

All-State: New Music Reading Session Recommendations

The New Music Reading Sessions are always an important part of the All-State Teachers Workshop. Here are the comments and suggestions compiled by Kathryn Buccola, Stephanie Dotzel, Cassandra Herold and Brenda Radloff. Where comments disagree, it's because the teachers have different students in mind! The list will be continued in the winter issue of String Notes.

Ted Allen, *Fire in the Forge*. Gr 3. Difficult! Students would have to start slowly for the bowings, and work in small sections. The violas have a nice, challenging part to keep them working. The piece has lots of possibilities. Hard but fun rhythms. Sounded like Metallica. Hard bowing. Kids would like. 9th grade

Beethoven/Brahms/Verdi, *Medley from the Masters*. Gr 2. \$45. Too difficult for my ensemble; not great quality or value. Boring; maybe good in a gig book. Good for 5th grade. Would use as teaching tool only.

Lauren Bernofsky, *Millipede Madness*. Gr 1. \$40. Good for my ensemble; not great musical quality; good value. Good for learning how to play together; homogenous rhythms for the most part; could be boring for an audience/advanced players. Could do with 5th grade. Repetitious.

Alan Berstein, *Spy Guy*. Gr 2. \$48. Good for early in 8th grade. Uses a lot of pizz in the basses and the 1/2 position would be challenging. Very fun to play. Too difficult for my ensemble; okay quality; not a great value. Tough rhythms; lots of fingerings.

Jeffrey Bishop, *Assemble the Minions*.

Gr 2.5. \$45. Suitable for the second half of the 8th grade year. Involves long tones but is quite repetitive rhythmically in the lower strings. This is a fun piece and I think my group would really enjoy it. Syncopated rhythms, accents. Violas/2nds are different. Extensions on the low strings. 1st violin goes into 3rd position. This piece was fine, but it seemed to go on a bit too long. Not good for my ensemble; good quality; good value. Cool piece; shifts into 3rd position for 1st violins; has a lot of fingerings.

Susan H. Day, *Flight*. Gr 3. \$48. 8th grade. Incorporates some challenging rhythms. String level changes could be difficult for some students. Cellos have some challenging shifting, some awkwardness in string crossings. Good parts all around. Lots of syncopation. The piece comes together well.

Lady Gaga/arr. Larry Moore, *Applause*. Gr 2.5. \$45. 8th grade. Very syncopated, fast, exciting. This would be super for an older group. Students always enjoy playing something that is recent in the pop world. Lots of syncopation. Glissando on bass part. Could do with 7th grade. Very catchy tune; kids would like.

Jason W. Krug, *Simple Hoedown*.

Gr 1. \$45. Good for my ensemble; good quality and value. Nice energy, fun; kids might not really be learning to read the rhythm because it's repetitive. Challenge for 5th grade. Has pizz and arco, syncopated rhythms. Fun to play.

Bob Lipton, *Canon Power*. Gr 1. \$40. Violas and 2nds double often. The tune is catchy, but the piece becomes repetitive. Students would need to be able to play it fast enough to keep it interesting. A little too difficult for my 5th grade if taken at tempo; okay quality and value. Awkward ending; D Major; pizz section. Viola doubles 2nd violins a lot; fast tempo.

Richard Meyer, *Fiddler's Fancy*. Gr 2.5. \$48. Too difficult for my ensemble; well written; good quality; okay value. Viola part more simple than others. Part 1 is emotional, part 2 is rhythmic. C extension; students may not like it. There are two movements—the first was in 3/4 and really pretty. Challenging ties across the bar line. Big stretches of pizzicato. Extensions on the C string. The viola part is simple compared to the other parts, but the piece as a whole sounds nice. †