

## **“CUMULATIVE RHYTHM EVALUATION SYSTEM to assess COMPREHENSION”**

Purpose of the “CRESC.” Assessment Tool:

- To evaluate rhythm comprehension and sight reading skill level to assess individual member’s band level or ensemble chair placement.
- To measure the successful teaching of rhythms to individual members of an ensemble. Since there is more than one tool, they can be used for pre-evaluation, mid-semester, and post-evaluation(s), or any combination desired by the instructor.
- To assess individual or ensemble area(s) of weakness in counting. Using this data, strategies can then be devised to target these specific areas for improvement.
- To begin experimenting with a performance assessment tool in case in the future, some kind of “hard” form of evaluation assessment is required to account for our student musicians’ progress. A performance based format would definitely be in our program’s best interest over some form of written “standardized test”.
- To be used as rhythm reading instructional material. This is possible since each tool is transposed, and melodically compatible with all wind and string instruments.

The initial focus will be on the measurement of each student’s present level of rhythmic comprehension, or to measure the extent or scope of his or her “whole language rhythm vocabulary” knowledge. In addition, it will then help music educators determine when some kind “phonetic” or “analysis” counting system must kick in. The tool itself is broken down by the individual units in the book (except for unit #6, since no new rhythms are introduced) and all measures are numbered for easy identification. This design is to help aide music educators in being very specific in which areas or rhythms they wish to target. Each tool takes a little over two minutes to play, at 60 beats per minute, if the entire assessment is performed. Accommodations are made for students with a more limited rhythmic vocabulary, by stopping them in any counting area where full credit is lost for three consecutive measures. This may shorten the overall time necessary to complete the assessments in any given class.

There are 150 total points possible, with 10 additional “bonus points” for accurately and recognizably performing articulation differentiations in ten targeted measures. It should be stressed to your students that the tool is designed to give them credit for the rhythms that they perform correctly. If assessments are done during class time, the students not performing can actively participate using the “S.A.S” tools, or “Student Assessment Sheets”. They follow along and also evaluate which measures are performed correct, any hesitation or “speeding up” problems, and if “bonus credit” should be given for the accurate performance of articulation markings. After assessments, a brief class critique can be given, giving both positive and negative feedback to the student that just performed. Accurate student assessments (those matching closely the teachers) can be reward with additional “extra credit” on their final performance score when it is their turn to perform.

Additional individual and ensemble aides, such as: “Power Grids”, sight reading etudes, rhythm theory and counting sheets, as well as additional “CRESC.” tools and “S.A.S” sheets are available and can be downloaded (in “PDF” format) at [www.rhythmmasters.org](http://www.rhythmmasters.org) . All materials on the “Rhythm Masters” web site are free and can be used by teachers for additional resources, or by the students themselves, who would like to down load additional practice materials.