

# Front Ensemble Arranging Philosophy

## My Golden Rule for Front Ensemble Arranging:

- The front ensemble should transform the marching percussion section into its own “band” within the band.
  - Wherever possible, at least one instrument in the front ensemble needs to feature melodic content

## Each Instrument’s General Role in a Multi-Talent Level Front Ensemble Chart

### Glockenspiel:

- Plays melodic content
- Usually the sparsest and easiest mallet part in the front ensemble

### Xylophone:

- Plays melodic content, but with rolls on longer sustained notes
- Can function as a ostinato bass pattern in octaves
- Can also be used to outline block chords
- Usually the second easiest mallet part in the front ensemble

### Vibraphone 1:

- Hardest four mallet vibraphone material that the ensemble can handle
  - Prioritizes permutations over block chords

### Vibraphone 2:

- Easier four mallet material (depending on the skill of the player)
  - Prioritizes block chords over permutations

### Vibraphone 3:

- Two mallet material (difficulty depends on ensemble’s skill level)
- Either plays melodic content or outlines chords (or both depending on the musical situation)

### Marimba 1:

- Hardest four mallet marimba material that the ensemble can handle
  - Prioritizes permutations over block chords
- Usually in the middle register of the instrument

### Marimba 2:

- Easier four mallet material (depending on the skill of the player)
  - Prioritizes block chords over permutations
- Usually in the middle register of the instrument

### Marimba 3:

- Easy four mallet material
  - Prioritizes block chords over permutations
- Usually in the higher register of the instrument

### Marimba 4:

- Two mallet material (difficulty depends on ensemble’s skill level)
- Either plays melodic content or outlines chords (or both depending on the musical situation)

\*If there are no four mallet players in the ensemble, all mallet parts divert to playing melodic content or outlining chords.