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Why Can't We All Play Together?: A Study in the Importance of "Full" Ensemble Rehearsals

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WHY CAN'T WE ALL PLAY TOGETHER?

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this empirical study is to research the importance of “full” ensemble rehearsals in the progression of beginning instrumental music students. In this study, beginning band students were surveyed to investigate their perceived comfort level, preparedness, and musicianship skills before and after a concert. The data was compiled and analyzed to identify the missing elements in the students’ learning caused by a lack of “full” ensemble rehearsals leading up to a performance and how this impacted the students’ performance and interest in the music program. Engaging all students in the process of a “full” ensemble rehearsal is vital to their development and future success as musicians. Being involved in the process of a rehearsal with a variety of different instruments forces students to think critically about their personal performance and how it affects the rest of the ensemble. While using small group lessons may be helpful for teaching students their music and helping them build up their personal skills on their instrument, it cannot cover the variety of useful skills, such as critical thinking, collaboration, communication, initiative, and social skills that are learned through an ensemble rehearsal. Other didactic subjects ensure that all aspects are taught, thereby ignoring a vital part of the musical learning process decreases the potential gains that students may receive from musical instruction. I expect to find a higher level of comfort, preparedness, and musicianship in the students that are involved in consistent “full” ensemble rehearsals as opposed to students who only meet for a dress rehearsal the day before a performance and use this data to convince principals and administrators of the benefits of fully supporting a music program.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The purpose of this empirical study is to research the importance of “full” ensemble rehearsals in the progression of beginning instrumental music students. In this study, beginning band students will be surveyed to investigate their perceived comfort level, preparedness, and musicianship skills before and after a concert. Two differing school band programs will be surveyed, one with a weekly “full” ensemble rehearsal and one without a “full” ensemble rehearsal. The empirical data will be compiled and analyzed to identify the missing elements in the students’ learning caused by a lack of “full” ensemble rehearsals leading up to a performance and how this impacted the students’ performance and interest in the music program.

Engaging all students in the process of a “full” ensemble rehearsal is vital to their development and future success as musicians. Being involved in the process of a rehearsal with a variety of different instruments forces students to think critically about their personal performance and how it affects the rest of the ensemble. While using small group lessons may be helpful for teaching students their music and helping them build up their personal skills on their instrument, it cannot cover the variety of useful skills, such as critical thinking, collaboration, communication, initiative, and social skills that are learned through an ensemble rehearsal. Other subjects make sure to be teaching all aspects, and ignoring a vital part of the musical learning process decreases the potential gains that students may receive from musical instruction.

The study is expected to find a higher level of comfort, preparedness, and musicianship in the students that are involved in consistent “full” ensemble rehearsals as opposed to students who only meet for a dress rehearsal the day before a performance. This data will be utilizing student identification of melody and harmony within the context of their band music. The results will

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then be used to convince principals and administrators of the benefits of fully supporting a music program for the benefits of their students.

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Chapter 2: The Need for “Full” Ensemble Rehearsals

Within the School District of Philadelphia there are instrumental music teachers that travel around to multiple schools a week teaching small group lessons. This could be at the elementary, middle school, or high school level. The time at each school could be as little as half a day or up to two days depending on the number of students. In almost all of these cases this teacher is in charge of their band or orchestra program despite only being at the school a small amount of time each week. Some cases involve a teacher being in charge of the entire instrumental program for the whole school while being at that particular school as little as half a day a week.

Despite this the instrumental programs keep thriving and keep churning out more and more students that have had their lives enriched by music. As wonderful as that is, most of these students are not getting the full musical experience they should for each ensemble, with only a handful of programs having “full” ensemble rehearsals. For the purposes of this manuscript, full ensemble rehearsals should be interpreted as relevant to a particular school, as student enrollment, participation, and voicing of the ensemble varies between locations. This could mean your full ensemble might be three flutes and twelve trumpets instead of having the traditional six beginning instruments of flute, clarinet, alto saxophone, trumpet, trombone, and percussion.

Where as other subjects typically have a formalized assessment or, in the case of activity-based classes such as art, a graded project may suffice, grades in ensemble music are dependent upon the group as a whole. Unlike the other subjects mentioned, ensemble music requires collaboration with the other members.

All aspects of the music making, such as tempo, dynamics, and articulations, are relative to the specific performance and require all the participants to be in agreement for everything to

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function smoothly. When members of an ensemble participate in a full rehearsal it is with the intention that they have their parts learned and only need to adjust minor things to make their part fit together with the other members. Depriving students the opportunity to rehearse the complete score before the performance is the same as having a group project without letting the group members work together to complete it or having a student learn all the words to a sentence, but not understanding how to make sense of it. Every aspect of learning music is based on the natural learning process. In *The Creative Director: Beginning and Intermediate Levels*, it states, “Reading, writing, speaking, and listening are based on encoding and decoding signs, symbols, and sounds allowing communication between two or more people. The same holds true for making music” (Lisk, 2001). Similar to learning a foreign language, a teacher should not rob a student of the building blocks of learning their new musical language, such as performing in a group.

Learning solely from a method book will not help you grow as a musician, “but sometimes the best approach is not simply to move ahead line by line through the book” (Musco, 2011). The same can be said for playing in an ensemble. Despite being able to perform your required music correctly, that does not mean you are suddenly prepared for the concert. With that knowledge it is required that you understand how you fit within the context of the ensemble. This principle is similar to that of homonyms with the English language. If you do not understand the usage of the word in the sentence, it could mean something wildly different, such as the crane stood still. Are you talking about a bird? Perhaps you were discussing a construction crane? It is unclear without the full context of the conversation. Similarly, you may be practicing your music at home and feel that you are performing very softly, but when you perform with the full ensemble, it might be way too loud.

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Teaching a full ensemble helps students learn from many different angles. Instead of having a teacher verbally tell them what to do, they could listen and know when to play. Music is an auditory subject and being able to listen to help make decisions is vital. Again, without all the moving pieces to be listening for, is that possible? While practicing with a recording may be helpful, it can also be very deceiving. It has been stated, “we don’t hear ourselves as objectively as we think we do” (Kageyama, 2017). Instead of always reminding students in a group class about a dynamic marking, it could be supremely beneficial to have them listen back to a recording of the full ensemble to help grasp the concept themselves.

Performing together is vital to building musicianship skills to help growing musicians. “Balance and blend of sound among players in a single section and among instruments from different timbre are fundamental concerns in any band” (Green & Gibson, 2004). While understanding your role in your section is important, how it functions with the rest of the group is equally imperative. The musical knowledge associated with each different dynamic or tempo change cannot be mastered without the entire ensemble working together.

Working together in a full ensemble is one of the best ways to develop critical and creative thinking skills as well. As Douglas E. Reahm (1986) states, “Critical thinking is a process of reflecting upon, weighing, arguing, and supporting alternative points of view (p.30). This opportunity for growth is not available for students when they are only able to work with the same instruments. Reahm (1986) goes on to state, “We owe it to our students to let them know when we make critical and creative decisions about how the music will be performed” (p.30). When students are able to working with each other they can feed off of the new information given to them by their peers. More often than not, this will have a greater benefit to

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the student's learning and understanding of the material and their overall retention as opposed to just being given information by the prescribed teacher.

Tim Lautzenheiser says in *Teaching Music Through Performance in Band* how music teaches us how to understand quality (Miles, et al., 2010). In a time where everything is measured by testing and assessment it is very clear to determine whether something is right or wrong, but doing so while maintaining a high quality is different. On a paper for an English class, messy handwriting may not be too detrimental to a well-worded paper. A musician may play all the notes and rhythms correctly in a piece of music, but if the tone is terrible, the audience will not want to listen. Working together in conjunction for a performance teaches the benefits of high quality and how that must be shared by all members of the ensemble for a successful performance.

When students engage in team work and activities, they are prone to develop a sense of discipline. Similar to a general classroom where students know to raise their hand or listen when someone else is talking, but it is taken to a new level that helped by their critical thinking skill development. Instead of just being passive while waiting, members of an ensemble must have the discipline to be silent in between songs, stand or sit still as a piece is being performed, and do all this while doing something else that is taking up the majority of their mental capacity.

An ensemble consists of many different parts that depend on the confidence and competence of the individual and of the group. Both school band programs in this study contain at least six different musical parts happening at once while trying to perform. Increased confidence is only one of the many additional benefits of working together as a group musically (Hallam, 2012). In order to be able to do that a high level of self-confidence is a necessity so that students are able to maintain playing their own part with the rest of the ensemble. Skills like this

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are transferrable to many other components of life that it is crucial to teach as often as possible, especially at younger ages.

Every piece of music puts students in different roles at different times. While some selections may have the trumpets play the melody, perhaps another may have it go to the clarinets. Whether the instrument in question has the melody or not, their role is still important because without it the music will not sound the same. Professor of Music Education at the University of North Texas, Darhyl S. Ramsey explains, “It is never too early to stress to students the importance of their role in the total ensemble experience”. (Miles, et al., 2001)

All the different aspects of a performance are necessary concerns when approaching a concert, especially the set-up of the ensemble. “It is not a stretch to say that ensemble set-up influence nearly every aspect of teaching” (Feldman & Contzius, 2016). Groups of any discipline practice in the same formation to improve upon their performance. A pitcher in baseball spends years practicing and perfecting each pitch in their arsenal and it would not make sense for the manager to suddenly put them in the outfield and expect them rob a batter of a home run. The same can be said for members of a musical ensemble, without constant practice in a similar formation, some of the skills needed to improve and hone their craft are neglected during their development. As Steven J. Morrison notes, “the success of an instrumental program rests on the ability of one or more music educators to construct a coherent, sequential, yet multifaceted experience for students” (Campbell, 2008). How is that possible when students are asked to learn in the same limited scope every week?

This study sought to prove the importance of full ensemble rehearsals for students by checking their understanding of melody and harmony before and after their first school concert of the year. Due to the many intricate details that are learned through full rehearsals, it is

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necessary for all students to have access to all parts of their musical education. While there are many different factors for each director to be concerned with, this study is meant to prove the need for a fully formed musical education that contains small group lessons with full group meetings to increase student learning and understanding. During this time, the results are expected to show an increase in understanding for both sets of students with a larger increase for the students without a full rehearsal.

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Chapter 3: Is Rehearsal Important?

Two different schools from the School District of Philadelphia were used in the study; Charles W. Henry, listed as school one, and Julia R. Masterman, listed as school two. School one does not have a weekly full ensemble rehearsal, but rather weekly group lessons containing 5th and 6th grade students during the school day. The day prior to the winter concert, the ensemble had a brief fifteen-minute dress rehearsal to run through their music as a full ensemble. School two also has weekly group lessons during the school day, containing 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students, but contains two weekly full ensemble rehearsals. The 5th and 6th grade students at the school meet once a week and the 7th and 8th grade students meet once a week, but at different times. In this case, most instruments are in both rehearsals, but not all.

The process of determining student understanding began with a survey given one week before their winter concert. The survey's purpose was to obtain as much information about the musical knowledge, in relation to melody, harmony, and backgrounds, students had prior to their concert. After the concert for each participating school, a post-concert survey was given to the same students that participated in the pre-concert survey. Both surveys asked similar questions, but were changed for the different music selections at each school. For school one, the questions were the following:

- Which school do you attend?
- What instrument do you play?
- In Centurion, who has the melody at measure 5? (Check all that apply)
- In Centurion, who has the harmony/backgrounds at measure 5? (Check all that apply)
- In Centurion, who has the melody at measure 13? (Check all that apply)
- In Centurion, who has the harmony/backgrounds at measure 13? (Check all that apply)

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- In Rock-It, who has the melody at measure 7? (Check all that apply)
- In Rock-It, who has the harmony/backgrounds at measure 7? (Check all that apply)
- In Rock-It, who has the melody at measure 17? (Check all that apply)
- In Rock-It, who has the harmony/backgrounds at measure 17? (Check all that apply)

For school two, the questions were the following:

- Which school do you attend?
- What instrument do you play?
- In Aladdin, who has the melody at measure 7? (Check all that apply)
- In Aladdin, who has the harmony/backgrounds at measure 7? (Check all that apply)
- In Aladdin, who has the melody at measure 45? (Check all that apply)
- In Aladdin, who has the harmony/backgrounds at measure 45? (Check all that apply)
- In Thunder and Fury, who has the melody at measure 33? (Check all that apply)
- In Thunder and Fury, who has the harmony/backgrounds at measure 33? (Check all that apply)
- In Thunder and Fury, who has the melody at measure 85? (Check all that apply)
- In Thunder and Fury, who has the harmony/backgrounds at measure 85? (Check all that apply)

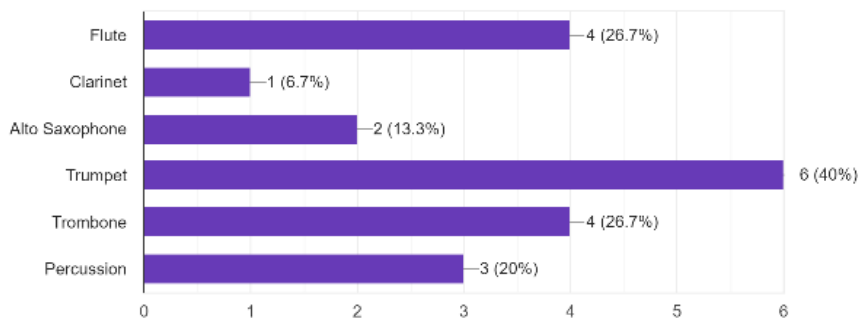
The first question was identical in both to separate the results from each group of participants. The second question was also identical, but was designed to determine if there was any correlation between participant knowledge of their own role within their ensemble. All questions that followed the opening two were to establish a baseline during the pre-concert survey and to quantify growth with the post-concert survey. While the ensembles rehearsed and performed different musical selections, the questions pertaining to each school asked the same

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basic questions. Two different portions of music within each piece were selected and participants were asked who played the melody and who had the harmony or backgrounds in each section. The available answers were slightly different due to the instruments in each ensemble differing. School one contained flute, clarinet, alto saxophone, trumpet, trombone, and percussion. School two contained flute, oboe, bassoon, clarinet, alto saxophone, trumpet, french horn, trombone, baritone, and percussion.

The third question in each survey allowed participants to have their music in front of them, but they were not allowed to listen to or play their part of the piece in question. In school one's survey the piece in question was *Centurion* by Mark Williams. The first unit of surveyed music began at measure five is a trumpet melody while the rest of the band is playing backgrounds (Appendix A). Of the fifteen students in the ensemble, only six, a meager 40%, were able to recall this information accurately during the pre-concert survey, instead providing a

In *Centurion*, who has the melody at measure 5? (Check all that apply)
15 responses



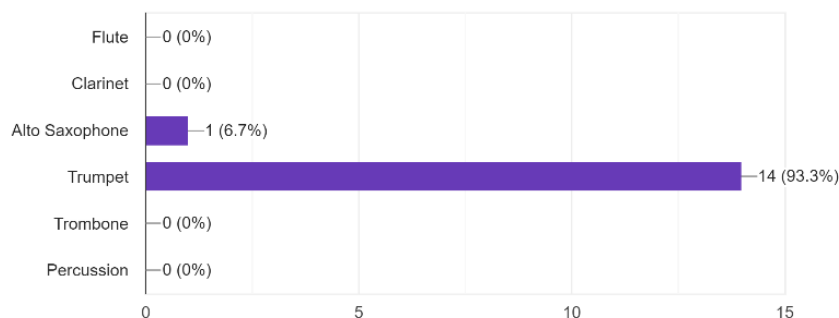
smattering of differing answers (Figure 1).

During the post-concert survey, the number of correct answers increased to fourteen out of fifteen, 93.3%, and provided a much more centralized depiction of information (Figure 2).

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In Centurion, who has the melody at measure 5? (Check all that apply)

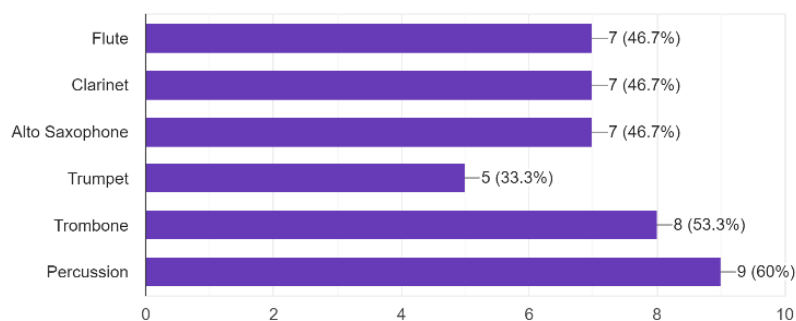
15 responses



Similar results were captured in question four where the students were asked “who” has the harmony and backgrounds during the same section of music. Most participants were able to correctly identify that trombones and percussion were not the melodic instrument during this

In Centurion, who has the harmony/backgrounds at measure 5? (Check all that apply)

15 responses



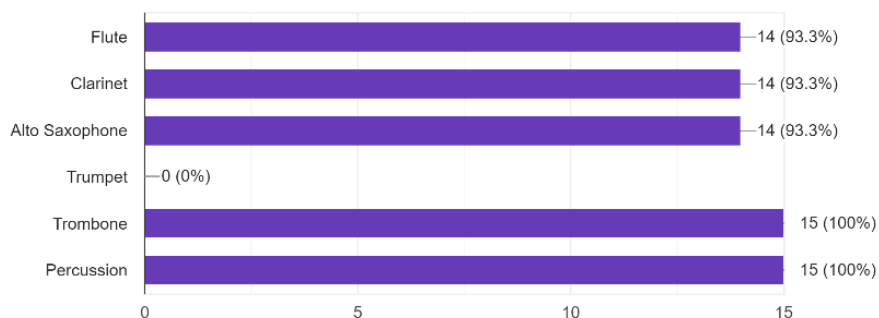
section, at 53.3% and 60%, respectively (Figure 3).

Less than half of the participants, 46.7%, were able to recognize the flute, clarinet, and alto saxophone were also non-melodic instruments at this section, and some students even guessed that the melody instrument, trumpet, was playing a harmonic part during this section. Many band members were not clear as to their role within the ensemble, but after one dress rehearsal and one performance together the change is staggering (Figure 4).

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In *Centurion*, who has the harmony/backgrounds at measure 5? (Check all that apply)

15 responses

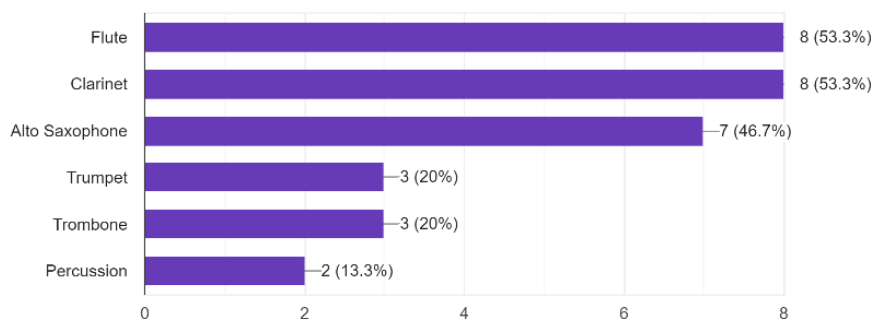


After the concert, not a single participant believed the trumpet was a non-melodic instrument during this section, and 93.3% of participants were able to correctly identify that all the other instruments were harmonic.

Question five in the survey for school one featured measure thirteen of *Centurion*. This portion featured the flute, clarinet, and alto saxophone section playing the melody, while the trumpet, trombone and percussion sections were the backgrounds and harmony (Appendix A). Similar to the previous section in question, during the pre-concert survey students were unclear to their role at the given moment of the piece (Figure 5).

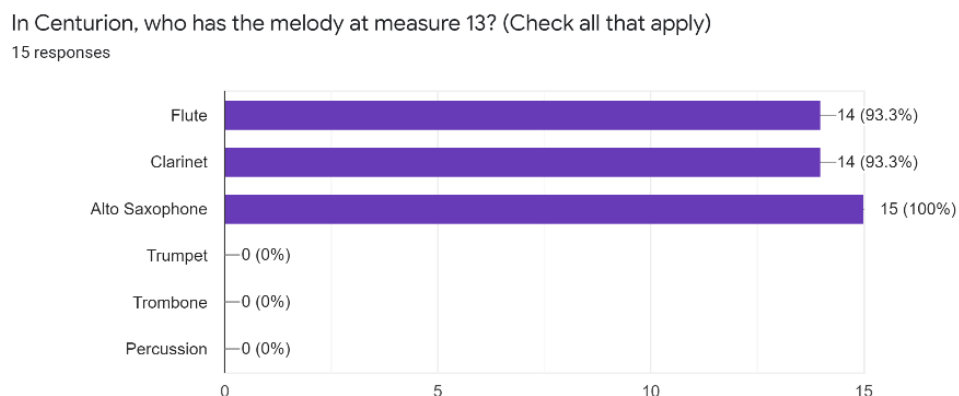
In *Centurion*, who has the melody at measure 13? (Check all that apply)

15 responses



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While the chart seems to indicate that the students understood the woodwind melody during this section, hovering at about 50%, but it is definitely not a firm understanding as it is in the post-concert survey (Figure 6).

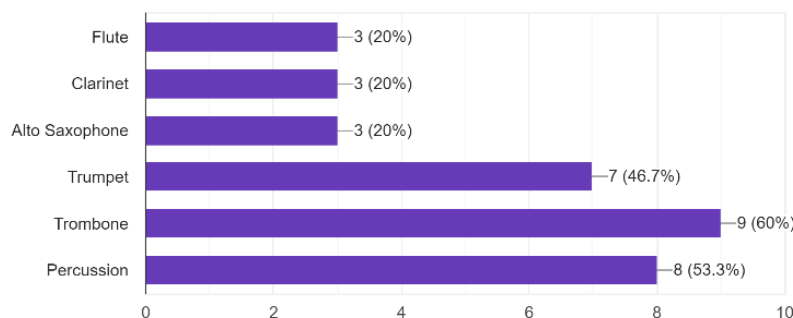


Whereas less than half of the participants could identify the alto saxophone before the concert, there was 100% recognition after the concert. The flute and clarinet recognition also increased from 53.3% in the pre-concert survey to 93.3% in the post-concert survey. Additionally, every member in the band realized that the brass and percussion sections were non-melodic during this portion.

Comparable results were captured in question six where the students were asked who had the harmony and backgrounds of *Centurion* during measure thirteen. While there was a better overall understanding of the piece in this question, many were still unclear about the exact nature of what was happening in their music at the given time. 20% of students still believed the flute, clarinet, and alto saxophone were playing harmonic parts, while 46.7% believed it to be trumpet, 60% trombone, and 53.2% percussion (Figure 7).

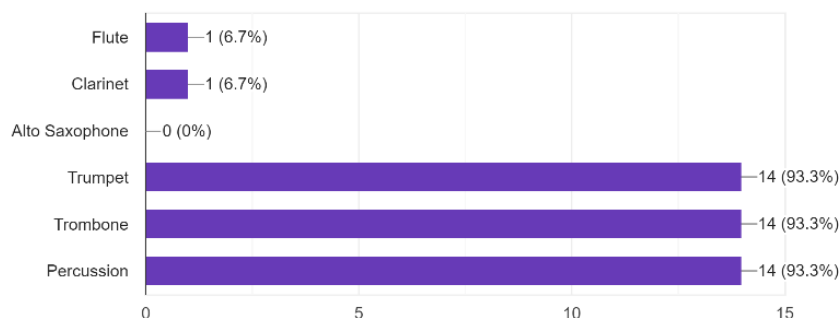
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In Centurion, who has the harmony/backgrounds at measure 13? (Check all that apply)
15 responses



Students had a much more comprehensive understanding of the music and their role post-concert (Figure 8).

In Centurion, who has the harmony/backgrounds at measure 13? (Check all that apply)
15 responses

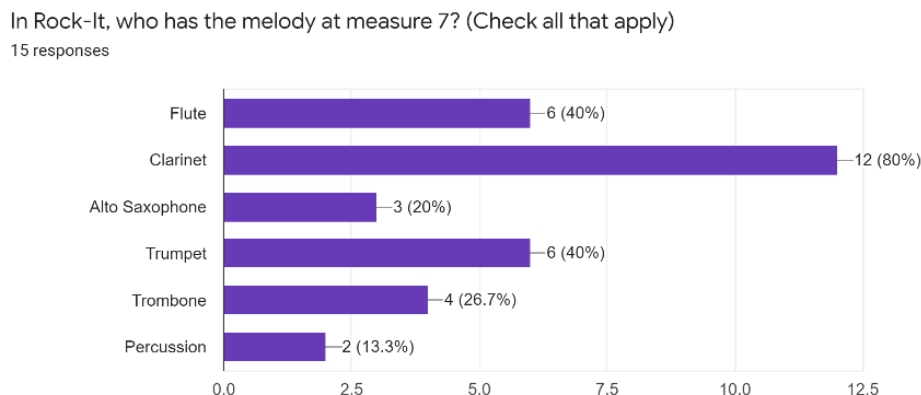


Similar to the other questions asked, the results indicate a much more unified belief. While there was still a small belief that the flute or clarinet had the harmonic part during this section, 6.7% each, the majority of participants, 93.3%, understood that the trumpet, trombone, and percussion sections were all meant to back up the woodwind melody. With one piece studied and analyzed the results were extremely positive and definitely support the hypothesis that student understanding is enhanced with full ensemble rehearsals.

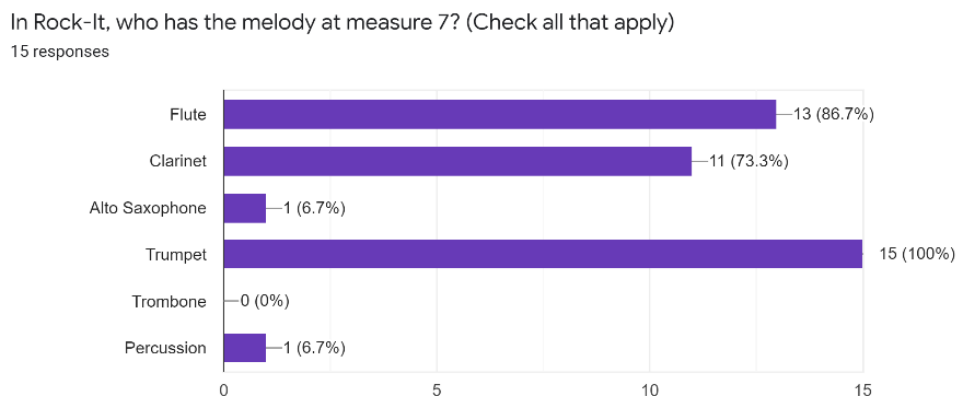
As we examine the second piece, *Rock-It* by Jack Bullock, the same four questions were asked for two different sections in the music. The seventh question in the survey asked students

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to identify the melody instruments at measure seven. During this section, the flutes, clarinets, and trumpets have the melody while the alto saxophones, trombones, and percussion have harmony and background parts (Appendix B). Before the concert, students were able to recognize one of the three melody instruments correctly, with twelve students, 80%, correctly identifying the clarinet as a melody instrument (Figure 9).



Despite that being better than opening question for *Centurion*, it still is not a truly targeted answer where student engagement is at a high level. As expected, after playing things together only two times, student understanding was vastly improved (Figure 10).



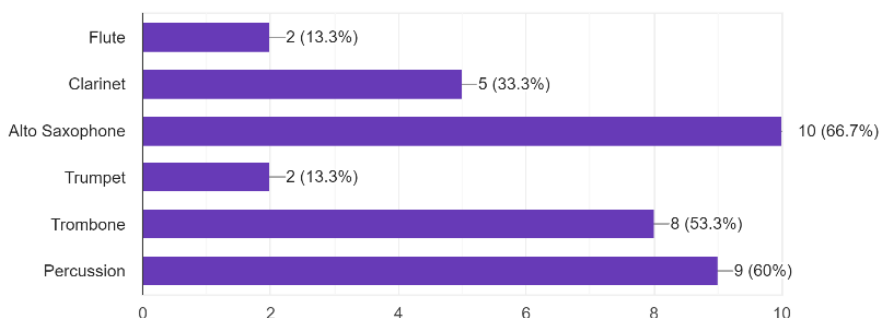
Similar to *Centurion*, there was a stronger knowledge of the material after performing as an ensemble. The majority of band members selected the trumpet, 100%, flute, about 87%, and clarinet, about 73% for the melody. One surprising note, was that fewer students believed the

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clarinet had the melody after performing together, possibly due to some second guessing upon hearing other instruments playing the same thing or an error when entering the data into the survey.

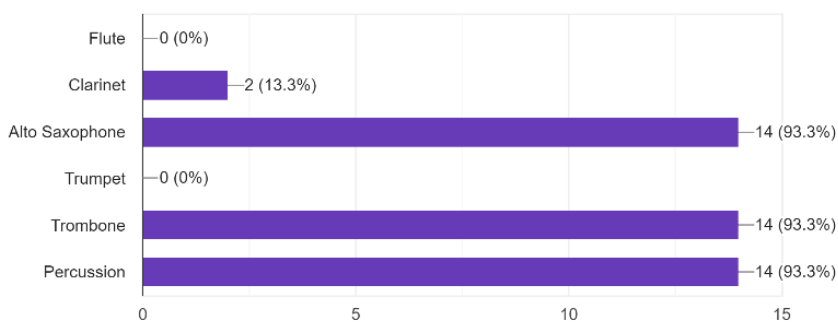
When identifying the non-melodic instruments in *Rock-It*, students seemed to have a much more solidified opening opinion than in the past questions. Over half of the students were able to correctly identify the alto saxophone, 66.7%, trombone, 53.3%, and percussion, 60%, as harmonic and background parts (Figure 11).

In Rock-It, who has the harmony/backgrounds at measure 7? (Check all that apply)
15 responses



While there was stronger knowledge from the beginning in this question during the pre-concert survey, the post-concert survey still provided evidence supporting the need for full ensemble rehearsals. In the post-concert survey, the non-melodic identification was much stronger with the alto saxophone, trombone, and percussion all receiving 93.3% identification (Figure 12).

In Rock-It, who has the harmony/backgrounds at measure 7? (Check all that apply)
15 responses

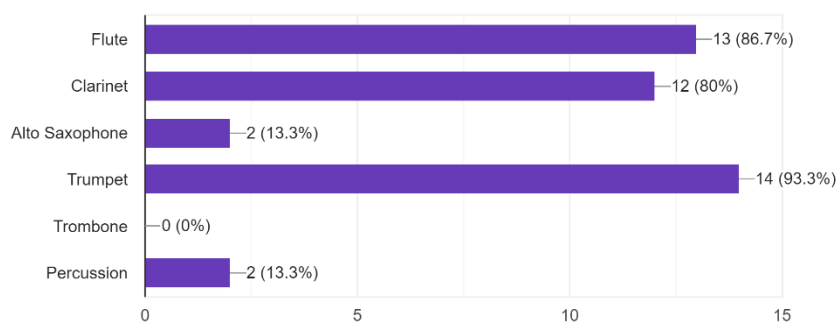


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As with *Centurion*, a second section of music was chosen in *Rock-It* to identify melody and harmony and measure seventeen was chosen. This section is identical to measure seven, but still provided some eye-opening results (Appendix B). Again, the flutes, clarinets, and trumpets have the melody while alto saxophones, trombones, and percussion are playing harmonic and background parts. Despite this section of music being matching measure seven, students did not truly believe the parts were the same (Figure 13).

In Rock-It, who has the melody at measure 17? (Check all that apply)

15 responses



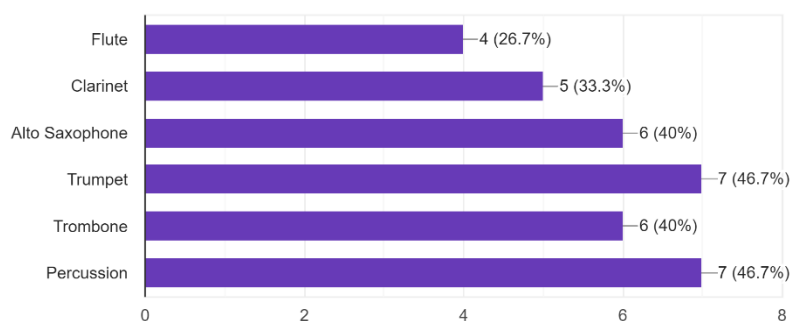
Eleven out of fifteen students believed the flute had the melody as opposed to the six that did at measure seven, but clarinet recognition dropped from twelve students in measure seven to nine at measure seventeen. Alto saxophones had one less vote, trumpets had one more, while trombones and percussion stayed the same. Again, the post-concert survey provided more positive data, with over 80% recognition for flute, clarinet, and trumpet as the melody instrument (Figure 14). Despite the results not being identical to the post-concert survey at measure seven, the results were similar. Flute and trombone numbers were identical, while more students believed the clarinet, alto saxophone, and percussion had the melody than previously. Interestingly, there was one less trumpet identification in this portion of the survey.

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When asking about the harmony and backgrounds parts at measure seventeen of *Rock-It*, no instrument section was selected at higher than 50%, indicating a lack of clarity (Figure 15).

In Rock-It, who has the harmony/backgrounds at measure 17? (Check all that apply)

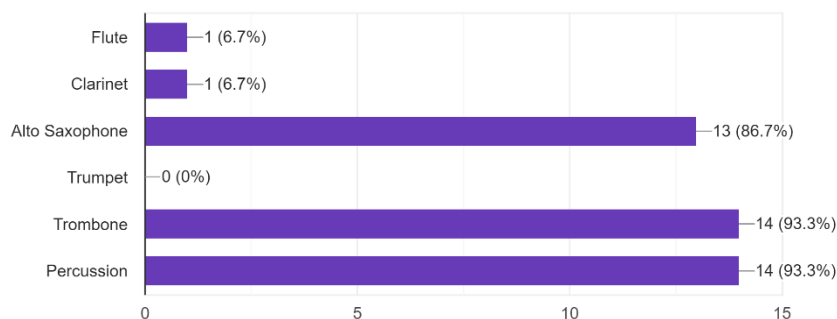
15 responses



Following the trend of the other questions, the numbers were more united with alto saxophone, trombone, and percussion obtaining an accurate identification rate of over 85% each (Figure 16).

In Rock-It, who has the harmony/backgrounds at measure 17? (Check all that apply)

15 responses



The numbers and trends definitely justify the helpfulness of full ensemble rehearsals according to school one's survey results. There was vastly increased knowledge in each question asked over only a small increment of time together. Such growth would indicate that a weekly meeting would increase the knowledge even more and perhaps eliminate all possible confusion about the role each player has at the given moment. The improvement shown is over only two

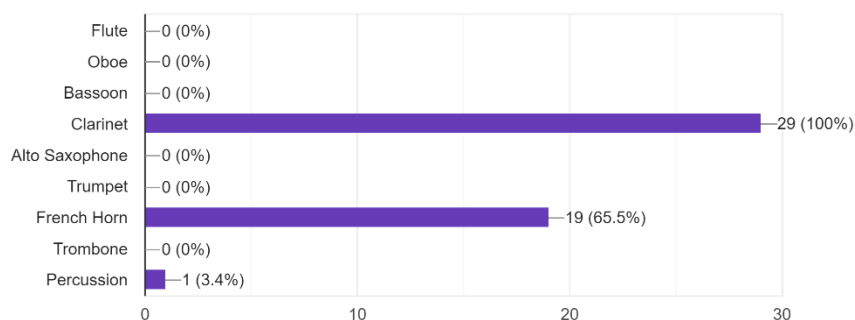
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meetings as a full ensemble, after roughly four and half months of small group practice and preparation.

School two utilized the same parameters and the students participating were allowed their music, but no listening or playing of it. During the third question for school two, the pre-concert identification was much stronger. The first piece was a medley from *Aladdin* arranged by Michael Sweeney. The music in question featured a clarinet and French horn melody with alto saxophone, trombone, and percussion harmony and backgrounds (Appendix C). All twenty-nine participants asked were able to correctly identify clarinet as the melody instrument during this section (Figure 17).

In *Aladdin*, who has the melody at measure 7? (Check all that apply)

29 responses

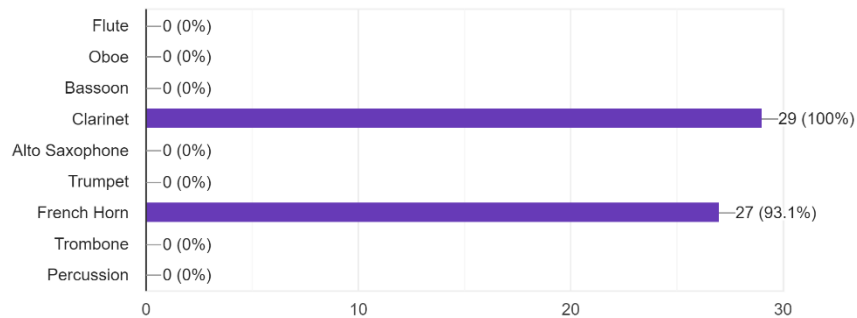


Only nineteen students, about sixty six percent, were able to identify French horn as a melody instrument. As the full ensemble is split into two groups, it is worth noting that not all of the students had a French horn in their ensemble rehearsal. Upon completion of the concert, the numbers again improved in a positive way. Similar to the students from school one, the French horn recognition increased from nineteen students or 65.6% to twenty-seven or 93.1% (Figure 18).

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In Aladdin, who has the melody at measure 7? (Check all that apply)

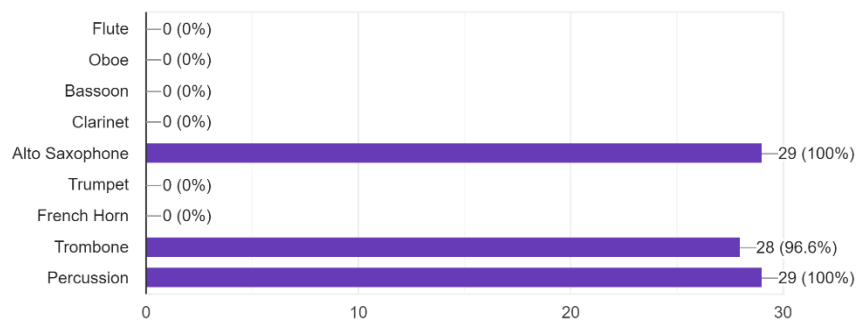
29 responses



The fourth question asked for the harmony and backgrounds of the same section, and was answered almost unanimously correct in the pre-concert survey (Figure 19).

In Aladdin, who has the harmony/backgrounds at measure 7? (Check all that apply)

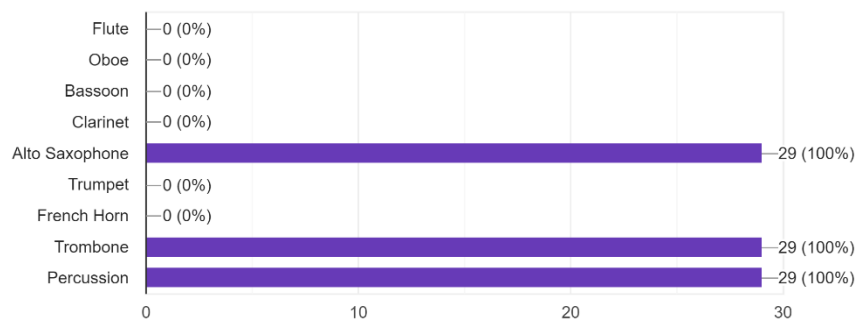
29 responses



After the concert, all participants obtained complete knowledge of what was happening in the ensemble at the given time (Figure 20).

In Aladdin, who has the harmony/backgrounds at measure 7? (Check all that apply)

29 responses

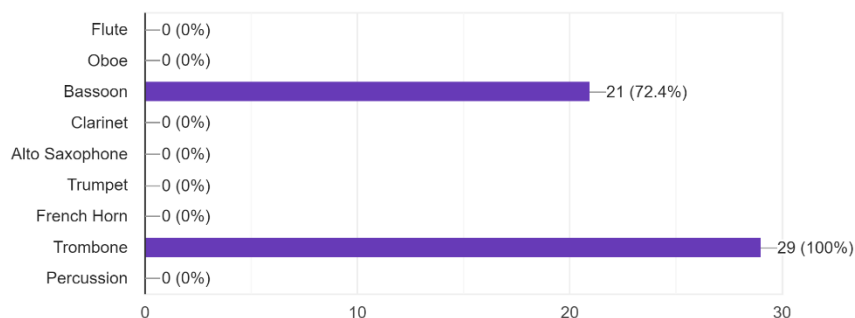


WHY CAN'T WE ALL PLAY TOGETHER?

Continuing to the next section featured the bassoon and trombone as melodic instruments while the rest of the band played some type of harmony or background figures (Appendix C). The student response with very strong before the concert with 100% accuracy for trombone and 72.4% for bassoon (Figure 21).

In Aladdin, who has the melody at measure 45? (Check all that apply)

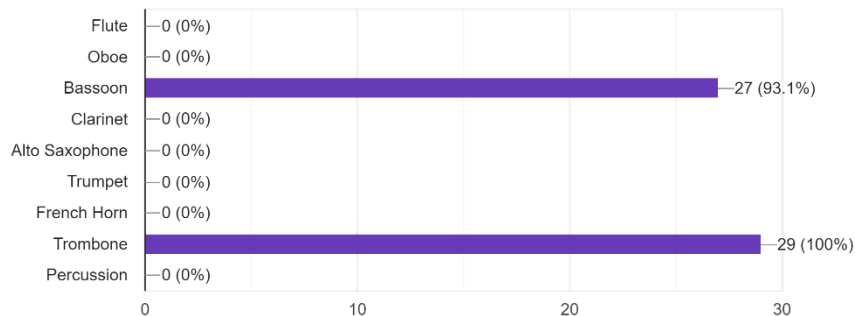
29 responses



Similar to the French horns not being in both ensemble rehearsals, the bassoon is not represented in both either. Despite strong recognition from the beginning, there was still large growth from the post-concert survey jumping from twenty-one students to twenty-seven students realizing the bassoon was melodic at this portion (Figure 22).

In Aladdin, who has the melody at measure 45? (Check all that apply)

29 responses

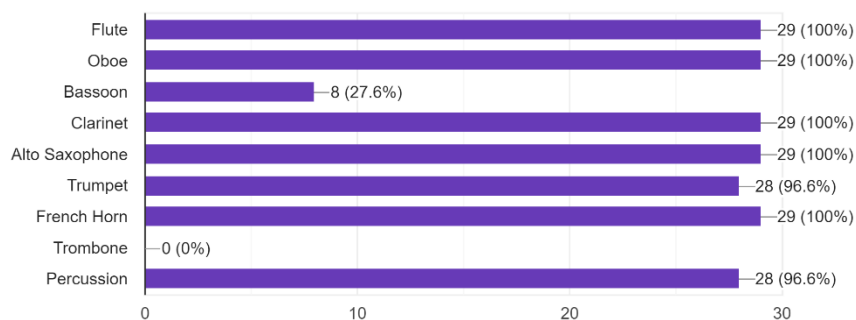


WHY CAN'T WE ALL PLAY TOGETHER?

As with other questions, the opening survey had a strong opening, with almost complete accuracy from the start (Figure 23).

In Aladdin, who has the harmony/backgrounds at measure 45? (Check all that apply)

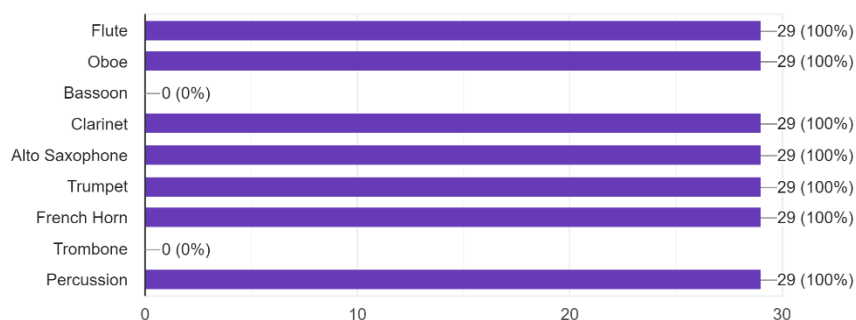
29 responses



Interestingly, while eight students did not think the bassoon was a melody instrument, eight believed it to be playing in some sort of supporting role at this moment. After a dress rehearsal and performance though, there was 100% accuracy for this section of music (Figure 24).

In Aladdin, who has the harmony/backgrounds at measure 45? (Check all that apply)

29 responses

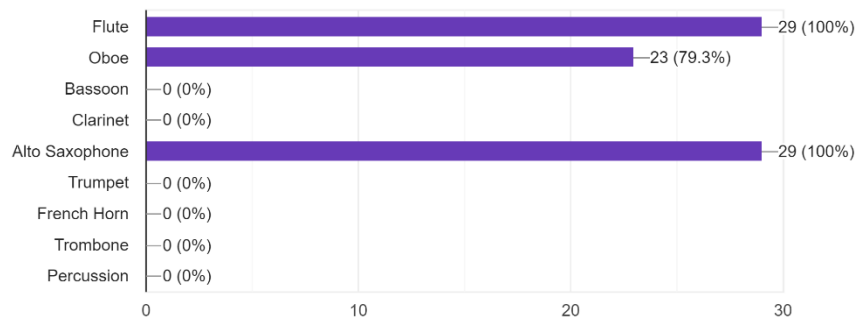


As with school one, it was important to also select a second piece to survey which was David Shaffer's *Thunder and Fury*. The first section chosen began at measure thirty-three and featured a flute, oboe, and alto saxophone melody with the bassoon, clarinet, French horn, and percussion providing harmony and backgrounds (Appendix D). Unlike the French horn and

WHY CAN'T WE ALL PLAY TOGETHER?

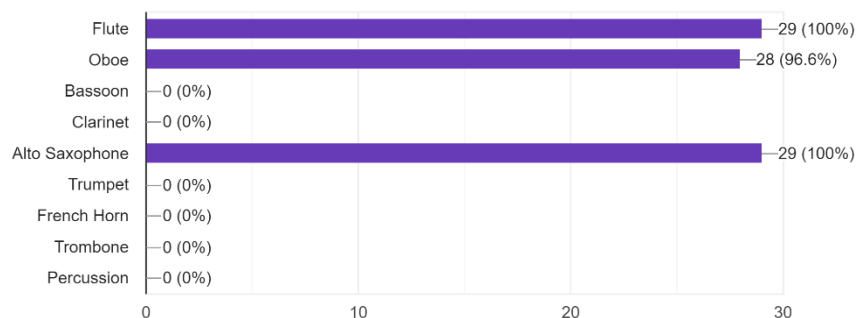
bassoon, the oboe was represented in both ensemble rehearsals, but was still a bit unnoticed, with only 79.3% identification pre-concert (Figure 25).

In *Thunder and Fury*, who has the melody at measure 33? (Check all that apply)
29 responses



Oboe recognition increased to 96.6% post-concert, with no loss of flute or alto saxophone recognition (Figure 26).

In *Thunder and Fury*, who has the melody at measure 33? (Check all that apply)
29 responses

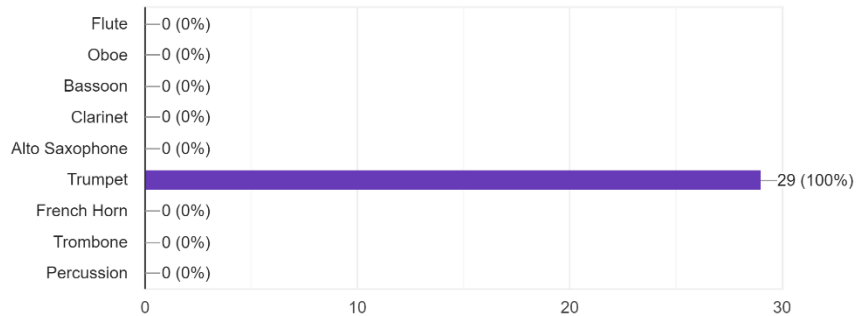


The second portion of *Thunder and Fury*, was at measure eighty-five, and was a trumpet melody with bassoon, French horn, trombone, and percussion behind it (Appendix D). The 2nd trumpets do go into a harmony during this section of melody, but for ease there was no option for first and second parts within the ensemble as the goal was to focus on the instruments and sounds as a whole rather than individual parts. That being said, in both the pre-concert and post-concert

WHY CAN'T WE ALL PLAY TOGETHER?

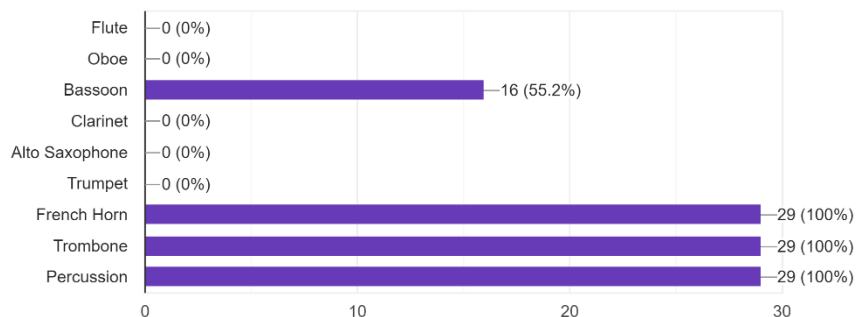
surveys, students knew with 100% accuracy that the trumpet had the melody during this section (Figure 27).

In Thunder and Fury, who has the melody at measure 85? (Check all that apply)
29 responses



When surveying the backgrounds and harmonies in this section, there was little doubt the rest of the brass section and the percussion were behind the trumpet melody. There was some lack of knowledge about the bassoon, possibly due to it not being in each rehearsal or not being as audible as the brass instruments in rehearsal. Only 55.2% of students surveyed recognized the bassoon as a harmonic instrument in this section of music (Figure 28).

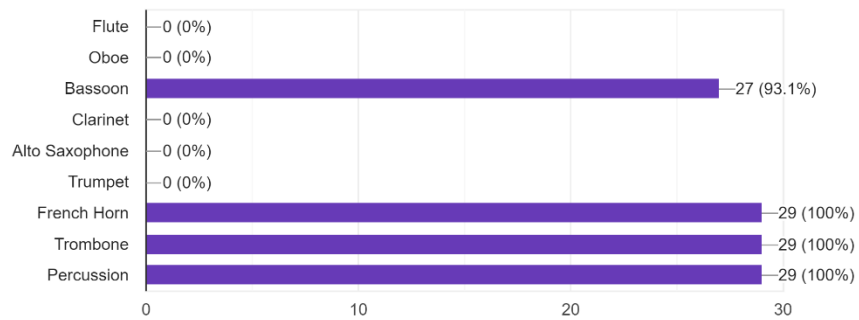
In Thunder and Fury, who has the harmony/backgrounds at measure 85? (Check all that apply)
29 responses



WHY CAN'T WE ALL PLAY TOGETHER?

This was drastically different in the post-concert survey where 93.1% of students were able to recognize that the bassoon was supporting the trumpet at measure eighty-five (Figure 29).

In Thunder and Fury, who has the harmony/backgrounds at measure 85? (Check all that apply)
29 responses



All this data goes to show there is little doubt with the results of this survey about the power of full ensemble rehearsals and their effectiveness on student understanding.

Chapter 4: Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to find how impactful having full ensemble rehearsals are to the learning of young musicians. This goal was accomplished through the results of the pre-concert and post-concert surveys of participating students. The two sets of students compared came from two differing schools with different rehearsal formats. The first group's students have weekly small group lessons, while group two has a weekly full ensemble rehearsal in conjunction with weekly small group lessons. While this particular study only surveyed young band musicians, it would definitely be applicable to orchestral and choral ensembles as well.

During the process of this study the information gained was much more substantial than expected. Although I anticipated some more understanding of melody and harmony within the ensemble for the students involved in a weekly full rehearsal, I was shocked to see such a disparity between the two groups. The limited knowledge retained from week to week for students was extremely disheartening as a teacher. It raises the question whether students are dropping out of programs for lack of understanding or confusion.

Aside from looking at just the relationship of melody and harmony within the ensemble, this could be a stepping stone into many different areas. Is there a difference between instruments self-identifying their own parts? Does the grade level matter? How impactful is lack of full rehearsal on their ability to self-evaluate? These are just a few questions that could be expanded upon in further studies.

Ideally, this study would have been done at the same school with two different pieces of music, but due to many different constraints that was not an option. I would be curious to try a similar experiment with the same set of students as opposed to two different schools and see the

WHY CAN'T WE ALL PLAY TOGETHER?

results with two similar pieces. Would the students still be able to infer the same type of knowledge despite it not being the same piece of music?

There were a couple different issues while completing the survey with the biggest being that the final concert was pushed back from December to January for school one. The stage in the auditorium was scheduled to be renovated and the lights replaced, but that did not happen in time for the original concert date. On top of that, the lights were not fully replaced on the day of the winter concert and students did not get a chance to perform their music for their peers during the traditional two daytime concerts. These concerts help set the tone for the evening concert in front of the students' families as well as give them another two opportunities to play together.

In spite of that, there did not seem to be much more growth during the extra time. With that in mind, did the winter break have an effect on student retention? Would the results seem as skewed in favor of a full rehearsal if the concerts had been at the same time? Would two more concerts before the final night concert have helped the students from school one feel more comfortable during the evening concert? Logically, it would seem that more time would benefit the learning process, but would school two have had as much success if their concert was pushed back into January, too? These are just a few of the questions that had a significant impact on the success of school one. Regardless of all the inconveniences the students faced getting to their final winter concert, the results still justify the need for full rehearsals.

This study was mildly selfish for I set out to prove that all schools need to find time for all their young musicians to meet together as a group to help prepare them. I had no idea the results would be as staggering as they were. Different group sizes are used in almost every other subject, so why not in the music classroom. Hopefully this will serve as a way to help

WHY CAN'T WE ALL PLAY TOGETHER?

administrators understand that both small and large group rehearsals are important for the growth of their students.

WHY CAN'T WE ALL PLAY TOGETHER?

APPENDIX A: CENTURION SCORE (MEASURE 1-25)

2

Centurion

CONDUCTOR

Duration - 2:10

Mark Williams

Allegro (♩ = 120)

Flute
Oboe

B♭ Clarinets 1 2

E♭ Alto
Saxophone

B♭ Trumpets 1 2

F Horn

Low Brass &
Woodwinds

Percussion
(Snare Drum,
Bass Drum)

Bells

Piano
Accompaniment

Cm B♭ Cm B♭ Cm

5

Fl.
Ob.

Cls. 1 2

A. Sax.

Tpts. 1 2

Hn.

Low Br.
& W. W.

Perc.

Bells

Piano
Accomp.

(no chord) Cm B♭ Cm

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3

9 10 11 12

Fl.
Ob.

1 2
Cls.

A. Sax.

1 2
Tpts.

Hn.

Low Br.
& W. W.

Perc.

Bells

Piano
Accomp.

(no chord) Cm B \flat Cm

13 14 15 16

Fl.
Ob.

1 2
Cls.

A. Sax.

1 2
Tpts.

Hn.

Low Br.
& W. W.

Perc.

Bells

Piano
Accomp.

B \flat Cm B \flat

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WHY CAN'T WE ALL PLAY TOGETHER?

4

Musical score for measures 17-20. The score includes parts for Flute/Oboe (Fl. Ob.), Clarinet (Cls.), Alto Saxophone (A. Sax.), Trumpets (Tpts.), Horn (Hn.), Low Brass & Woodwind (Low Br. & W. W.), Percussion (Perc.), Bells, and Piano Accompaniment (Piano Accomp.). The key signature is B-flat major (two flats). The time signature is 4/4. The score shows the following notes and rests:

- Measure 17:** Fl. Ob. (D4), Cls. (D4), A. Sax. (D4), Tpts. (D4), Hn. (D4), Low Br. & W. W. (D2), Perc. (D4), Bells (D4), Piano Accomp. (D4).
- Measure 18:** Fl. Ob. (E4), Cls. (E4), A. Sax. (E4), Tpts. (E4), Hn. (E4), Low Br. & W. W. (E2), Perc. (E4), Bells (E4), Piano Accomp. (E4).
- Measure 19:** Fl. Ob. (F4), Cls. (F4), A. Sax. (F4), Tpts. (F4), Hn. (F4), Low Br. & W. W. (F2), Perc. (F4), Bells (F4), Piano Accomp. (F4).
- Measure 20:** Fl. Ob. (G4), Cls. (G4), A. Sax. (G4), Tpts. (G4), Hn. (G4), Low Br. & W. W. (G2), Perc. (G4), Bells (G4), Piano Accomp. (G4).

Chord changes for Piano Accomp. are indicated below the staff: Cm (measure 17), Bb (measure 18), Cm (measure 19), Bb (measure 20), Cm (measure 21).

Musical score for measures 21-25. The score includes parts for Flute/Oboe (Fl. Ob.), Clarinet (Cls.), Alto Saxophone (A. Sax.), Trumpets (Tpts.), Horn (Hn.), Low Brass & Woodwind (Low Br. & W. W.), Percussion (Perc.), Bells, and Piano Accompaniment (Piano Accomp.). The key signature is B-flat major (two flats). The time signature is 4/4. The score shows the following notes and rests:

- Measure 21:** Fl. Ob. (A4), Cls. (A4), A. Sax. (A4), Tpts. (A4), Hn. (A4), Low Br. & W. W. (A2), Perc. (A4), Bells (A4), Piano Accomp. (A4).
- Measure 22:** Fl. Ob. (Bb4), Cls. (Bb4), A. Sax. (Bb4), Tpts. (Bb4), Hn. (Bb4), Low Br. & W. W. (Bb2), Perc. (Bb4), Bells (Bb4), Piano Accomp. (Bb4).
- Measure 23:** Fl. Ob. (C5), Cls. (C5), A. Sax. (C5), Tpts. (C5), Hn. (C5), Low Br. & W. W. (C3), Perc. (C5), Bells (C5), Piano Accomp. (C5).
- Measure 24:** Fl. Ob. (D5), Cls. (D5), A. Sax. (D5), Tpts. (D5), Hn. (D5), Low Br. & W. W. (D3), Perc. (D5), Bells (D5), Piano Accomp. (D5).
- Measure 25:** Fl. Ob. (E5), Cls. (E5), A. Sax. (E5), Tpts. (E5), Hn. (E5), Low Br. & W. W. (E3), Perc. (E5), Bells (E5), Piano Accomp. (E5).

Chord changes for Piano Accomp. are indicated below the staff: Bb (measure 21), Cm (measure 22), Bb (measure 23), Cm (measure 24), Cm (measure 25).

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WHY CAN'T WE ALL PLAY TOGETHER?

APPENDIX B: ROCK-IT SCORE (MEASURES 7-11, 15-22)

26682S

7 8 9 10

Choke

The image displays a musical score for a piece titled "Rock-It", specifically measures 7-11 and 15-22. The score is arranged in a system with 14 staves, each representing a different instrument or section. The instruments listed on the left are: Fl. (Flute), Ob. (Oboe), Cl. (Clarinet), B. Cl. (Bass Clarinet), A. Sax. (Alto Saxophone), T. Sax. (Tenor Saxophone), Bar. Sax. (Baritone Saxophone), Tpt. (Trumpet), Hn. (Horn), Trb./Bar./Bsn. (Trumpet/Baritone/Bassoon), Tuba, Mlts. (Mellophone), Timp. (Timpani), Perc. 1 (Percussion 1), and Perc. 2 (Percussion 2). The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or D minor), and the time signature is 4/4. The dynamic marking *mf* (mezzo-forte) is indicated at the beginning of each staff. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and articulation marks. A rehearsal mark [7] is placed above the first measure of the Flute staff. At the bottom of the page, there is a page number 33.

WHY CAN'T WE ALL PLAY TOGETHER?

This musical score is for a piece titled "Why Can't We All Play Together?". It is arranged for a large ensemble, including woodwinds, brass, and percussion. The score is divided into two systems, each containing staves for Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet (Cl.), Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.), Alto Saxophone (A. Sax.), Tenor Saxophone (T. Sax.), Baritone Saxophone (Bar. Sax.), Trumpet (Tpt.), Horn (Hn.), Trombone/Euphonium (Trb./Bar./Bsn.), Tuba, Mellophone (Mlts.), Timpani (Timp.), Percussion 1 (Perc. 1), and Percussion 2 (Perc. 2). The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or D minor), and the time signature is 4/4. The score begins at measure 15 and continues through measure 18. Measures 15 and 17 are marked with a box containing the number 15 and 17 respectively. The dynamic marking *mf* (mezzo-forte) is indicated at the start of measures 15, 17, and 18 for several instruments. The percussion parts include a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. The woodwind and brass parts feature a mix of quarter, eighth, and sixteenth notes, with some instruments playing sustained notes while others have more active lines. The overall texture is dense and rhythmic, with a strong emphasis on the percussion.

Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
B. Cl.
A. Sax.
T. Sax.
Bar. Sax.
Tpt.
Hn.
Trb./Bar./Bsn.
Tuba
Mlts.
Timp.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2

26682S 15 16 17 18

WHY CAN'T WE ALL PLAY TOGETHER?

This musical score is for the piece "Why Can't We All Play Together?". It is arranged for a large ensemble, including woodwinds, brass, and percussion. The score is divided into three systems, each containing staves for different instruments. The first system includes Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet (Cl.), Bass Clarinet (B. Cl.), Alto Saxophone (A. Sax.), Tenor Saxophone (T. Sax.), and Baritone Saxophone (Bar. Sax.). The second system includes Trumpet (Tpt.), Horn (Hn.), Trumpet/Baritone/Bassoon (Trb./Bar./Bsn.), and Tuba. The third system includes Mellophone (Mlts.), Timpani (Timp.), Percussion 1 (Perc. 1), and Percussion 2 (Perc. 2). The score is written in 2/4 time and features a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The first system begins with a measure of rest, followed by a series of eighth and sixteenth notes. The second system begins with a measure of rest, followed by a series of eighth and sixteenth notes. The third system begins with a measure of rest, followed by a series of eighth and sixteenth notes. The score includes dynamic markings such as *f* (forte) and *sf* (sforzando). The percussion parts include a variety of rhythmic patterns, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and a "Choke" instruction for Percussion 2. The score is numbered 26682S and includes page numbers 19, 20, and 21.

Fl.
Ob.
Cl.
B. Cl.
A. Sax.
T. Sax.
Bar. Sax.
Tpt.
Hn.
Trb./Bar./Bsn.
Tuba
Mlts.
Timp.
Perc. 1
Perc. 2

26682S 19 20 21

Choke

WHY CAN'T WE ALL PLAY TOGETHER?

APPENDIX C: ALADDIN SCORE (MEASURES 7-12, 41-52)

7 "Arabian Nights"

Flute

Oboe

Clarinet

Alto Clar.

Bass Clar.

Alto Sax.

Tenor Sax.

Bari. Sax.

Trumpet

Trombone

Euphonium

Tuba

Double Bass Line (inforcement)

Percussion

Tambourine

Xylophone (with soft mallets)

mp

sim.

mf

mp

WHY CAN'T WE ALL PLAY TOGETHER?

45

on

trinet

trinet

o Clar.

ss Clar.

o Sax.

for Sax.

l. Sax.

45

mpet

one

ie

ine
rcement

ision

ision

ision

S.D. (Snares on)

Slap Stick

Siren Whistle

Hi-Hat

The musical score is written for a large ensemble. It begins with a key signature of three flats and a 4/4 time signature. The score is divided into two systems, each starting with a measure number '45' in a box. The first system includes staves for 'on' (bass), 'trinet' (two staves), 'o Clar.' (bass), 'ss Clar.' (bass), 'o Sax.' (bass), 'for Sax.' (bass), and 'l. Sax.' (bass). The second system includes staves for 'mpet' (bass), 'one' (bass), 'ie' (bass), 'ine rcement' (bass), 'ision' (three staves), and 'ision' (three staves). The score features various musical notations, including notes, rests, and dynamic markings such as 'mf' and 'a2'. The percussion section includes staves for 'S.D. (Snares on)', 'Slap Stick', 'Siren Whistle', and 'Hi-Hat'. The score is written in a clear, professional style with a focus on readability.

WHY CAN'T WE ALL PLAY TOGETHER?

div.

Flute

Oboe

Bassoon

B♭ Clarinet 1

B♭ Clarinet 2,3

E♭ Alto Clar.

B♭ Bass Clar.

E♭ Alto Sax. 1,2

B♭ Tenor Sax.

E♭ Bari. Sax.

B♭ Trumpet 1,2

F Horn

Trombone

Baritone

Tuba

Bass Line Reinforcement

Percussion 1

Percussion 2

Mallet Percussion

Ratchet

WHY CAN'T WE ALL PLAY TOGETHER?

APPENDIX D: THUNDER AND FURY SCORE (MEASURES 31-38, 85-90)

33

Flute

Oboe

1st Clar.

2nd Clar.

B. Clar.

Bsn.

A. Sax.

T. Sax.

B. Sax.

33

1st Trpt.

2nd Trpt.

Horn

Trom.

Bar.

Tuba

Xyl.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Perc. 3

Pno/Keyb (opt)

WHY CAN'T WE ALL PLAY TOGETHER?

85

Flute

Oboe

1st Clar.

2nd Clar.

3. Clar.

3sn.

A. Sax.

E. Sax.

B. Sax.

85

1st Trpt.

2nd Trpt.

Horn

Tron.

Bar.

Tuba

Xyl.

Perc. 1

Perc. 2

Tri.

Perc. 3

Pno./Keyb (opt)

This is a page from a musical score, specifically page 40. It contains 18 staves of music for various instruments. The first system includes Flute, Oboe, 1st Clarinet, 2nd Clarinet, 3rd Clarinet, 3rd Snare, Alto Saxophone, E-flat Saxophone, and Baritone Saxophone. The second system includes 1st Trumpet, 2nd Trumpet, Horn, Trombone, Baritone, Tuba, Xylophone, Percussion 1, Percussion 2, Percussion 3 (with a triangle), and Piano/Keyboard (optional). The music is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat. The score shows a variety of rhythmic patterns and melodic lines across the different instruments.

APPENDIX E: THESIS QUESTIONNAIRE (PRE-CONCERT) RESULTS

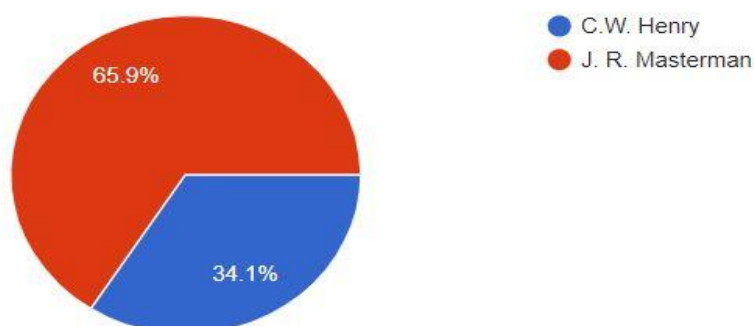
Thesis Questoinnaire (Pre-Concert)

44 responses

[Publish analytics](#)

Which school do you attend?

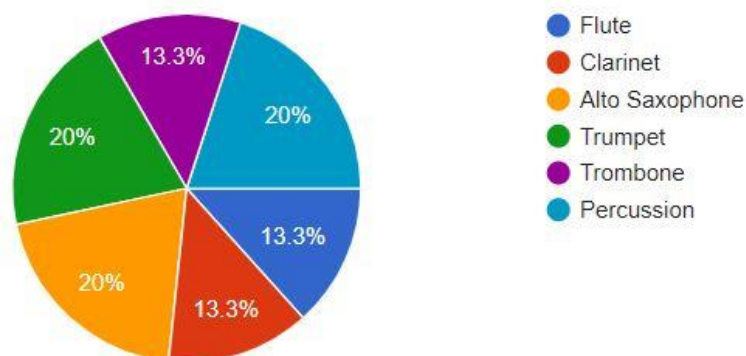
44 responses



C.W. Henry Questions

What instrument do you play?

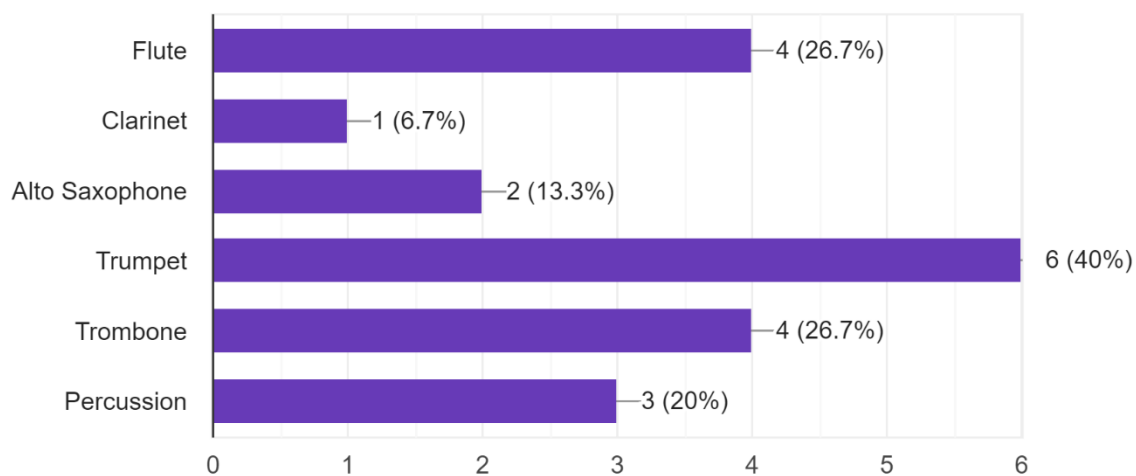
15 responses



WHY CAN'T WE ALL PLAY TOGETHER?

In Centurion, who has the melody at measure 5? (Check all that apply)

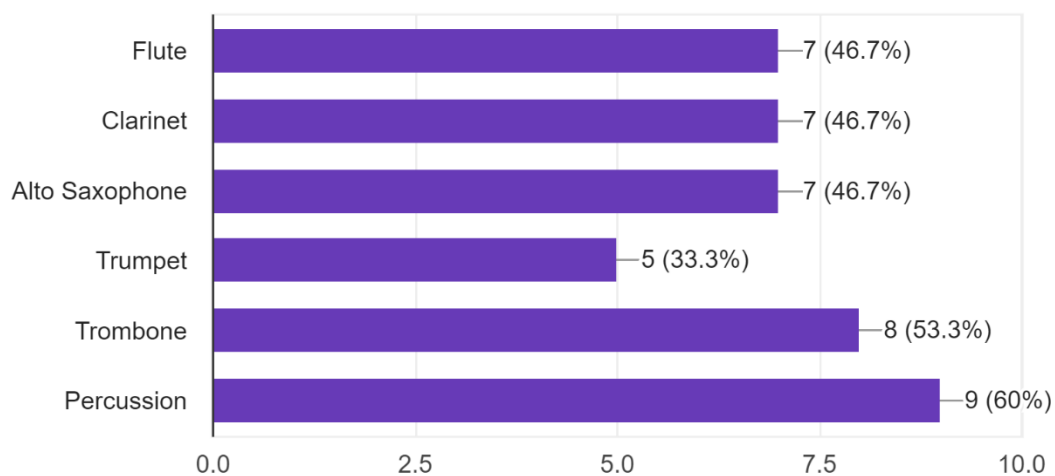
15 responses



=

In Centurion, who has the harmony/backgrounds at measure 5? (Check all that apply)

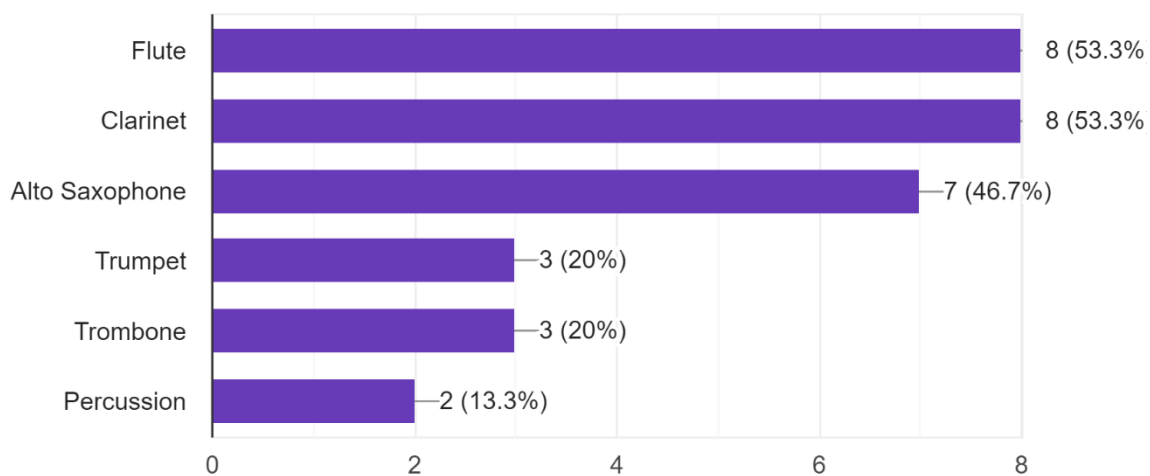
15 responses



WHY CAN'T WE ALL PLAY TOGETHER?

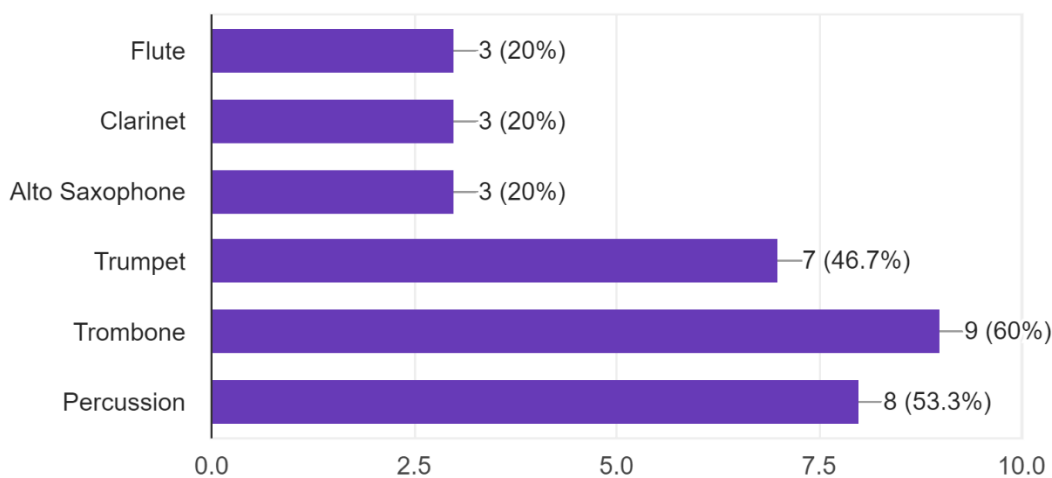
In Centurion, who has the melody at measure 13? (Check all that apply)

15 responses



In Centurion, who has the harmony/backgrounds at measure 13? (Check all that apply)

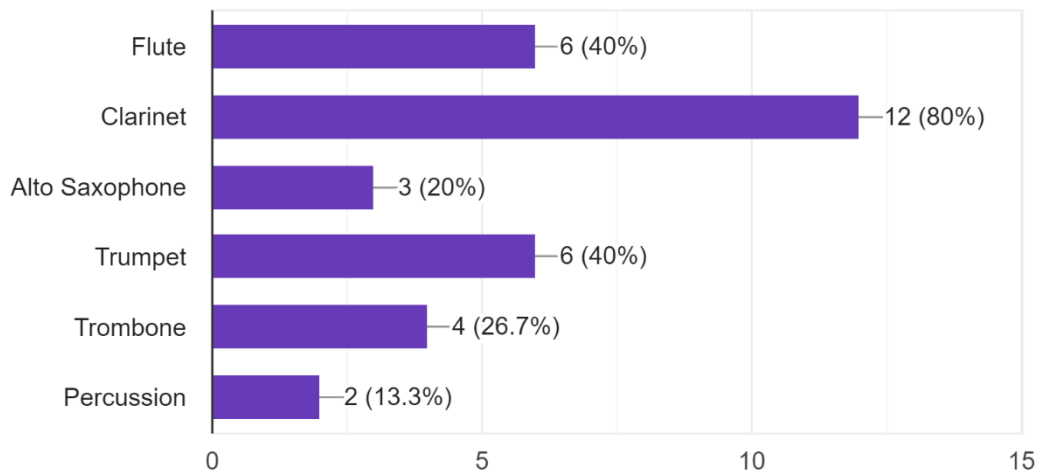
15 responses



WHY CAN'T WE ALL PLAY TOGETHER?

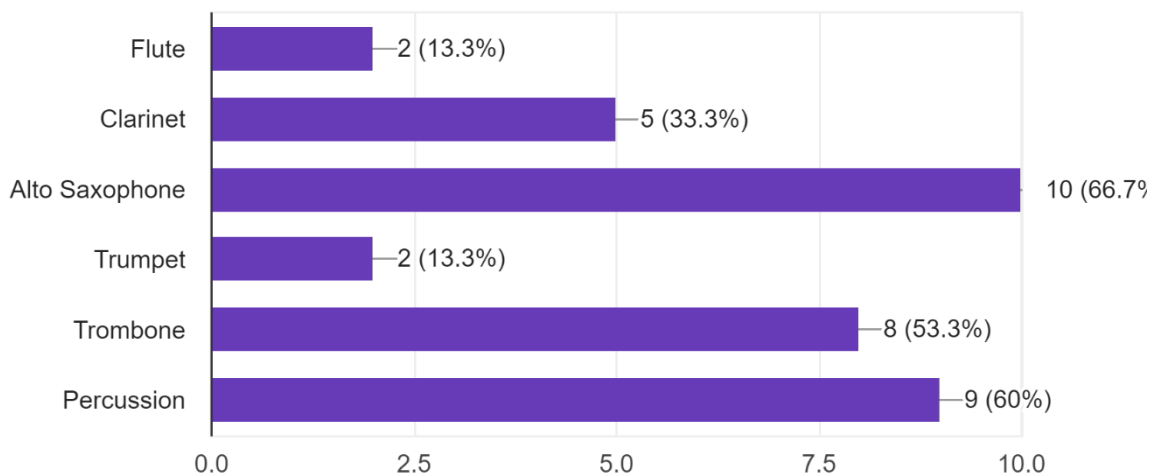
In Rock-It, who has the melody at measure 7? (Check all that apply)

15 responses



In Rock-It, who has the harmony/backgrounds at measure 7? (Check all that apply)

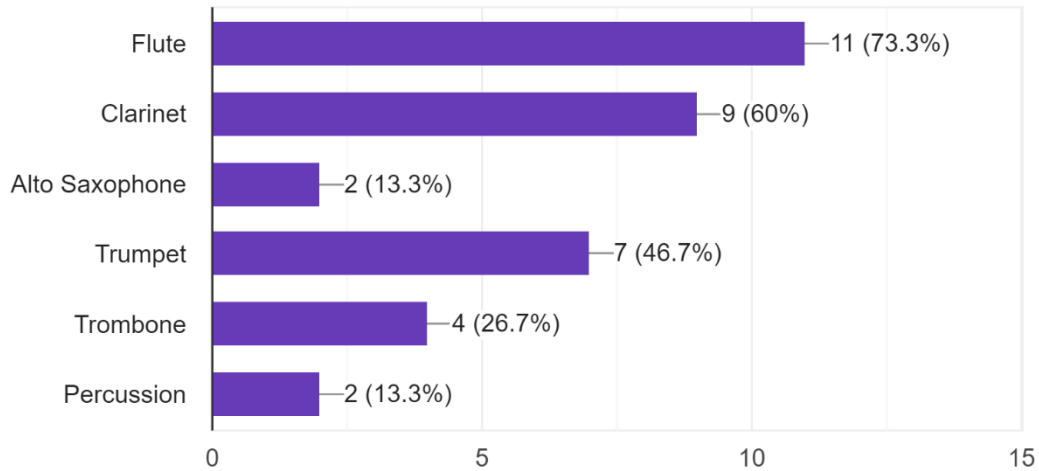
15 responses



WHY CAN'T WE ALL PLAY TOGETHER?

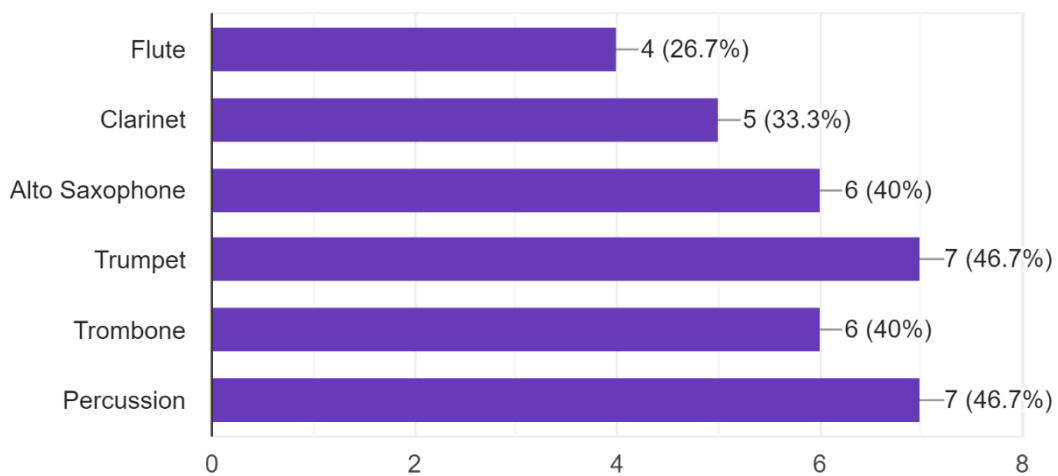
In Rock-It, who has the melody at measure 17? (Check all that apply)

15 responses



In Rock-It, who has the harmony/backgrounds at measure 17? (Check all that apply)

15 responses

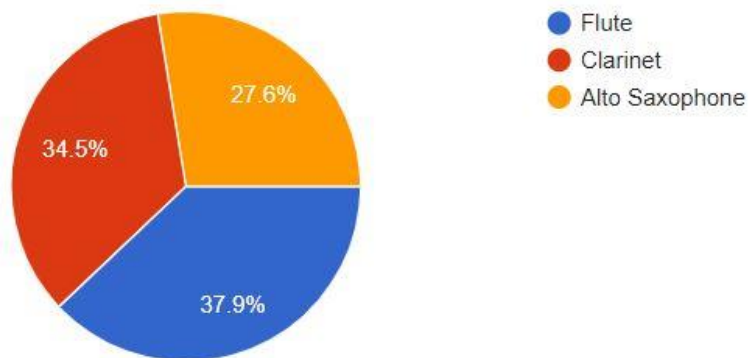


WHY CAN'T WE ALL PLAY TOGETHER?

J.R. Masterman Questions

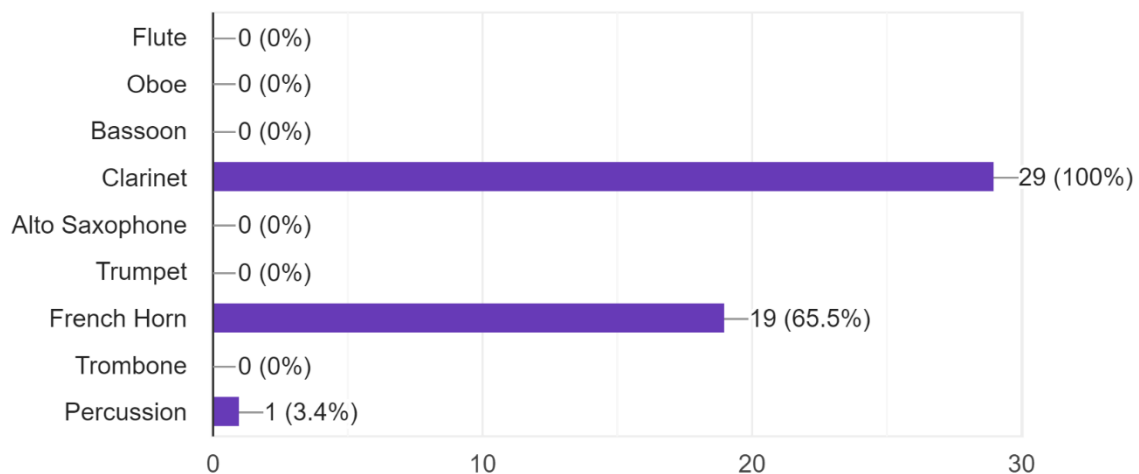
What instrument do you play?

29 responses



In Aladdin, who has the melody at measure 7? (Check all that apply)

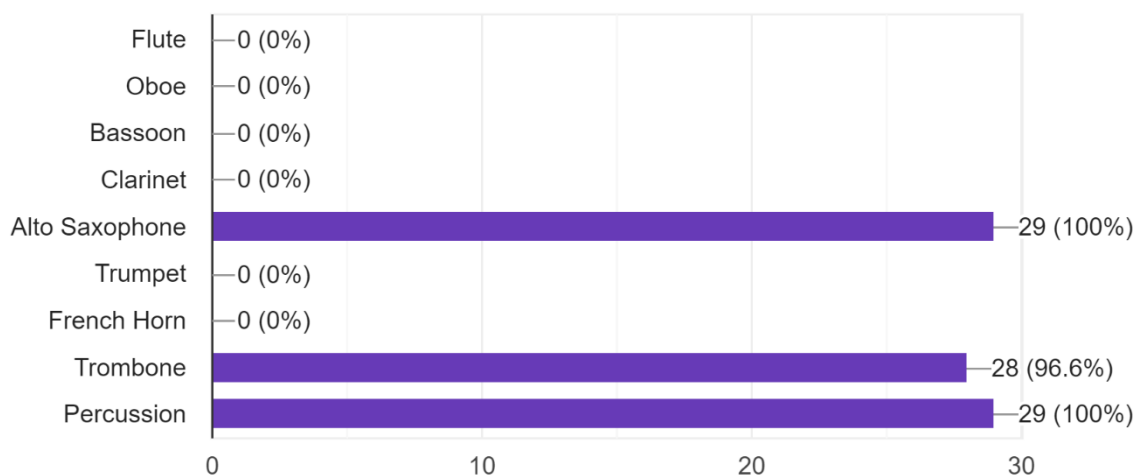
29 responses



WHY CAN'T WE ALL PLAY TOGETHER?

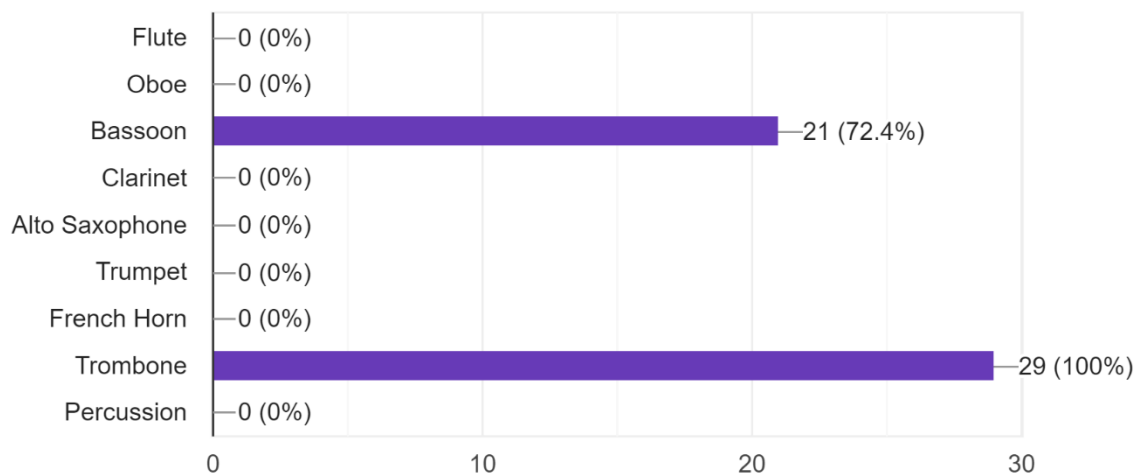
In Aladdin, who has the harmony/backgrounds at measure 7? (Check all that apply)

29 responses



In Aladdin, who has the melody at measure 45? (Check all that apply)

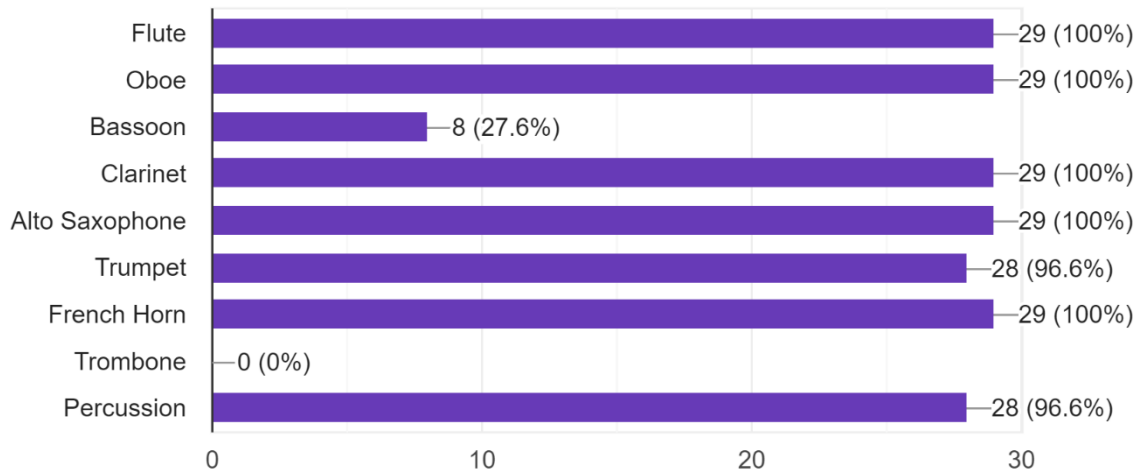
29 responses



WHY CAN'T WE ALL PLAY TOGETHER?

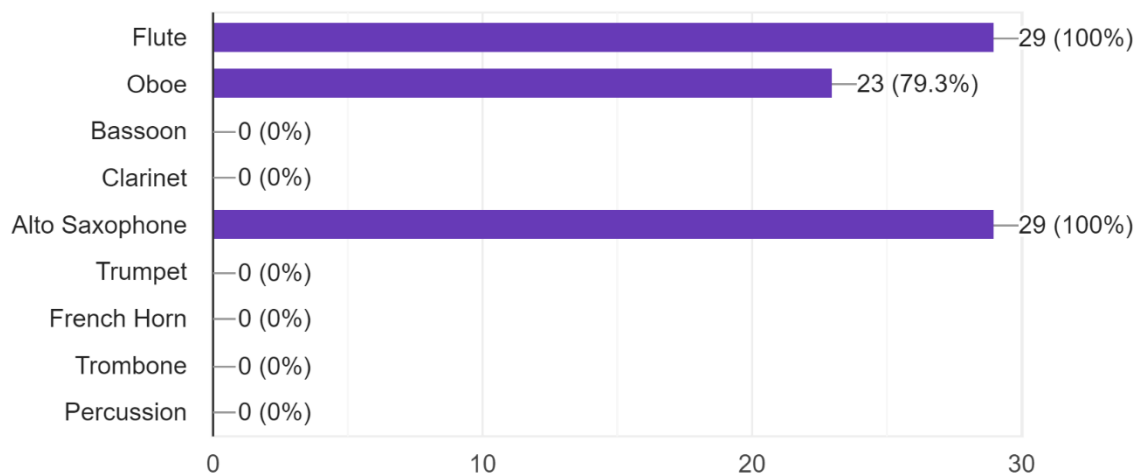
In Aladdin, who has the harmony/backgrounds at measure 45? (Check all that apply)

29 responses



In Thunder and Fury, who has the melody at measure 33? (Check all that apply)

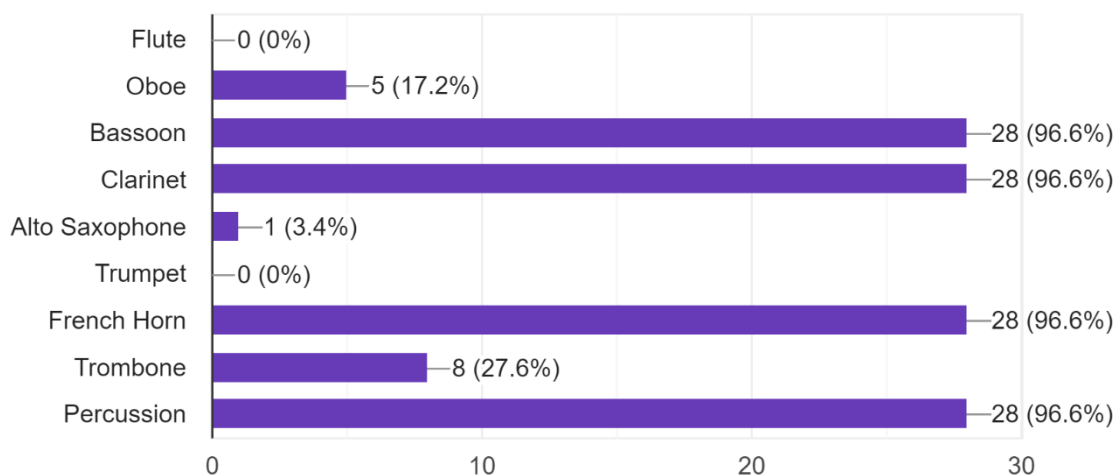
29 responses



WHY CAN'T WE ALL PLAY TOGETHER?

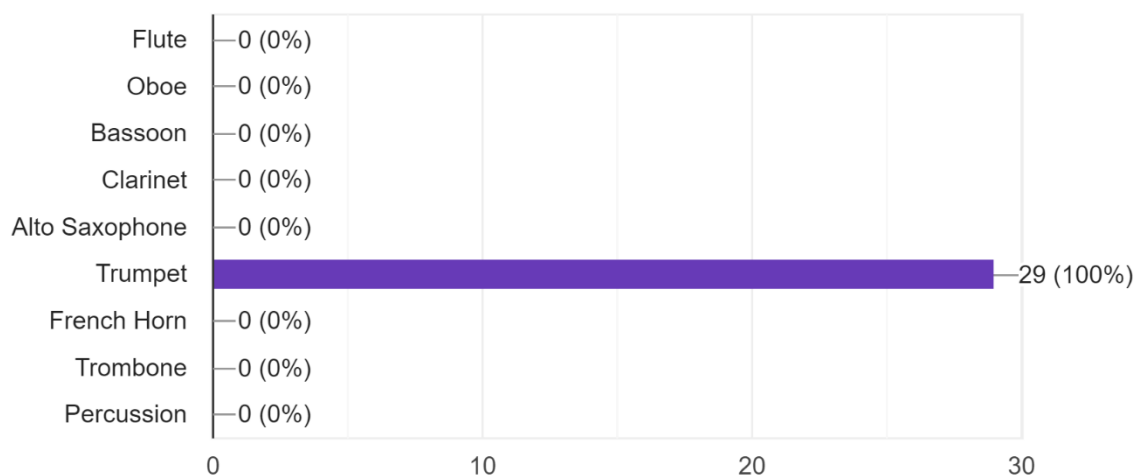
In Thunder and Fury, who has the harmony/backgrounds at measure 33? (Check all that apply)

29 responses



In Thunder and Fury, who has the melody at measure 85? (Check all that apply)

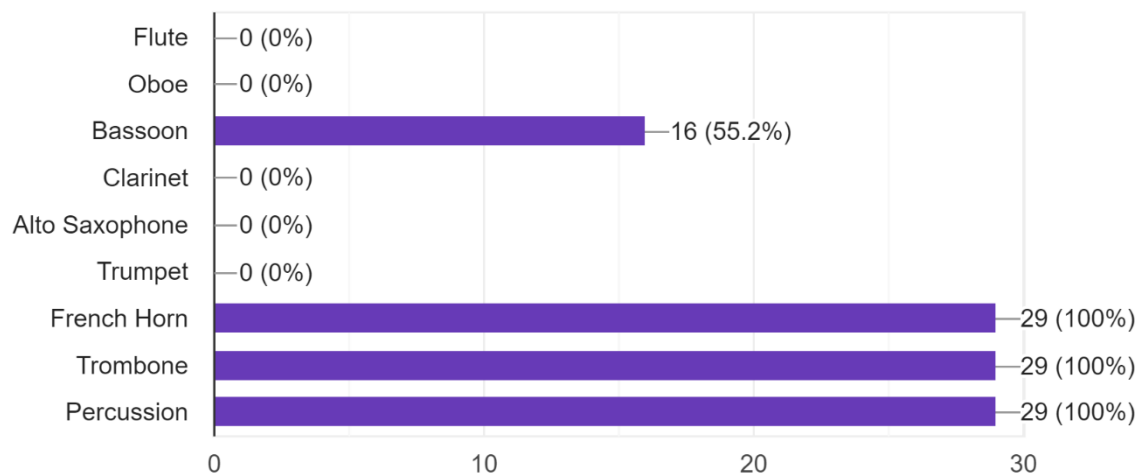
29 responses



WHY CAN'T WE ALL PLAY TOGETHER?

In Thunder and Fury, who has the harmony/backgrounds at measure 85? (Check all that apply)

29 responses



APPENDIX F: THESIS QUESTIONNAIRE (POST-CONCERT) RESULTS

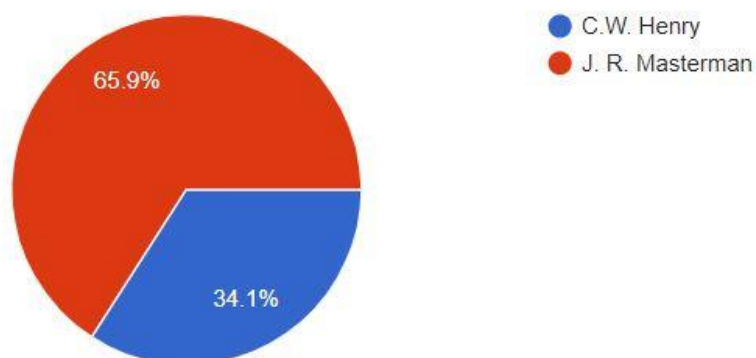
Thesis Questoinnaire (Post-Concert)

44 responses

[Publish analytics](#)

Which school do you attend?

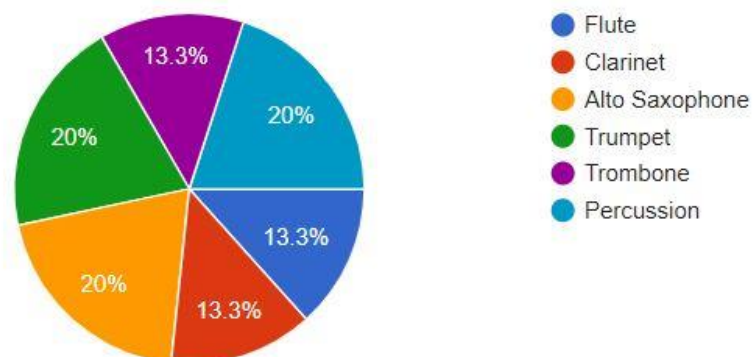
44 responses



C.W. Henry Questions

What instrument do you play?

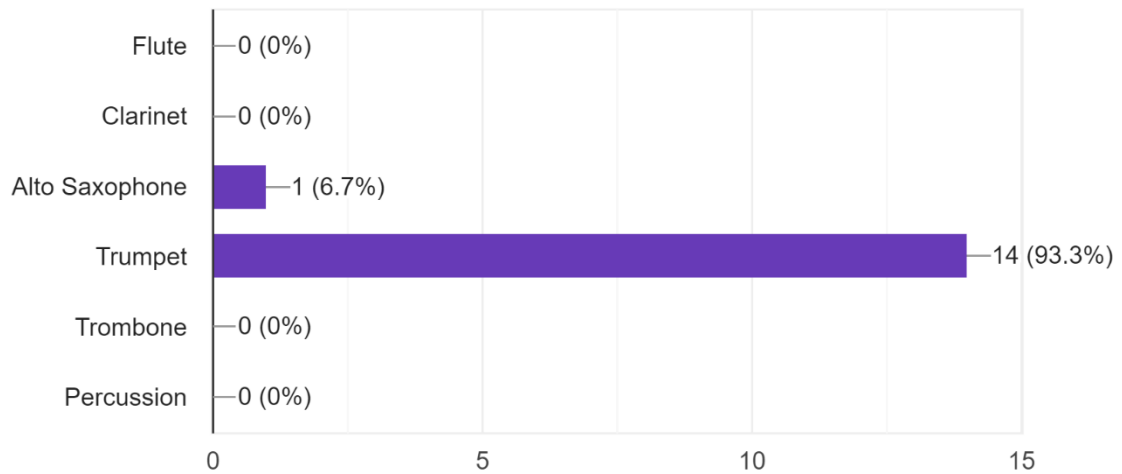
15 responses



WHY CAN'T WE ALL PLAY TOGETHER?

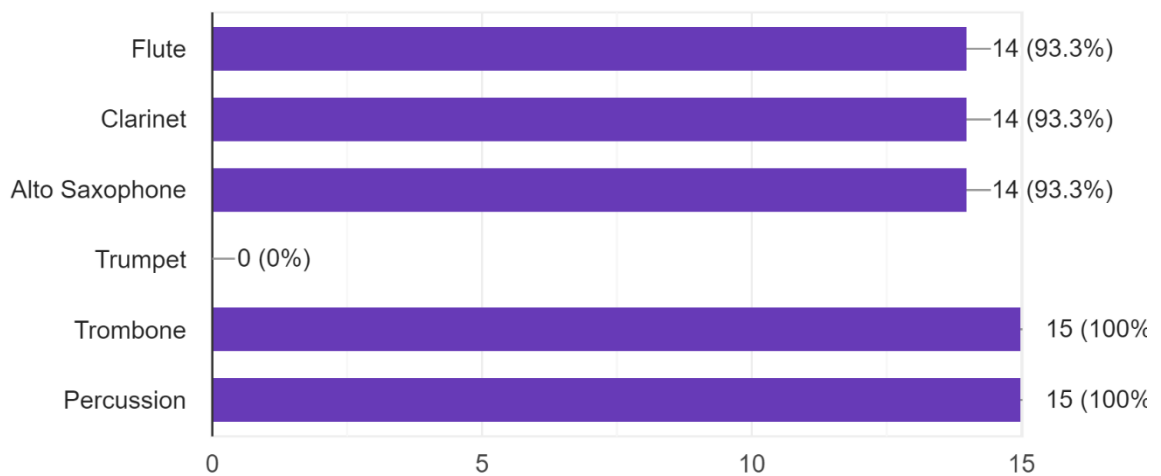
In Centurion, who has the melody at measure 5? (Check all that apply)

15 responses



In Centurion, who has the harmony/backgrounds at measure 5? (Check all that apply)

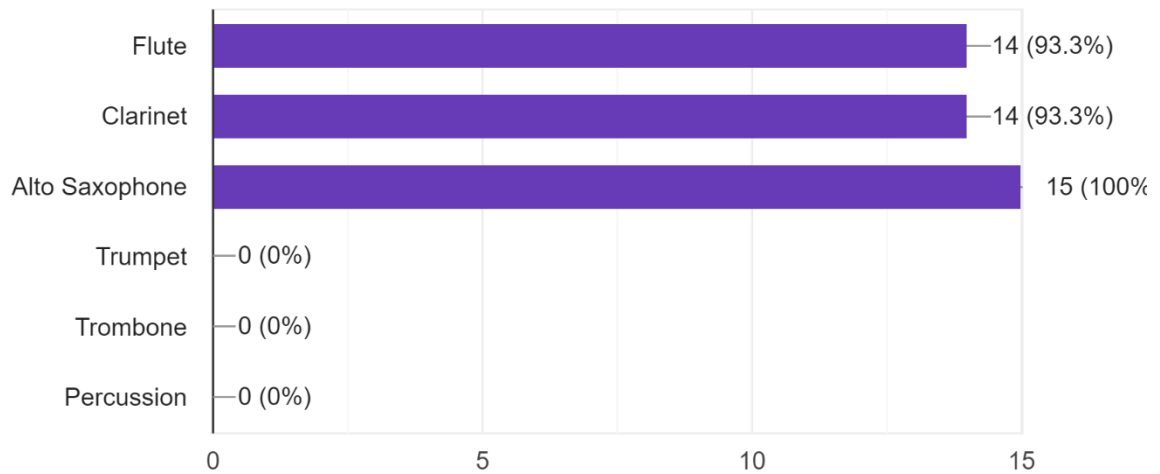
15 responses



WHY CAN'T WE ALL PLAY TOGETHER?

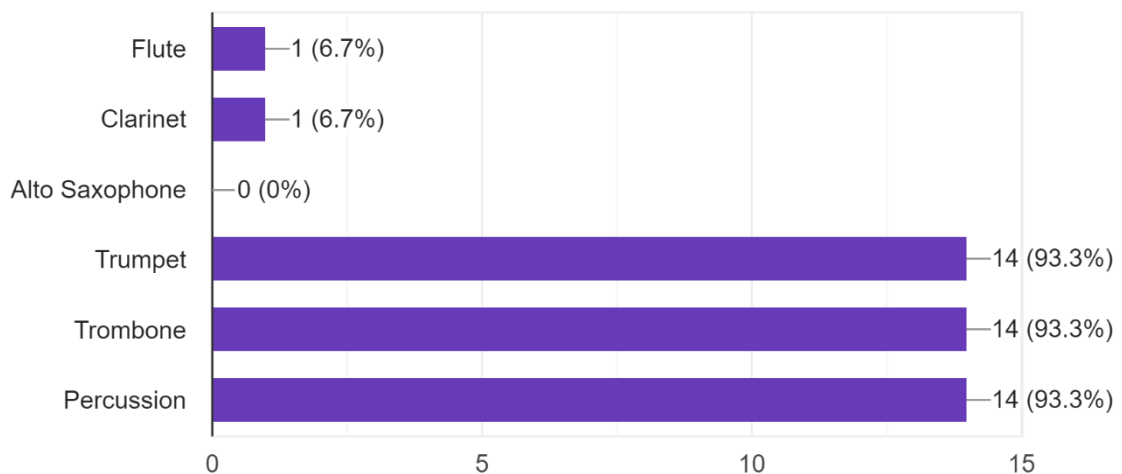
In Centurion, who has the melody at measure 13? (Check all that apply)

15 responses



In Centurion, who has the harmony/backgrounds at measure 13? (Check all that apply)

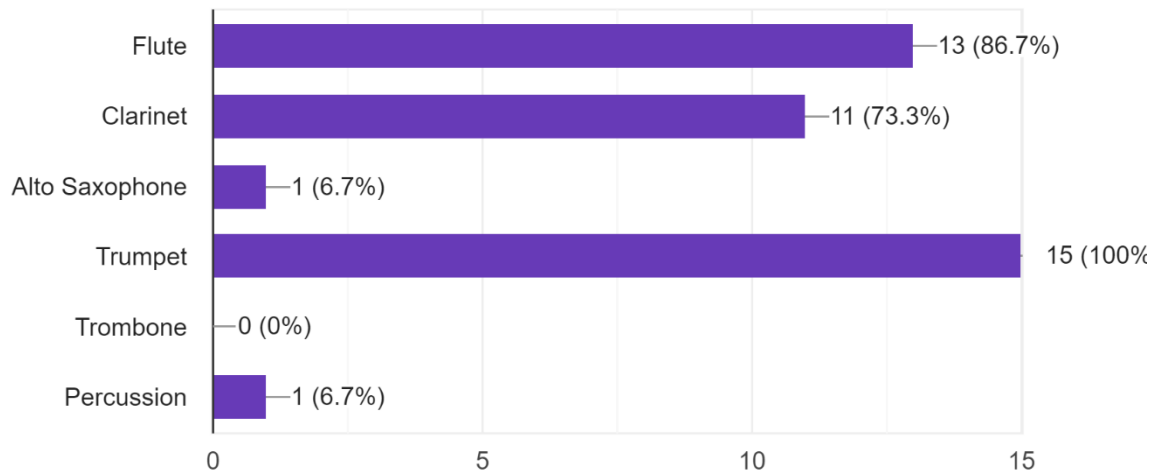
15 responses



WHY CAN'T WE ALL PLAY TOGETHER?

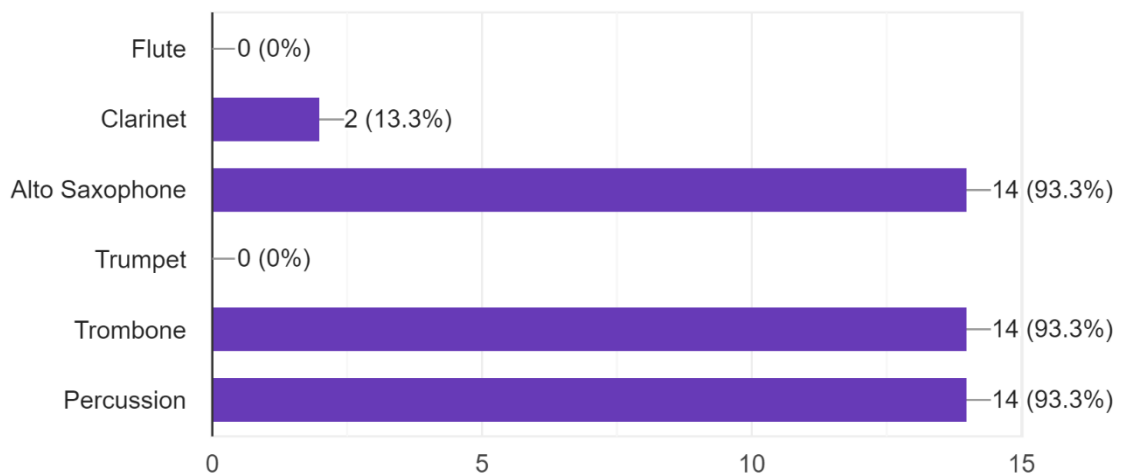
In Rock-It, who has the melody at measure 7? (Check all that apply)

15 responses



In Rock-It, who has the harmony/backgrounds at measure 7? (Check all that apply)

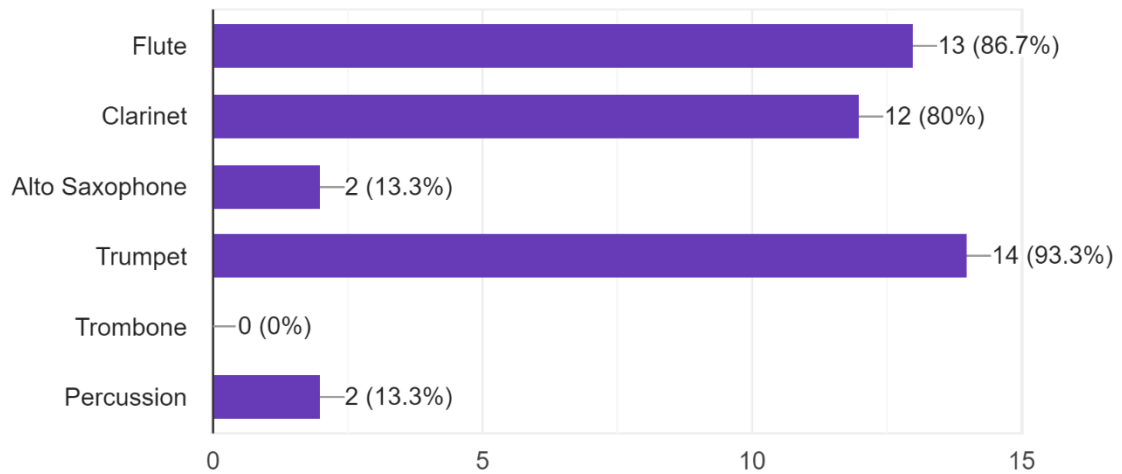
15 responses



WHY CAN'T WE ALL PLAY TOGETHER?

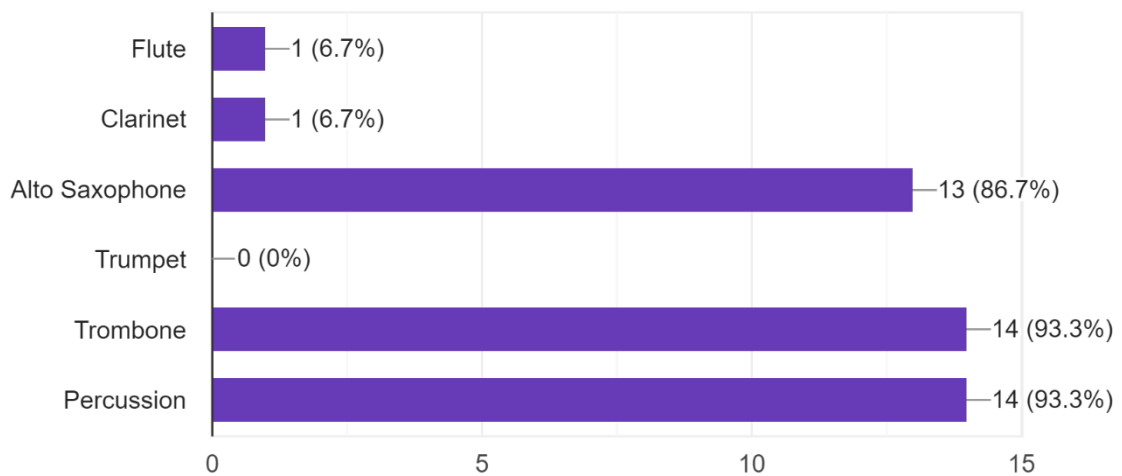
In Rock-It, who has the melody at measure 17? (Check all that apply)

15 responses



In Rock-It, who has the harmony/backgrounds at measure 17? (Check all that apply)

15 responses

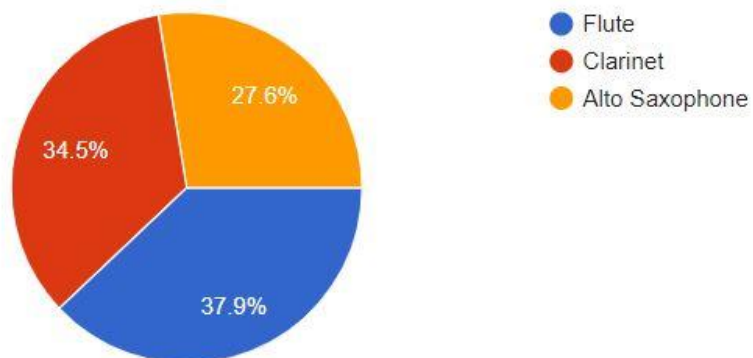


WHY CAN'T WE ALL PLAY TOGETHER?

J.R. Masterman Questions

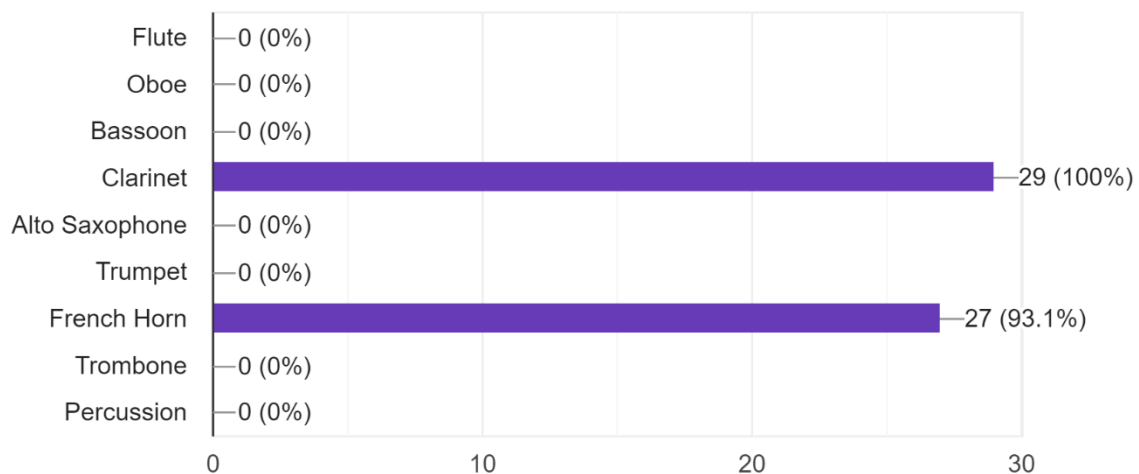
What instrument do you play?

29 responses



In Aladdin, who has the melody at measure 7? (Check all that apply)

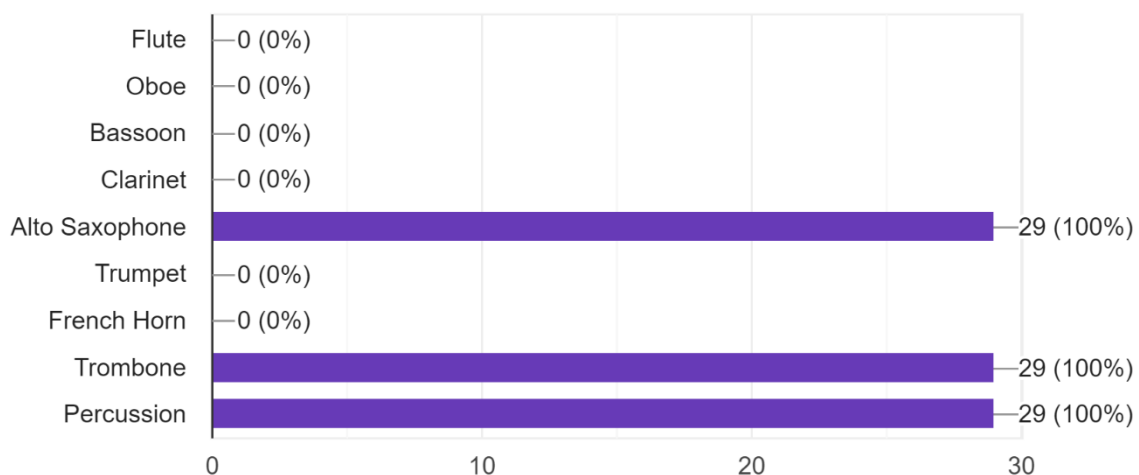
29 responses



WHY CAN'T WE ALL PLAY TOGETHER?

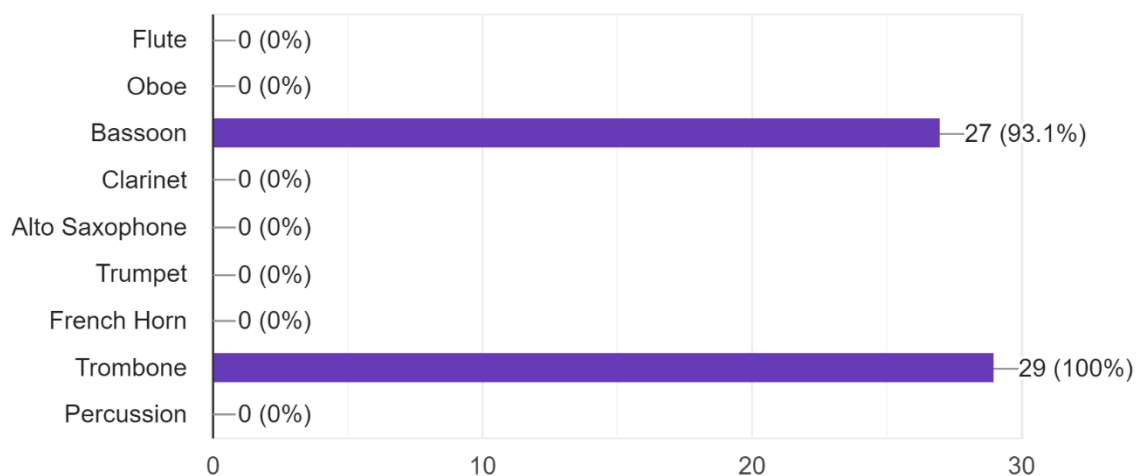
In Aladdin, who has the harmony/backgrounds at measure 7? (Check all that apply)

29 responses



In Aladdin, who has the melody at measure 45? (Check all that apply)

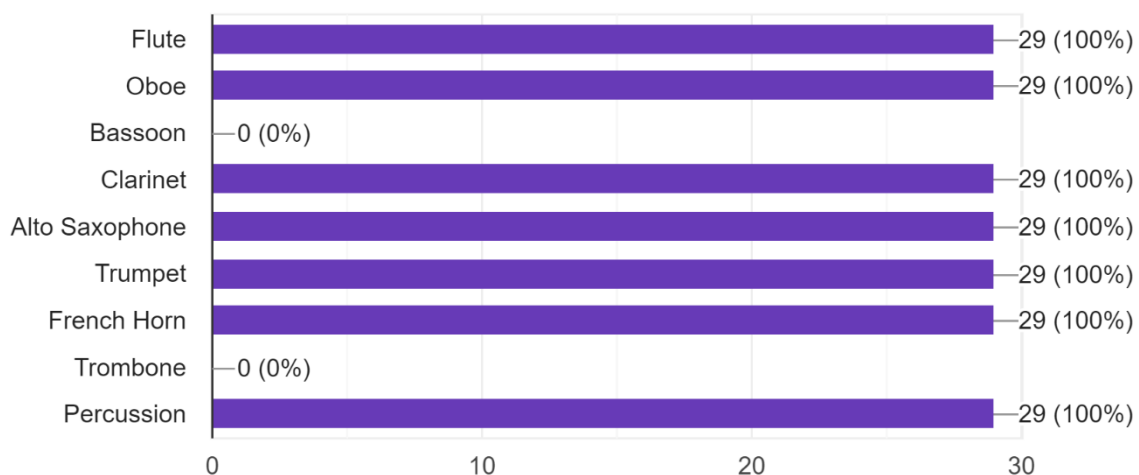
29 responses



WHY CAN'T WE ALL PLAY TOGETHER?

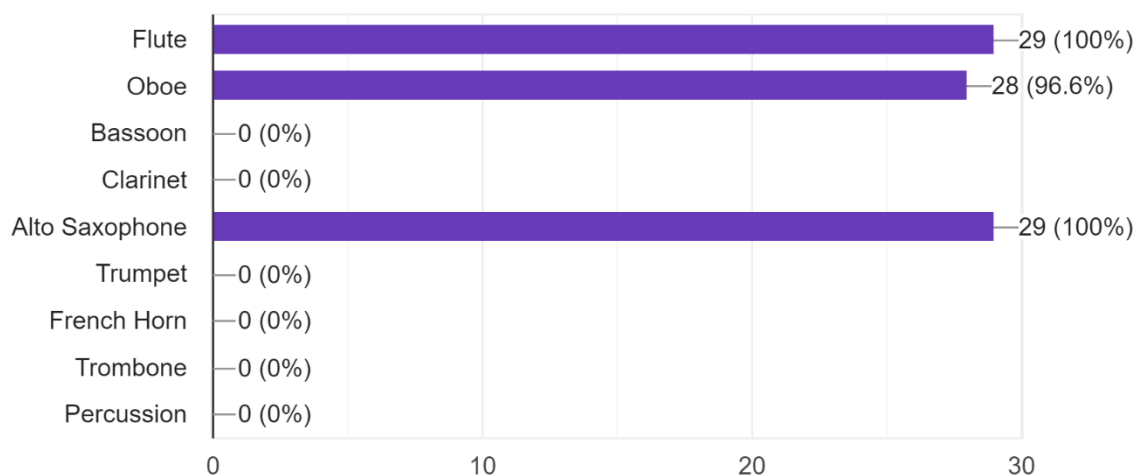
In Aladdin, who has the harmony/backgrounds at measure 45? (Check all that apply)

29 responses



In Thunder and Fury, who has the melody at measure 33? (Check all that apply)

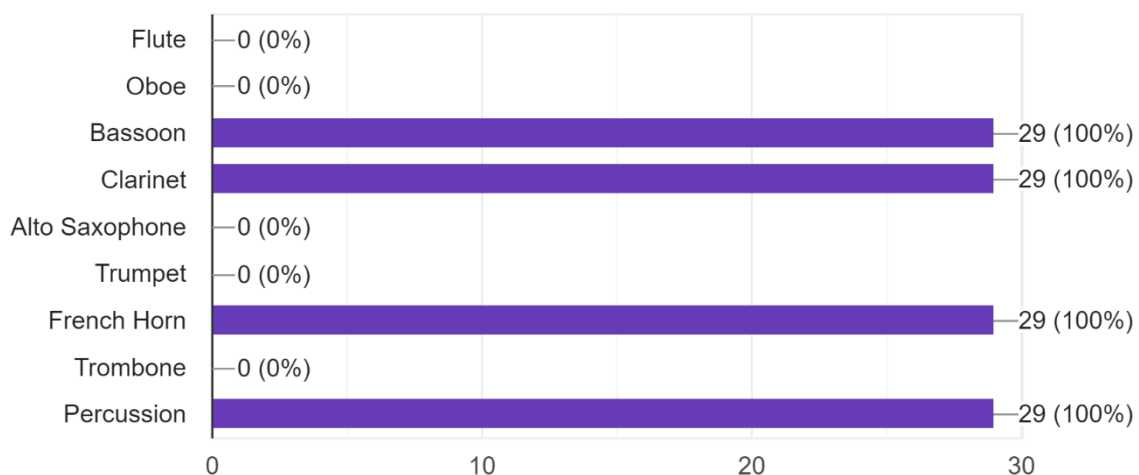
29 responses



WHY CAN'T WE ALL PLAY TOGETHER?

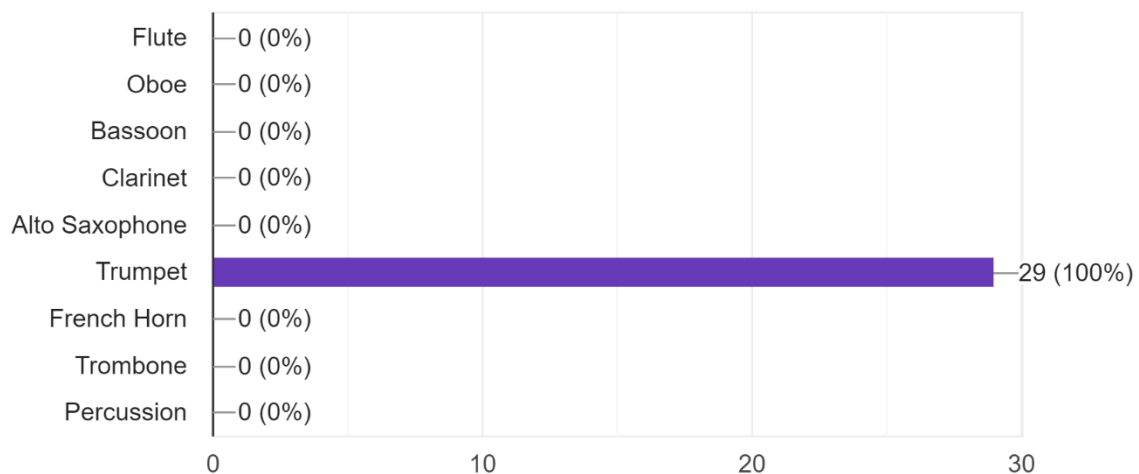
In Thunder and Fury, who has the harmony/backgrounds at measure 33? (Check all that apply)

29 responses



In Thunder and Fury, who has the melody at measure 85? (Check all that apply)

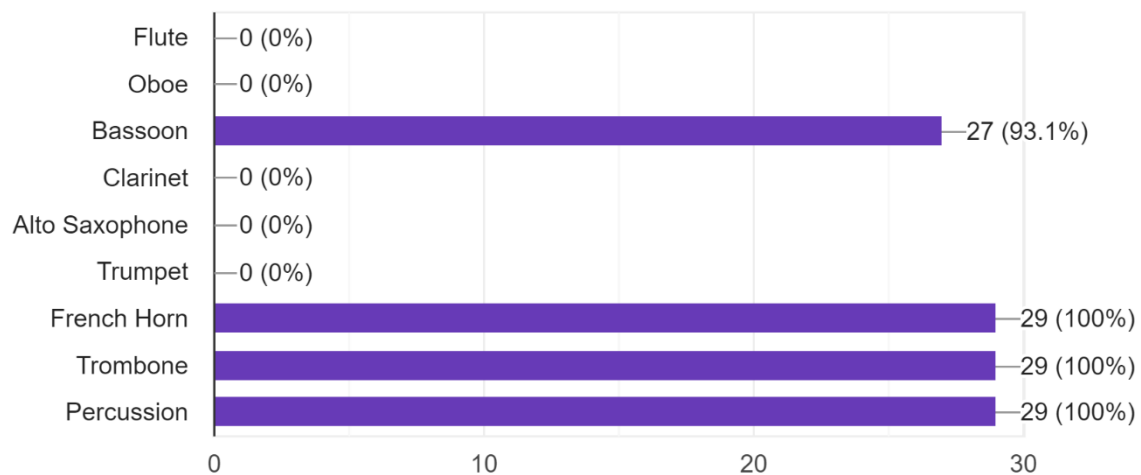
29 responses



WHY CAN'T WE ALL PLAY TOGETHER?

In Thunder and Fury, who has the harmony/backgrounds at measure 85? (Check all that apply)

29 responses



WHY CAN'T WE ALL PLAY TOGETHER?

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