

FAQs about the Army Musician Proficiency Assessment for Euphonium

Q: Do I have to play the ceremonial music in Part 1 of the AMPA from memory?

A: No, these pieces DO NOT have to be played from memory. However, the Ceremonial Band and MPT lesson plans require you to memorize music, including the music in Part 1.

Q: How is Part 1 graded?

A: Part 1 is graded GO or NO-GO based upon the Rubric. The Soldier must score at least 15 on the Rubric, minus the Music Prep category, in order to receive a GO. The score for Part 1 will not be added to the final score.

Q: How do I correct a NO-GO on Part 1 of the AMPA?

A: In the event that the Soldier receives a NO-GO, the Assessor would tell the Soldier what he or she played incorrectly, and the Soldier would re-do Part 1 of the AMPA at a later time.

Q: Which selections should I play for Part 2 of the AMPA?

A: The easy answer to what music to play is to perform three selections in contrasting styles not to exceed 5 minutes; you are trying to show off your versatility and how quickly you can change gears. What works well for euphonium, is to play a technical excerpt, a lyrical excerpt, and an "other style" excerpt in either march or swing style. The technical and lyrical excerpts can be from the standard solo euphonium literature, but they don't have to be. Standard band marches can be used. Swing played well on Euphonium can go a long way, but so could a stylistically well played march. Part 2 is graded using the Rubric.

Q: What are some selections I can choose to demonstrate Swing?

A: Excerpts from the Canadian Brass/Luther Henderson arrangements, ex. Ain't Misbehavin', Tuba Tiger Rag, Amazing Grace, Just a Closer Walk, etc., and other BQ swing tunes and ballads. You can use also Trombone parts for stage band and swing excerpts from all three volumes of Bugs Bower's Bop Duets for Trombone.

Q: How is Part 2 graded?

A: Part 2 is graded using the rubric.

Q: What kind of excerpts are in the Quickly Prepared Music packets?

A: Part 3 will cover four styles: Concert Band, Marches, Chamber Ensemble, and Swing. (Chamber Ensemble and Swing excerpts will both fall under the Chamber Ensemble category on the AMPA Form.) The Soldier should prepare the packet as a whole.

Q: The Quickly Prepared Music packets have excerpts in both bass and treble clef, what if I read only one or the other?

A: Euphonium players are expected to be able to read both bass and treble clef in the Army, so the Quickly Prepared Music packets have excerpts in both clefs. If the Soldier does not read both clefs, it could lower the Soldier's Quickly Prepared Music score.

Q: How is the Quickly Prepared Music graded?

A: Part 3 is graded using the rubric. All six categories on the Rubric are considered when scoring Part 3.

Q: How much time will I have to prepare the Quickly Prepared Music packets?

A: The Quickly Prepared Music packets are handed out at the close of business the day before the Assessment.

Q: How much time should I spend working on these packets?

A: Depending on the player, the Soldier should spend no more than an hour to an hour and a half preparing the packet. The Soldier should not spend too much time on this and risk over-working his or her embouchure right before the AMPA.

Q: How does Part 4 Additional Skills work?

A: This part is optional; however, if the Soldier has additional skills he or she should attempt to earn Additional Skills Points. Soldiers may earn Additional Skills Points in 3 categories: any other ASI instrument, vocals, and improvisation.

Q: How are Additional Skills Points awarded?

A: Soldiers may earn a maximum of two points per category with a maximum of four points total for Part 4, which will be added to the Rubric score to determine the final score. Additional Skills Points for other ASI instruments and vocals will be awarded by grading with the Rubric for that instrument: a score of 15 - 19 will earn 1 Additional Skills Point and a score of 20 or higher will earn 2 Additional Skills Points. Refer to the AMPA Handbook under Additional Skills for the awarding of Additional Skills Points for Improvisation. Even a zero for Additional Skills on the AMPA form shows an attempt on the Soldier's part.

Q: What if I just "sort of" play another instrument?

A: If the Soldier does not have additional skills, the Soldier should not waste his or her, and the Assessor's time by trying to earn Additional Skills Points. Additional Skills Points are not awarded if the Soldier does not score an 18 on his or her instrument, so Part 4 should not be used by the Soldier just to try to pass the course. Furthermore, if the Soldier is struggling to score 18 on his or her primary instrument, that instrumental instructor may not even allow the Soldier to test for Additional Skills, because this may take valuable practice and training time away from the Soldier's primary instrument and cause the Soldier to fail the course.