

SKILL SETS AND CLASSIFICATION  
MISSISSIPPI INDOOR ASSOCIATION  
NOVEMBER 17, 2021

National perspective of 3 competitive levels.

A -	Basic – Fundamental Level Performers
OPEN -	Intermediate – More Mature Performers
WORLD -	Advanced – Most Advanced Performers

Locally has added further delineations.

Novice -	Introductory skill level
Regional A -	Less advanced BASIC skills. Meant to be a “bridge” class between INTRODUCTORY skills and the more advanced BASIC skills.

Classification has less to do with **competitive** experience of the ensemble, but more to do with the skill sets offered, with emphasis on music, and the education level of the performers.

Classification definitions are not based on what is seen from the top of each class at WGI Championships.

Classification definitions can be influenced by ONE subsection. Rarely do groups find that all segments advance at the same rate. A more mature snare line or marimba ensemble may be cause for promoting an ensemble.

***Skill Set Compatibility*** is key to success. Designers must match the **what** with the **who**.

***Playing well*** is a primary focus of WGI percussion. It is desirable to have strong fundamental development with a logical development of skills that match development of the performers.

There is no expectation of reward for more advanced skills performed at a more basic level.

Poor design is not a mitigating factor in classification.

Promotion into a classification does not guarantee “winning” that classification.

**Musical and Visual Clarity and appropriate training are key.** While “what” and “how” are constant considerations, ***more is not necessarily better***. It is more desirable to see a limited vocabulary presented with a solid educational foundation than it is to see a broader vocabulary presented with incomplete foundational support.

Classification promotions indicate the successful meeting and exceeding of class paradigms and should be viewed as a positive achievement by students and instructors. It is hoped that successful competition results from meeting educational goals and not from other, less healthy motives.

## CLASSIFICATION PARADIGMS

**NOVICE** – Scoring paradigm is basically one box above A Class criteria.

Key Word: **INTRODUCTORY** – What would BEGINNING students be expected to demonstrate?

Limited musical vocabulary- Quarters, 8ths, 16ths, 8<sup>th</sup>-note triplets

Limited drill responsibilities - Few sets, 8x5 and at tempo.

Movement skills in isolation. Layering of musical/movement skills should be non-existent.

Restrained tempi – 120-ish would be maximum.

Keyboards – single mallet only

Beginning Tone Quality.

Minimal show length.

**REGIONAL A** – Scoring is based on the A Class criteria.

Key Word: **BASIC** – What would *lesser* developed High School/middle school students be expected to demonstrate?

This class is a “bridge” between the introductory level performer and the most fundamentally sound High School players.

This class has limited chance of being competitive nationally within the BASIC paradigm

Probably looking at ultimate score in Box 3.

NOVICE skills are expanded. “Restraint” and “limited” are still key words.

## CLASS A

Key word: **BASIC** – What would fundamentally sound High School students be expected to demonstrate?

Skills developing, increasing vocabulary.

Layering of musical/movement is limited with few skills and repetition of those limited skills.

Increasing movement responsibilities.

Growing tempi ranges, but tempo generally remains stable within long segments

Keyboards- Limited multi-mallet exposures. Limited intervallic motion, spacings a max of ~5th

Developing tone quality.

Growing physical/mental endurance reflected in phrase lengths and show lengths

General thoughts for BASIC Vocabulary (less is Introductory, more is Intermediate)

**IS:** Basic duple/triple rhythmic relationships.

**NOT:** Abundant and diverse hand speed changes within the same phrase.

**IS:** Limited multi-mallet use in the front ensemble with limited intervallic flexibility

**NOT:** Constantly changing intervals, rotations, and flexibility within upper and lower keyboards.

**IS:** Standard double/single stroke transitions in tenors

**NOT:** “Scrapes” and “butterflies”

**IS:** Bass splits involving 2-note, 3-note groupings

**NOT:** Single-note splits over faster note values

Tempo:

**IS:** Restrained. 140's

**NOT:** 160

Movement:

**IS:** Primarily standard marching, limited number of layering skills presented in isolation.

**NOT:** Running

General Design Thoughts:

Know your performers. **Compatibility**

Know what you're writing. **Classification**

Design for performer success. **Education**

Design for clarity. **Musicality**

### **"Why aren't scores the determining factor?"**

Judges are asked to give scores that reflect success WITHIN THE PARADIGM OF THE CLASSES. It may be difficult to give a number that reflects the need for reclassification when imperfections are still present. Upon conferencing, the panel may be in general agreement for the need of reclassification because of a variety of factors including skill sets presented and the apparent maturity of performers. If so, recommendations are made to the association.

A high score may also reward success withing the paradigm, but not necessarily reflect a skill set and performance that exceeds the paradigm for the classification.

If WGI moves a group, it is generally matched by the association.