



At MPA - Using that 5 minutes:

Before you begin:

1. Let your students adjust the chairs so they're comfortable and can see you. If you need to, switch the seating so that you have strong readers as section leaders and strong readers in the middle and back.
2. Make sure students know that they can help each other, even though the director can't talk once you begin. Stand partners can point or whisper counts or measure numbers to each other.
3. Emphasize that the adjudicator will be watching as they come in and get ready. Stay professional.
4. Make sure everyone has the correct part.

Once it's time - give the responsibility of this event to the students - you just guide it.

1. Ask the students if the title gives any clues to the style or mood of the piece.
2. Give the students the first 60 seconds to look over the part with their stand partner checking for things that might be problems. Use this time to look for tricky sections in the score that you need to lead, especially solo section spots, repeats in the score, changes of any kind: tempo, key, meter, problem notes (C#s on G stgs), etc.
3. Start the STARS process. Discuss EACH letter, and ask for student input
 1. S - Ask about key signatures and finger patterns on each string - especially extensions and position work. If there are key changes, ask students to find the first changed note in the new key.
 2. T - Meter and tempo changes can be killers... look for them. I put a ritard or a fermata in before big changes.
 3. A - Ask if anyone sees any accidentals in their part. Look at the notes around the accidental and plan a fingering. Ask if there are any notes they don't know how to play.
 4. Rhythms - Count and clap the whole thing if you have time. If not, look for problem spots: tempo changes, long notes, dotted rhythms, rests, repetitions and solo sections and clap through those. Air-bow spots that may be bowing problems (bow lifts, hooks, etc.). Make a plan for fermatas and clap through them.
 5. S - REPETITIONS - Ask students to actually touch the symbol that tells them what to do and then the one that tells them where to go back to. Do it again. Count and clap through any repeated sections. Ask students about any pizz sections, dynamic markings and articulations. If appropriate, talk about where in the bow to play them.

Finally - ask students again for anything that you may have missed ... they are usually more alert than we are at that point, and their part is not nearly as complex to look at as the score.

Relax, look at your kids, and smile. It'll be fine.