



The Sectional Standard

Speaker Script · "SOP and the Minimum Skills Audition"

PRESENTER Led by the Section Leaders

SLIDES 13

THE HAMPTON UNIVERSITY MARCHING FORCE · PRE-DRILL CAMP 2026

Presenter notes for every slide, in order. Bracketed cues are stage directions; quoted lines are suggested wording — say them in your own voice.

01 The Sectional Standard

SLIDE 1 — TITLE: The Sectional Standard

INSTRUMENTALIST SESSION — section leaders are presenting or co-presenting.

SAY: "Two things today. The MSA is the bar every player has to clear. The SOP is how you run the room that gets them over it."

02 Icebreaker

SLIDE 2 — ICEBREAKER: Wynton Marsalis, "On Teaching" (1:20)

SET UP: "In a sectional you're not a player. You're the teacher. Listen to how he holds a high standard and still cares about the student."

Play it.

AFTER: "Both at once. High bar, real care. That's the job."

03 The Premise

SLIDE 3 — THE PREMISE (statement slide)

Read it.

THE QUESTION THAT LANDS: "Every member can march the show. But can every member play their scales?"

Takeaway: "Own the instrument, not just the part."

04 Two Standards Today

SLIDE 4 — TWO STANDARDS TODAY

Keep this short — it's a signpost.

"MSA measures the player. SOP runs the room. The MSA sets the bar; the SOP is how you get everyone over it."

05 The MSA: Minimum Skills Audition

SLIDE 5 — THE MSA

Be exact, because members will quote you on this: twelve major scales with arpeggios, plus a two-octave chromatic. **70 percent or better to stay in good standing.**

READ THE CALLOUT: "This is the floor, not the ceiling."

CUE: Expect a question about consequences below 70. Answer it plainly — not in good standing.

06 Why Scales Are the Whole Game

SLIDE 6 — WHY SCALES ARE THE WHOLE GAME

Head off the eye-roll: some of them think scales are busywork.

"Every phrase you'll ever play is built from scales and arpeggios."

LAND IT: "The MSA is not busywork. It's the shortest path to The Hampton Sound." That connects it to the session they'll have later today.

07 Helping Your Section Pass

SLIDE 7 — HELPING YOUR SECTION PASS

Shift the frame: "Your job isn't to judge them once. It's to get them there."

FOUR MOVES: know it cold yourself, check off often and honestly, diagnose the actual sticking point, drill and re-check.

BEST LINE: "A failed scale is a to-do list, not a verdict."

08 Running a Sectional: The SOP

SLIDE 8 — RUNNING A SECTIONAL: THE SOP

This is the operational core.

"A sectional is a repair shop, not a concert."

Three rules: attack the tough spots, repeat for proficiency, do not run entire songs.

SAY THE EXCEPTION CLEARLY: "Full run-throughs are for memorization only."

09 Attack the Tough Spots

SLIDE 9 — ATTACK THE TOUGH SPOTS

Back the method with the research so it isn't just opinion — deliberate practice means working at the edge of what you can't yet do.

THE METHOD, say it as a sequence: isolate, slow it down, repeat it clean, bring the tempo back.

"Slow and correct beats fast and sloppy, every time."

10 Playing Through Is Not Practicing

SLIDE 10 — PLAYING THROUGH IS NOT PRACTICING

This is the habit you're trying to break. Be blunt.

"Running the song from the top feels productive. You spend most of it playing what you already know."

KILLER LINE: "Playing through rehearses the mistakes right alongside the good parts."

TEST: "If you're not fixing something, you're not practicing."

11 A Sectional Blueprint

SLIDE 11 — A SECTIONAL BLUEPRINT

Give them the order: warm up on fundamentals, check off, attack the tough spots, lock it in.

CUE: Tell them the bulk of the time goes to step three. Most leaders over-spend on warmup and run out of clock.

"Leave every sectional with something measurably better than when you walked in."

12 Demand, Don't Demean

SLIDE 12 — DEMAND, DON'T DEMEAN

The guardrail. Do not skip it.

"A hard sectional is not a cruel one. Rigor is not hazing — you push the standard, never the person's dignity."

TEACH INTELLECTUAL HESITATION: before you correct, ask whether the gap is a resource problem, an understanding problem, or an effort problem. Fix the one it actually is.

"The goal is not to expose who cannot play. It's to make sure everyone can."

13 Own the Scales. Fix the Spots.

SLIDE 13 — CLOSE: Own the Scales. Fix the Spots.

"Know your scales cold, hold honest check-offs, and spend your reps on the four bars that are broken."

End on the sign-off.