

Concert Percussion Tips and Observations

I. Sound Choices – **Take responsibility for your sound!**

A. *Equipment*

1. Instrument (cymbals, snare drums, gong vs. gong sheet, etc.)

a. Don't simply use whatever happens to be convenient. The school owns a variety of instruments. **USE THEM!**

2. Implement (keyboard mallets, BD mallets, timpani mallets, triangle beaters)

a. Use the trap tables! Always have a variety of mallets available

B. *Execution*

1. Playing areas – use different areas on the snare drum, bass drum, tambourine, and triangle to achieve different effects.

II. Musicianship – Be precise! Treat each note like it's your last. "Easy parts" take just as much concentration to play well.

A. *Listening* – you must know your part in relation to the rest of the percussion section and the rest of the band. Are you playing in unison with other sections? Timpanist must listen for intonation. **Get you head out of the music!**

B. *Know your role* – determine the musical function of your part and play it accordingly. Is it providing accompaniment, a solo, or a color/timbre?

C. *Interpretation* – add phrasing (agogic accents) and dynamics to your part when appropriate. Match your interpretation with the other sections of the band.

D. *Style* – consider the stroke style you employ. Match the motion of your stroke to the style of the music. Always use a prep. stroke and a follow-through.

III. Professionalism – Put the music first, even when you're not playing. Act as if you are in the spotlight all the time.

A. *Timpani Tuning* – the timpani must be tuned quickly and quietly! Don't get in the habit of tuning with a mallet.

B. Avoid moving to other set-ups or sharing instruments if possible.

C. Make sure the snares are turned off when appropriate. Take care to turn on the snares quietly!

D. Be ready to play! Don't wait till the last second; especially after a long period of inactivity. Get into position at least 4 bars in advance.