

# WYSO Audition Booklet

## Strings, Woodwinds, Brass and Percussion Spring 2009

THIS INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE ONLINE AT  
[WYSO.MUSIC.WISC.EDU/AUDITIONS](http://WYSO.MUSIC.WISC.EDU/AUDITIONS)

APPLICATIONS DUE MARCH 14, 2009

### Table of Contents

History of the WYSO Program	Page 2
Eligibility and Audition Guidelines	Page 2
Audition Date Information	Page 3
Audition Location	Page 3
Audition Tips	Page 4
General Audition Criteria	Page 5
Youth and Philharmonia Strings Criteria	Page 6
Concert and Sinfonietta Strings Criteria	Page 7
Woodwind Criteria	Page 8
Brass Criteria	Page 9
Percussion Criteria	Page 10
WYSO Member Application	Page 11

#### Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestras

455 N. Park Street • Room 1625 Humanities • Madison • WI • 53706

Phone 608-263-3320 • Fax 608-265-3751

Email: [wyso@wyso.music.wisc.edu](mailto:wyso@wyso.music.wisc.edu) • Web: [wyso.music.wisc.edu](http://wyso.music.wisc.edu)

# History of the Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestras Program

Wisconsin Youth Symphony Orchestras (WYSO) was established in 1966 by Professor Marvin Rabin of the University of Wisconsin-Extension Music Department. More than 5,000 young musicians from more than 100 communities in southern Wisconsin have participated in WYSO during its 42 years of providing excellence in musical opportunities. Currently under the artistic direction of James Smith, WYSO includes three full orchestras, a string orchestra, a chamber music program, a harp program, a percussion ensemble, and a brass choir program.

The orchestras perform three to four public concerts per season and have toured regionally, nationally and internationally. The Youth Orchestra has toured to Austria, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Japan, Scotland, Spain, France, Canada, Washington, D.C., Colorado, and Iowa.

The WYSO program is a not-for-profit organization that relies upon many diverse constituencies for its financial stability. Students who successfully audition into the WYSO program are assessed a tuition charge of \$425 to \$550 per year. This tuition fee represents less than 30% of the total cost of a student musician's participation in WYSO. Families are expected to participate in fundraising activities to keep costs at a reasonable level. Need-based scholarship funds are available for tuition, private lessons, chamber music, and touring.

## Eligibility and Audition Guidelines

Eligibility requirements have been developed in order to ensure the highest quality musical, educational and social setting for all members. Students and parents should have realistic expectations and students should audition at the level most appropriate for their musical development. Consulting with a private teacher or school music teacher is recommended. WYSO is designed to be a sequential orchestral program; therefore, bypassing orchestras is not recommended. **Due to the large number of violin applicants, current WYSO violin players desiring to bypass an orchestra level (i.e. moving from Sinfonietta to Philharmonia) may only audition at the advanced level upon recommendation of the WYSO conductors.\***

### Youth Orchestra

Youth Orchestra is open to string, woodwind, brass and percussion students who will be age 13 or older by September 1 of the new school year. The Youth Orchestra is WYSO's premiere orchestra, performing advanced orchestral literature. Applicants should have several years of band or orchestra experience and perform individually at a pre-college or college level.

### Philharmonia Orchestra

Philharmonia Orchestra is open to string, woodwind, brass and percussion students who will be age 12 or older by September 1 of the new school year. Philharmonia Orchestra performs orchestral literature at the high school and college level, and members receive regular sectional coaching on the repertoire being rehearsed. Applicants should have three or more years of band or orchestra experience and perform individually at an advanced high school level.

\*Sinfonietta and Concert Orchestra violinists wishing to audition to bypass an orchestra must participate in preliminary auditions with their current conductor and the conductor of the advanced orchestra. Contact WYSO to register for a preliminary audition. The conductors will determine whether it is appropriate for the student to audition for the more advanced orchestra. Sinfonietta members are not permitted to audition for Youth Orchestra.

### Concert Orchestra

Concert Orchestra is open to string, woodwind, brass and percussion students who will be ages 11 through 16 on September 1 of the new school year. Current members older than age 16 may retain their chair. This orchestra performs music for full orchestra at the high school and advanced middle school level, and members receive regular sectional coaching on the repertoire being rehearsed. Applicants should have two to three years of band or orchestra experience and perform individually at a standard high school or advanced middle school level.

### Sinfonietta

Sinfonietta is open to string players who will be ages 10 through 14\*\* on September 1 of the new school year. Sinfonietta performs various levels of string orchestra literature from standard middle school (class C) to high school (class A) level, and members receive regular sectional coaching on the repertoire being rehearsed. Applicants should have at least two years of private study or school string experience, along with some ensemble playing.

\*\*Students who will be 9 years old on Sept. 1 may audition for Sinfonietta upon the recommendation of a private teacher. They must perform an outstanding audition and then meet individually with the Sinfonietta conductor to be considered for membership.

# 2009 Audition Date Information

## String Audition Schedule

SAT, February 28 • Violin Preliminaries for Current Members (see bottom of page 2)  
SUN, April 5 • Youth Orchestra Violin, Viola, Cello  
SAT, April 18 • Youth Orchestra String Re-auditions (if necessary)  
SUN, April 19 • Philharmonia Orchestra Violin, Viola, Cello; All String Bass  
SUN, April 26 • Concert Orchestra Violin; Concert Orchestra/Sinfonietta Viola & Cello  
SAT, May 2 • Sinfonietta Violin

## Woodwind, Brass and Percussion Audition Schedule

SUN, April 19 • Woodwind Auditions - Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon  
SUN, April 26 • Brass Auditions - Horn, Trumpet, Trombone, Tuba  
SUN, April 26 • Percussion Auditions  
MON/TUE, May 11 & 12 • Wind and Percussion Re-auditions (if necessary)

## Violin Section Auditions

All violinists accepted into Youth Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra, and Concert Orchestra will receive instructions in their acceptance packet regarding how to sign up for a section audition to be considered for the first violin section.

Monday eve, May 11 • Youth Orchestra Violin  
Tuesday eve, May 12 • Philharmonia Orchestra Violin, Concert Orchestra Violin

### Audition Time Assignments

**To register for an audition, WYSO must receive a fully completed Member Application and \$15 fee by Saturday, March 14.**

Applicants will receive an e-mail confirmation by **March 27**.

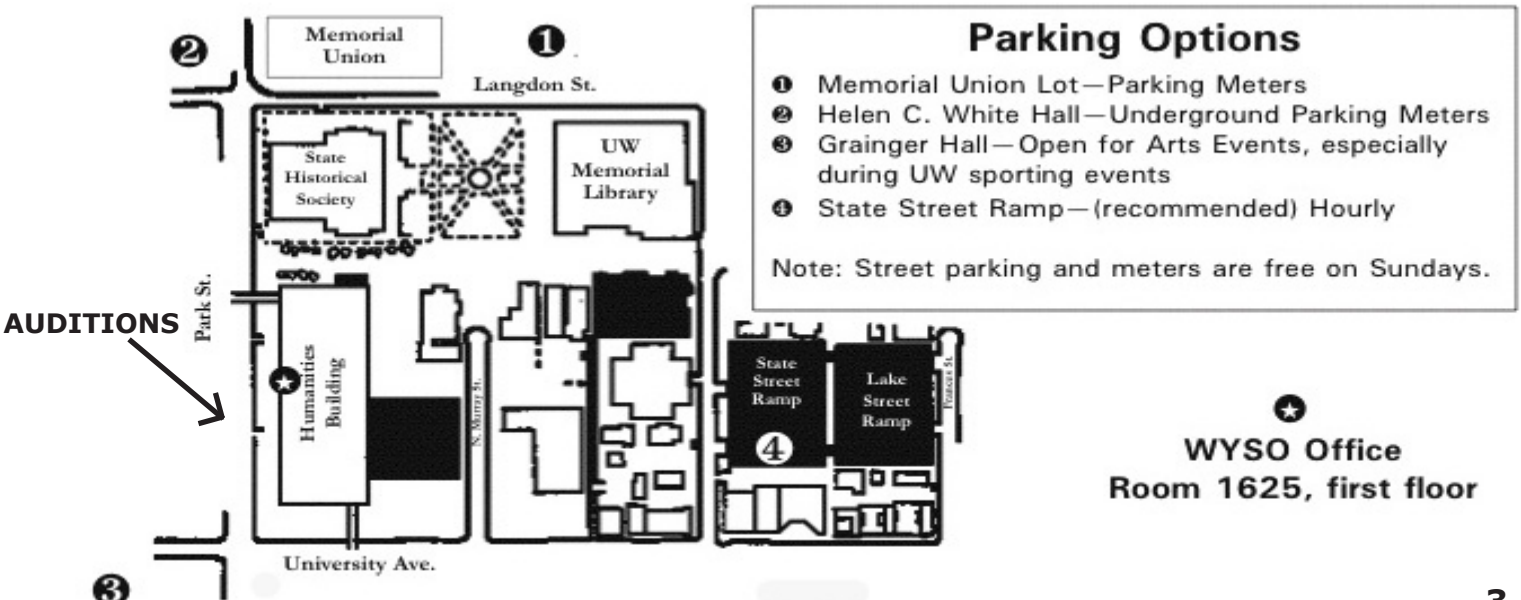
Please indicate any serious time conflicts on your application.  
WYSO will consider conflicts when assigning times, but has limited flexibility.

WYSO cannot offer alternate or make-up audition dates.

**You may submit an audio recording if you are unable to attend the audition on the date assigned for your instrument.**

**Contact the WYSO office for details.**

## Audition Location



# Audition Tips

## Making the Decision to Audition

The WYSO commitment includes attending Saturday morning rehearsals throughout the school year, performing in several concerts, and possibly missing one or two days of school for in-state school tours. Youth Orchestra members make an even larger commitment due to more concert dates and touring. Discuss the WYSO commitment with your family and how it will impact your school work, family time, friends and other extracurricular activities.

## Audition Preparation

- Read the entire audition packet! Call or e-mail the WYSO office with any questions.
- See page 3 of this booklet to determine for which orchestra(s) you are eligible to audition.
- Discuss with your private teacher and/or school music teacher all the criteria and skill levels for the orchestra that is best suited to your current abilities.
- Turn in your application by the due date.
- Make a plan for how and when you will practice.

## Practice Tips

- All areas of the audition (Scales, Solo, Excerpts, and Sight reading) are important!
- Practice with a metronome for even tempo and accurate rhythms.
- Scales: Prepare all scales required at the orchestra level for which you are auditioning. Maintain an even tempo throughout each scale.
- Solo: Prepare the best two minutes of a solo of your choice (three minutes for percussion).
- Excerpts: Prepare all excerpts required at the orchestra level for which you are auditioning. If available, obtain a recording of each work so you can learn the context of the excerpt.
- Sight reading: Work with your teacher on a variety of sight reading materials.

## Day of the Audition

- Put your best foot forward when auditioning. Dress clothing and a neat appearance are recommended.
- Make sure your instrument is in top shape. Bring extra strings or reeds just in case.
- Checklist: Instrument and accessories, your solo music, two photocopies of your solo music for the judges, printed scales (for strings) and excerpts from WYSO, map to the audition.
- Arrive 20 to 30 minutes before your audition so you have plenty of time to check in and warm up. Auditions usually run on schedule. If parking is a problem, have a parent drop you off first. Registration is in Room 1621, Humanities Building.
- Be outside the assigned audition room five minutes before your scheduled audition. A judge will indicate he or she is ready to begin the audition. Please do not play your instrument in the hallway as the sound may interfere with other auditions.

## During the Audition

- When you enter the room, state your name for the judges and hand them your photocopied solo music and orchestra choice form (winds only).
- Before playing your solo, state the title, composer and movement (if applicable).
- Count through all rests in the excerpts. The rests are part of the music.
- Take about 20 seconds to look at the sight reading excerpts before you begin to play. Think about the tempo. Choose a slower tempo for improved accuracy rather than one that is too fast. If you make a mistake, keep going.
- Audition time is limited so come prepared. Make the best of every minute you have.
- Do not ask the judges for any results during the audition. Results will be mailed to you.

# General Audition Criteria

Every student auditioning for a WYSO orchestra is required to prepare materials from the categories listed below. Specific requirements within each category are determined by the instrument the student plays and the orchestra level for which he or she chooses to audition. The requirements are listed on pages 6-10 of this booklet.

1. **Scales (memorized) for winds, brass and percussion:** The goal is to demonstrate a concept of different tonalities, tone quality and range development. Different scales are required for each level.
2. **Scales for strings (memorization not required):** The goal is to demonstrate knowledge and expertise of different tonalities, tone quality, range development, bowing styles, and articulations. Different scales are required for each level.
3. **Prepared solo:** Two minutes for strings, woodwinds and brass; three minutes for percussion. All students must bring two photocopies of their solo music for the judges.
4. **Orchestral Excerpts (online as of 2/28/09):** Excerpts are tiered by difficulty and are reflective of the level of repertoire studied and performed by each orchestra.
5. **Sight reading:** Provided by judges during the audition

## Judges evaluate students on the following overall qualities:

<b>Articulation</b>	Does the student perform articulations clearly and as marked?
<b>Intonation</b>	Are pitches in tune, or is there a tendency to go sharp or flat?
<b>Musicianship</b>	How well does the student make dynamic contrasts and interpret the music?
<b>Rhythm</b>	How precisely does the student play rhythmic figures in the context of a piece?
<b>Technique</b>	How strong is the student's technical facility?
<b>Tone</b>	Is the tone focused and is it characteristic?
<b>Sight Reading</b>	How well can the student play a previously unseen piece of music?
<b>Transposition</b>	May be required in some excerpts for horn and trumpet.
<b>Other Clefs</b>	May be required in some excerpts for strings, bassoon and trombone.

Placement into a specific ensemble is based primarily on achievement in these areas, but is also on the difficulty as well as musicianship displayed in the audition performance; prior orchestral or band experience; musical, social and emotional maturity; and instrumental need in the ensembles. WYSO realizes an audition is a one-day experience and that audition performance in that instance is the primary indicator of skill and ability. In addition to the audition results, the history of members is reviewed for attendance issues, behavioral issues and responsibility issues. Those showing strong records in these areas will be given preference over those not demonstrating commitment and discipline in these areas.

WYSO's intent is to do what will be in the best interest of both the student and the overall program. The audition judges, the WYSO music director and conductors, and the administrative staff all work together for what we hope will be the best result. WYSO strongly believes being a member of an orchestra is more than how "YOU play YOUR part" and is about striving for the highest level of educational and ensemble achievement. Good orchestra members come to rehearsal, actively practice to have parts prepared, listen and focus attentively, actively make adjustments during rehearsal, bring a positive attitude and spirit, desire to grow as musicians and understand their role as an ensemble member. WYSO is an organization with a strong history and welcomes members to become part of this tradition of excellence.

# 2009 Audition Requirements and Minimum Proficiency Levels

## Youth Orchestra Strings

**Violin, Viola, Cello Auditions** • Sunday, April 5, 2009  
**String Re-auditions (if necessary)** • Saturday afternoon, April 18, 2009  
**All String Bass Auditions** • Sunday, April 19, 2009  
**Violin Section Auditions** • Monday evening, May 11, 2009

### Minimum Proficiency Levels

#### **Violin/Viola**

Facility in advanced positions • Established Vibrato  
Violists should have knowledge of Treble Clef

#### **Cello**

Facility in 1st through Thumb Position • Established Vibrato  
Knowledge of Tenor Clef and Acquaintance with Treble Clef

#### **String Bass**

Facility in Half through Thumb Position • Knowledge of Tenor Clef

### Audition Requirements

1. Scales for Youth Orchestra—Memorization is not required.
2. Two minutes of a prepared solo—Bring two photocopies for the judges.
3. Orchestral excerpts for Youth Orchestra (online as of 2/28).
4. Sight reading provided by the judges.

## Philharmonia Orchestra Strings

**Violin, Viola, Cello Auditions** • Sunday, April 19, 2009  
**All String Bass Auditions** • Sunday, April 19, 2009  
**Violin Section Auditions** • Tuesday evening, May 12, 2009

### Minimum Proficiency Levels

#### **Violin/Viola**

Facility in 1st through 3rd Position (through 5th preferred) • At Least Beginning Stages of Vibrato  
Violists should have knowledge of Treble Clef

#### **Cello**

Facility in 1st through 4th Position, Acquaintance with Thumb Position  
At Least Beginning Stages of Vibrato • Acquaintance with Tenor Clef

#### **String Bass**

Facility in Half through Thumb Position

### Audition Requirements

1. Scales for Philharmonia Orchestra—Memorization is not required.
2. Two minutes of a prepared solo—Bring two photocopies for the judges.
3. Orchestral excerpts for Philharmonia Orchestra (online as of 2/28).
4. Sight reading provided by the judges.

# Concert Orchestra and Sinfonietta Strings

## Minimum Proficiency Levels

- Ability to use all parts of bow • Good hand position and mobility of fingers
- Produce a clean, clear sound with a centered pitch
- Solid tone production—beginning vibrato or readiness to begin vibrato required.
- Control of bow in different articulation styles (staccato, spiccato, legato, etc.)
- Facility in 3rd position is required for Concert Orchestra and 1st violins in Sinfonietta.

## Audition Requirements

### Concert Orchestra Violin

**Concert Orchestra Violin Auditions** • Sunday, April 26, 2009

**Violin Section Auditions** • Tuesday evening, May 12, 2009

1. Scales for Concert Orchestra Violin—Memorization is not required.
2. Two minutes of a prepared solo—Bring two photocopies for the judges.
3. Orchestral excerpts for Concert Orchestra (online as of 2/28).
4. Sight reading provided by the judges.

### Sinfonietta Violin

**Sinfonietta Violin Auditions** • SATURDAY, May 2, 2009

Sinfonietta violin section placement (1st or 2nd) is determined by the conductor's review of the judge's audition results.

1. Scales for Sinfonietta Violin—Memorization is not required.
2. Two minutes of a prepared solo—Bring two photocopies for the judges.
3. Orchestral excerpts for Sinfonietta (online as of 2/28).
4. Sight reading provided by the judges.

### Concert Orchestra and Sinfonietta Viola, Cello, and String Bass

**Concert Orchestra/Sinfonietta Viola and Cello Auditions** • Sunday, April 26, 2009

**All String Bass Auditions** • Sunday, April 19, 2009

These students audition once and are placed according to their ability level.

1. Scales for Concert Orchestra/Sinfonietta—Memorization is not required.
2. Two minutes of a prepared solo—Bring two photocopies for the judges.
3. Orchestral excerpts for Concert Orchestra/Sinfonietta (online as of 2/28).
4. Sight reading provided by the judges.

# Woodwinds (Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon)

Woodwind Auditions • Sunday, April 19, 2009

Woodwinds should prepare the audition requirements for their first choice orchestra. They will be considered for all orchestras up to the level for which they audition. Students are encouraged to audition at the level that best represents their current ability.

## **Woodwind Audition Requirements - All Levels**

- 1. Two minutes of a prepared solo. Bring two photocopies for the judges.**
- 2. Sight read a piece provided by the judges during the audition.**
- 3. Scales and excerpts listed below for your preferred orchestra:**

### Youth Orchestra Scales and Excerpts

1. Memorized Scales (ascending and descending): All 2-octave major scales through four sharps and four flats; 2-octave melodic or harmonic minor scales (your choice) through three sharps and three flats; chromatic scale of two or more octaves to demonstrate your performing range. You will be asked to play three scales.  
Note: Scales should be performed in eighth notes at a minimum tempo of quarter note=60, but not faster than you can play cleanly and evenly.
2. Excerpts labeled A and B (online as of 2/28).

### Philharmonia Orchestra Scales and Excerpts

1. Memorized Scales (ascending and descending): All 2-octave major scales through three sharps and three flats; 2-octave melodic or harmonic minor scales (your choice) through two sharps and two flats; chromatic scale of two or more octaves to demonstrate your performing range. You will be asked to play three scales.  
Note: Scales should be performed in eighth notes at a minimum tempo of quarter note=60, but not faster than you can play cleanly and evenly.
2. Excerpts labeled B and as much of A as possible (online as of 2/28).

### Concert Orchestra Scales and Excerpts

1. Memorized Scales (ascending and descending): All 1-octave major scales through three sharps and three flats (two octaves on the advice of your teacher); chromatic scale of at least one octave to demonstrate your performing range. You will be asked to play three scales.  
Note: Scales should be performed in eighth notes at a minimum tempo of quarter note=60, but not faster than you can play cleanly and evenly.
2. Excerpts labeled B (online as of 2/28).

# Brass (Horn, Trumpet, Trombone, Tuba)

**Brass players are required to participate in the brass choir program which meets Saturday mornings before orchestra rehearsals and performs two recitals each season.**

**Brass Auditions • Sunday, April 26, 2009**

Brass players should prepare the audition requirements for their first choice orchestra. They will be considered for all orchestras up to the level for which they audition. Students are encouraged to audition at the level that best represents their current ability.

## **Brass Audition Requirements - All Levels**

- 1. Two minutes of a prepared solo. Bring two photocopies for the judges.**
- 2. Sight read a piece provided by the judges during the audition.**
- 3. Scales and excerpts listed below for your preferred orchestra:**

### Youth Orchestra Scales and Excerpts

1. Memorized Scales (ascending and descending): All 2-octave major scales through four sharps and four flats; 2-octave melodic or harmonic minor scales (your choice) through three sharps and three flats; chromatic scale of two or more octaves to demonstrate your performing range. You will be asked to play three scales.  
Note: Scales should be performed in eighth notes at a minimum tempo of quarter note=60, but not faster than you can play cleanly and evenly.
2. Excerpts labeled A and B (online as of 2/28).  
Horns and trumpets: One or more excerpts may include transposition.

### Philharmonia Orchestra Scales and Excerpts

1. Memorized Scales (ascending and descending): All 2-octave major scales through three sharps and three flats; 2-octave melodic or harmonic minor scales (your choice) through two sharps and two flats; chromatic scale of two or more octaves to demonstrate your performing range. You will be asked to play three scales.  
Note: Scales should be performed in eighth notes at a minimum tempo of quarter note=60, but not faster than you can play cleanly and evenly.
2. Excerpts labeled B and as much of A as possible (online as of 2/28).  
Horns and trumpets: One or more excerpts may include transposition.

### Concert Orchestra Scales and Excerpts

1. Memorized Scales (ascending and descending): All 1-octave major scales through three sharps and three flats (2-octaves on the advice of your teacher); chromatic scale of at least one octave to demonstrate your performing range. You will be asked to play three scales.  
Note: Scales should be performed in eighth notes at a minimum tempo of quarter note=60, but not faster than you can play cleanly and evenly.
2. Excerpts labeled B (online as of 2/28).

# Percussion

**All percussionists are required to participate in the Percussion Ensemble which meets Saturday mornings before orchestra rehearsals from 7:30 to 9:30 AM. Percussion Ensemble members will be required to perform during concert performances of orchestras other than their own, as well as in the annual WYSO Percussion Extravaganza.**

**Percussion Auditions • Sunday, April 26, 2009**

Percussionists should prepare the audition requirements for their first choice orchestra. They will be considered for all orchestras up to the level for which they audition. Students are encouraged to audition at the level that best represents their current ability.

**WYSO provides the following audition instruments for both warm-up and the audition:**

4 Timpani, Snare Drum, Marimba, Xylophone, Vibraphone

**Students must bring to the audition:**

Snare drum sticks, xylophone and marimba mallets, timpani mallets and pitchpipe or tuning fork. Students must provide two photocopies of their solo music for the judges.

## **Percussion Audition Requirements - All Levels**

- 1. Solo on either Xylophone, Marimba, Vibraphone, Snare Drum or Timpani. Memorization is not required. The solo portion should be three minutes or less. Bring two photocopies for the judges.**
- 2. Sight-reading: Judges will provide sight-reading for Xylophone/Marimba, Snare Drum and Timpani.**
- 3. Scales and excerpts listed below for your preferred orchestra:**

### Youth Orchestra Scales and Excerpts

1. Memorized Scales (ascending and descending): All two-octave major scales through 4 sharps and 4 flats; two-octave melodic or harmonic minor scales (your choice) through 3 sharps and 3 flats. You will be asked to play three scales.  
Note: Scales should be performed in eighth notes at a minimum tempo of quarter note=60, but not faster than you can play cleanly and evenly.
2. Excerpts labeled A and B (online as of 2/28).

### Philharmonia Orchestra Scales and Excerpts

1. Memorized Scales (ascending and descending): All two-octave major scales through 3 sharps and 3 flats; two-octave melodic or harmonic minor scales (your choice) through 2 sharps and 2 flats. You will be asked to play three scales.  
Note: Scales should be performed in eighth notes at a minimum tempo of quarter note=60, but not faster than you can play cleanly and evenly.
2. Excerpts labeled B and as much of A as possible (online as of 2/28).

### Concert Orchestra Scales and Excerpts

1. Memorized Scales (ascending and descending): All 1-octave major scales through 3 sharps and 3 flats (two octaves on the advice of your teacher). You will be asked to play three scales.  
Note: Scales should be performed in eighth notes at a minimum tempo of quarter note=60, but not faster than you can play cleanly and evenly.
2. Excerpts labeled B (online as of 2/28).