, Respondent 1 mentioned *Strange Humors* is one of their favorite pieces to program since students love it, it is unique, and the instrumentation is interesting. For *Candide Suite*, Respondent 1 had never heard the whole suite, and knew it would be a challenge for students, however, would feature some of the "stars" in the ensemble. They mentioned, "you get better by doing things you're not quite ready for" and have mentioned students rose to the occasion. All respondents struggled to choose their march for assessment and felt they were lacking in diverse music due to the two pieces chosen for adjudication. Respondent 1 conducted research and reached out to colleagues for repertoire suggestions, and found a newer march written by two Japanese composers. The ensemble sight read it as well as more traditional marches, and the students enjoyed the new march and picked the piece. Respondent 2 mentioned they picked a different march from the past several years, opting for a more European/British march compared to a Sousa/American march. Respondent 2 mentioned they have a small woodwind section but great players, as well as a great trumpet player and good trombone section. While only having 17 players in the top group, the ensemble members are all very strong and are able to present a full ensemble sound.. Respondent 2 believes the pieces they are performing help accentuate the full ensemble sound and represent the composers' intent. Respondent 3 mentioned the instrumentation and size of the ensembles was an important factor in

their selection of repertoire. Respondent 4 mentioned they looked in the music library to see what they had, wanted to program a piece the ensemble hasn't played before, and make sure the two graded pieces contrast each other.

Goals for Assessment and Teaching

The next question of the interview asks, "what are the goals you plan to teach with this repertoire, and how will you accomplish them?" with student-centered learning being the primary focus. Respondent 1 mentioned their main goals were a high-level polished performance, repertoire with great depth in length and musical value, musical technique, and relation to the original source material. Respondent 2 included making students self-reliant musicians by providing them the tools and teaching practice strategies they can apply when they are at home. They mentioned the ensemble can go in depth working 2-3 months with three pieces of music to make it sound as professional as possible. Respondent 2 hopes those skills of practicing and listening can transfer to preparing the spring concert music with the same level of intensity and focus as assessment, and this is "where real growth at a high school level comes through." Respondent 3 mentioned their goals for students included individual preparation, rising to an appropriate challenge, confidence, and understanding of cut time for concert band. Respondent 4 mentioned their goals for the ensemble included challenging music and setting the students up for success in performance, as well as for students to be proud of what they're performing. They mentioned they do not care about what rating they receive, as long as the students were happy with the performance.

Assessment Predictions

The last question for the interview before assessment asks, "how do you predict your ensemble will do at assessment?" all of the Respondents felt confident and prepared. Respondent

1 mentioned the ensemble is quite prepared and is aiming for a superior rating. Respondent 2 said the ensemble should do well, and a rating of 1 is very much within reach. They mentioned the ensemble can sound really good when focused and attentive, but sometimes the day isn't the right day. They reflected on their pre-assessment concert and mentioned things that had never happened in rehearsal such as counting and entrances. They said "the blessing, the curse of live music is sometimes it just doesn't quite go how we want it to", but still thinks the ensemble will do well. Respondent 3 mentioned they believe both their bands will receive excellent ratings. Respondent 4 mentioned they will do pretty well, and thinks the ensemble will receive a 2 rating. They mentioned *Sheltering Sky* is still pretty challenging and their ratings will depend on how the adjudication performance goes. They are also confident in the march, the Brian Balmages piece, and believe the students feel good about sight reading.

Assessment Results and Reflections (Interview Part Two)

The second round of interviews occurred after assessment. These questions were asked as a reflection of the progress of the ensemble for the assessment performance, as well as their repertoire selections. Table 13 displays the assessment results for each Respondent's ensemble that they responded to in the survey as well as the first round of interviews (2023 Concert Assessment Results).

Table 13. VBODA District V Concert Assessment Results

<i>Respondent</i>	<i>Grade Level</i>	<i>Stage 1 Adjudicator Rating</i>	<i>Stage 2 Adjudicator Rating</i>	<i>Stage 3 Adjudicator Rating</i>	<i>Sight Reading Adjudicator Rating</i>	<i>Overall Rating</i>
1	VI	I	I	I	I	Superior
2	V	I	I	I	I	Superior

3	V	II	II	II	I	Excellent
4	III	II	II	II	I	Excellent

The first question of the interview after assessment asks, “what growth did you see in your ensemble from when you first started rehearsing the repertoire until assessment?” all respondents have noticed significant growth in the students. Respondent 1 mentioned the Bernstein piece positively stretched the students’ skills and exposed weaknesses that other pieces might have hidden. They mentioned the march and Mackey pieces were well within the ensemble’s reach. Respondent 2 mentioned there was a better understanding of the music, developing the ear of a musician to see how parts fit in as a whole, and getting out of “learning their specific notes and rhythms.” Respondent 3 noticed individual confidence, understanding of individual responsibility, and understanding of cut time for their concert band. Respondent 4 mentioned more people in the band were accepting of different styles of music, showed more enthusiasm for the type of music, were able to play rhythms they had not played before and got better at playing their instrument through the process. Respondent 4 also mentioned they focused more on the process, rather than the product, with the importance placed on students learning something during the time period they spent working on the pieces, compared with getting a superior rating at assessment.

The question of “how do you think your ensemble benefited from the repertoire?” focused on student potential, growth musically, and appreciation. Respondent 1 mentioned one gets better by doing hard things, and the length of the program stretched the focus and attention span of the ensemble. They also mentioned, overall the ensemble is stronger, and while some individuals are not as strong on their own, they have grown to rely on each other. Respondent 2 stated students were exposed to non-traditional marches and repertoire where they would explore new topics

before assessment, such as going through different scales e.g. pentatonic and whole tone scale. Respondent 3 reflected the ensemble benefited as they hoped they would, but unfortunately not all students did the best they could with preparation. Respondent 4 mentioned the repertoire pushed the ensemble to play music they have not or would otherwise not have played before, opened them to a new style of music, and required more maturity to a piece.

The third question of the interview asks, “was the grade your ensemble received expected?”, and all of the Respondents said yes. Respondent 1 mentioned they got worthwhile feedback on how the Bernstein piece stretched the ensemble and may have almost been out of reach. They mentioned stretching students musically is often the goal, and do not achieve the polish or precision they might have with an easier selection. Respondent 2 was confident that the ensemble had straight 1’s within them and was looking forward to seeing if the students would be able to rise to the challenge. Respondent 2 reflected that it was a great performance and the judges thought so too, and they were “very, very proud of them.” Respondent 3 stated they expected the rating of 2’s and that was accurate. Respondent 4 stated the ensemble received an overall 2 with a 1 in sight reading, and mentioned if a few things were done differently the ensemble could have gotten a 1. However, they said at the time of the performance a 2 was an accurate representation of how the ensemble performed and exactly what they expected.

Changes to the Repertoire Selection Process

The last question of the interview asks “if you were to change anything about the repertoire selection process, what would you consider?” and each Respondent had several thoughts on what to change and what they could do. Respondent 1 mentioned they would select repertoire based on how the first half of the school year progressed.. Students may have achieved well and the repertoire can have them strive to do better. However, it was noted if weaknesses are exposed later

in the year, there is not a “going back” option. They also mentioned there may be things that come up such as sickness and weather interruptions that can stretch the ensemble thinner, and if it happens to be under-programmed, it may be a struggle to manage time as the ensemble attempts to correct any errors. Respondent 2 said they would put more stock into looking at and selecting marches. They mentioned they are good at finding substantial pieces to diversify the overall program, but the march is often an afterthought. They want to make sure a good repertoire is selected for students to benefit from and enjoy. This includes starting the march earlier, finding something more challenging, and then providing options for students to choose one piece for assessment. It is important to note the term “good repertoire” is also subjective in this case. Respondent 3 stated they would like to take a more involved approach for flexible arrangements and make sure they fit the ensemble well. They used a flexible arrangement for the march, and there was trouble with balance. Respondent 3 mentioned they could have put more players on part 1 which had the melody, but there were limited options for instruments on part 1. They said in theory flexible arrangements should work but in this case they didn’t. Respondent 4 reflected they think they did a “pretty good job” in [their] first year choosing music that [the ensemble] could be successful performing. They wished they started the process earlier and are already talking with the ensemble to see how they want to be challenged for next year. Respondent 4 mentioned they like the dichotomy of the pieces they chose, with a piece challenging the ensemble and the other piece the ensemble really enjoyed.

Discussion, Implications, and Recommendations

Overall, the results demonstrate several factors and thought processes that high school band directors use when selecting repertoire for assessment. The first research question is “what factors do band directors use in selecting repertoire for assessment?” was to investigate if the factors for

repertoire selection were to change for state assessment or if they are similar to any performance. The factors band directors use in selecting repertoire for assessment are instrumentation, student appeal of the music, student engagement, ability and limitations of the ensemble, highlighting strong soloists and sections, musical maturity of the ensemble, personal appeal, diversity of style and composers, and exposing students to repertoire or musical elements they may not have had the opportunity to be involved with otherwise. High school band directors take the time to observe and learn about students' individual and ensemble strengths and weaknesses. By understanding this, band directors can select repertoire that highlights the strengths and find ways to teach students to build upon existing musical skills.

The second research question of this study asks, “How much research do band directors conduct when choosing this repertoire?” is to investigate the approximate timeline of their selection process and if it would benefit by planning in advance. High school band directors usually have a set time frame and dive into research when selecting assessment repertoire. According to the data, high school band directors range from October through January when selecting repertoire. Two respondents already have lists of repertoire they choose from, whether it is a personal list or one shown to work for their level of ensembles. They strive to learn new repertoire and add it to the list. Some ways this list is kept include lists of recommended literature, listening to performances of other bands, conversations with other directors or mentor teachers, and what is in the school library. High school band directors prefer to have their students involved in the repertoire selection process by having the ensemble pick one piece for assessment, as the students will have ownership of the piece and be more invested because of their interest in the piece.

The third research question of the study asks, “What are the main goals band directors hope their students in repertoire selection?” to look into the pedagogical approaches and benefits band

directors consider. From this study, the goals of band directors are focused on student-centered benefits. Some examples are increasing musicianship by providing students tools and teaching strategies to practice at home, and what to listen for in rehearsal, having a high-level polished performance, individual preparation, students accepting a challenge and rising to the occasion, student confidence, setting students up for success, and for students to be proud of their performance. High school band directors notice the benefits and growth of students within the months they are working on this repertoire by stretching their musical, individual, and ensemble skills. There also has been growth in music appreciation in the repertoire selected and performed. Emphasis on process compared to product is what band directors strive for. They want their students to gain these skills and for them to flourish as musicians.

The fourth research question asks “Do band directors consider their musical preferences in repertoire choice?”. The primary goal is to see if band directors have a mindset that is more focused on the students or for their own personal appeal. According to the survey and the interview questions, band directors consider some of their musical preferences in repertoire choice, but ultimately strive for student choice or benefit. Band directors consider what they have on their list, and sight read through several pieces that could serve as options for assessment. At that point, they narrow down the selection by student vote or how well the ensemble is performing that piece. A piece will then be selected to contrast the first one, and the march is also selected either by the band director or by choice. Promoting student ownership and choice provides the opportunity for more investment in the piece, and can lead to a more successful performance.

The last research question, “Does the process change as assessment approaches?” investigates whether band directors need to adjust their curriculum pending the students’ performances during class. The process does change as assessment approaches depending on

certain circumstances, but ultimately the ensemble focuses on the repertoire they are working on for assessment. From the survey and interview data, high school band directors have an understanding of their ensemble's abilities, and can accurately estimate the rating their bands will receive at assessment. There can be a change in the repertoire if the ensemble is not doing well. For example, one band director noticed one piece was not working for the ensemble, so they discussed what could work and contrast the original piece. There was a response mentioning that it is okay for the ensemble to be challenged and their skills to be stretched, as that is where growth occurs at the high school level. There is a lot of confidence from band directors about what their ensembles can accomplish if they put their attention and focus on the repertoire and performing well.

This research project aligns with previous research. For example, the more experience the high school band directors had while teaching, the higher the assessment rating the ensemble received. The high school band directors also demonstrated a more pedagogical approach and had a specific process when selecting repertoire. This increased with the number of years of experience, as well as the utilization of a variety of sources. All band directors focused on what would benefit the students in terms of repertoire. Instrumentation, size of the ensemble, and playing ability of the ensemble were factors when selecting repertoire. Musical and educational goals were the primary focus in repertoire selection to what students would benefit most from assessment. There is still some preference on what is "good" and "respectable" repertoire, and it is important for band directors to define what that means to them specifically. Diversity has also been an important factor when selecting repertoire as awareness has been more present in recent years.

One major implication of this research project includes the responses received from the surveys. There were a total of ten responses out of twenty-four high school band directors located in VBODA District V, though there were seven responses that did not contribute to the data set. This project was originally going to utilize a mixed-methods approach. One survey completed said the participant did not consent to participate in the survey. Six respondents of the survey selected they would consent to participate in the survey, however, did not complete the survey in its entirety. This could be due to either time constraints as the surveys were distributed during a time block when high school band directors are focused on rehearsing their ensemble, or misinterpretation of the email that they could participate in either the survey or the interview. Due to this, the study needed to be revised to use the four responses that were complete as the control and to then follow up on the high school band directors' experiences of selecting repertoire for assessment through interviews.

Another implication of this research project includes clarification regarding which ensemble the band director was using for the survey. Schools with larger populations or bigger band programs may have multiple ensembles in one school, and that can lead to a lack of clarity when answering the question, "How many students are in your band program?". One way to revise this is to change the question to "How many students are in your top concert ensemble?", or to add a question pertaining to the amount of ensembles the program has, and then list them. For instrumentation that encompasses a band, the amount of students can be applied to each ensemble.

For further research, it is recommended this study be expanded to an entire state or nationwide, rather than one district. While a district can provide insight, having a wider pool of participants can provide more information regarding selection practices. It was anticipated the majority of high school band directors would elect to participate in the survey, however, only a

small portion completed the survey in its entirety. Research in this area can also be expanded to include different demographics such as age level of students.

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Tables

Table 1. VBODA Performance Assessment Rubric – Concert Band

<i>Category</i>	<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Key Words (+/-)</i>
Tone Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Produce a dark, characteristic tone quality ● Produce a focused, controlled sound in all ranges and registers ● Demonstrate proper use of vibrato ● Produce a quality sound on percussion instruments through proper technique and choice of equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Breath Support ● Upper range ● Lower range ● Embouchure
Intonation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Produce uniform tonal focus throughout the ensemble ● Demonstrate careful attention to tuning and pitch processes ● Understand chordal and harmonic structures ● Adjust any perceived pitch issues ● Demonstrate percussion tuning to match the ensemble 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Listening for pitch ● Adjusting pitch issues ● Unisons ● Melodic pitch
Technique	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meet technical demands with precision ● Demonstrate an understanding of styles of articulation ● Demonstrate dexterity in performing technical passages ● Start and stop together, within sections and across the ensemble 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Finger precision ● Light tonguing ● Slurring ● Accent, marcato ● Legato articulation
Rhythm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstrate control of rhythms– accuracy and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dotted rhythms ● Agogic pulse

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> precision ● Maintain a tempo ● Produce a natural feel to rhythmic passages ● Demonstrate control in multi-metered passages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Vertical alignment ● Subdivision
Balance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Produce correct balance in all sections of the music ● Demonstrate balance between inner and outer voices ● Demonstrate the melodic line as the prevalent voice ● Understand the supportive relationship between the percussion and wind sections in the ensemble 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Environment ● Placement
Musicianship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Demonstrate attention to detail ● Demonstrate the music's expressive features ● Shape phrases using dynamics, articulation, and direction ● Produce effective moods and emotions ● Demonstrate an understanding of musical style 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sensitivity ● Training
General Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide evidence that selected literature is appropriate for the ensemble ● Present a variety of idioms ● Demonstrate appropriate appearance and demeanor ● Radiate confidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Quality of literature ● Instrumentation ● Recognition ● Recovery from error

Table 2. Years of Experience Teaching High School Band

<i>Respondent 1</i>	10-14 years
<i>Respondent 2</i>	5-9 years
<i>Respondent 3</i>	20-24 years
<i>Respondent 4</i>	0-4 years

Mean = 2.75, SD = 1.48, var = 2.19

Table 3. Approximate Student Population at High School

<i>Respondent 1</i>	1501-2000 students
<i>Respondent 2</i>	501-1000 students
<i>Respondent 3</i>	501-1000 students
<i>Respondent 4</i>	0-500 students

Mean = 2.25, SD = 1.09, var = 1.19

Table 4. Student Population Participating in Band Program

<i>Respondent 1</i>	101-125 students
<i>Respondent 2</i>	26-50 students
<i>Respondent 3</i>	51-75 students
<i>Respondent 4</i>	26-50 students

Mean = 3.00, SD = 1.22, var = 1.50

Table 5. Highest Level of Education

<i>Respondent 1</i>	Master's Degree
<i>Respondent 2</i>	Master's Degree
<i>Respondent 3</i>	Master's Degree
<i>Respondent 4</i>	Bachelor's Degree
Mean = 1.75, SD = 0.43, var = 0.19	

Table 6. Type of Area That School is Located

<i>Respondent 1</i>	Suburban
<i>Respondent 2</i>	Rural
<i>Respondent 3</i>	Suburban
<i>Respondent 4</i>	Rural
Mean = 2.50, SD = 0.50, var = 0.25	

Table 7. Number of Students in Each Section

	<i>Respondent 1</i>	<i>Respondent 2</i>	<i>Respondent 3</i>	<i>Respondent 4</i>
<i>Flute/Piccolo</i>	7	5	4	0
<i>Oboe</i>	2	0	0	1
<i>Bassoon</i>	2	0	1	0
<i>Clarinet</i>	16	4	7	4
<i>Bass Clarinet</i>	3	0	2	0
<i>Alto Saxophone</i>	7	2	4	3
<i>Tenor Saxophone</i>	3	0	1	1
<i>Baritone Saxophone</i>	2	1	1	1
<i>Trumpet</i>	13	6	6	5
<i>Horn</i>	8	0	2	1
<i>Trombone</i>	8	5	8	6
<i>Euphonium</i>	8	1	2	3
<i>Tuba</i>	5	2	4	2
<i>Percussion</i>	25	8	8	8
<i>Other</i>		2*		
<i>Total</i>	109	36	50	35
*Guitar and Bass				

Table 8. Month When Repertoire Is Selected for Assessment

<i>Respondent 1</i>	October
<i>Respondent 2</i>	December
<i>Respondent 3</i>	November
<i>Respondent 4</i>	January

Mean = 3.00, SD = 1.22, var = 1.50

Table 9. Repertoire for Assessment

<i>Respondent</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Composer/Arranger</i>	<i>Grade Level (According to VBODA)</i>
1	Sounds of Spring Concert March	Shizuka Sato & Naoya Wada	
	Candide Suite	Leonard Bernstein, arr. Grundman	VI
	Strange Humors	John Mackey	VI
2	Arsenal	Jan Van der Roost	
	Puszta	Jan Van der Roost	V
	Variations on a Korean Folk Song	John Barnes Chance	V
3	Amparito Roca	Jaime Texidor	
	Toccata for Band	Frank Erickson	V
	K2 “The Savage Mountain”	Julie Giroux	V
4	Courage	Harold Bennett, arr. Clark	
	Sheltering Sky	John Mackey	III
	Moscow, 1941	Brian Balmages	III

Table 10. Factors When Selecting Repertoire for Assessment

	<i>Respondent 1</i>	<i>Respondent 2</i>	<i>Respondent 3</i>	<i>Respondent 4</i>
<i>Instrumental performance skills that can be taught through the music (phrasing, balance, tone quality, intonation, staccato, legato, etc.)</i>				X
<i>Historical elements of the music (musical period, historical period, style)</i>				
<i>Social elements of the music (multicultural, social influences of the time, relation of history to society)</i>				
<i>Music to fit the program (cohesive and contrasting assessment program)</i>				
<i>Student appeal of the music</i>	X	X	X	X
<i>Personal appeal to the music</i>	X			X
<i>Technical considerations of the music (range, fingerings)</i>		X		
<i>Rhythmic considerations of the music (rhythms, patterns, ostinatos, etc.)</i>				
<i>Aesthetic appeal or value of the music</i>				

*Recently heard
another band perform
music*

<i>Ability and limitations of the ensemble that performs this music</i>	X	X	X	X
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<i>Instrumentation of the ensemble</i>	X	X	X	
--	---	---	---	--

<i>Size of the ensemble that performs this music</i>			X	
--	--	--	---	--

<i>The musical maturity of the ensemble that performs this music</i>	X	X		
--	---	---	--	--

*The music appeared
on the program of an
honor, district, or all-
state type program*

The music is new

*The music is older or
has an established
place in repertoire of
this level*

<i>Gender, ethnicity, or other status of the composer</i>			X	
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*Cost of the published
score and parts*

<i>Grade level</i>				X
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Table 11. Estimate Rating that Band Will Receive at Assessment

<i>Respondent 1</i>	Superior
<i>Respondent 2</i>	1
<i>Respondent 3</i>	2
<i>Respondent 4</i>	2

Table 12. Sources Used to Learn New Repertoire

	<i>Respondent 1</i>	<i>Respondent 2</i>	<i>Respondent 3</i>	<i>Respondent 4</i>
<i>Professional journals</i>				
<i>Lists of recommended literature (for contest/competition)</i>	X	X	X	X
<i>School library</i>		X	X	X
<i>Listening to performances of other bands</i>	X	X	X	X
<i>Reading sessions at other functions where finding literature is the primary purpose of the event (such as being sponsored by the publisher)</i>	X			
<i>Reading sessions at conferences for professional development finding literature is just one of many professional functions</i>	X		X	
<i>Looking through and listening to promotional materials sent to you by</i>	X			

publishers

Conversations with other directors or mentor teachers X X X X

Table 13. VBODA District V Concert Assessment Results

<i>Respondent</i>	<i>Grade Level</i>	<i>Stage 1 Adjudicator Rating</i>	<i>Stage 2 Adjudicator Rating</i>	<i>Stage 3 Adjudicator Rating</i>	<i>Sight Reading Adjudicator Rating</i>	<i>Overall Rating</i>
1	VI	I	I	I	I	Superior
2	V	I	I	I	I	Superior
3	V	II	II	II	I	Excellent
4	III	II	II	II	I	Excellent

Appendices

Appendix A: Cover Letter for Survey

SUBJECT: Survey on Repertoire Selection for Assessment

This study is approved by JMU IRB Protocol #23-3836.

Qualtrics Survey Link: https://jmu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_4NM0SFunKXsSTf8

Dear Survey Participant,

The purpose of this study, Repertoire Selection for High School Band Assessment, is to survey high school band directors from District V of Virginia in regards to factors in selecting repertoire for assessment.

This study has been approved by the IRB, protocol #23-3836. It consists of 11 questions, and the timetable of this study is as follows: Survey window opens on January 15, 2023 and closes on January 30, 2023. Approximately 25% of respondents will be selected at random for follow up interviews prior to assessment, as well as an interview after assessment.

The study description (including consent explanations and the survey questions) is below. If you decide to participate, please click on the link below and complete the survey between January 15, 2023, and January 30, 2023.

Qualtrics Link: https://jmu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_4NM0SFunKXsSTf8

In closing, thank you for your consideration. Should you choose to proceed, the Consent to Participate in Research Form is on the next page of this Survey Instrument.

Sincerely,
Miranda Cook

Appendix B: Consent Form for Survey

Consent to Participate in Research Identification of Investigators & Purpose of Study:

You are being asked to participate in a research study conducted by Miranda Cook from James Madison University. The purpose of this study is to acknowledge the different factors that high school band directors use in order to select repertoire for assessment. This study will contribute to the researcher's/researchers' completion of her master's thesis.

Research Procedures: Should you decide to participate in this research study, you will be asked to sign this consent form once all your questions have been answered to your satisfaction. This study consists of a survey and interview that will be administered to individual participants via Zoom. You will be asked to provide answers to a series of questions related to determining factors that high school band directors use in order to select repertoire for assessment. Interviews will be audio and video recorded via Zoom, with recordings being used in reference for the master's thesis.

Time Required: Participation in this study will require 15-45 minutes of your time. The survey should take about 15 minutes to complete, with two interviews being selected for randomly selected participants before and after assessment. Each of these interviews should take 15 minutes of your time.

Risks: The investigator does not perceive more than minimal risks from your involvement in this study (that is, no risks beyond the risks associated with everyday life).

Benefits: Potential benefits from participation in this study include enlightening the process behind repertoire selection and to help improve repertoire selections for the music curriculum.

Incentives: You will not receive any compensation for participation in this study.

Confidentiality: The results of this research will be presented at a classroom and conference. The results of this project will be coded in such a way that the respondent's identity will not be attached to the final form of this study. The researcher retains the right to use and publish non-identifiable data. While individual responses are confidential, aggregate data will be presented representing averages or generalizations about the responses as a whole. All data will be stored in a secure location accessible only to the researcher. Upon completion of the study, all information that matches up individual respondents with their answers including audio/video recordings will be destroyed. Final aggregate results will be made available to participants upon request.

Participation & Withdrawal: Your participation is entirely voluntary. You are free to choose not to participate. Should you choose to participate, you can withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind.

Questions about the Study: If you have questions or concerns during the time of your participation in this study, or after its completion or you would like to receive a copy of the final aggregate results of this study, please contact:

Miranda Cook
Music Education
James Madison University
cookmo@dukes.jmu.edu

Dr. Alice Hammel
Music Education
James Madison University
hammelam@jmu.edu

Questions about Your Rights as a Research Subject:

Dr. Lindsey Harvell-Bowman
Chair, Institutional Review Board
James Madison University
(540) 568-2611
harve2la@jmu.edu

Giving of Consent: I have read this consent form and I understand what is being requested of me as a participant in this study. I freely consent to participate. I have been given satisfactory answers to my questions. The investigator provided me with a copy of this form. I certify that I am at least 18 years of age. I give consent to participate in the survey.

- a. Yes, I freely consent to participate.
- b. No, I do not freely consent to participate.

Appendix C: Survey Questions

1. How many years of experience do you have as a band director?
 - a. 0-4 years
 - b. 5-9 years
 - c. 10-14 years
 - d. 15-19 years
 - e. 20-24 years
 - f. 25-29 years
 - g. 30+ years

2. Approximately how many students attend the high school where you teach?
 - a. 0-500 students
 - b. 501-1000 students
 - c. 1001-1500 students
 - d. 1501-2000 students
 - e. 2001-2500 students
 - f. 2501-3000 students
 - g. 3001+ students

3. How many students are in your band program?
 - a. 0-25
 - b. 26-50
 - c. 51-75
 - d. 76-100
 - e. 101-125
 - f. 126-150

- g. 151+
4. What is your highest level of education?
- a. Bachelor's
 - b. Master's
 - c. Doctorate
5. What do you consider your school to be?
- a. Urban
 - b. Suburban
 - c. Rural
6. In the box below, please list the number of students in each section in score order.

Flute/Piccolo -
Oboe -
Bassoon -
Clarinet -
Bass Clarinet -
Alto Saxophone -
Tenor Saxophone -
Baritone Saxophone -
Trumpet -
Horn -
Trombone -
Euphonium -
Tuba -
Percussion -
Other (Please list) -

7. What month do you begin to consider selecting repertoire for assessment?
- a. August
 - b. September
 - c. October

- d. November
 - e. December
 - f. January
 - g. February
 - h. March
 - i. April
 - j. May
 - k. June
 - l. July
8. What pieces did you choose for your band to perform at assessment? Please list the title, composer/arranger, and grade level.
- a. Title
 - b. Composer/Arranger (e.b. Balmages)
 - c. Grade Level
9. Select up to five of the choices below that you use in order to select repertoire for assessment.
- a. Instrumental performance skills that can be taught through the music (phrasing, balance, tone quality, intonation, staccato, legato, etc.)
 - b. Historical elements of the music (musical period, historical period, style)
 - c. Social elements of the music (multicultural, social influences of the time, relation of history to society)
 - d. Music to fit the program (cohesive and contrasting assessment program)
 - e. Student appeal of the music

- f. Personal appeal to the music
 - g. Technical considerations of the music (range, fingerings)
 - h. Rhythmic considerations of the music (rhythms, patterns, ostinatos, etc.)
 - i. Aesthetic appeal or value of the music
 - j. Recently heard another band perform music
 - k. Ability and limitations of the ensemble that performs this music
 - l. Instrumentation of the ensemble
 - m. Size of the ensemble that performs this music
 - n. The musical maturity of the ensemble that performs this music
 - o. The music appeared on the program of an honor, district, or all-state type program
 - p. The music is new
 - q. The music is older or has an established place in repertoire of this level
 - r. Gender, ethnicity, or other status of the composer
 - s. Cost of the published score
and parts
 - t. Grade level
10. What rating do you estimate that your band will receive at assessment?
11. What sources do you use to learn new repertoire? (select all that apply)
- a. Professional journals
 - b. Lists of recommended literature (for contest/competition)
 - c. School library
 - d. Listening to performances of other bands

- e. Reading sessions at other functions where finding literature is the primary purpose of the event (such as being sponsored by publisher)
- f. Reading sessions at conferences for professional development where finding literature is just one of many professional functions
- g. Looking through and listening to promotional materials sent to you by publishers
- h. Conversations with other directors or mentor teachers

Appendix D: Consent Form for Selected Interviews

Consent to Participate in Research

Identification of Investigators & Purpose of Study

You are being asked to participate in a research study conducted by Miranda Cook from James Madison University. The purpose of this study is to acknowledge the different factors that high school band directors use in order to select repertoire for assessment. This study will contribute to the researcher's/researchers' completion of her master's thesis.

Research Procedures

Should you decide to participate in this research study, you will be asked to sign this consent form once all your questions have been answered to your satisfaction. This study consists of a survey and interview that will be administered to individual participants via Zoom. You will be asked to provide answers to a series of questions related to determining factors that high school band directors use in order to select repertoire for assessment. Interviews will be audio and video recorded via Zoom, with recordings being used in reference for the master's thesis.

Time Required

Participation in this study will require 15-45 minutes of your time. The survey should take about 15 minutes to complete, with two interviews being selected for randomly selected participants before and after assessment. Each of these interviews should take 15 minutes of your time.

Risks

The investigator does not perceive more than minimal risks from your involvement in this study (that is, no risks beyond the risks associated with everyday life).

Benefits

Potential benefits from participation in this study include enlightening the process behind repertoire selection and to help improve repertoire selections for the music curriculum.

Incentives

You will not receive any compensation for participation in this study.

Confidentiality

The results of this research will be presented at a classroom and conference. The results of this project will be coded in such a way that the respondent's identity will not be attached to the final form of this study. The researcher retains the right to use and publish non-identifiable data. While individual responses are confidential, aggregate data will be presented representing averages or generalizations about the responses as a whole. All data will be stored in a secure location accessible only to the researcher. Upon completion of the study, all information that matches up individual respondents with their answers including audio/video recordings will be destroyed. Final aggregate results will be made available to participants upon request.

Participation & Withdrawal

Your participation is entirely voluntary. You are free to choose not to participate. Should you choose to participate, you can withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind.

Questions about the Study

If you have questions or concerns during the time of your participation in this study, or after its completion or you would like to receive a copy of the final aggregate results of this study, please contact:

Miranda Cook
Music Education
James Madison University
cookmo@dukes.jmu.edu

Dr. Alice Hammel
Music Education
James Madison University
hammelam@jmu.edu

Questions about Your Rights as a Research Subject

Dr. Lindsey Harvell-Bowman
Chair, Institutional Review Board
James Madison University
(540) 568-2611
harve2la@jmu.edu

Giving of Consent

I have read this consent form and I understand what is being requested of me as a participant in this study. I freely consent to participate. I have been given satisfactory answers to my questions. The investigator provided me with a copy of this form. I certify that I am at least 18 years of age.

I give consent to be (video/audio) recorded during my interview. _____ (initials)

Name of Participant (Printed)

Name of Participant (Signed)

Name of Researcher (Signed)

Date

Date

This study has been approved by the IRB, protocol # 23-3836.

Appendix E: Interview Guide

Interview Question Guide
<i>Before Assessment</i>
1. How long have you been teaching high school band?
2. What ratings have you received at previous assessments?
3. What is your repertoire selection process like?
4. What are the main factors you consider when selecting repertoire?
5. For this year's assessment, why did you select the repertoire you have chosen?
6. What are the goals that you plan to teach with this repertoire, and how will you accomplish them?
7. How do you predict your ensemble will do for assessment?
<i>After Assessment</i>
1. What growth did you see with your ensemble from when you first started rehearsing the repertoire until assessment?
2. How do you think your ensemble benefitted from the repertoire?
3. Was the grade your ensemble received expected?
4. If you were to change anything about the repertoire selection process, what would you consider?

Appendix F: Interview Transcript for Respondent 1 - Round 1 (via Email)

Miranda Cook (MC): How long have you been teaching high school band?

Respondent 1 (R1): This is my 11th year, all at [redacted] High School

MC: What ratings have you received at previous assessments?

R1: I have received superior ratings each year I have taken an ensemble to concert assessment since 2015.

MC: What is your repertoire selection process like?

R1: I always have a running list of repertoire that I would like to program when appropriate. Throughout the year I am constantly searching for new repertoire that I am not familiar with. In the summer I spend extensive time listening to new music. Some pieces I've done before I can't WAIT to be able to program again. Other pieces I'll never program again!

MC: What are the main factors you consider when selecting repertoire?

R1: Respectable repertoire, student engagement, a challenge that will stretch our students and myself throughout the 2.5 month process, achievable yet not playing it safe, feature outstanding instrumentalists as much as possible, and engaging modern music, complimented by proven standards, while striving to program diverse composers.

MC: For this year's assessment, why did you select the repertoire you have chosen?

R1: Our closer, John Mackey's *Strange Humors* is my absolute favorite to program. I do so every 4 years if possible! Students love it, it is unique, and the instrumentation is interesting. Our standard is *Candide Suite* by Bernstein/ arr. Grundman. I have never played or conducted this piece but began listening to and fell in love with it the last year. I have experienced the Overture but not the entire suite. I knew it would be a stretch and a challenge for us, but it featured some of our stars and was something I was passionate about programming. It is a model for my new favorite

quote "you get better by doing things you're not quite ready for." As an ensemble, it was a stretch, but the students have more than risen to the occasion! I have been SO successful in programming diverse music this year, but with the two above pieces, I was about to fail on my goal of programming diverse composers in every performance this year. Choosing a march is always very difficult for me. I don't do so until we're a couple weeks into the other two pieces to see how it's going. If we need a challenging march or something that will come together quicker. I searched near and far for a march by a diverse composer. BUT, the one I wanted to do we did in the fall! (I wish I would've saved it!) So I continued searching, reaching out to respected colleagues, etc. The march I ended up finding is newer and not well known by 2 Japanese composers. I actually read this march with a Sousa and a Van Der Roost. Then students were given a choice to pick and they picked the Japanese composers!

MC: What are the goals that you plan to teach with this repertoire, and how will you accomplish them?

R1: A high-level polished performance, repertoire with great depth (length and musical value), modern musical technique (Mackey), and relation to original source material (Bernstein musical).

MC: How do you predict your ensemble will do for assessment?

R1: We are feeling quite prepared and aiming for a superior!

Appendix G: Interview Transcript for Respondent 2 - Round 1 (via Zoom)

Miranda Cook (MC): All right, so I will share the questions with you. So my first question for you is, how long have you been teaching high School band?

Respondent 2 (R2): This is year 9 for me. That is the only job I've had. So yes, it's my ninth year here at [redacted].

MC: Okay, awesome. The next question is, what ratings have you received at previous assessments?

R2: It generally has been more ones, but we've had some twos in there as well, but ones and twos. I've never had a 3 or anything like that so.

MC: Great. Then the next question is, what is your repertoire selection process like?

R2: So, it's changed over the past couple of years. I used to do it where I picked every piece, the march and the 2 prepared selections. What I've started doing the past year is because I found that students tend to buy into a piece more when they get some ownership of it. So what I do is I pick usually right after our winter concert. or maybe even a little bit, at the beginning of the school year, when we're just figuring some stuff out, I'll give them a bunch of pieces, like 6 or 7 different pieces that could be possible assessment pieces. And then, through just voting and a nice little democratic process, they dwindle it down. They get to pick one of the pieces that we do for assessment, and then I pick a piece that I feel complements the one that they picked well, and I picked the march. So that's what I've done these past couple of years, I found, especially when they find a piece they really like. Like, last year we did *Ride* by Samuel Hazo and they, it was a unanimous vote on that piece. They loved that piece, and they sounded great because they really bought in and really wanted to play it. So, I found that that helps a lot this year, especially because we generally have gone grade 5 every year, so it helps, especially with music of that difficulty that the stuff that

they're willing to buy into and work on as opposed to putting some harder music in front of them and they just don't work hard, and then we don't sound as good as we can.

MC: Yeah, thank you for that. Then the next question. It kind of ties into the question you just answered. But what are the main factors you consider when selecting repertoire.

R2: So, being a smaller program, instrumentation obviously is a big factor. I have 0 French horns right now. So obviously not, I can have things that have some force, some good for heart, four split harmony and the horns, but it just takes a lot for me, because then I'm writing extra parts out for alto sax. I've got some really strong trombones, so they're kind of my trombones/French horn section this year that I've written stuff out. Some instrumentation balances out a little bit. I also don't have any double reeds so like my kids, even though we still wouldn't play it. They really wanna have always wanted to do *Angels in the Architecture* by Frank Ticheli, but it's got a massive bassoon solo, which we don't have a bassoon, so that, not that I would even take that piece to begin with, but that would sort of limit that there. So it has to do with that, but also looking at where some strengths are. I've got some really talented first chair players this year, so trying to find some pieces that have some good soloistic spots for them to feature those players. But that, and also I do try and pick some stuff that challenges them. I don't want them to get bored. I know some directors sometimes pick some slightly easier music, so they can like, guarantee a good rating, and that they cannot be stressed this time of year. But that's not my philosophy. I like to push the students a little bit, and really try and go for that high achievement level that I know they can get to when they work hard. So that's a lot of the fact that I pick things that also will stretch them and like, if I know we need to work on dynamic contrast and things like that, I'll pick things that have, especially in the march, some things that have wider ranges of that to help improve those skills for future years as well.

MC: Great, Thank you. And then the fifth question is for this year's assessment: Why did you select the repertoire you have chosen?

R2: Like I said, it features a lot of good. So, we're doing, I wanted to do a different march past several years. I've done more of a standard, Sousa, American March. This year we're doing *Arsenal* by Jan Van de Roost. That's a nice, more European British sounding march, which has provided some variety for them. And then we're doing, also by Jan Van de Roost, we're doing *Pushta* and then *Variations on a Korean Folk Song*. My woodwinds are small, but they are some killer players. My first chair clarinet, I believe, is going to be at JMU next year as a music major. My principal flute is Dr. Cahill's son, so he's pretty good at flute. So, they're small, but they have the technique to show off in some of those pieces. So yeah, and I've got a really good trumpet player as well, and a good trombone section. So it's even with my winds section for my top group, there's only about 17 players, but they are all very strong and able to still have a good full ensemble sound, and I think these pieces help accentuate that in just the way that they are written.

MC: And that's great, Thank you. And then the next question is, what are the goals that you plan to teach with this repertoire, or have you implemented in your repertoire? And how will you accomplish them, or how you accomplished those?

R2: Yeah, so I'm a firm believer—yeah, it's a pet peeve of mine that as music educators, we are fantastic at telling kids to go home and practice, but we're not great at showing them how. So, picking some of this assessment music that is more difficult, has a lot more technique. We work on things like how you can practice this one outside of class, how you can slow it down, how you can break it apart and do smaller chunks, and then put it back together, working on a lot of rehearsal habits. Also with assessment, one of my goals is we use these, we, you know, we spend 2, 3 months on just 3 pieces, so we can really go in depth with them, really pick it apart and make it as

professional sounding as possible, so using that aspect to teach them that. Okay, we did that with these 3 pieces. Now, can you do that with every piece that you play all the time? So you know, we have a spring concert coming up in May, where we've got about 2 months to prepare for that. Can we prepare that music the same way, with the same level of intensity and focus that we did for assessment where we're getting a rating and a grade on it. But just for a spring concert, when it's a little less...consequences to it. So that that's my thing is helping them with everything that I teach is helping them become, what's the word I'm looking for, like self-reliant musicians, where I don't have to just spoon feed them. I don't have to sit there and count every rhythm with them. I don't have to play it for them, so they know how it sounds, but giving them the tools to figure it out their own, because that is where real growth at a high school level comes through.

MC: Yeah, great. Thank you for that. And then the last question is, how do you predict your ensemble will do for assessment?

R2: They should do well, key word being should. No, they sound really good, when they're really focused, really attentive to everything they sound great. I may be a little biased, but I think they sound really good. I think a rating of a one is very much within reach, but as musicians know, it sometimes that day just isn't the right day. We had that last week at our pre-assessment concert where things were happening that had never happened before. People just missed counting, people missing entrances, had never happened before in the previous 2 months up, like things that didn't even happen almost when we sight read the pieces. So I think they should be able to get a one. I think it is very attainable for them. But yeah, it's the blessing, the curse of live music is sometimes it just doesn't quite go how we want it to, so.

MC: Oh, yeah, for sure. Yeah, thank you so much for participating in this interview...

[MC and R2 discuss the next interview time for after assessment.]

Appendix H: Interview Transcript for Respondent 3 - Round 1 (via Email)

Miranda Cook (MC): How long have you been teaching high school band?

Respondent 3 (R3): 23 years.

MC: What ratings have you received at previous assessments?

R3: Overall superiors or excellent.

MC: What is your repertoire selection process like?

R3: A long process! I have a list of literature that I think works for the two level bands at my school. I add to the list when I hear new music, and I keep a list of music that I want to listen to. Each year, the ensembles are a little different (instrumentation, soloists, sections that are stronger, sections that are more challenged). For assessment in March, I usually have a short list of music that I think will work by the beginning of January, and we sight read to narrow it down. **MC:** What are the main factors you consider when selecting repertoire?

R3: Level of difficulty, instrumentation, soloists, stronger/weaker sections, overall size of ensemble, diversity of composers, styles of music.

MC: For this year's assessment, why did you select the repertoire you have chosen?

R3: Instrumentation and size of ensembles!

MC: What are the goals that you plan to teach with this repertoire, and how will you accomplish them?

R3: Individual preparation/rising to an appropriate challenge, confidence, understanding cut time (for Concert Band).

MC: How do you predict your ensemble will do for assessment?

R3: Excellent ratings for both bands.

Appendix I: Interview Transcript for Respondent 4 - Round 1 (via Zoom)

[MC talks about getting the screen ready to share the questions, and also discusses about the amount of tabs open. MC gets the questions ready and discusses that there are seven questions and that the participant is allowed to withdraw at any time.]

Miranda Cook (MC): ...So the first question is, how long have you been teaching high school band?

Respondent 4 (R4): This is my first year, so since August. I'm a 12 month employee. So I kind of started doing stuff in July, which was nice to kind of be in the band room before the school year started. But yeah, just one year.

MC: Great. And then the next question is, what ratings have you received at previous assessments?

R4: Non applicable?

MC: I guess the next question: what is your repertoire selection process like?

R4: So the school I took over at, they did go to assessment last year, and they got straight ones with, they brought grade 3 music, and so my thought process was, "if it ain't broke don't fix it." I just did grade 3 music again. And I first looked at what we had in our music library, and we sight read a few things, and John Mackey's *Sheltering Sky*, one of the pieces we went with when we played it the first time they were like, "I don't like it." I was like, "Okay. Why don't you like it?" And then they were like, "Well, it's just slow," and I was like "Cool. We're doing it." You know, it's one of those pieces that I think it, I see now, it was really good for them, even if it isn't their favorite piece in the world to play something different than what we've done before. And then the selection process for the second piece. Originally, we were doing Frank Ticheli's *Cajun Folk Songs*, and then, maybe about a month ago, maybe not quite a month ago, it just we were struggling with it, and we decided, as a group that it would be better to wait until the spring concert to do

that. And so I found them Brian Balmages' piece called *Moscow 1941*, that they all really liked, and it was a lot easier to put together, and that was one that a student had actually showed me, and I remembered it, and I listened to the recording of it, and it just seemed like a good contrasting piece to the *Sheltering Sky* piece. That's why we went with it.

MC: Yeah, very nice. Now, what are the main factors you consider when selecting repertoire?

R4: One of the first things I looked at was instrumentation. I don't have any flutes in my band. Zero flutes, so I didn't want to pick anything that had like a flute solo in it, or anything that's not doubled in the oboe part or something else. So that was kind of the number one choice. And then the other factors are just looking for things that that they haven't been exposed to yet, or, like the *Sheltering Sky* piece, is a lot slower in a more lyrical piece, and so I wanted to do something like that that I thought would be good for them to work on that they needed. And then the other one was just a nice contrasting piece. So yeah.

MC: Yeah, nice. Okay, so for this year's assessment, why did you select the repertoire you have chosen?

R4: Yeah, kind of the same thing. I wanted to look in what was our music library first, and things they hadn't played before, and once I figured out *Sheltering Sky*, it was easier to pick the second piece because I just wanted it to contrast the first piece.

MC: Great, and then the next question, which I'll kind of rephrase it. So what are the goals that you plan to teach or have taught with this repertoire, and how will you accomplish them?

R4: What are the goals you plan to teach? I was pretty upfront with my kids at first. I wanted them to want to go to assessment. I was like, "if no one wants to go to assessment, we will not go." And they went last year, they were in the process doing it, so I wanted to pick music that was challenging for them and not too easy, because we worked on it like 2 months, I think it can get

pretty boring and monotonous. So I wanted to pick music that would challenge them, and, but still set them up for success, and I think that's why I went away from the *Cajun Folk Songs* piece, because it wasn't really setting them up for success. But my goal for them, and they're aware of this, is just, I wanted them to be proud of what they're performing, and I don't really care if I get a one, a two or whatever, and mostly just are, or were they happy with their performance. And yeah.

MC: Yeah, very nice. And then the last question for today is, how do you predict your ensemble will do for assessment?

R4: I think we're going to do pretty well. The *Sheltering Sky* piece, the one that I really wanted to challenge them with, is still pretty challenging for them. And so, I think overall, I think we'll get about a two. I think it depends on how *Sheltering Sky* goes, but we're really confident with it. I know the march isn't graded, but we're pretty confident in our march. We're pretty confident, in the Brian Balmages piece. And I think they feel pretty good about sight reading, too. It's kind of just dependent on how *Sheltering Sky* goes. So I probably predict like a two, which i'm happy with, yeah.

MC: Well, thank you so much for doing this first part...

[MC and R4 discuss the next interview time for after assessment.]

Appendix J: Interview Transcript for Respondent 1 - Round 2 (via Email)

MC: What growth did you see with your ensemble from when you first started rehearsing the repertoire until assessment?

Respondent 1 (R1): The Bernstein stretched us greatly! The march and Mackey were well within our reach. Bernstein stretched our students' skill in a positive manner and exposed weaknesses that other pieces might have hidden.

MC: How do you think your ensemble benefitted from the repertoire?

R1: They benefitted greatly! We get better by doing hard things! The students grew to appreciate the Bernstein original source material, how their parts compared to the original vocal parts and the character aspect of each movement. The length of the program stretched their focus and attention span. Years ago I had a band of performers who were stronger individually but lacked the attention span as an ensemble to perform music of this length. Now the ensemble is stronger, but the individuals aren't as strong on their own, but rely on each other.

MC: Was the grade your ensemble received expected?

R1: Yes! We got some worthwhile feedback exposing how the Bernstein stretched the ensemble and might have almost been out of their reach. I don't think that is a bad thing and stretching our students is often the goal. They still achieved, just not with the polish or precision they might have on an easier selection.

MC: If you were to change anything about the repertoire selection process, what would you consider?

R1: We select repertoire based on how the year has gone during the first half of the year. Students may have achieved well and we strive to push them. There isn't really a "going back" option, though. Once we dive into the music in January for assessment, it might be too late if weaknesses

are exposed in February. It is often a hard push to the finish to achieve if something is out of our reach! On top of that, it is a double edged sword. If you have a perfect storm of sickness, weather interruptions, etc., you might be stretched even thinner. If the stars align and these things aren't working against you, then if you under program you might be left twiddling your thumbs to fill time to the finish!

[It was also asked a clarifying question about how many students were in the ensemble that R1 focused on in the survey and interview. Below is what they sent for their Symphonic Band instrumentation.]

Symphonic Band #s:

- Flutes - 4
- Oboes - 2
- Bassoons - 2
- Clarinets - 8
- Bass Clarinets - 2
- Alto Sax - 3
- Tenor Sax - 2
- Bari Sax - 1
- Horns - 8
- Trumpets - 8
- Trombones - 5
- Euphs (Euphoniums) - 5
- Tubas - 3
- Percussion - 11

Appendix K: Interview Transcript for Respondent 2 - Round 2 (via Zoom)

[MC talks about sharing the screen for questions.]

Miranda Cook (MC): There we go. So the first question I have for you today is, what growth did you see with your ensemble from when you first started rehearsing the repertoire until assessment?

Respondent 2 (R2): The biggest growth I saw was just their understanding of the music. Like it, it was getting out of their parts and seeing how things fit as a whole. Especially at our pre-assessment concert, we had some things go wrong that had never gone before, and a very important part got off. But they all knew what was supposed to happen when so when there someone like made the choice that this is where they were going to be, everyone just jumped on board, and it actually saved the end of one of our pieces, which was good. So seeing them get out of just “I need to learn my notes and rhythms”, but more for me it is developing that ear of a musician of “oh no! This is how things are supposed to fit together, and where things are supposed to go.”

MC: Great. And then the next question I have for you is, how do you think your ensemble benefited from the repertoire?

R2: Especially with the march, I think it helped expose them to not traditional American march, which is good. So some different repertoire in there with *Korean Folk Song*, it just help them learn more of like the pentatonic scalar system, as opposed to just our normal major and minor scales, but going through some different scales, and there's also some whole tone scales within the piece that I could talk about and learn from that. So just the biggest benefits, I think was just exposed them to things that they haven't been exposed to before.

MC: Awesome. Now the next question is, was the grade your ensemble received expected?

R2: Yes, I knew that they had the straight ones within them, which was awesome to see if they showed up. I say there's a lot of talent in this group, so I knew if they all show up the way they were, were gonna have a great performance, and the judges just thought so as well. So I was very, very proud of them.

MC: Excellent. And then the last question is, if you were to change anything about the repertoire selection process, what would you consider?

R2: For me personally, I'd put more stock into looking into marches. I'm good at finding like the actual, like substantial pieces in order to help diversify those with marches. I don't want to say it's more of an afterthought for me, but it kind of is, where I really put a lot of programming and thought behind the other pieces and picking some good repertoire that I think the kids would benefit from and enjoy, but the march sometimes is like, "oh yeah, we need to find that pesky third piece to play as well." And so for me that's what I would change is, I just would put more emphasis on, besides, just like not exposing them to the same type of American march all the time, but like maybe starting the march earlier, so we could do something a little bit more challenging with the march. But yeah, I still like my system of letting that, giving them a bunch of options, and letting them pick one, because then they take ownership of that. So, and then me taking time to find a piece that complements the one that they picked.

MC: Fantastic. Well, that's the interview that's all I have...

[MC discusses that if there is anything else that R2 would like to add and if there is any changes that they have they can send an email with their revised thoughts.]

Appendix L: Interview Transcript for Respondent 3 - Round 2 (via Email)

Miranda Cook (MC): What growth did you see with your ensemble from when you first started rehearsing the repertoire until assessment?

Respondent 3 (R3): Individual confidence, understanding of individual responsibility (for some players!). Understanding of cut time (for Concert Band).

MC: How do you think your ensemble benefitted from the repertoire?

R3: I think they benefitted as I hoped they would. Unfortunately, all of the students didn't do the best they could have with preparation.

MC: Was the grade your ensemble received expected?

R3: Yes.

MC: If you were to change anything about the repertoire selection process, what would you consider?

R3: Actually, I chose a flexible arrangement for the march for Symphonic Band (advanced band). We had a lot of trouble with balance, and the arrangement didn't work very well for us. In hindsight, I could have put a few more players on part 1, which often had the melody. There were limited options of instruments for part 1, however, so that wouldn't have really solved the problem. In theory, flexible arrangements should work well for that ensemble, but this one didn't work out well.

Appendix M: Interview Transcript for Respondent 4 - Round 2 (via Zoom)

Miranda Cook (MC): And I'm going to share the questions with you. All right, so the first question I have for you is, what growth did you see with your ensemble from when you first started rehearsing with the repertoire until assessment?

Respondent 4 (R4): So yeah, one of the pieces I talked about last time I picked because a lot of them were not big fans of it, and they didn't like playing like the lyrical style stuff, so I saw a lot more people and the band become more accepting of playing that kind of music, and showed more enthusiasm for it, which was which was great. And then, obviously like the growth of like the music, like the technical music stuff, like being able to play rhythms they hadn't played before, and this overall got better at playing their instrument through the process. For me, assessment's not like about getting like a superior or anything it's about did they learn something during the process, and I think they absolutely did.

MC: Excellent. The next question, how do you think your ensemble benefited from the repertoire?

R4: I definitely think it pushed them to playing music that they otherwise had not played before or would not want to play. And it just opened them up to a whole style of music that they just hadn't done before. And I think it was pretty, especially in it was talking about the second piece, the John Mackey piece was just a lot more like mature of the piece than they thought they were capable of.

MC: Yeah, that's great. Alright, then was the grade your ensemble received expected?

R4: Yeah, we got an overall 2. So it was all 2's from the stage performances, from those judges, and a one sight reading. That's about what I expected. We, there are a few things I think, if we done differently we could have got one, but I think, for where we were at that time of that

performance, I think 2 was an accurate representation of how we played, and it was exactly what I expected.

MC: Great. And then the last question is, if you were to change anything about the repertoire selection process, what would you consider?

R4: I think I did a pretty good job in my first year of choosing music that they could be successful on. I wish I just started that process earlier, and so I'm already starting to think about how I want to challenge them with next year. And I like kind of the dichotomy between the two pieces I picked. One was a piece that some of them really liked the *Sheltering Sky* piece from the very beginning, but a large majority of the band was pretty tentative about that piece. So I liked picking a piece like that that is intended to challenge them but then I also enjoyed that I picked the piece that they all enjoyed, and were really enthusiastic about playing in the Brian Balmages piece.

MC: Awesome. Yeah well, that's all the questions I have. Thank you again for participating.

[MC discusses that if there is anything else that R4 would like to add and if there are any changes that they have they can send an email with their revised thoughts.]