



Interpreting the Music

Speaker Script · "Two Halves of One Show"

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SLIDES 22

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 Interpreting the Music

SLIDE 1 — TITLE: Interpreting the Music

TWO-PART SESSION. Part One is for the auxiliary; Part Two is for the instrumentalists. Both groups stay in the room for both halves — that's the point.

OPEN: "Two halves of one show. You each need to hear what the other is being asked for."

02 Icebreaker

SLIDE 2 — ICEBREAKER: Alvin Ailey, "Wade in the Water" from Revelations (3:14)

SET UP: "The song is a spiritual. The dancers never say a word, and they tell the whole story."

Play it.

AFTER: "Every movement meant something. That's interpretation at its highest."

03 For the Auxiliary

SLIDE 3 — PART ONE DIVIDER: For the Auxiliary

Dark divider slide.

SAY: "Auxiliary — this half is yours. Band, listen anyway. You'll understand what they're building."

04 The Premise

SLIDE 4 — THE PREMISE (statement slide)

Read it.

Takeaway: "Make the music visible."

05 What You Really Do

SLIDE 5 — WHAT YOU REALLY DO

"The auxiliary is not decoration. It is the music, made visible."

Amplify the music, tell the story, set the picture, move the crowd.

NOTE: our auxiliary is dancers, flags, and batons. No rifles or sabres.

06 Listen First

SLIDE 6 — LISTEN FIRST

"You cannot interpret what you have not studied."

PRACTICAL ASSIGNMENT: "Before you choreograph one eight-count — listen to the song ten times. Learn where it breathes, where it hits, where it goes quiet."

07 Move the Feeling

SLIDE 7 — MOVE THE FEELING

Laban's effort qualities in plain language: match the QUALITY of movement to the quality of the music.

"Sharp music, sharp movement. Sustained music, sustained movement."

DEMONSTRATE if you can — show the same eight-count two ways. It teaches instantly.

08 Hit the Music

SLIDE 8 — HIT THE MUSIC

"Move ON the music, not just TO it. That's musicality."

Catch the accents. Phrase the movement the way the music phrases. And use the pause — "the silence right before the hit is yours too."

09 Tell the Story in the Lyrics

SLIDE 9 — TELL THE STORY IN THE LYRICS

"The words are your script. Act them."

If the lyric says reaching, reach. Gesture the words — the crowd reads it even when they don't consciously notice.

10 Bigger and Smaller

SLIDE 10 — BIGGER AND SMALLER

Dynamics and levels. "Match your dynamics to the music's, and use contrast to keep it alive."

"If everything is big, nothing is big."

11 Serve the Show's Theme

SLIDE 11 — SERVE THE SHOW'S THEME

"Every show tells a story. Your job is to make the audience see it."

Tie to the season's theme shows. Visual storytelling is where this program is headed.

12 Clean and Together

SLIDE 12 — CLEAN AND TOGETHER

"Feeling only reads when the line is together."

One person off doesn't just look sloppy — it breaks the emotion for the whole audience.

"Unison is what makes emotion readable from the stands."

13 Sell It

SLIDE 13 — SELL IT

"A perfect routine with a blank face moves no one."

Perform with the face. Eye contact, commitment, energy through the last count.

"You are not finished when the movement is finished. You're finished when the crowd feels it."

14 For the Ensemble

SLIDE 14 — PART TWO DIVIDER: For the Ensemble

SAY: "Instrumentalists — now it's your turn. Everything they just committed to depends on you."

CUE: watch the band's posture change here. Good.

15 The Premise

SLIDE 15 — THE PREMISE (statement slide)

Read it.

Takeaway: "They can only shape what you actually play."

16 They Ride Your Time

SLIDE 16 — THEY RIDE YOUR TIME

"The auxiliary choreographs to a tempo — yours."

"Rush it and their toss lands wrong. Drag it and their turn finishes late. Neither is their fault."

17 Hit the Hits Together

SLIDE 17 — HIT THE HITS TOGETHER

"Their visual hit is only as clean as your musical hit."

A ragged hit gives them nothing to catch.

18 Give Them Dynamics

SLIDE 18 — GIVE THEM DYNAMICS

"You cannot interpret a wall of one volume."

Swells to grow into, drops to get delicate on. "Flat sound is a flat canvas."

19 Play With Feeling

SLIDE 19 — PLAY WITH FEELING

"Clean is not enough. Give them something to feel."

Style, phrasing, and the melody sung rather than executed.

20 Be Consistent

SLIDE 20 — BE CONSISTENT

"They choreographed to how you played it — so play it that way every time."

A rep that changes shape every run is unchoreographable.

21 Make Them Look Great

SLIDE 21 — MAKE THEM LOOK GREAT

"You are not each other's background. You are one show."

THE MINDSET: "When they're flying, the band looks its best. Their moment is your moment."

22 One Field. One Show.

SLIDE 22 — CLOSE: One Field. One Show.

Both halves in one charge — address the auxiliary and the ensemble by name.

End on the sign-off.