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### COMMUNITY BANDS: CREATING A MORE ACCESSIBLE COMMUNITY BAND EXPERIENCE THROUGH THE USE OF MULTI- LEVEL REPERTOIRE

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COMMUNITY BANDS:  
CREATING A MORE ACCESSIBLE COMMUNITY BAND EXPERIENCE  
THROUGH THE USE OF MULTI-LEVEL REPERTOIRE

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School  
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of Master of Music

Cooper Neil

Pittsburg State University

Pittsburg, Kansas

April 2022

COMMUNITY BANDS:  
CREATING A MORE ACCESSIBLE COMMUNITY BAND EXPERIENCE  
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COMMUNITY BANDS:  
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An Abstract of the Thesis by  
Cooper Neil

Community bands have been a long-standing tradition as a part of our American culture, however, these “community” ensembles are rarely representative of the communities where they are found. This is true concerning age, gender, racial/ethnic, and socio-economic demographics. Participation in diverse community music ensembles have been shown to improve positive perceptions of other demographic groups. Additional benefits of performing in community ensembles include the promotion of good mental health and opportunities for lifelong performance and learning. In order to create community ensembles that seek to increase accessibility and to reflect our diverse communities across the United States, there is not a single, simple solution. There are, however, steps that can be taken toward creating a more accessible community ensemble experience. This thesis proposes a way forward toward the goal of a more open and accessible community band.

In status studies that attempt to determine the reasons for non-participation in community ensembles, availability of time is most often cited. This includes time for scheduled rehearsals and time to practice. In status studies that attempt to determine why musicians do participate in community ensembles, participants list both social and musical factors, noting that the music should be enjoyable with a sufficient level of challenge. These challenges will be addressed by putting into dialogue

the research and writings of Cavitt, Mantie, Belgrave, and Rohwer along with the proposed use of multi-level literature.

This thesis hypothesizes that the addition of multi-level repertoire will allow ensembles to more directly cater to their community member's musical expectations while respecting the issue of time commitment for others. In this way, a community ensemble can become more accessible and, ideally, lead to a more diverse and representative group. Creating a volunteer community ensemble that accounts for musician's available time, skill level, and desire for appropriate level of challenge is what this document seeks to address.

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## FOREWARD

As a kid, I vividly remember attending performances from the Pittsburgh Community Summer Band at the J.J. Richards Band Shell in Lincoln Park. My family, along with many other Pittsburgh residents, would gather on the grass with blankets and lawn chairs and wait for the monthly performances of this volunteer group. As a high school student, I joined the ensemble for a concert cycle one summer. I was welcomed by the musicians and the conductor but my level of playing experience did not match the level of the repertoire. Following the first performance of the summer, I respectfully bowed out of the ensemble and assumed my position back in the grass with the rest of the audience. In the summer of 2006, after my first full year as a music major, I rejoined the summer band with a much higher comfort level. It was a pleasure to not only make music with these diversely aged community members, but to be able to socialize with them before and after rehearsals and performances. I am now a high school band director and I want to be able to offer the same opportunity to make music with a diverse group of individuals. It is my hope that all adolescent musicians, career musicians, retired musicians, and hobbyist musicians have the opportunity to collaborate together, create together, and learn from each other. Music can be the bridge between many different worlds.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

There is a large body of research surrounding the topic of community music within the United States. Sections of this body of research are specifically focused on community bands, orchestras, and choirs. Much of the research regarding community bands consists of status studies or demographic studies.<sup>1</sup> The number of community bands surveyed in these status studies demonstrate a level or very gradual ascending growth pattern in the number of community bands currently in the United States.<sup>2,3,4</sup> In March of 2022, according to their websites, The Association of Concert Bands, which supports community bands through its organization, hosts a membership of over 550 ensembles across the United States, The New Horizons International Music Association, which is an organization dedicated to adult musician education, lists over 150 active registered New Horizons Bands and Orchestras in the United States, and the Community-Music Contact List, a repository of community ensembles initially compiled by Ron

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<sup>1</sup> Debbie Rohwer, "Community Bands: Past, Present, and Future," *Contributions to Music Education* 41, (2016): 15-16.

<sup>2</sup> Audrey-Kristel Barbeau and Roger Mantie, "Music Performance Anxiety and Perceived Benefits of Musical Participation Among Older Adults in Community Bands," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 66, no. 4, (2019): 409.

<sup>3</sup> Jason Michael Hartz, "The American Community Band: History and Development," (Masters Thesis, Marshall University, 2003), 34.

<sup>4</sup> Bryan Raya, "A Survey of the Current Financial Trends in American Adult Community Bands," (DMA Dissertation, Arizona State University, 2017), 39-58.

Boerger, contains over 1300 contacts for different community ensembles across the United States.

Community ensembles, such as community bands, have shown through multiple surveys and status studies to benefit their participants in many different ways. Senior participants in adult music making have reported increases in social activity, mental health, and physical health.<sup>5,6</sup> Within intergenerational music programs, participants develop enhanced cross-age perceptions and communication skills.<sup>7</sup> Older adults in intergenerational programs will often experience increased feelings of usefulness while children and adolescents in the same programs tend to develop a more positive perception of aging.<sup>8</sup> The ability of healthy ensemble music making has long been generally accepted to offer many extra-musical benefits to its participants. The well-established K-12 music education system in the United States, in conjunction with the amount of community bands in existence, has the potential to offer myriad opportunities for creating diverse connections through music performance.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Unfortunately, it is the case that, following high school graduation, most musicians cease their involvement with active group music making.<sup>9,10</sup> For the majority

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<sup>5</sup> Mary Ellen Cavitt, "Factors Influencing Participation in Community Bands," *Journal of Band Research* 41, no. 1, (2005): 43.

<sup>6</sup> Don D. Coffman, "Music and Quality of Life in Older Adults," *Psychomusicology* 18, Spring, (2002): 85.

<sup>7</sup> Melita Belgrave and Alice-Ann Darrow, "Creating and Assessing Intergenerational Music Programs," *Proceedings of the 20th International Seminar of the Commission on Music in Special Education, Music Therapy, and Music Medicine*, (2014): 127.

<sup>8</sup> Melita Belgrave, "The Effect of a Music Therapy Intergenerational Program on Children and Older Adults' Intergenerational Interactions, Cross-Age Attitudes, and Older Adults' Psychosocial Well-Being," *Journal of Music Therapy* 48, no. 4, (2011): 505-506.

<sup>9</sup> Cavitt, 42-43.

<sup>10</sup> Roger Mantie, "A Study of Community Band Participants: Implications for Music Education," *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, no. 191, (2012): 21-22.

of adults who have chosen to not participate in any form of post-secondary ensemble music-making, citations of being “too busy” have been the leading rationale.<sup>11</sup> However, it is the case that extensive research has not been afforded to this question of “Why do most graduated high school musicians choose to not participate in any form of post-secondary music making?”<sup>12</sup> This lack of participation indicates a strong need for coordination between secondary music educators and community music organizations to facilitate the *transition* called for by Jellison from formal secondary music ensembles to community music making.<sup>13</sup> It is also worth noting that while the number of community bands remains level or on a very gradual incline, the participants that make up these ensembles are aging.<sup>14</sup> This could lead to an eventual decrease in the amount of community bands available in the United States. Coordination and cooperation between high school music programs and community music programs offers a potential solution and could also be mutually beneficial to both areas through efficient use of resources, and cross-cultural education.<sup>15</sup>

Another issue that merits attention is the disparity between the demographics of high school music programs and community music programs. According to an analysis of data from the National Center for Education Statistics High School Longitudinal Study of 2009 the demographic profile of students enrolled in band programs in the United States was 52% male and 48% female, 62% white, 11% black or African-American, 16%

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<sup>11</sup> Cavitt, 51.

<sup>12</sup> Matthew A. Boswell, “Music for a Lifetime: How Are We Doing? A Review of Literature on Adult Participation in Large Community Ensembles,” *Applications of Research in Music Education* 40, no. 2, (2021): 60.

<sup>13</sup> Judith Jellison, “How can all people continue to be involved in meaningful music participation?” *Vision 2020: The Housewright Symposium on the future of music education* (2000): 109-138.

<sup>14</sup> Boswell, 57.

<sup>15</sup> Mary A. Leglar and David S. Smith, “Community music in the United States: An overview of origins and evolution,” *International Journal of Community Music* 3, no. 3, (2010): 352.

Hispanic or Latinx, 4% Asian or Pacific Islander, and 7% two or more races.<sup>16</sup> With many status studies suggesting that many community band participants were involved in the formal music education system through high school,<sup>17</sup> it could be assumed that Elpus and Abril's findings would be similar to that of the demographic makeup of community bands. This, however, does not hold true, especially as it pertains to race. A study of community bands in Kentucky showed that nearly 96% of community band participants were white.<sup>18</sup> Another study drawing participants from a national summer senior band camp showed 100% white participants which came from 17 states and 1 province.<sup>19</sup> A nationwide study of member bands from the Association of Concert Bands showed a 96.3% white participant rate.<sup>20</sup> Demographic studies regarding gender identification have demonstrated a higher average participation of males when compared to Elpus and Abril.<sup>21,22</sup> It is worth noting that most studies have shown that participants over the age of 65 overwhelmingly identify as male.<sup>23</sup>

### **Purpose of the Study**

While the reasons behind the low transition rate between high school music education and community band engagement as well as the disparities between the demographics of high school band programs as compared to the demographics of

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<sup>16</sup> Kenneth Elpus and Carlos R. Abril, "Who Enrolls in High School Music? A National Profile of U.S. Students, 2009-2013," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 67, no. 3, (2019): 329.

<sup>17</sup> Cavitt, 53.

<sup>18</sup> Duwayne Clark Dale, "Community Bands of Kentucky: Participation, Engagement and the Fulfillment of Basic Psychological Needs," (DMA Dissertation, Boston University, 2018), 85.

<sup>19</sup> Debbie Rohwer, "Health and Wellness Issues for Adult Band Musician," *Medical Problems of Performing Artists* 23, no. 2, (2008): 55.

<sup>20</sup> William David Spencer, "An Attitude Assessment of Amateur Musicians in Adult Community Bands," (PhD Dissertation, University of North Texas, 1996), 149.

<sup>21</sup> Cavitt, 52.

<sup>22</sup> Spencer, 151.

<sup>23</sup> Dale, 85.

community bands merit dedicated research, it is not within the scope of this thesis. This document will explore a new and unique style of educational literature for its potential to create a more flexible and accessible ensemble experience for the often diverse needs of a community band. Multi-level literature is a form of educational band repertoire that has been around since 2003. Its use has not yet found a foothold outside of mass band events. This study hypothesizes that multi-level literature has a potential use outside of its use in mass bands. This style of writing, in theory, could assist in creating more opportunity for varying levels of musician skill and commitment within community ensembles. Through the exploration of research surrounding community band participation and through a survey and analysis of available multi-level literature, this document will reveal the potential of multi-level literature to create a more accessible and diverse community band.



## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to determine a potential application for the use of multi-level literature in the creation of a more open and accessible community band experience. In order to determine a possible application, a thorough review of the literature surrounding two specific areas was necessary: community band status studies and community band demographic studies. These two types of literature are among the most common in the realm of community band research. When community band status studies and demographic studies are put into dialog, a potential use for multi-level literature is revealed. Following the review of these two areas of study, a review of available multi-level repertoire itself was necessary. A thorough review of multi-level literature will be covered in the next chapter.

#### **Status Studies**

Status studies of Billaud, Cavitt, Dale, Hudson and Egger, Keough, King, Mantie, Shansky, and Spencer have shown community band and orchestra participants' motivations for joining community bands and maintaining their involvement. Motivations for participation in community ensembles have been reported to be varied, diverse, and

unique to the participant. A review of several status studies which surveyed musician's motivations for joining a community ensemble and maintaining their involvement pointed to three major sources of motivation.<sup>24</sup> The first frequently reported motivator for participation is musical enrichment.<sup>25,26,27,28,29</sup> Musical enrichment rationales include increasing existing instrumental ability, learning a new instrument, and artistic self-expression. The second frequently reported motivator from major status studies pointed to social factors, like making new friends, as playing a role for participation to some.<sup>30,31,32,33,34</sup> Finally, participants also responded in studies with responses that indicated that their membership was motivated by leisure and enjoyment.<sup>35,36,37</sup> One narrative study of a longtime community band participant indicated that social connections were a very important part of ongoing participation in a community ensemble.<sup>38</sup> One study asked current community band participants if there was ever a time that they did not participate in a community band and, if so, why they chose to not

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<sup>24</sup> Boswell, 59-60.

<sup>25</sup> Louise Ann Billaud, "The Case of the Highlands Community Band: Structuration, Self-Determination, and the Promotion of Participation Beyond the Classroom," (DMA Dissertation, Boston University, 2014), 137.

<sup>26</sup> Dale, 105.

<sup>27</sup> Sara Beth Keough, "The Geography of Community Bands in Virginia," (M.S. in Geo. Thesis, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, 2003), 50.

<sup>28</sup> Roger Mantie, "A Preliminary Study of Community Bands in Ontario," *Canadian Winds*, Spring (2009): 61.

<sup>29</sup> Spencer, 232-234.

<sup>30</sup> Billaud, 136-137.

<sup>31</sup> Michael W. Hudson and John Okley Egger, "The Lesbian and Gay Band Association: An Exploratory Study of Factors Influencing Participation," *Journal of Band Research* 56, No. 2, (2021): 17-18.

<sup>32</sup> Keough, 57-61.

<sup>33</sup> Mantie (2009), 61.

<sup>34</sup> Spencer, 220-221.

<sup>35</sup> Cavitt, 54.

<sup>36</sup> Dale, 105.

<sup>37</sup> Spencer, 220-222.

<sup>38</sup> Debbie Rohwer, "A narrative investigation of adult music engagement," *International Journal of Music Education* 35, no. 3, (2017): 375.

participate. The most frequent responses were “Too busy with other activities” (41.6%) and “No community band in my area” (29.2%).<sup>39</sup> Burch corroborated Cavitt’s findings and found that adults who had once participated in high school bands but did not participate in any community bands also noted financial concerns as a reason for non-participation.<sup>40</sup>

### **Demographic Studies**

Following a review of the reasons for participation in community ensembles, a review of available demographic information was necessary. Demographic studies were particularly useful in determining who participates in community bands. For this particular research, demographic studies detailing participant ages, gender identity, race, and socio-economic status were of interest. Because one of the goals of this research is to offer an available solution for greater transfer between formal academic music making and community music making, knowledge of the populations that participate in formal high school bands and the populations that participate in community bands is integral. The most recent demographic study of formal high school music programs, which drew its analysis from the National Center for Education Statistics High School Longitudinal Study of 2009, reported a nearly even split of male and female participants, 62% white participants, 16% Hispanic or Latinx, 11% black or African-American, 4% Asian or Pacific Islander, and 7% two or more races. The same study stated that 53% of students enrolled in band during high school had a household income in the top 2 socioeconomic

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<sup>39</sup> Cavitt, 59.

<sup>40</sup> Stephen Webb Burch, “Beyond the Bell: Young Adult Former Instrumental Music Student Non-Participation In Community Band or Orchestra,” (DMA Dissertation, Boston University, 2016), 88.

quintiles.<sup>41</sup> For the research objectives of this paper, demographic information was taken from studies conducted from United States community bands. Demographic studies of community bands showed a difference in populations as compared with the demographics of high school band participation. One demographic study of community band participation in Kentucky found a 55.5% male and 45.5% female split in gender identity which is similar to high school demographics. However, in terms of racial demographics, the same study showed a 95.9% white participation in community bands as compared to the state's 88.3% white population. Just under 76% of survey respondents had a household income that was higher than the state's median household income.<sup>42</sup> Another demographic study of community bands in Virginia showed very similar results, especially with respect to racial demographics. The study found a 61% male and 39% female split in gender identity, a 95.2% white/caucasian participant population, and 76% of respondents reported an annual household income of over \$50,000.<sup>43</sup> According to census.gov, Virginia's median household income in 2003 was \$54,783. A large study of membership bands from the Association of Concert Bands also reported similar findings. The study found a 57.5% male and 42.3% female split in gender identity and a 96.3% white/caucasian participant population. There were no survey questions which addressed socioeconomic status.<sup>44</sup>

### **Other Relevant Literature**

Other relevant literature that was reviewed included research and rubrics dealing with the grading of wind band repertoire. In order to determine how multi-level literature

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<sup>41</sup> Elpus/Abril, 329.

<sup>42</sup> Dale, 86.

<sup>43</sup> Keough, 39.

<sup>44</sup> Spencer, 150-152.

creates a more flexible and accessible rehearsal and performance ensemble, knowledge of standard criteria involved in determining the difficulty of a piece of music was required. The American Band College Grading Chart offers 5 grade levels with 12 criteria for assessing a piece of music's grade level. It lists the criteria against the grade levels in table form. The wind band grading system was analyzed in a much more comprehensive manner, taking into account differences in publisher's grading systems and the fact that there is not an industry standard for grading pieces of music in place.<sup>45</sup> Marlatt's review includes 6 different grades of difficulty, including a .5 and 1.5 grade level. Marlatt encourages conductors to assess range demands, technical demands, and musical aspects of the score when determining a piece of music's appropriateness for ensemble performance.

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<sup>45</sup> David Marlatt, "Defining the Wind Band Grading System," *Canadian Winds*, Fall, (2015): 46.

## CHAPTER III

### OVERVIEW OF AVAILABLE MULTI-LEVEL LITERATURE

#### **History of Available Published Multi-Level Literature**

Multi-level works for band have been present in the educational repertoire since the early 21st century. In 2003, Larry Clark and Sandy Feldstein published *Bandorama* after their commission by Carol and Richard Doede to commemorate the 10th annual Carson City, Nevada School District's "Band-o-rama." The Band-o-rama event in Carson City, Nevada features all grades of the district's band programs. The piece was written to accommodate a combined performance of the various levels of musicianship. It was published by PlayInTime Productions, Inc. This is the earliest available example of a published multi-level work for band. Like some of the multi-level work to follow, it features parts for beginner, intermediate, and advanced performers. After the publication of *Bandorama*, there is a chronological gap in published available multi-level work. The next piece of multi-level literature that is available was not published until 2014 by the Hal Leonard Corporation. Again, it was a work published on commission by a different Band-O-Rama event in Shorewood, Wisconsin. Michael Sweeney was commissioned by the Shorewood Band Parents Association for this event featuring all of the Shorewood School District's bands. Again, the idea was to create a piece that would allow beginning,

intermediate, and advanced students to perform together in one ensemble. The score to *Shorewood Overture* features program notes which state:

This composition was specifically written to be used with multi-level or “mass” band festivals and concerts. The three levels are beginner, Middle School, and High School and correspond with grade levels 1, 2 and 3. The piece opens with a fanfare played by Levels 2 and 3, followed by a brief feature spot for the Beginners (Level 1). A tutti section for all levels (m. 34) is then followed by a feature section for Level 2 (m. 42). A lyric treatment of the theme is played by the Level 3 players (m. 67), and ultimately all levels join in for the ending segment.<sup>46</sup>

This paragraph from the program notes of *Shorewood Overture* points to the rationale for the conception of multi-level literature. With “mass” bands as the inspiration, multi-level literature aims to facilitate an ensemble performance of musicians of differing ability levels. It is an attempt to create a composition where beginning level musicians are not frustrated or intimidated by the music while simultaneously creating a composition that will not bore more advanced musicians. In short, an appropriate difficulty level can be offered to all musicians. The program notes also offer an apt description of one of the types of multi-level compositions which will be addressed in a section to follow. While the piece is designed to feature 3 different levels of musicians, it is possible to perform the piece exclusively from the Level 3 score as cues for the Level 2 and Level 1 feature sections are written into the Level 3 parts.

The next piece of multi-level literature to be published came from the Neil A. Kjos Music Company in 2015. Robert Longfield created an arrangement of Peter Ilyich

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<sup>46</sup> Michael Sweeney, *Shorewood Overture* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard Corp., 2014), 1.

Tchaikovsky's *1812 Overture* as a companion piece for the Kjos published band method, *Tradition of Excellence*. The arrangement, entitled *Highlights from 1812 Overture*, is designed very similarly to Sweeney's *Shorewood Overture*. The arrangement was conceived with a "mass" band in mind. It includes parts for beginner, intermediate, and advanced musicians, each of which are featured at some point during the performance. The Level 3 version functions as a stand-alone work and can be performed independently of the Level 2 and Level 1 parts, while the Level 2 and Level 1 parts could not perform the piece as a stand-alone work. While the arrangement's design and concept was very similar to that of Sweeney's *Shorewood Overture*, this particular piece caught the attention of Masashi Shikano of Brain Music International. The inspiration from *Highlights from 1812 Overture* would lead toward production of the Dual Grade Series from Brain Music International<sup>47</sup> which will be addressed in depth in a section to follow.

After the publication of Longfield's *Highlights from 1812 Overture*, Michael Sweeney was, once again, commissioned to write another multi-level piece. In 2016 Sweeney composed *River Rendezvous* for the 2016 Waterford Area Schools Band Festival in Waterford, Michigan. Like Sweeney's first multi-level work, *Shorewood Overture*, *River Rendezvous* was written for beginner, intermediate, and advanced musicians, or grades 1, 2, and 3 respectively. The key difference between *River Rendezvous* and *Shorewood Overture* is that *River Rendezvous* is designed to allow all musicians to play together simultaneously, rather than the various levels performing in featured sections. This layered style is the second type of multi-level literature that will be addressed in the next section.

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<sup>47</sup> Masashi Shikano (Project Manager of Dual Grade Series) in discussion with the author, March 2022.



In 2017, Brain Music International published their first group of works in the Dual Grade Series under the management of Masashi Shikano. The first group included 4 original works from 4 composers: *Celtic Fantasy* by Keiichi Kurokawa, *Evergreen Overture* by Hayato Hirose, *I, My, Me, Mine* by Sohei Kano, and *Short Stories* by Daisuke Ehara. The concept behind the project was to allow beginning level students to find success while rehearsing with more advanced students. According to Masashi Shikano:

At the start of each new school year, we sometimes have separate activities: one ensemble for advanced students only, the other for beginners only. This is even though they are in the same band. Even if a beginner joins an advanced student's ensemble, it is difficult for him or her to enjoy playing if they do not have enough skill. We wanted to avoid having them dislike the music before they learned how joyful it can be. We believe that the educational impetus is not to prevent novices from participating because of their lack of skill, but rather that even technically limited players should experience and learn music and effective ensemble playing. We also believe that by using dual-grade scoring, experienced players can join with younger players to facilitate guidance and communication as mentors.<sup>48</sup>

All of the Dual Grade Series is designed with this concept that the ensemble is incomplete if both beginning and experienced players are not present in the ensemble.

In 2020, Brain Music International released a second group of compositions in the Dual Grade Series. This time, 7 compositions were released from 7 different composers.

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

This group of compositions consisted mostly of arrangements and medleys. The 7 compositions, published in 2020 were *Classic Cartoon Favorites* arranged by Daisuke Ehara, *Classical Delights* arranged by Makoto Onodera, *Reprise from “Spirited Away”* arranged by Hiroki Takahashi, *Scott Joplin Portrait* arranged by Shuhei Tamrua, *The Water is Wide* arranged by Makoto Onodera, *Theme from Jupiter* arranged by Keiichi Kurokawa, and *Young Musician’s Variations* by Yo Goto. In the next chapter, an analysis of 4 of the 11 works from the Dual Grade Series will attempt to demonstrate some of the compositional techniques used in the creation of this unique and useful brand of literature.

Table 1: Chronological List of Available Multi-Level Literature

<b>Multi-Level Compositions</b>	<b>Composer</b>	<b>Publisher</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Grade Levels</b>	<b>Type</b>
Band-o-rama	Larry Clark & Sandy Feldstein	PlayInTime	2003	1/2/3	Layered
Shorewood Overture	Michael Sweeney	HL	2014	1/2/3	Sectioned
Highlights from 1812 Overture	P.I. Tchaikovsky, arr. Longfield	Kjos	2015	1/2/3	Sectioned
River Rendezvous	Michael Sweeney	HL	2016	1/2/3	Layered
Odyssey	David Marlatt	ENP	2017	1.5/Advanced	Layered
Celtic Fantasy	Keiichi Kurokawa (arr.)	BMI	2017	1/2.5	Layered
Evergreen Overture	Hayato Hirose	BMI	2017	1/2.5	Layered
I, My, Me, Mine	Sohei Kano	BMI	2017	1/2.5	Layered
Short Stories	Daisuke Ehara	BMI	2017	1/2.5	Layered
Hudson River Run	Michael Sweeney	HL	2020	1/2.5	Layered
Classic Cartoon Favorites	Daisuke Ehara (arr.)	BMI	2020	1/2.5	Layered
Classical Delights	Makoto Onodera (arr.)	BMI	2020	1/2.5	Layered
Reprise from Spirited Away	Hiroki Takahashi (arr.)	BMI	2020	1/2.5	Layered
Scott Joplin Portrait	Shuhei Tamura (arr.)	BMI	2020	1/2.5	Layered
The Water is Wide	Makoto Onodera (arr.)	BMI	2020	1/2.5	Layered
Theme from Jupiter	Keiichi Kurokawa (arr.)	BMI	2020	1/2.5	Layered
Young Musicians' Variations	Yo Goto	BMI	2020	1/2.5	Sectioned

Abbreviations: PlayInTime = PlayInTime Productions, Inc.

HL = Hal Leonard Corporation

Kjos = Kjos Music Press

ENP = Eighth Note Publications

BMI = Brain Music International

## Defining Multi-Level Literature

The concept of facilitating an ensemble opportunity for groups of musicians with disparate skill levels is at the heart of multi-level repertoire. While searching for literature that could qualify as multi-level literature, the search terms “multi-level,” “multi-grade,”

“dual-level,” and “dual-grade” were used. In the Frequently Asked Questions section of online music distributor J.W. Pepper’s website, the question “Where can I find resources for mixed-ability instrumental performers?” is answered with the following statement: “Methods and music with alternate easier parts for mixed-ability players are generally labeled as “flexible” or “multi-level” on Pepper. Find them by searching these terms and filtering by instrument type.” While some “flexible,” “adaptable,” or “flex-band” scores do offer parts that are written with different music grade levels in mind, most are 5 different parts that are transposed for the different instruments of the wind band. They are designed for flexibility of instrumentation rather than flexibility of ability levels. A review of the available “flexible” scores is not within the scope of this research.

From the scores that did appear with the search terms “multi-level,” “multi-grade,” “dual-grade,” or “dual-level” a definition of this type of literature can be formed. Multi-level literature is composed and arranged for large instrumental ensembles consisting of at least 2 parts for most instruments, written at different grade levels. The objective being simultaneous rehearsal and performance or simultaneous performance of musicians of disparate ability levels.

### **Types of Multi-Level Literature**

After a review of the available multi-level literature, there are two different types of what can be considered multi-level works, each with its own practical use. The two types of literature that fit within our definition of multi-level literature are: Sectioned and Layered. Layered multi-level repertoire consists of parts written for two or more distinct skill levels that occur simultaneously. Clark and Feldstein’s *Bandorama* and most of Brain Music International’s Dual Grade Series are examples of the layered type of multi-

level repertoire. Most layered multi-level repertoire requires that all ability levels be present during rehearsals because most parts are required for a complete performance. In this type of multi-level writing, the less difficult parts are much more closely related to 2nd or 3rd parts which are written with a very specific grade level in mind.

Sectioned multi-level repertoire consists of parts written for two or more distinct skill levels which are each featured prominently during a portion of the composition. Sectioned multi-level repertoire is designed to highlight or expose each skill level as a group during the performance. Sweeney's *Shorewood Overture* and Longfield's *Highlights from 1812 Overture* both fall into this category. This style of writing is designed to bring two or more pre-established groups of differing ability levels together for a performance. Typically, the advanced band parts include cued notes so that the piece can be performed with just an advanced group if so desired. The program notes from Longfield's *Highlights* layout the sectional type of multi-level literature well:

This arrangement was written so that it may be used in a variety of different performance situations. The grade 3 Advanced Band version of this arrangement is complete and may be used independently of the other versions. The grade 2 Intermediate Band and grade 1 Beginning Band versions are intended for use in a mass band performance with the advanced band version. All three versions, although different, are coordinated to allow players in the respective band to perform at their own technical and musical levels.

When used in a mass band setting, please use the following plot:

*Measures 1-13 Beginning Band Only*

*Measures 14-16 Beginning and Intermediate Bands*

*Measures 16-33 Intermediate Band Only*

*Measures 34-36 Intermediate and Advanced Bands*

*Measures 36-64 Advanced Band Only*

*Measures 64-end Mass Band Together*<sup>49</sup>

The score's notes about the arrangement demonstrate the compartmentalized writing for each ability level. Sectional multi-level literature allows the different levels to rehearse independently, unlike layered multi-level literature, and join together for a performance.

While repertoire for band that features a soloist could be considered "multi-level repertoire" and sometimes does appear in online searches with search terms like "multi-level" it is not designed with multiple *groups* of disparate skill levels in mind and will not be addressed in this research. This type of writing is usually designed for a single advanced musician to perform in front of an ensemble. It is ideal for guest artists or for a significantly advanced musician from within an existing group to perform with their peers.

To date, there have been at least 17 published multi-level compositions which are available through major online music distributors. A list of these works, their publishers, and type of multi-level composition can be found in Table 1. The majority of multi-level compositions come from Brain Music International's "Dual Grade Series." Currently, Brain Music International has published 11 pieces of multi-level repertoire. The Japanese company started publishing its "Dual Grade Series" in 2017. The first release included *Celtic Fantasy* arranged by Keiichi Kurokawa, *Evergreen Overture* composed by Hayato Hirose, *I, My, Me, Mine*, composed by Sohei Kano, and *Short Stories* composed by

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<sup>49</sup> Robert Longfield, *Highlights from 1812 Overture* (San Diego: Kjos Music Press, 2015), 4.

Daisuke Ehara. The initial release was successful enough that a second group of dual grade compositions was released as part of the series in 2020. The second release consisted mainly of arrangements of folk songs, popular works, and classical standards. It included *Classic Cartoon Favorites* arranged by Daisuke Ehara, *Classical Delights* arranged by Makoto Onodera, *Reprise from “Spirited Away”* arranged by Hiroki Takahashi, *Scott Joplin Portrait* arranged by Shuhei Tamura, *The Water is Wide* arranged by Makoto Onodera, *Theme from Jupiter* arranged by Keiichi Kurokawa, and *Young Musicians’ Variations* composed by Yo Goto.

It is likely that another round of works in the “Dual Grade Series” from Brain Music International will be released in the future. When asked if there are plans to create more compositions in the Dual Grade Series, Masashi Shikano, project manager of the series replied “Yes, we are considering production schedule. We also weigh whether a popular song, an original brass band piece, or a classical arrangement would be needed. We also refer to customer feedback.”<sup>50</sup> As will be discussed in the final chapter, further additions to multi-level literature could serve to increase equal access to community bands in the future. This unique brand of repertoire has applications for encouraging greater participation in community ensembles.

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<sup>50</sup> Masashi Shikano (Project Manager of Dual Grade Series) in discussion with the author, March 2022.

## CHAPTER IV

### ANALYSIS OF SELECT MULTI-LEVEL LITERATURE

#### **Criteria Affecting Score/Part Difficulty**

When creating works for wind band, composers, arrangers, and publishers must take several criteria into account. When combined, these criteria influence the difficulty level and the publisher's grade level of a composition. As grading parameters differ from publisher to publisher, determining a standard for assigning a difficulty level or grade is impossible.<sup>51</sup> There are, however, several universal criteria that are taken into account, to varying degrees when considering a score's grade level. According to the American Band College Music Grading Chart, factors that influence a piece of music's grade level include meter, key signature, tempo, rhythm, dynamics, articulation, ornaments, scoring, duration, and range. The limitations placed on each of the criteria decrease as the grade level increases. For works written for inexperienced musicians or beginners, the playing range of the winds, the technical demands of winds and percussion, independent lines, and the duration of the piece is limited. As musicians gain experience, greater control over their instruments, and higher levels of musical literacy, they are able to access higher graded scores in which the complexity of the above criteria is increased.

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<sup>51</sup> Marlatt, 54.



The grading criteria from the American Band College can be divided into two groups, each with a different effect on the score. Global factors affect all parts within a score simultaneously while technical factors only affect a single part at a time. Most of the grading criteria can be controlled and adjusted depending on the type of multi-level score. In *layered* multi-level works, factors with a global effect cannot be adjusted. Typically, global factors cannot be adjusted in an individual part without affecting another part. Global factors include key signature, tempo, meter, and duration. In a *sectioned* multi-level work, it would, in theory, be possible to adjust any of these global parameters in the featured section for the advanced players. A temporary modulation to a less common key signature or a faster or slower tempo would not affect the beginner musicians if they were not playing. In Sweeney's *Shorewood Overture*, all of the tutti sections, which include Levels 1, 2, and 3, are written in the key of Bb major and are in a 4/4 meter. During the Level 2 musician's featured section, the meter changes to 5/4 so that beginning level players are not struggling with an asymmetric meter. During the Level 3 musician's featured section, the piece modulates into the less common band key of C Major. At the end of the Level 3 feature, the music modulates back into the tonic key of Bb major for the benefit of the Level 1 and 2 musicians. Although Sweeney's *Shorewood* makes use of a change in meter for a featured section, meter should still need to be considered as all musicians who do not play through an advanced feature would still be required to count rests. Multimeter featured sections could become treacherous if beginner level musicians are included in a performance.

Unlike the global factors, technical factors like rhythm, dynamics, articulation, ornamentation, and range can be adjusted within individual parts of the score. Because of

their ability to be independently controlled per each individual part, technical factors can be adjusted in sectioned *and* layered multi-level repertoire. In parts written for less experienced musicians, range demands can be reduced to fit the target ability level. Ornamentations like grace notes or trills can be absent in lower parts for less experienced musicians while remaining in the score for the more advanced musicians. The next section will address the differentiation techniques utilized within select layered multi-level works from Brain Music International's Dual Grade Series.

### **Differentiation Techniques of Technical Factors**

Throughout the available multi-level literature, similar compositional techniques can be observed in the differentiation of technical factors between independently graded parts. Through an analysis focused on the differentiation of higher-level parts or "Part A" and lower level parts or "Part B" in Brain Music International's Dual Grade Series, two types of difficulty adjustments were able to be identified and defined. In order to create parts that are less demanding or written at a lower grade level, range-related adjustments and technique-related adjustments are made. While both of these categories of differentiation fall under the label of "technical factors" I have divided them into the categories of range-related adjustments and technique-related adjustments because of the intent of each type of adjustment. The 6 primary techniques for part differentiation are listed below in Table 2.

Table 2: Multi-Level Part Differentiation Techniques

<b>Type</b>	<b>Technique</b>	<b>Example</b>
Range Related	Octave Adjustment	Figure 1
Range Related	Note Adjustment	Figure 2
Range Related	Tacet	Figure 3
Technique Related	Rhythmic Outline	Figure 4 and 5
Technique Related	Ornament Omission	Figure 6
Technique Related	Tacet	Figure 7

The first range-related differentiation technique is octave adjustment. Octave adjustment is the transposition of a section of notes, by octave, in order to fit into a more comfortable range for the player. Octave adjustment is a very common part differentiation technique found in multi-level literature. In Figure 1, octave adjustment is demonstrated in Clarinet B and Alto Sax B. This differentiation keeps both “B” parts within the imposed range parameters of Ehara’s *Short Stories*. Throughout the piece, Clarinet B is held within a range of A3-Bb4 and never crosses the break. Saxophone B is held within a range of F#4-G5. Both of these range parameters coincide with Grade Level 1 in the American Band College Grading Chart. If the Clarinet B and Alto Sax B parts were written in unison with the “A” parts, they would fall into the next grade level.

Figure 1: Octave Adjustment (mm. 70-73 of *Short Stories* by Daisuke Ehara)

The image displays a musical score for two instruments: Clarinet in B $\flat$  and Alto Sax, both in 4/4 time. The score is divided into two systems, each with two staves labeled (A) and (B). The key signature is one sharp (F#). The first system (mm. 70-71) shows both instruments playing a melody starting on a half note G4. The second system (mm. 72-73) shows an octave adjustment. In mm. 72, the (A) parts continue with the melody, while the (B) parts play a lower octave melody. In mm. 73, the (A) parts continue, and the (B) parts play a lower octave melody. The text 'mf' (mezzo-forte) is written below the first staff of each system. The text 'Octave Adjustment' is written above the (B) staff of the second system.

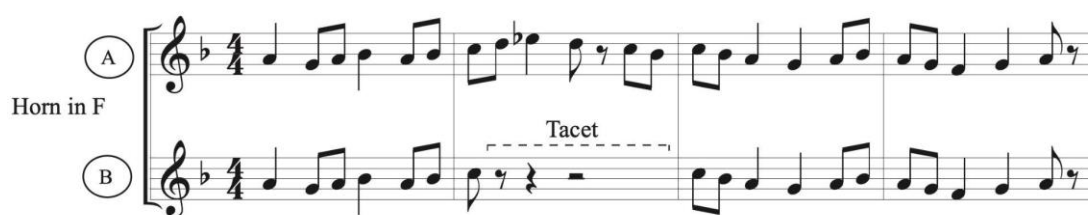
Similar in principle to octave adjustment is the range-related part differentiation technique of note adjustment. Note adjustments are utilized when a note that is part of a phrase is unable to be transposed by octave due to range concerns or when the transposition of a note by octave would create a more challenging passage. In these instances a note that fires within the harmony is used as a substitute. Figure 2 demonstrates a note adjustment from Souhei Kano's *I, My, Me, Mine*. The range parameter of F4-G5 placed on the Alto Sax B part and the range parameter of B $\flat$ 3-D5 placed on the Trumpet B part do not allow the continuation of the unison line started in mm. 92. If an octave adjustment were used in mm. 92, that would place the "B" parts well outside of their range parameters. If an octave adjustment happen abruptly as the "B" parts were about to exceed their range parameter, it would create a very large downward leap in both "B" parts, which is also discouraged for beginning level musicians. The note adjustment solution alters two notes to create a brief concordant harmony before utilizing strict octave adjustments.

Figure 2: Note Adjustment (mm. 92-93 of *I, My, Me, Mine* by Souhei Kano)

The musical score for Figure 2 shows two staves, Alto Sax and Trumpet in Bb, each with two parts (A and B). The time signature is 4/4. The Alto Sax part (A) starts with a forte (ff) dynamic and has a 'Note Alteration' indicated by a dashed line in measure 93. The Trumpet in Bb part (B) also starts with a forte (ff) dynamic and has a 'Note Alteration' indicated by a dashed line in measure 93.

The final range related differentiation technique is a tacet. A range related tacet is occurs when octave adjustment and/or a range related note adjustment are made unavailable due to the range considerations of the instrument and the musical demands of the passage do not allow for a range related note adjustment. If the composer/arranger desires a musical line that is written in unison or octaves, a range related tacet may be the final option. In Kano's *I, My, Me, Mine*, a range parameter of C4-C5 is placed on the French Horn B. In this case, octave adjustment would call for a range that is below the parameters of the Horn B or it would create 2 large leaps of a descending and ascending minor 7ths. It is also likely that the composer desired a strictly unison melodic line without any temporary harmonization of the melody. As a solution, the composer uses a temporary tacet, reintroducing the melodic line at a rhythmically predictable point on beat 1 of mm. 3.

Figure 3: Range Related Tacet (mm. 1-4 of *I, My, Me, Mine* by Souhei Kano)



Technique related part differentiations are utilized when a musician's skill level may affect their ability to execute a rapid series of notes, perform ornamentations correctly, or read and perform a complex rhythm. The intent of a technique related differentiation is to make the performance and understanding of the music more accessible to musicians who may not be as technically adept or as musically literate as musicians with more experience.

The first type of technique-related part differentiation is a rhythmic outline. Rhythmic outlines are the use of larger subdivisions, like the use of 8th notes instead of 16th notes, to offer slower moving and simpler note changes. In Kano's *I, My, Me, Mine*, a technically simplified flute part is created by the use of quarter notes on beat 1 of mm. 84-86 and staccato eighth notes on beat 3 instead of 16th notes. In this example of the rhythmic outline differentiation technique, notes still remain in unison, just with fewer subdivisions. In the Snare Drum B part, beat 1 omits the drags and the dotted eighth sixteenth rhythms while beat 3 offers 2 eighth notes in place of 4 sixteenth notes. One factor for composers and arrangers using rhythmic outline to consider is that the rhythmic outline should not be made more complicated by the potential for more frequent skips in melodic lines.

Figure 4: Rhythmic Outline (mm. 84-87 of *I, My, Me, Mine* by Souhei Kano)

The musical score for Figure 4 is in 4/4 time with a tempo of 112. It consists of four staves: Flute A (A), Flute B (B), Snare Drum A (A), and Snare Drum B (B). The top system contains the Flute parts, and the bottom system contains the Snare Drum parts. The Flute A part is marked with 'mp' (mezzo-piano) and the Snare Drum A part is marked with 'pp' (pianissimo). The Flute B part is marked with 'mp' and the Snare Drum B part is marked with 'pp'. The score shows various rhythmic patterns, including sixteenth notes, eighth notes, and dotted quarter notes, with some measures featuring a 16th note run in Flute A and Snare Drum A.

In another example of this technique-related part differentiation, Matoko Onodera's arrangement of *The Water is Wide*, Flute B has several examples of rhythmic outlines. In mm. 29, Flute B does not include the C6. This allows Flute B to move on the more predictable beat 2 and it prevents the larger leap of a major 6th as opposed to the perfect 4th that is demonstrated. In mm. 30, Flute B has a very drastic example of a rhythmic outline. In place of the 16th note run beginning just after beat 2, Flute B sustains a whole note F5, which is a part of the harmony throughout the entire measure, before rejoining the melody in mm. 31. An alternate solution to this technique related issue could have been a temporary tacet. Conductors should take caution in the balancing of measures like this to ensure that the desired clarity is still present in the Flute A part. The final example of a rhythmic outline from Figure 5 is found in mm. 33. This measure is similar to the previous example but is less drastic. A run of 16th notes is replaced with a dotted quarter note Ab5 and an 8th note F5. This prevents the demand of the rapid series of notes in the

Flute A part while also allowing the Flute B part a smooth octave adjustment to maintain its range parameters.

Figure 5: Rhythmic Outline (mm. 28-35 of *The Water is Wide* arr. Matoko Onodera)

The image displays two systems of musical notation for Flute A (labeled A) and Flute B (labeled B). Both staves are in 4/4 time and use a key signature of three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). The first system covers measures 28-31. In measure 28, Flute A has a half note G4 and a half note A4, while Flute B has a half note G3 and a half note A3. In measure 29, Flute A has a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, while Flute B has a quarter note G3, a quarter note A3, and a quarter note B3. In measure 30, Flute A has a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, while Flute B has a quarter note G3, a quarter note A3, and a quarter note B3. In measure 31, Flute A has a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, while Flute B has a quarter note G3, a quarter note A3, and a quarter note B3. The second system covers measures 32-35. In measure 32, Flute A has a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, while Flute B has a quarter note G3, a quarter note A3, and a quarter note B3. In measure 33, Flute A has a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, while Flute B has a quarter note G3, a quarter note A3, and a quarter note B3. In measure 34, Flute A has a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, while Flute B has a quarter note G3, a quarter note A3, and a quarter note B3. In measure 35, Flute A has a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, while Flute B has a quarter note G3, a quarter note A3, and a quarter note B3. Dashed lines labeled 'Rhythmic Outline' are placed under the notes in measures 28-31 and 32-35.

Another type of technique-related part differentiation is ornament omission.

Ornament omission is the intentional exclusion of the use of ornaments like gracenotes or trills in lower grade level parts to reduce the technique demands for the musician. In Figure 6, while the Flute A has a trill on every single 8th note, the Flute B only plays the 8th notes without trills.

Figure 6: Ornament Omission (mm. 1-2 of *I, My, Me, Mine* by Souhei Kano)

The image displays two systems of musical notation for Flute A (labeled A) and Flute B (labeled B). Both staves are in 4/4 time and use a key signature of three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). The first system covers measures 1-2. In measure 1, Flute A has a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, while Flute B has a quarter note G3, a quarter note A3, and a quarter note B3. In measure 2, Flute A has a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, while Flute B has a quarter note G3, a quarter note A3, and a quarter note B3. The second system covers measures 3-4. In measure 3, Flute A has a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, while Flute B has a quarter note G3, a quarter note A3, and a quarter note B3. In measure 4, Flute A has a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, and a quarter note B4, while Flute B has a quarter note G3, a quarter note A3, and a quarter note B3. Trills are indicated by a double wavy line over the notes in measures 1-2 and 3-4.



The final type of technique-related part differentiation is a tacet. As opposed to a range-related tacet, a technique-related tacet is a tacet that occurs where a tutti might otherwise be used but because the demanded technique would exceed the parameters placed on it by the grade level, a tacet is more appropriate. This differentiation technique is most often used in woodwind parts where quick runs are written into the “A” parts. In Daisuke Ehara’s *Short Stories*, the omission of the 16th note runs on beat 4 are excluded in the “B” parts.

Figure 7: Technique Related Tacet (mm. 81-84 of *Short Stories* by Daisuke Ehara)

The image displays a musical score for two instruments, Clarinet in Bb and Alto Sax, across four measures (mm. 81-84). Each instrument has two staves labeled 'A' and 'B'. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The 'A' parts for both instruments feature complex, fast sixteenth-note runs, marked with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The 'B' parts are significantly simpler, consisting of quarter and eighth notes. In the Clarinet part, the 'B' staff has two measures marked 'Tacet' with dashed lines. In the Alto Sax part, the 'B' staff has two measures marked 'Tacet' with dashed lines, and the first measure is also marked *mf*.

### Description of Parts in Dual Grade Series

Brain Music International’s Dual Grade Series has a unique feature that is not present in any other available multi-level works that makes the parts more adaptable to the player’s level of experience. In each of the parts with an available differentiation, both the “A” and “B” parts are printed together in a grand staff. In some pieces from the Dual Grade series, this allows the player to switch between levels of difficulty depending on their comfort level. In the composer’s notes from *I, My, Me, Mine*, Souhei Kano states that “switching between ‘A’ and ‘B’ in the music is acceptable. If the player is above

Grade 1 level yet not quite 2.5, keep ‘B’ as the primary line and use ‘A’ where the player is capable. (This is why ‘A’ and ‘B’ Parts are on the same page).” An example of the flute part from I, My, Me, Mine is shown in Figure 8. While the option to switch between part ‘A’ and part ‘B’ is available to musicians performing works from the Dual Grade Series, the conductor should be careful to ensure that all integral parts are still covered. In my interview with Masashi Shikano, project manager for the Dual Grade Series, Shikano notes that:

The concept of the project is for advanced and novice players to play together. It is also effective to use only beginners, but then there are already many grade 1 and 1.5 pieces available. That is why this series is an advantageous, educational option. The intention of the planners, anyway, is that advanced students and beginners can each enjoy themselves in the ensemble, so yes, both A and B should be performed. We thought that advanced students might feel underserved when playing grade 1 or 1.5 scores, so we opted for coexistence within a certain degree of difficulty.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Masashi Shikano (Project Manager of Dual Grade Series) in discussion with the author, March 2022.

Figure 8: Part Example (Flute part from *I, My, Me, Mine* by Souhei Kano)

## Flute

**I, My, Me, Mine !!**

鹿野 草平  
Souhei Kano

**1st mov.**  
♩ = 144 ca.  
(with Picc.)

(A) (Piccolo)

(B)

*f*

4

8

1

8

8

17

2

(without Picc.)

*mf*

*mf*

21

(with Picc.)

*mf*

*ff*

*ff*

### **Description of Scores in Dual Grade Series**

The conductor's scores from Brain Music International's Dual Grade Series are also unique from the multi-level works of Sweeney and Clark. The difference in score layout is due to the nature of the compositions. In the multi-level compositions of Sweeney and Clark, a complete performance of the piece can be made by the advanced group alone. The level 3 or advanced score for the compositions of Sweeney and Clark stand alone. The addition of the level 2 and level 1 scores is optional. As such, each level is presented as its own score. There is a single score for level 3, a single score for level 2, and a single score for level 1. In Brain Music International's Dual Grade Series, all differentiated parts are present in the same score. The conductor is able to see all 'A' and 'B' parts at once. The rationale behind this decision is that the performance is incomplete without the presence of the 'B' parts. The creation of these layered multi-level works serve to place less experienced musicians next to more experienced musicians throughout the rehearsal process. In response to the question of why the Dual Grade Series is a positive addition to the educational wind band repertoire, Masashi Shikano states:

We believe that the educational impetus is not to prevent novices from participating because of their lack of skill, but rather that even technically limited players should experience and learn music and effective ensemble playing. We also believe that by using dual-grade scoring, experienced players can join with younger players to facilitate guidance and communication as mentors. The layered type of multi-level score suits this end well. The layout of the score

allows the conductor to run rehearsal effectively without the need to open another completely different score.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

Figure 9: Score Example (*Reprise from “Spirited Away”* arr. Hiroki Takahashi)

**ふたたび**  
 「千と千尋の神隠し」より  
 Reprise from “Spirited Away”

  
 Comp. by Joe Hisaishi  
 Arr. by Hiroki Takahashi

**Moderato** (♩=88) A

Flute (A) *mp*

Flute (B) *mp*

Oboe *mp*

Bassoon *mp*

Clarinet in B<sup>♭</sup> (A) *mp*

Clarinet in B<sup>♭</sup> (B) *mp*

Bass Clarinet in B<sup>♭</sup> *mp*

Alto Saxophone in E<sup>♭</sup> (A) *mp* *pp* *mp*

Alto Saxophone in E<sup>♭</sup> (B) *mp* *pp* *mp*

Tenor Saxophone in B<sup>♭</sup> *mp*

Baritone Saxophone in E<sup>♭</sup> *mp*

**Moderato** (♩=88) A

Trumpet in B<sup>♭</sup> (A) *mp* *pp* *mp*

Trumpet in B<sup>♭</sup> (B) *mp* *pp*

Horn in F (A) *mp*

Horn in F (B) *mp*

Trombone (A) *mp*

Trombone (B) *mp*

Euphonium *mp*

Tuba *mp*

String Bass *mp* *pizz.*

**Moderato** (♩=88) A

Timpani *mp* *pp*

Percussion 1  
Wind Chimes  
Suspended Cymbal  
Triangle *mp*

Percussion 2  
Glockenspiel *mp*

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### **Statement of the Problem**

Why does music participation seem to end after high school graduation for so many? Why are the demographics of high school music programs so much more diverse than the demographics of community bands? A comparison of the research of Elpus and Abril to the research of Cavitt, Dale, Keough, Mantie, and Spencer demonstrates a stark difference between the populations of participants in formal music programs through high school and the populations of community bands in the United States. Boswell suggests three areas in need of improvement for a greater transition from formal high school music programs to community music opportunities as adults. Those three areas are diversity within community ensembles, breadth of experiences offered in school music and program design.<sup>54</sup> As part of the issue of breadth of experiences offered, Boswell suggests that “Participation in multiple types of music experiences may reinforce the acquisition and deepen the breadth of musical skills leading to increased participation later in life.” School music educators should allow for greater ease of participation in multiple ensembles like choir, band, and orchestra.<sup>55</sup> The issue of program design should

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<sup>54</sup> Boswell, 62.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

include opportunities for interaction between community musicians and school musicians. Community ensembles and school music can form a mutually beneficial relationship. According to Leglar and Smith, “The school can play a valuable role in educating citizens about their musical traditions, counterbalancing the prevailing tendency to regard music performance as best left to professional musicians. Community groups, in turn, can provide a valuable resource for music teachers in the task of cultural education.”<sup>56</sup> Boswell states that “Community music leaders, like school music teachers, may benefit from structuring their ensembles to welcome musicians with various skill levels or reasons for participating.”<sup>57</sup> Beyond the case of facilitating lifelong music participation for the next generation, the potential benefits of community music making makes the search for answers to the questions above worthwhile. This issue of diverse representation within community bands is a problem worth researching because of the potential for extra-musical benefits described in the works of Belgrave, Coffman, and Rodgers. Belgrave showed increased positive descriptions of cross-aged perceptions after participating in intergenerational music programs.<sup>58</sup> Coffman wrote about adult musician’s reports of improvements in overall quality of life as a result of participation in community ensembles.<sup>59</sup> Rodgers discusses the potential for community music making to assist in the reduction of mental health-related stigma.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Leglar and Smith, 352.

<sup>57</sup> Boswell, 63.

<sup>58</sup> Belgrave, 498-500.

<sup>59</sup> Coffman, 83.

<sup>60</sup> Debra Rodgers, “Community music as a vehicle for tackling mental health-related stigma,” *London Review of Education* 15, no. 3, (2017): 479-480.



### **Qualities of Multi-Level Literature**

Multi-level literature is composed and arranged for large instrumental ensembles consisting of at least 2 parts for most instruments, written at different grade levels. The objective being simultaneous rehearsal and performance or simultaneous performance of musicians of disparate ability levels. Multi-level literature is a flexible style of writing that offers additional grade levels for individual instrumental parts. Within most instrumental parts in a multi-level score, there exist, at least, two parts written at different grade levels. One part will be for a more advanced musician, while the other(s) will be written for a musician with less experience or technical ability. This is different from a standard score with 2nd and 3rd parts in that there are clear parameters placed on the lower level parts to ensure that they are accessible by musicians with less training or practice. In standard scores with 2nd and 3rd parts, the 2nd and 3rd parts often have less of a range demand but will often have similar technical factors like articulation, note and rest values, dynamics, and ornamentation. Multi-level scores attempt to address more than just range in the lower level parts and often, the disparity between levels is greater than a standard score even where range is concerned. Multi-level scores will have parts with reduced ranges, simplified rhythms, and simplified or no ornamentation.

### **Role of Multi-Level Literature in Community Bands**

Because of multi-level literature's ability to accommodate large ensembles with musicians of not only disparate ability levels but also musicians with varying levels of time availability, it could provide a solution to the presented problem. Leglar and Smith's suggestion that a smoother transition between formal high school music programs and community music ensembles could be achieved by building stronger relationships

between these two entities can possibly be assisted through the use of multi-level literature.

As discussed, sectional multi-level literature is designed in such a way that it can bring together two or more ensembles of disparate ability levels without much combined rehearsal time. This is achievable because each ensemble can rehearse their own featured sections separately and then come together to rehearse the combined sections prior to a performance. In this way, an established community ensemble can rehearse its parts on one level of the score while a school ensemble rehearses its parts on another level of the score. The two ensembles can come together prior to the performance for final preparations. Interaction on this level would aid in the completion of Boswell's proposal that community music leaders offer support and encouragement to local music programs through joint performances.

Layered multi-level music offers even more opportunities to foster more meaningful social interaction between a greater number of community members. Layered multi-level works serve to place less experienced musicians next to more experienced musicians throughout the rehearsal process. In layered multi-level works, all parts are necessary during the rehearsal process but, as in all multi-level works, not all parts are as taxing or demanding. The allowance for musicians to perform music that is not as taxing or demanding in the same ensemble as more advanced musicians who are still playing more advanced parts offers two solutions for the accommodation of greater accessibility to the community ensemble. The first solution is that musicians of disparate ability levels are able to perform comfortably within the same ensemble. Advanced musicians will not become bored with the music as they are provided with parts that are appropriate for their

level of ability and experience. Less advanced musicians are not intimidated by their music and are not threatened by music that is outside of their technical ability.

Accommodating disparate ability levels within a community band will keep all musicians comfortable and engaged. The second solution that layered multi-level literature offers is, if the ensemble allows, a more flexible attendance policy and time commitment. One of the most frequently cited reasons for non-participation in community ensembles is a lack of available free time to rehearse and/or practice on the part of the musician.<sup>61</sup> If a community ensemble were willing to offer a flexible attendance policy, which has been shown to increase ensemble participation,<sup>62</sup> layered multi-level repertoire could be used as an added flexibility for musicians struggling with the time constraints. Musicians who may have unpredictable work hours or family obligations could opt for a less demanding part within the ensemble. This would relax pressures to practice a more challenging part outside of rehearsals and would ease ensemble concerns regarding a member's ability to execute their part fully during the rehearsals for which they are available.

## **Conclusion**

Increasing accessibility to active music participation is what community music is all about. The professional association for community musicians in the United Kingdom, Sound Sense, set forth three criteria for community music, the second of which is of particular interest to this work. "Community music is concerned with putting equal opportunities into practice."<sup>63</sup> The use of multi-level literature offers a starting point for creating equal opportunities for community members to become community musicians.

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<sup>61</sup> Cavitt, 51.

<sup>62</sup> Billaud, 143.

<sup>63</sup> Lee Higgins, *Community Music: In Theory and In Practice*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 54.

This type of literature is still a relatively new style of writing within the educational wind band repertoire and there are relatively few compositions that are publicly available.

There is, however, a use for more multi-level literature. Dual grade and multi-level literature offer important opportunities to increase access to community music making.

With the long-assumed power of ensemble music making to foster important connections between both similar and dissimilar personalities, offering points of access to disparate levels of musicians could improve cross-cultural, cross-age, and cross-gender communication and relationships. In this way, community bands are no longer a collection of community music makers, but rather music making communities.

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## APPENDIX

APPENDIX A:  
TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW WITH MASASHI SHIKANO

The following transcript is the full interview between the author and Masashi Shikano, project manager of the Dual Grade Series from Brain Music International. The interview was conducted via email. The author's questions were translated from English to Japanese by a representative from Brain Music International. The responses from Masashi Shikano were translated from Japanese to English by the same representative from Brain Music International.

AUTHOR: If you agree to answer all or some of the following questions, do you first consent to the publication of your name and your responses?

M. SHIKANO: I agree. My name is Masashi Shikano, and the entire series is published by Brain Co. Ltd.

AUTHOR: Where did the idea for the dual-grade series come from?

M. SHIKANO: I came up with the idea from *Highlights from 1812 Overture (Advance Band)* /Arr. Longfield by Neil A Kjos Music Company. The first half is performed by beginner players, the middle half by intermediate players, and the latter half by advanced players. This is the point where the difficulty level is changed within one piece. The history of Japanese school bands was also a source of my inspiration. When there were no such pieces in Japan, the instructors had devised arrangements of classical works according to the skills of the individual players.

AUTHOR: What kind of feedback have you received about the dual-grade series?

M. SHIKANO: The publications are very well received in the Japanese market. However, we still believe there are demands outside Japan and we are considering how to promote this music.

AUTHOR: Why do you think that the dual-grade series is a positive addition to the educational wind band repertoire?

M. SHIKANO: Japanese club activities consist of students having two years' experience as all advance from the first to the third year in the case of junior high school (7th to 9th graders). At the start of each new school year, we sometimes have separate activities: one ensemble for advanced students only, the other for beginners only. This is even though they are in the same band. Even if a beginner joins an advanced student's ensemble, it is difficult for him or her to enjoy playing if they do not have enough skill. We wanted to avoid having them dislike the music before they learned how joyful it can be. We believe that the educational impetus is not to prevent novices from participating because of their lack of skill, but rather that even technically limited players should experience and learn music and effective ensemble playing. We also believe that by using dual-grade scoring, experienced players can join with younger players to facilitate guidance and communication as mentors.

AUTHOR: What rules, guidelines, or restrictions did you place on the composers who wrote pieces for the dual-grade series?

AUTHOR: What criteria does Brain Music International use for determining grade level?

M. SHIKANO: The above two questions have the same answer. In principle, we imposed a grading standard common to foreign publishers. However, since most school bands in Japan have extended rehearsal every day after school, we set a difficulty level unique to

Japan, considering that the rate of improvement in technique can be achieved more quickly. These aspects include the range of pitch, duration of piece, and key.

AUTHOR: Do you intend to continue publishing more pieces in the dual-grade series?

M. SHIKANO: We are considering the next step, but are still undecided with whether to follow this same format. We are willing to closely examine the grade openings and other factors described below.

AUTHOR: Is the intent of the dual-grade series to have all parts covered (both A and B) for an ideal performance or is the intent to create a flexible type of score where the ensemble only requires part A or B, but not necessarily both?

M. SHIKANO: The structure of the piece suggests both play together, though the B score should be inclusive. The concept of the project is for advanced and novice players to play together. It is also effective to use only beginners, but then there are already many grade 1 and 1.5 pieces available. That is why this series is an advantageous, educational option. The intention of the planners, anyway, is that advanced students and beginners can each enjoy themselves in the ensemble, so yes, both A and B should be performed.

We thought that advanced students might feel underserved when playing grade 1 or 1.5 scores, so we opted for coexistence within a certain degree of difficulty.

AUTHOR: Most of your current dual-dual grade listings are written for the advanced parts at a grade 2.5-3 level and the beginner parts written at a grade 1-1.5 level. Do you think that there is a use for higher grade levels that are differentiated (ex. Part A written at a grade 4-5 and Part B written at a grade 3-4)? Why or why not?

M. SHIKANO: We also have this idea. The reason is a characteristic of Japanese band activities: band competitions. In many cases, music of Grade 3 or higher is selected for

competition, and typically, both advanced and junior members participate together. We have determined that there are many higher-grade works. We are also discussing with composers what kind of score can be appropriately created to retain the work's maturity.

AUTHOR: Are there plans to create more compositions in the dual-grade series from Brain Music International?

M. SHIKANO: Yes, we are considering production schedule. We also weigh whether a popular song, an original brass band piece, or a classical arrangement would be needed. We also refer to customer feedback.

AUTHOR: Is there anything else that you would like to share about the dual-grade series from Brain Music International?

M. SHIKANO: We are thinking of beginning-level students as well as young players in community groups and schools in less-advantaged situations.

We would be most pleased if those young musicians, the future of band, can develop a rich sensitivity to music made accessible these special scores.