A Handbook for Writing
For use by students in the
School of Music

Jamie Weaver, PhD
&
David Howard, DMA

Stephen F. Austin State University

2011
## Contents

Part One: Style Guide ................................................................. 2
Part Two: Documentation .......................................................... 4
Part Three: Grammar Guide ....................................................... 11
Part Four: Guidelines for Research ............................................. 17
Part Five: Guideline for Writing Musical Analysis ....................... 19
Part Six: Guideline for Writing Program Notes ......................... 21
PART ONE: STYLE GUIDE

1.1 Musical style periods and centuries

Musical style periods are generally capitalized
Middle Ages, but medieval music
Renaissance period
Baroque era
Classical era
Romantic composers and romanticism
Impressionist era and impressionism
contemporary music

Centuries are lower case (don’t use Arabic numerals, ex: 20\textsuperscript{th})
twentieth-century music (hyphenate the two adjectives)
twentieth-century music
nineteenth-century Lieder
sixteenth-century motets
in the seventeenth century (no hyphen)

1.2 Dynamics and other musical instructions

Use complete words, not abbreviations (ex: forte, not f)
Use italics. (ex: da capo, a cappella, piano)

1.3 Tonalities, genre, forms, and sections of forms

Keys (major/minor), modes, scales are not capitalized unless they are part of the titles.
Beethoven’s sonata modulates to B minor
Bach’s B Minor Mass

Genre names are usually lower case unless refer to a specific title.
fugue
sonata
symphony
string quartet
madrigal
suite

Musical forms and sections of forms are not capitalized.
ritornello form
sonata form
binary form
da capo form
overture
recitatives and arias
exposition, development, and recapitulation
1.4 Instrumental/voice names, tempi, pitches, time signatures, chords

*Instrument and voice names are lower case.*
contrabassoon
oboe
violin
cello
soprano
counter-tenor or countertenor
baritone
french or english horns (does not literally refer to a nationality)

*Tempo markings…*
are not capitalized except when they refer to the beginning of a movement or are included in a title.
Ex: In the *Allegro* movement…

*Pitches, chords and time signatures*
Pitches are capitalized in written text. Chords are rendered in roman numerals.
*Blow the Man Down* begins on G and on the tonic chord, but moves to a V7.
4/4, 9/8, 3/2 (do not use fractions with one number over the other).

1.5 Titles (font style and quotation marks)
Generally, titles of musical works are italicized while sections within larger works are placed in quotation marks.
“Va tacito e nascosto” from *Giulio Cesare in Egitto* by G.F. Handel is an excellent example of da capo form.
“Kyrie” from Mozart’s *Grand Mass in C Minor*
The second movement of Beethoven’s *Sonata, Op. 22* titled, “Menuetto,” is particularly lovely.
PART TWO: DOCUMENTATION (Corresponding to the Chicago Manual of Style, 16th edition)

Please note that the footnote protocol is different than the bibliographical protocol. For ease of comparison, each bibliographical example that follows is accompanied by a corresponding footnote.

2.1 Books with One Author

Example 1:

Example 2:

Note – CMS 14.64: For successive entries by the same author, editor, translator, or compiler, a 3-em dash (followed by a period or comma, depending on the presence of an abbreviation such as ed.) replaces the name after the first appearance.

2.2 Books with Two or More Authors

Example 3:

Example 4 (three authors):

2.3 Edited/Translated Books

Example 5:

Example 6:

2.4 Edited/Translated/Compiled Books Where No Author Appears on the Title Page

Example 7:

Example 8:

2.5 Multivolume works or Series

Example 9 (Multivolume):

Example 10 (Multivolume w/editor):

Example 11 (Series):

2.6 Citing Just One Chapter of a Book

Example 12:

Example 13 (with editor):

2.7 Electronic Books

Example 14:

---

2.8 Journal Articles (accessed electronically or in printed format)

The writer should include all available information: author, title, subtitle, title of periodical, issue information, page reference, and URL or DOI for online periodicals.

**Example 15 (in print):**

**Example 16/17 (electronically):**

**Example 18 (date rather than issue number):**

**Example 19 (electronically):**

**Example 20 (foreign language):**

2.9 Theses/Dissertations

**Example 21 (formally published dissertation):**

**Example 22 (informally published thesis):**

---

17 Lewis, “‘Tis a Misfortune to Be a Great Ladie,’” 32. (Format used after first citation of same source)
21 Ira Jacobs, “Textus Macaronicus: The Prospect of Conflation” (PhD. diss., Michigan State University, 2008), 129.
2.10 Audiovisual Materials

Example 23 (musical recording):

Example 24 (DVD recording):

Example 25 (videocassette recording):

Example 26 (online multimedia):

2.11 Webpages and Weblogs

Example 27:

Example 28 (blog):

2.12 Musical Scores


Example 29:

Example 30:

2.13 Reviews of Musical Performances

Example 31:

2.14 Musical Recording Liner Notes

Example 32:

2.15 Liner Notes from a Performance

Example 33 (notes written by the performer):
Howard, David. Program notes for “Eastern Voices: Choral Music from Estonia, Russia, Latvia, Georgia, Bulgaria, Romania, the Czech Republic, and Hungary.” Choral concert, Stephen F. Austin State University Cole Concert Hall, November 2, 2010.33

2.16 Introductory Information found in a Musical Score

Example 34 (material not written by the composer):

33 David Howard, “Notes,” program notes for “Eastern Voices: Choral Music from Estonia, Russia, Latvia, Georgia, Bulgaria, Romania, the Czech Republic, and Hungary” (choral concert, Stephen F. Austin State University Cole Concert Hall, November 2, 2010).

**Example 35 (material written by the composer):**

2.17 Encyclopedias and Dictionaries

**Example 36 (New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, print version):**

**Example 37 (Grove Dictionary, Oxford Music Online):**

**Example 38 (well-known reference works):**
(Footnote only, generally not included in bibliography)38

2.18 When Citing Items Found in Music Libraries, Manuscript Collections, etc.

*From CMS 14.232:*

The 1987 edition of the Guide to the National Archives of the United States offers the following advice: Full identification of most unpublished material usually requires giving the title and date of the item, series title (if applicable), name of the collection, and name of the depository. Except for placing the cited item first [in a note], there is no general agreement on the sequence of the remaining elements in the citation… Whatever sequence is adopted, however, should be used consistently throughout the same work.”

*From CMS 14.233:*

In a note, the main element of a manuscript citation is usually a specific item (a letter, a memorandum, or whatever) and is thus cited first. In a bibliography, the main element is usually either the collection in which the specific item may be found, the author(s) of the items in the collection, or the depository for the collection.

**Example 39:**
Egmont Manuscripts. Phillips Collection. University of Georgia Library.39

---

39 James Oglethorpe to the Trustees, 13 January 1733, Phillips Collection of Egmont Manuscripts, 14200:13, University of Georgia Library.
2.19 Newspaper and Magazine

Example 40 (newspaper w/bibliographic entry, accessed online):
http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/26/sports/football/26vikings.html?emc=etal.\(^4^0\)

Example 41 (magazine):
Frank, Michael. “La Concha Revival: San Juan’s Tropical Modernist Gem Makes a Comeback.” *Architectural Digest*, August 2009.\(^4^1\)

\(^4^0\) Pat Borzi, “Retirement Discussion Begins Anew for Favre.” *New York Times*, January 25, 2010, 

PART THREE: GRAMMAR TIPS

3.1 IN GENERAL

1. Use consistent tenses:
   Wrong = “The French chanson was fostered primarily by Gounod, Berlioz, and Bizet.”
   (followed by) “They are outstanding composers of both vocal and instrumental music.”

2. Make sure there is agreement between the subject and verb, as well as between the pronoun and its antecedent:
   Wrong = “A series of articles were planned.”
   Wrong = “Both structure and harmonic language makes this opera unique.”
   Use parallel construction whenever possible:
   Wrong = “Some members of the faculty favor the semester system, others demand the quarter system, and from a third group comes the radical proposal for a trimester system.”

3. Avoid dangling modifiers, gerunds:
   Wrong = “Perched on a white divan in her sunny Rodeo Drive home, Jacqueline’s smoky green-gray eyes were thoughtful as she contemplated her role as Violetta in La traviata.”
   Wrong = “Reaching sixteen, my parents agreed to let me drive.”

4. Avoid confusing adverbs with adjectives:
   Wrong = “The composer made the music move slow so that the text would be well understood.”
   Better = “The composer wanted the passage to proceed slowly so that the text would be well understood.”
   Wrong = “The composer wrote slowly-moving notes so that the audience could understand the text.”
   Better = “The composer fashioned slow-moving phrases in order to preserve textual clarity.”

3.2 TIPS FOR STRUCTURE, STYLE, AND PUNCTUATION

1. INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPH. Its purpose is to ease the reader out of her other preoccupations into the world of your paper in as interesting a manner as you can manage.
   • Don't start in the middle of your topic as though the reader were already panting to know about it. Introduce her gradually but vividly to the problems you're going to explore.
   • Warning: avoid the temptation to start too generally (e.g., "Since the dawn of time, Man has told stories.")

2. CONCLUDING PARAGRAPH. Its purpose is to pan back from your focused argumentation, to consider its implications. Open up the problem a bit.

3. THESIS. State your thesis early on so that the reader can follow you (and with any luck believe you). Make sure it is interpretative, i.e. not a matter of fact, and controversial enough to need demonstrating. Tip: even if you have to write your entire paper before
being sure yourself of what you're claiming, go back and insert the thesis early on: keep the reader in mind.

4. QUOTATIONS.  
- Quote frequently from the text to support your claims. (Don’t ask the reader to take your word for it.)  
- Comment explicitly on every quotation. Bring out what you gathered from the quotation, both style and substance, and show how the quotation supports your interpretation. Remember, no two people will read a quotation in the same way. Don't end a paragraph (let alone a paper) with a quotation, unless you have a particularly compelling reason.  
- When you have several quotations which support your claim, don't pile them up in a list, unless they consist of single words. Give each quotation its own introduction and commentary.  
- Adapt the grammar of your lead-in to that of the quotation you’re inserting.

5. TOPIC SENTENCE. The first sentence of every paragraph should clearly announce the subject matter to follow. A topic sentence should promise no more than you can deliver in a paragraph of reasonable length.

6. PARAGRAPH STRUCTURE: Make it coherent, concise, and unified. As a rule of thumb, a paragraph longer than one page is out of control and needs subdividing. Avoid paragraphs of only one sentence.

7. TRANSITION. Make explicit but smooth transitions from one paragraph to the next. Make the transition informative but unobtrusive; it should recall and close the previous topic, as well as introducing the following one.

8. PAGE REFERENCES.  
- Give them for every quotation, in a footnote or endnote.  
- Always cite the edition / translation you are using.

9. INTRODUCING QUOTATIONS: give informative introductions to your quotation, rather than empty connectors. Compare the following:  
- Dante writes: "No man is an island..."  
- Dante uses imagery to claim that humankind is interconnected: "No man is an island..."

10. WORD CHOICE: Avoid words or phrases which are weak, vague, or too general. Choose pointed, clear words.  
- Avoid colloquialisms and contractions in academic writing.  
- Avoid malapropisms and near-misses (e.g., mystical for mysterious).  
- Avoid misusing the following confusing words and phrases:  
  - DATA for DATUM  
  - LESS for FEWER  
  - MEDIA for MEDIUM  
  - LIE for LAY  
  - ANXIOUS for EAGER  
  - JUDY AND I for JUDY AND ME
11. Avoid sexist language-
   • Wrong = "The professor knew he could respond accurately to the questions."
   • Wrong = "The student must complete his application by Friday."
   • Avoid stereotypes: co-ed, girl, fairer sex, man-made, mankind, congressman,
     chairman,
   • Gal, dumb blond, authoress, women's work, man-sized job.

12. Vary your lexicon: don't overuse the same words.

13. Ruthlessly cut out any words or phrases that aren't pulling their weight. Even if you aren't
    intending to pad your prose, the effect is the same: inert verbiage looks like filler, and
    slows down the drive of your writing.

14. PASSIVE VOICE: "The passive voice should not be used too often." (You should not
    use the passive voice too often.) It disguises who the true agent is, and it slows the
    prose down, making sentences bottom heavy and unwieldy. Use it sparingly, only when
    you want to emphasize a word by placing it first, or to simplify a transition.
    • Weak = "At the beginning of the first act the anguished voice of Wotan could be
      heard."

15. ACTIVE VERBS: Choose vivid verbs, rather than slowing down your writing with
    variations on the verb "to be" + adjective.

16. PREPOSITIONAL PHRASE OVERKILL. Rephrase a sentence to eliminate unnecessary
    prepositional phrases
    • Wrong = ("In the time of the overthrow of the civil government of Florence...")

17. APPEARANCE: Give your reader every aid to comprehension, and your paper all
    credibility which a clean, professional presentation can supply.
    • Inset every quotation which occupies over two lines of text.
    • Indent every paragraph five spaces, and leave no blank lines between
      paragraphs.
    • Leave 1-inch margins left, right, top, and bottom, use a normal font, and
      NUMBER YOUR PAGES.
    • Proofread for typos, syntax, misquotations, and misspellings. Using your spell
      and grammar check programs is not a substitute for proofreading.

18. SENTENCE FRAGMENTS: no. They rarely have the dramatic effect you might be
    hoping for.

19. STRUCTURE: For a comparison/contrast paper, don't organize your paper in a two-part
    fashion, e.g.:
    I. Introduction
    II. Caccini
    III. Monteverdi
    IV. Conclusion

    • This structure is tedious, and it doesn't tell the reader how the two composers are
      important to each other or how their works can illuminate each other. Moreover,
in Part II the reader has to do a lot of memory work in order to recall what you said in Part I that should be relevant to Part II.

- Instead, organize your essay thematically, and interlace the two works you discuss:

I. Introduction

II. Harmonic Language
   1. Caccini
   2. Monteverdi

III. Text Setting
   1. Caccini
   2. Monteverdi

IV. Conclusion

- This keeps relationships clear in your reader's mind, and clarity makes you more persuasive.

20. PLOT SUMMARY: Keep it to a bare minimum. Learn to make brief and synthetic sketches (10 words maximum), just to remind the reader what part of the story you are commenting on.

21. Vary the length, structure, and rhythm of your sentences.

22. SUBORDINATING CONJUNCTIONS: Use them to make clear connections between sentences. Organize and clarify for the reader what is obvious to you, using words such as therefore, consequently, however, still, nonetheless, thus, despite, etc.

23. COMMAS AND SEMI-COLONS:
   - Do not surround a comma with two clauses capable of standing alone as sentences, this is known as a comma splice.
   - Semi-colons, on the other hand, should surround clauses capable of standing alone as sentences; this is virtually its only correct use in academic prose, except to separate items in a list which follows a colon.

24. ACKNOWLEDGE ANY AND ALL SOURCES YOU USE: Whether you consult a book, a web site, or an expert to gain additional information for your paper, acknowledge it explicitly and correctly. You will gain credit for doing research, whereas if you fail to credit any source, you are plagiarizing. This is simply wrong, and the penalty for doing it is severe.

3.3 THIRTY-ONE WRITING RULES (The contents of this guide are derived from pedagogical resources created by Prof. Regina Psaki, and Prof. Gary Martin. These materials are reproduced here with their permission.

The Nitty Gritty: Thirty-one Writing Rules

1. Each pronoun agrees with their antecedent.

2. Just between you and I, case is important.
3. Verbs have to agree with their subjects.

4. Watch out for irregular verbs which have crope into our language.

5. Don't use no double negatives.

6. A writer musn't shift your point of view.

7. When dangling, don't use participles.

8. Join clauses good, like a conjunction should.

9. Don't write a run-on sentence you got to punctuate it.

10. About sentence fragments.

11. In letters themes reports articles and stuff like that we use commas to keep a string of them apart.

12. Don't use commas, which aren't necessary.

13. Its important to use apostrophe's right.

14. Don't abbrev.

15. Check to see if you any words out.

16. In my opinion I think that an author when he is writing shouldn't get into the habit of making use of too many unnecessary words that he does not really need.

17. It is wrong to completely split the infinitive.

18. A preposition is something you shouldn't end a sentence with.

19. Spel carefully and PROD FREAD!

20. The active voice should be used whenever possible.

21. Don't overuse the exclamation mark!

22. Don't overuse "legal" phraseology; the aforesaid does not, however, proscril te, foreclose and/or abolish, pro tanto, each and every exception hereinafter described, respectively, in regard thereto.

23. Hopefully, you will not gross out with colloquialisms.

24. Do not use adverbs unusually.

25. Use orthodox spelling thruout.
26. Unless it is not really warranted, try not to put language in anything but positive form.

27. It may seem sort of different than ordinary speech, but irregardless of what you've heard, write according to the rules.

28. Make sure that expressions are as good or better than if they were rearranged.

29. Be careful in using S' in the possessive.

30. Avoiding redundancy means maintaining a clear focus on basic essential fundamentals.

31. Last but not least, lay off cliches.

3.4 FAKE PAPER ABOUT MUSIC

The first topic I enjoyed him talking about from this book is about the somewhat unique meaning of music. In the book it was described how the people listen to music according to our separate capacities. The author's own belief was that, irregardless of its nature, all music has an expressive power, some more and some less, but that all music has a certain type meaning behind the notes constitutes, after all, what the piece is saying, what the piece is about.

Looking now at the orchestra and its conductor. The book explained the fact that the former may be considered as a large instrument capable of uttering at once or succesively a multitude of sounds of different kinds. Common sense tells the composer that in terms of instrumentation he is a man who should combine his mass of performers according to the style and character connected with the work he brings forth and according to the nature of the principal effects which the subject demands. Obviously, the less instruments employed the less variety in effect is possible. The conductor is bound to actually possess a clear idea of the principle point and character of the work of which he is about to superintend the performance or study.
PART FOUR: GUIDELINES FOR RESEARCHING TOPICS IN MUSIC

1. Make general notes about topics that interest you. Keep these very general, listing topics dealing with your performance instrument, your historical interests in music, or genres of music you enjoy.

2. Begin conducting electronic searches in library databases such as IIMP, RILM, Academic Search Complete, or the Biography Resource Center. Look up a variety of search terms and see what comes up. Be prepared to change your search terms to improve results. Follow search instructions for each database in order to maximize efficiency and results.

3. Keep a research log. Write down the terms you searched so that you don’t repeat searches unnecessarily. Also, log success with specific searches. Which yielded the most hits? Which databases were the most useful for you? Which items found in your searches will you check out from the library, order online, get through Interlibrary Loan, or discard? This may seem like an extra step, but you will be glad for your organization while preparing your paper.

4. Ask a reference librarian for assistance. Librarians are special people. They have learned the art of massaging computer databases until they reveal their secrets. They can provide ideas on additional search strategies, show you where sources are located, and guide you in making the best use of your library time. Get to know them and thank them when they are helpful.

5. Choose the most recent information first. Although older sources often remain valuable, it is important that your paper be based on the most recent research in your chosen field. When choosing sources that are more than twenty years old, please be sure that their content is still valid. You could lose points on a paper for presenting incorrect information.

6. Never, ever, under any circumstances, leave The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians out of your research process. This encyclopedia, now maintained on-line by Oxford Music, has been compiled by the best scholars in the field of music. Not only does it contain articles about composers, but it features helpful articles on terms, instrument histories, and non-musical subjects that are related closely to music. Always search in it when researching any musical topic. Pay special attention to the bibliography appended to each article. This will contain the most useful list of resources connected to your research term or name. Please consult the New Grove articles and bibliographies before telling your professor that you cannot locate any information on your topic.
7. When consulting a source, write down all pertinent bibliographic information clearly. This includes the page numbers for the source you are consulting. This will keep you from returning to the library to retrieve tiny bits of information.

8. Take notes in your own words while you read. Writing notes in your own words will help you to remember what you were thinking about your reading and to frame your thoughts within the paper itself.

9. Spend money on copies. If an article in a reference book interests you, do not assume that your own notes will be enough for you to work with when writing the paper. There will always be a quote for which you lack a page number, a sentence that you want to be careful not to plagiarize, or a concept about which you need more details. Having hard copies of your research materials in your hands is valuable. Retaining copies of your sources saves time and reduces stress.

10. Cite as you write. The decision to avoid inserting notes and bibliography entries while writing your paper is a decision to procrastinate, and procrastination often results in poor documentation of sources. If you cite each source as you reference it you will not forget it as you create new drafts of the paper. Remember that failing to cite a quotation from, or reference to a work can count as plagiarism.

11. Proofread and edit. Creating multiple drafts of your research paper will ensure its quality. You may wish to proofread several times, concentrating on a different aspect of the paper each time you read. A collection of quotes and citations is nothing without a solid foundation.

12. Prepare for the worst and hope for the best. If something can go wrong an hour before your research paper is due, it certainly will. The probability that your printer will run out of ink, that your hard drive will crash, that your computer will be stolen, that you will delete your entire bibliography by mistake, or that you will forget your flash drive on a bus while going to print out your paper is directly proportionate to the impact of the paper on your final grade. Writing a research paper is a personal activity and a complex project. Please assume that you will encounter difficulties, or even emergencies during the process, and plan accordingly. Plan to submit your paper twenty-four hours before it is due. Devise a proposed schedule that will allow you to track your progress on the paper. Plan on needing to order sources from outside your library. Plan time to revise your topic when you do not find the information you expected to study. Make frequent back-ups of your work to avoid losing it. Maintain control of your laptop computer at all times. Proper planning will allow to submit your best work.
PART FIVE: GUIDELINE FOR WRITING MUSICAL ANALYSIS

The composition of a useful musical analysis requires study and practice. The guidelines listed here are merely to get you started on your journey towards being a good musical analyst. Understand that further instruction on this subject will be provided you throughout your academic career.

1. Avoid personal opinion.
   a. An analysis paper is not the place to express your own opinions about how lovely a piece is or about how brilliant the composer must have been.
   b. Concentrate instead on delivering factual information to your reader.
   c. Avoid making judgements, such as “This is one of the most glorious pieces of all time.” Leave this to your reader, or demonstrate it through your analysis.

2. Inclusion of composer biography
   a. Keep biographical information to an absolute minimum.
   b. Include only that information which might influence the form, structure, or shape of the piece you are analyzing.
   c. Please include the year in which the work you are analyzing was composed.
   d. Do not speculate too much about how a composer’s personal circumstances might have influenced a work.
      - The fact that a Mozart aria was written during the same year in which the composer’s mother died does not mean that the aria must be sad.
   e. Do not actively search for reasons that a composer wrote a particular work. Your main focus is the analysis.

3. Parts of the paper
   a. Include an introduction stating your purpose and explaining the areas you will analyze.
   b. Include a conclusion in which you restate your findings about the piece.
   c. Divide the body into paragraphs of reasonable size.
   d. If the work is your own analysis you should not need citations.
   e. If you use information provided by others you must cite it, of course.

4. Types of analysis
   a. Schenkerian analysis
   b. Roman numeral analysis
   c. Formal analysis
   d. Rhetorical analysis

5. Completing a formal analysis
   a. Include information about sections, themes, motives that are fragmented, key areas, key centers, developmental modulations.
   b. Do not hesitate to use measure numbers and letter names for keys. Describe themes in lengths of measures or with letters.
6. Descriptive parts
   a. Delineate formal sections in your analysis. Explain where the exposition of a symphony or concerto ends, and how the second exposition differs from the first, if applicable. Describe where the development and recapitulation, or A and B sections begin.
   b. Describe themes by using terms such as first or second theme, cadence theme, theme group, collection of motives, and so forth.
   c. Describe changes in key area or center. What is the tonic, what is the secondary key chosen? Through which keys does the composer modulate during a development?
   d. Describe modulations by demonstrating how the composer arrives in a new key and by indicating how long the piece remains in this new key.
   e. Describe developmental modulations by understanding that they are merely modulations. If the piece is in a different key during every new measure, there is no need to define each key as a new tonal center. Describe these modulatory passages as best you can.

7. The nature of analytical writing
   a. Analytical writing will feel boring at first. It will not be poetic, but can still be expressive.
   b. Vary your lexicon as much as possible to avoid using the same words again, and again, and again.
   c. Think of something that you would like to prove in your analysis.
      • Is Mozart's sonata form pure? Does Haydn vary the sonata form to preserve audience interest?
      • Does the composer make most choices in order to paint the text?
      • Explain this idea in your introduction and restate it in your conclusion.
1. **What is a program?** A program is a document that details the sequence in which the pieces on a recital or concert will be performed. Be sure that it follows the guidelines set forth for programs by the institution sponsoring the event. In other words, if you are a student at SFASU, see that your program follows the university, college of Fine Arts, and School of Music guidelines for the preparation of programs. A program should contain information pertinent to the performance. This includes the names of all performers and accompanists, the date of the performance, the venue in which the performance will be held, and other information. Programs often contain information that will help auditors to better appreciate the music to which they are listening. This information is placed in program notes. The purpose of this guide is to give you some suggestions for writing program notes.

2. **How long should program notes be?** Program notes are read in half-darkened halls by auditors who might have taken their seats only moments before the beginning of a performance. Therefore, it is not appropriate to turn a program note into a scholarly essay that no one will have time to read. Notes should be short enough to be read in the brief pauses between pieces or during intermission pauses. This length excludes translations of song texts, which should be provided in their entirety. One or two paragraphs written about each piece should be sufficient to interest the audience. Longer notes will be necessary for the introductions of large, concert-length symphonic or choral works.

3. **What kinds of information should a program note contain?** A program note should contain information that will help listeners appreciate what they are hearing in new ways. Biographical information about the composer should be included but kept to a minimum. Ask yourself what biographical information the listener needs in order to better understand the work you are performing. Although some analytical information may help listeners to enjoy the piece, many listeners could become lost in the technical details. Therefore, include only the analytical information that will guide auditors to a richer listening experience. Include information that will get audience members excited about hearing the work. Help listeners to become interested in the piece.

4. **Who is my audience for program notes?** Usually, your audience is comprised of the listeners who attend your performance. You may occasionally have a more academic audience, such as the committee for your graduate recital. It is acceptable to write more academic program notes for such an audience. Keep in mind, however, that even academics like to be entertained. Make your program notes exciting and accessible for everyone. Make people love this piece of music as much as you do.

5. **Do I need to cite my sources in Program Notes?** Try to cite your sources in informal ways. If you quote a source, preface the quote with an informal attribution such as the following. “Aaron Copland once said” or “The New York Times columnist William Crutchfield states.” You could also place the attribution after the quotation. If you glean ideas from documented sources you may attribute the idea to your source in a text statement rather than placing actual citations in your notes. In this way you can reference your sources without forcing your auditors to read dreary footnotes.