



Frequently Asked Questions

What is a flute choir?

Today the term generally refers to an ensemble of 5 or more flutes, and can include piccolo, C flute, alto flute and bass flute. Using this definition one could argue that flute “choirs” have been around for a long time -- fife and drum corps and Irish flute bands being prime examples. However, the “modern” flute choir is a recent development, and the once sparse selection of repertoire for the group is now abundant and includes a large variety of literature.*

What kind of music is written for a flute choir?

Compositions include arrangements of classical, folk and popular music, as well as original works by contemporary composers. Music ranges from 3 to 12 parts. As flute choirs began to gain in popularity, the flute industry began to produce more affordable bass and alto flutes in the 1970s and 1980s and more arrangements followed. In 1978 Myrna Brown produced a repertoire list of 128 flute choir works. By 1996, Carol Kniebusch Noe, formerly at James Madison University, published *A Guidebook to Flute Choir Literature* which was 104 pages long! Presently there are over 1000 pieces available for flute choir.*

What do the students learn in Flute Frenzy?

Because flute choir is a chamber music experience, it offers the students the opportunity for more individual attention than is possible in the school band setting. We focus on typical chamber ensemble skills, with special emphasis on developing listening skills to improve intonation, phrasing, articulation and tone quality. The flute choir repertoire varies from three to as many as twelve individual parts. Therefore, the students become more independent, rather than “following the leader,” as often happens in band when there are many flutes on one part. In addition, by changing parts and instruments, the students learn to pay attention to where their part fits into the harmonic and melodic structure. Because there are few players on a part, the students become more comfortable with playing by themselves and with the constructive criticism necessary to correct errors. By learning to direct while playing, they become more aware of the meaning of a conductor’s motions and learn when it is especially important to pay close attention.

How is Flute Frenzy supported?

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*Adapted from Amy Rice-Young, “Flute Choirs,”
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