PIONEER BATTERY TECHNIQUE PACKET 2018

Hello Perspective Member,

Welcome to the Pioneer Drum and Bugle Corps. We thank you for expressing interest in our 2018 percussion program. Pioneer is a Drum Corps International World Class competing marching percussion program. There are several skills needed to become a member of our marching percussion section. The information in this packet explains the basic understanding of our style and technique. However, specific information on our style and technique will be taught and reviewed at all camps. Mastering skills in this packet will increase your probability in earning a position as a marching member of the Pioneer Drum and Bugle Corps.

***Information in this packet and the information given at camps are mutually exclusive to Pioneer.

Although technique and style are important, the most significant concept to take away is that you are, first and foremost, a performer. There are quite a few key components that go into being a great performer. These concepts are elaborated throughout this packet as well. The Exercises are to be memorized and played as musical entities, even though they work on a specific stroke types. Make sure that you think and listen musically.

****Here are some prerequisites for the audition process****

Marching Percussionist-

1) Know your 40 PAS Rudiments and be able to perform them at various tempi and dynamics. At Pioneer, we view and use rudiments playing them in combinations of rhythms that create music.

2) Utilize a metronome or music to practice these rudiments. Make sure to produce a balanced sound from hand to hand. If your hands don't produce the same sound, see if a stick is broken or adjust your technique accordingly. Utilize the subdivision on your metronome to line up your rhythms.

3) Be able to mark time to all exercise in this packet.

Technique & Approach

Before getting into too much detail on how to play we will talk about how to stand and carry your body first. This stance is crucial and very important in the way we play. This stance is designed for ultimate relaxation and comfort as you will have rigorous rehearsals and long days during the summer touring months.

A. Stance and Posture

A more detailed explanation will be given during camps. Stance and posture is very important and will be reviewed at every camp until it becomes second nature. Be sure to practice all of these bullet-points at home by looking in a mirror or by physically looking at the lower half of your body...

a. Feet- 45 degrees b. Knees should be straight over ankles but not locked c. Hips are aligned with knees and ankles d. Shoulders aligned with hips e. Fill up your chest with air (Marine Corp Look) f. Neck and head straight up and held high g. Chin should be parallel to the floor h. Arms and Hands should hang gently at your side (Willow Tree)

Rest & Silent Playing Position

This may vary slightly per section. Each teacher will explain this in more detail during sub-section time as it relates to each instrument.

i. Willow Tree-Relaxed limbs. Manipulation of two places

j. Platform-Creating that playing position. Beads close to the head.

k. Playing Angle (rest position 5-8 degrees

l. Eyes should remain straight forward, never looking toward the ground

B. Grip-Implement Control-Full Contact and The Moveable Fulcrum

The stick should be held in the following way:

****Snares your left hand will be different***

The initial fulcrum should be made when placing the stick between the index finger and thumb. The other three fingers should be wrapped gently around the stick with the stick following the natural curve of the fingers. In the playing position, the bead of the stick (or head of the mallet) should be as close to the playing surface as possible.

The Movable Fulcrum (Whole Hand Approach)

The movable fulcrum refers to where the stick's "pivot point" is in the grip. As stated earlier, the initial fulcrum is located between the index finger and thumb. This fulcrum can be transferred to different areas of the palm by the application of pressure with various digits.

Front Fulcrum

The front fulcrum or "initial fulcrum" is located between the index finger and thumb. This is the fulcrum that is employed during the initial gripping process by applying slight pressure between these two digits.

However, this type of fulcrum should only be employed during fast roll passages and fast single hand strokes.
Middle Fulcrum

The middle fulcrum is created when applying slight pressure with the middle and ring fingers. In this case, the pivot point is directly in the middle of the palm. The middle fulcrum is utilized for passages that are too fast to utilize strictly back fulcrum and not quite fast enough to justify using the front fulcrum. The idea is behind the middle fulcrum is to help maintain a full sound at slightly faster tempi.

Back Fulcrum

The back fulcrum is created when applying slight pressure with the ring and pinky fingers pushing the stick against the palm. This transfers the "pivot point" to the back part of the palm by the pinky. Using the back fulcrum creates a stronger tone and fuller sound because more of the stick is engaged in sound production. Because the back fulcrum creates the fullest tone from our instrument, this should be utilized as much as physically possible to maintain a strong ensemble sound.

The Basic Stroke Types

Stroke Types are essential to drumming and making music happen.

Full Stroke=High-High

This stroke begins in the highest point of the stroke. Utilizing the natural weight of the arm, wrist, and fingers the performer allows the stick to fall to the drum surface. Upon contact with the drum surface, the performer then allows the stick to rebound back up to the top of the stroke.

Down Stroke=High-Low

Once again, this stroke will begin at the highest point of the prep stroke. Utilizing the natural weight of the arm, wrist, and fingers the performer allows the stick to fall to the drum surface. This time, instead of following the rebound the performer allows the natural weight of the hand and arm to stop the stick in the low position (approximately 3 inches from the drum surface. It is very important that there be no squeezing or extra pressure used to stop the stroke in the down position.

Tap Stroke=Low-Low

This stroke begins in the low position. The stroke is executed much like the high-high stroke - The full weight of the hand, arm, wrist, and fingers are utilized to push the stick downward to achieve as full of a sound as possible. ***These are the most important and hardest to control.

Up Stroke=Low-High

This stroke begins in the low position. All mechanics to perform this stroke are the same as the low-low with the exception that after the stroke is performed, the stick is then pulled back up to the high position.

Double Stroke=Diddles (Used to develop roll quality)

This stroke is also known as the rebound stroke. The main concept of the rebound stroke entails utilizing 2 strokes for every arm motion. The first stroke (utilizing arm) plays the first note of the double. The second stroke is then initiated when the wrist and fingers cradle the rebound from the first stroke and propelling the

stick back to the drumhead for the second stroke. Upon playing the second stroke the arm initiates back to the "high" position as outlined in the high-high stroke type

We use the AIR approach to play our drums

Aggressive – Maxing out all the details. Thinking about timing in your feet, your technique, the grip, correct posture, dynamics and rhythm accuracy.

Intensity – Maximizing mental focus and pushing your physical limits. This is also known as Vibe. We have to develop this right away. Work hard. Play hard. Always.

Relaxation – Fluid motions while playing, not holding tension in any part of the body. The more relaxed you can be the better.

Musicianship :

Knowing your role and how you contribute to the ensemble at every moment in the production creates better musicianship and perfection of your performance.

Listening to your sound when playing. Make sure that your sound matches Right hand to Left Hand. Make sure you're applying techniques and approaches listed in this packet.

Listening to your section. Make sure you are balancing evenly with your section. Use peripheral vision to match heights, and zones. This will enhance you ability to understand and utilize center awareness.

Listening to your ensemble Understanding your musical role in the ensemble at any given point in the musical literature.

Dynamics (Volume control, Velocity, Height to Rise, Grip and Musicianship)

pp- 1 inch stroke under parallel p- 3 inch strokes...0 degrees, taps mp- 6 inch strokes, a little bit above parallel, slight wrist turn, half of the stick or mallet mf- 9 inch stroke (45 Degrees) f- 12 inch stroke with a little arm and a tighter grip in hands (sub 90 Degrees) ff- 15 inch stroke with addition of the arm... (90 Degrees)

The Audition Process:

Your time spent at camp is one big audition. There are three sections included in our playing portion of the audition process. These sections are labeled as such, group audition, individual audition, in addition to playing and marching audition.

Group Audition: This part of the audition will include time spent with your sections as well as time spent during ensemble rehearsals. It could be battery ensemble, percussion ensemble and full corps ensemble you're always being adjudicated while playing in these forums.

Individual Audition: There will be time during the camp where you will have an opportunity to perform for your section tech and caption head. You will be assigned an exercise or a portion of an exercise to play. We

also ask that you prepare short lick or solo for us to listen to, something you feel confident and comfortable playing. We would like to see how you perform.

Playing and Marching Audition: Is stated exactly as it looks. You will be given a series of exercises or music to play and march to. There will be basic marching blocks to advanced oblique moves. The speeds will vary along with marching to various note values such as, the quarter note, and/or eighth notes.

The materials that Pioneer will provide at audition camp dates.

-All marching percussion Drums w/carriers, and stands

- Cymbals

- Bass drum mallets. ******Bass Drummers, I would still bring sticks and a pad for practice when not on a drum.

Things you will need for the audition: - Snare Sticks= we use Ike Jackson signature series by Innovative Percussion.

-Tenor Sticks= we use "Shorty's" model from Innovative Percussion.

- Drum pads (so you can play while personnel rotates)

- This packet in a three-ring binder with clear plastic sheet protectors

Video Auditions:

The video audition process has a few more things an individual would have to do on his/her own. The only negative about a video audition is the staff seeing your ability to learn and grasp things quickly. We want to know your passion and desire to be able to see your work ethic. So you'll really have to impress us with this video. The Steps listed for the Video auditions are as follows.

1). Play anything that you feel extremely comfortable playing. It could be an excerpt from a show, a cool lick or a solo from a previous performance group. What you play does matter to us we want to see how you perform your stuff.

2). Play exercises at the slowest tempo given two times through. Speed up the metronome ten clicks and perform them again. Lastly, play it at your fastest speed you can handle without stressing.

3). Perform a basic marching block with 8 counts between direction changes. We would preferably see you playing an exercise or two on a drum while marching.

***Important: You must pay our $50 video audition fee in order to have your videos viewed by a member of Pioneer's percussion staff.

The Selection Process:

This is the easy part. As in always, come prepared for the audition and there should be no reason for our team to assign you a position within the ensemble. You will receive a call or personal email about our observation of your performance during camp. At this time you receive an offer for a contract or a call back for your instrument of choice. We will also offer suggestions as to where we feel you would benefit the corps and yourself. We are here to help student performers become more successful in the education and

growth of marching arts. Fortunately, if we honestly don't feel that you're ready for the instrument of your choice at that time of audition, we will honestly let you know up front.

Video Assignment(s): There will be assigned video obligations of you per every two weeks after the first camp. Always include the exercises at various tempos.

Thank you once again for your interest in the Pioneer Drum Corps Battery Section!

If you have any questions, please contact caption head Josh Logan at jlogan75@gmail.com.

PIONEER EST. 1961

drum ☘ bugle corps ☘ color guard

MILWAUKEE ☘ WISCONSIN

THE EXERCISES

Eights

Double Beat

Irish Spring

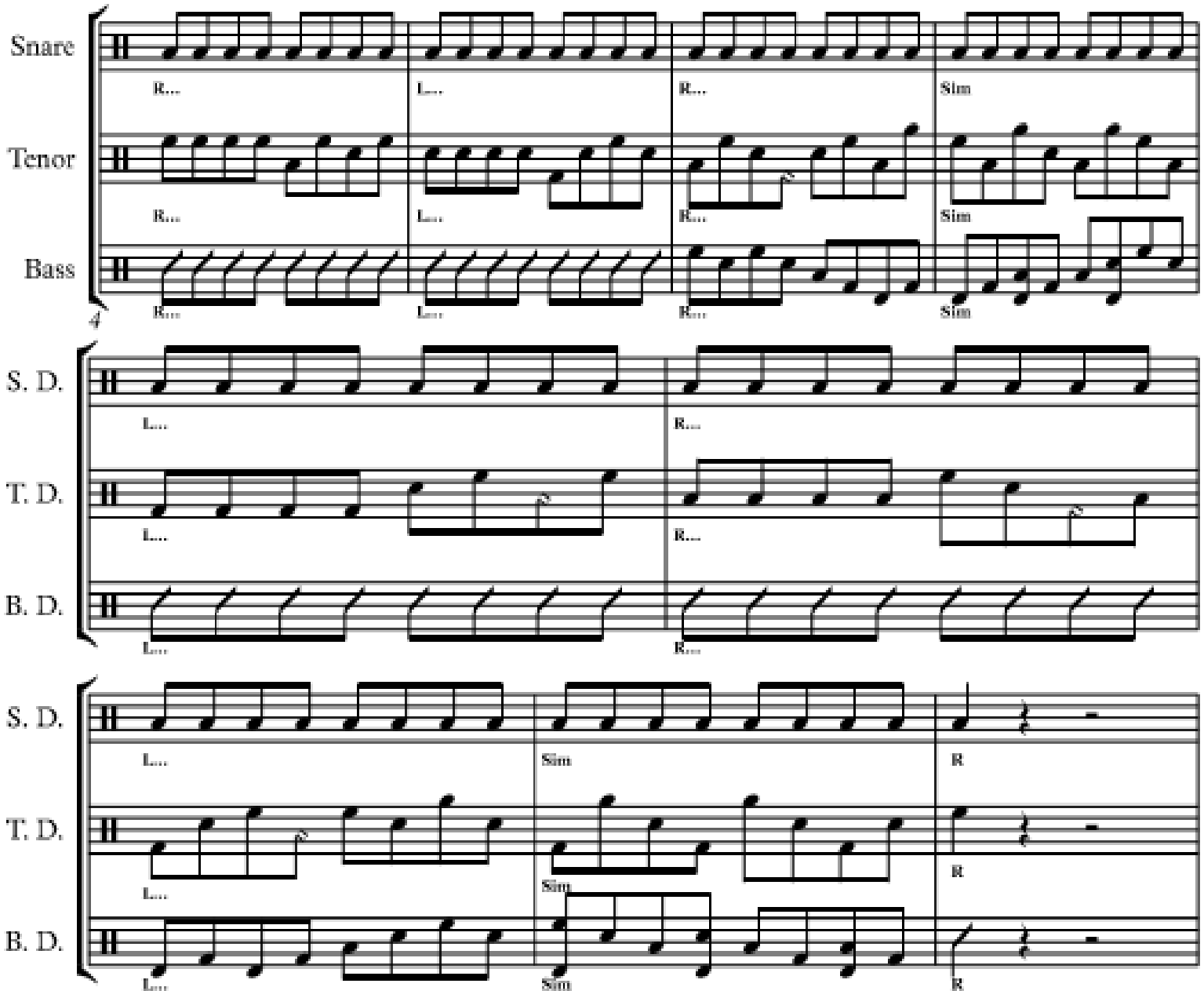
Accent Tap

Triplet Rolls

Triplet Singles

Pioneer Battery 2018

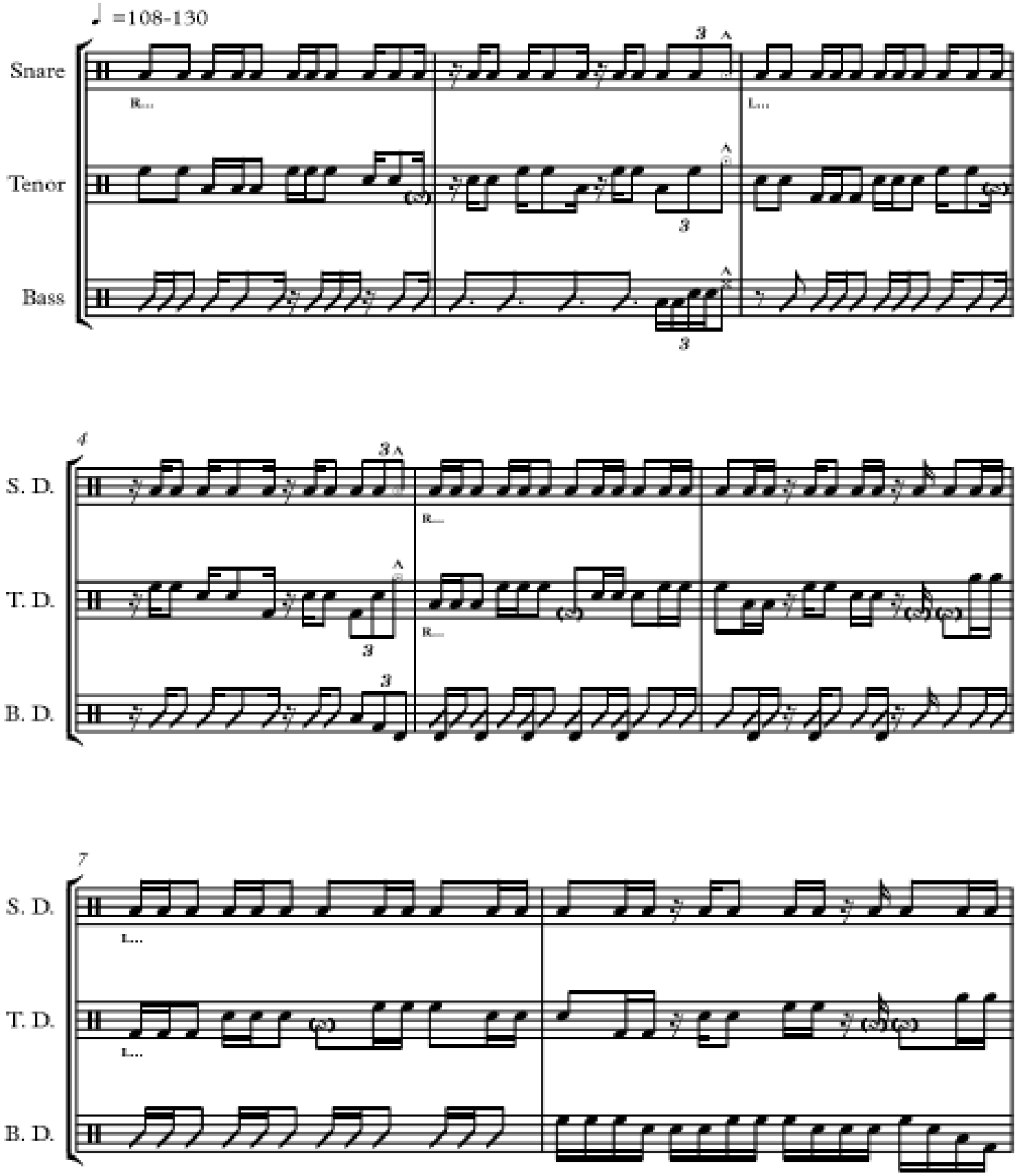
Eights

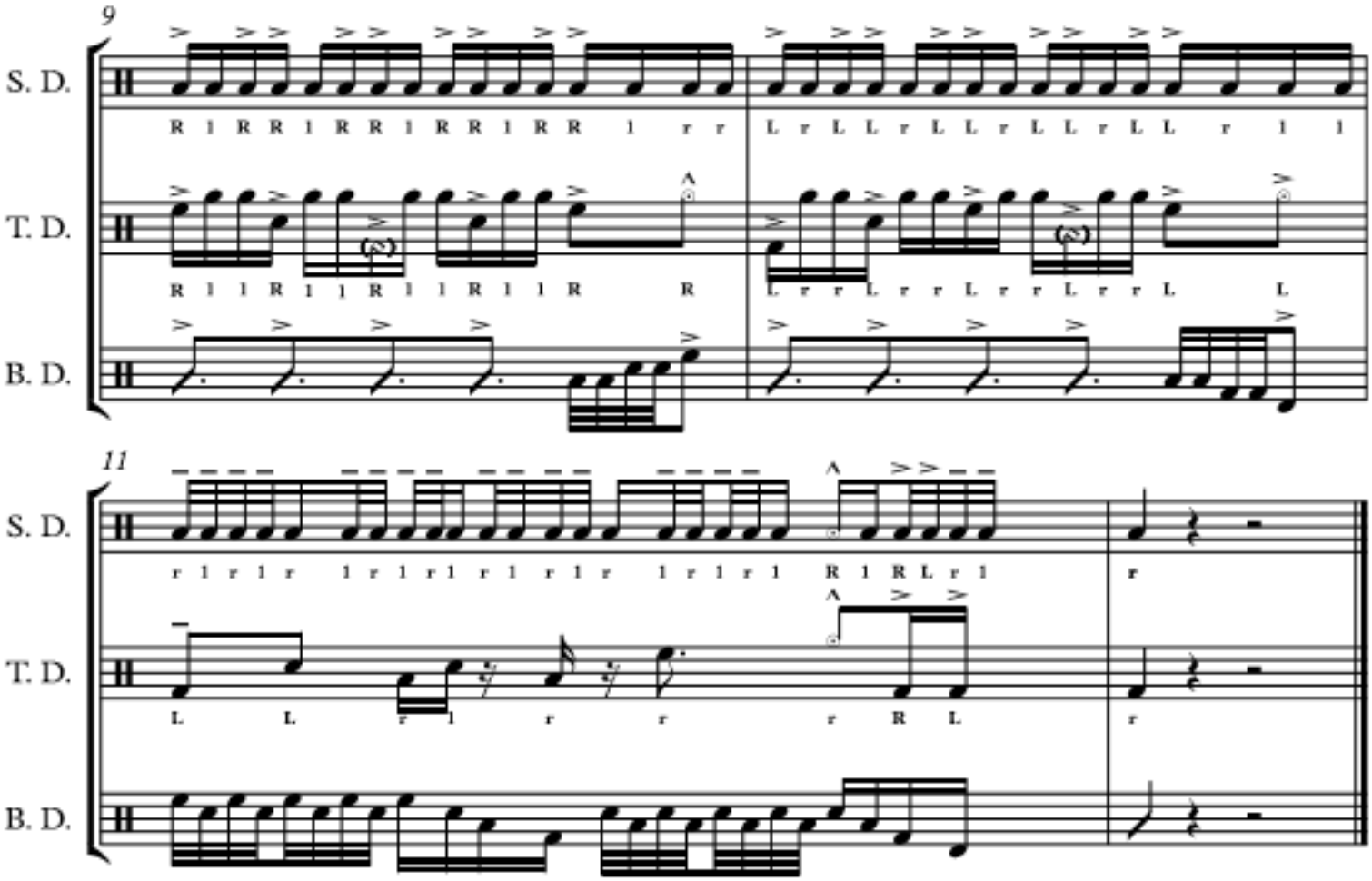


-Practice at multiple tempos
-Practice at all dynamic levels, with crescendos and decrscendos
-Basses practice with 16th, sextuplets, and 32nd splits

Pioneer Battery '18

Double Beat

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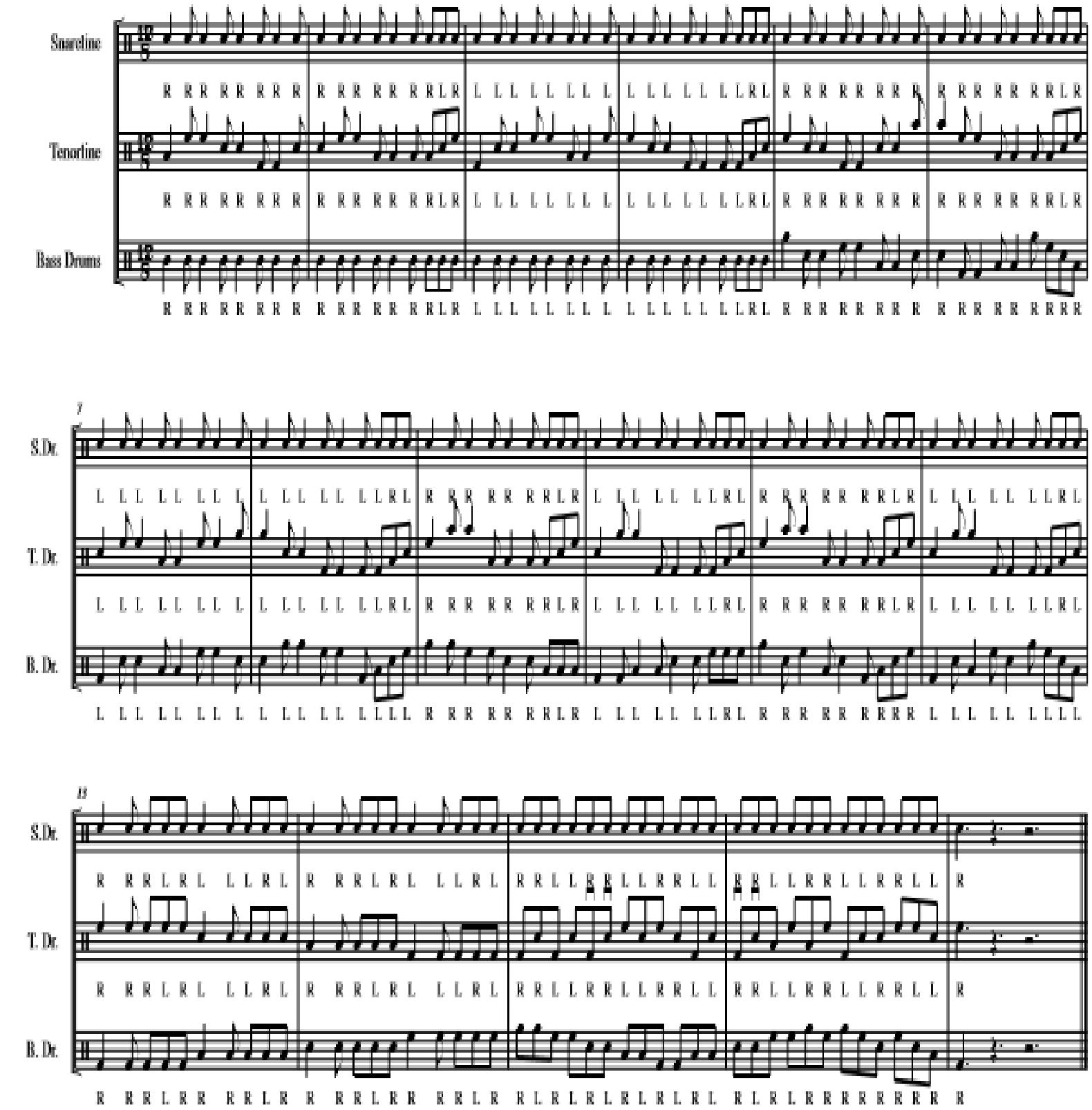
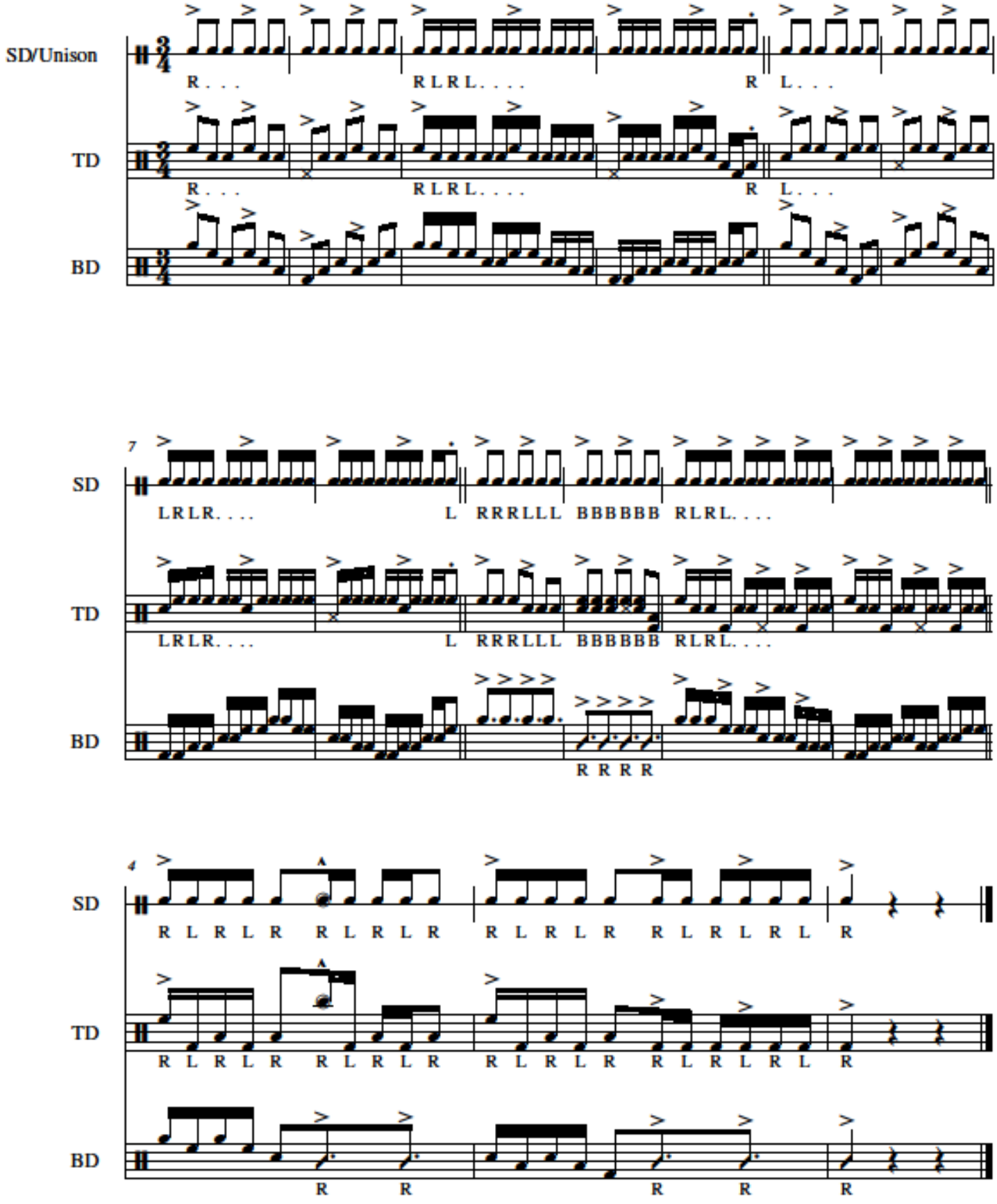
Irish Spring



Accent-Tap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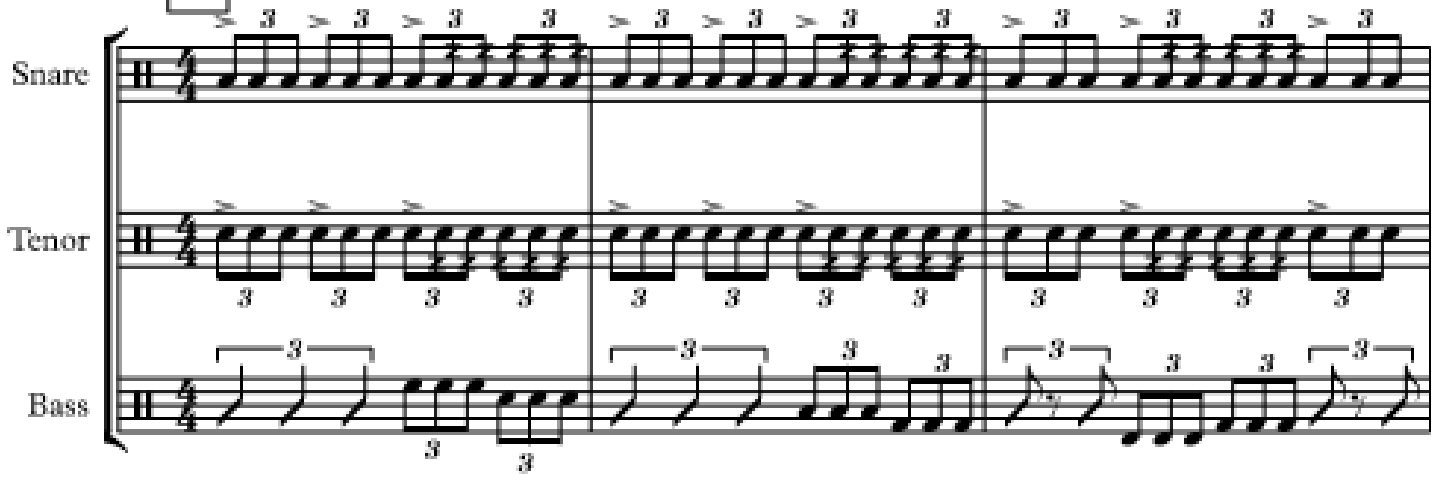
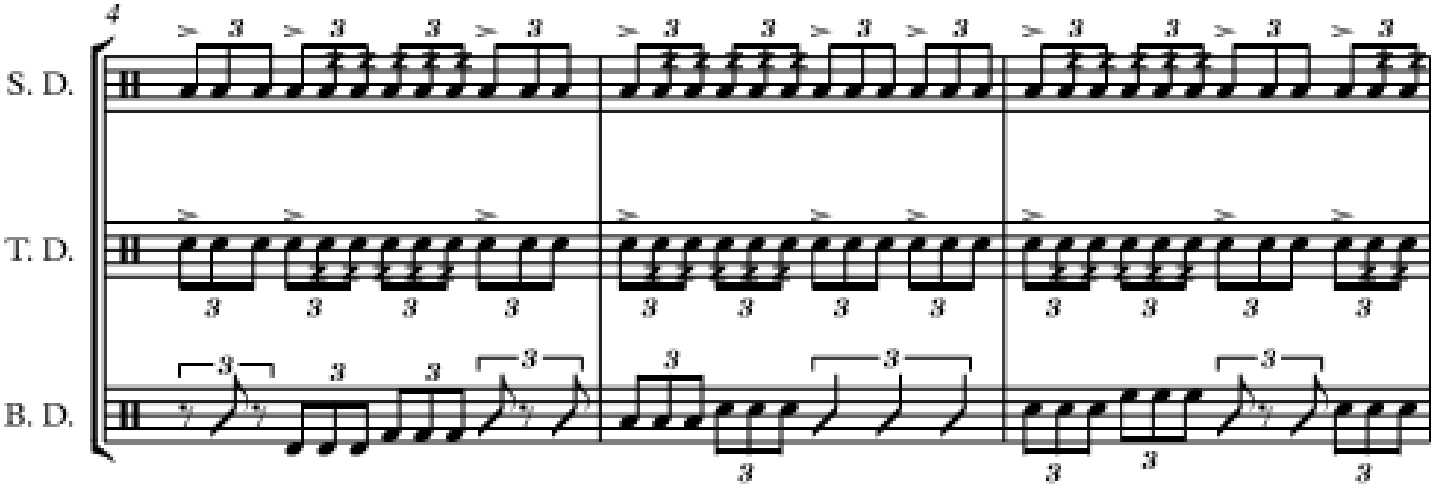
Pioneer Battery '18

Triplet Rolls

♩=160-180

A





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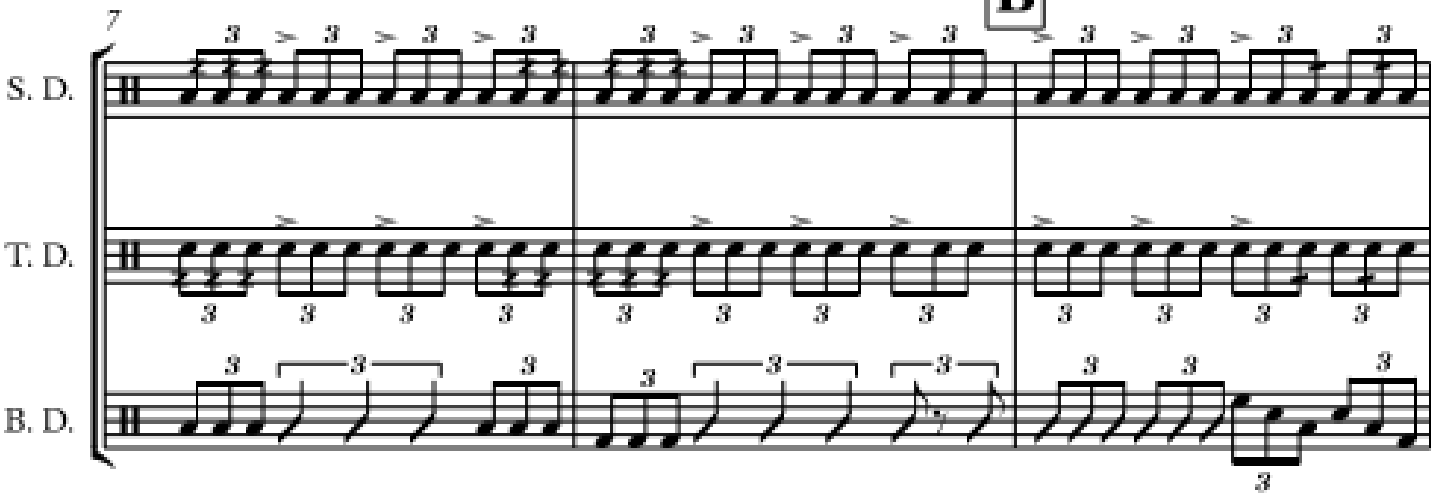

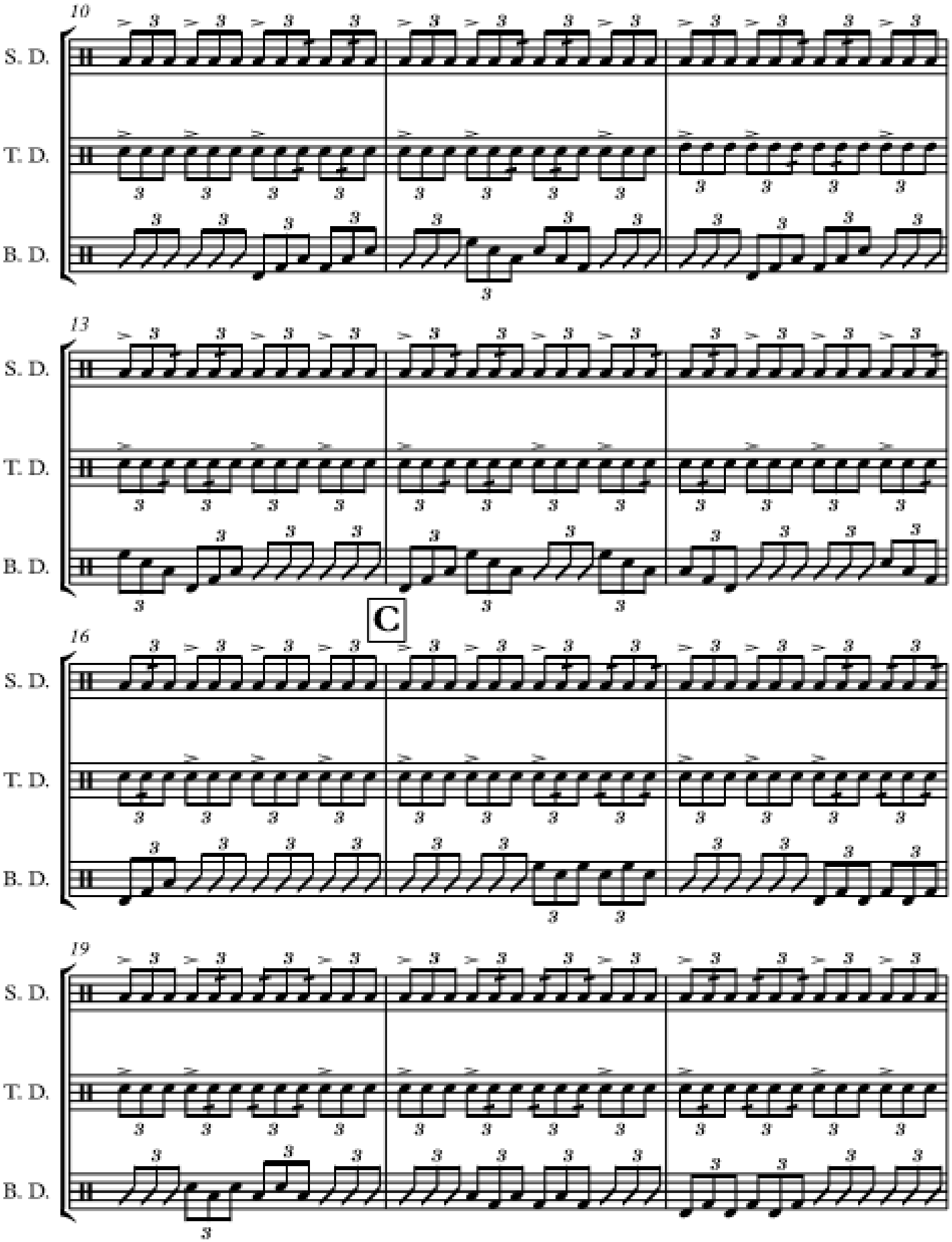
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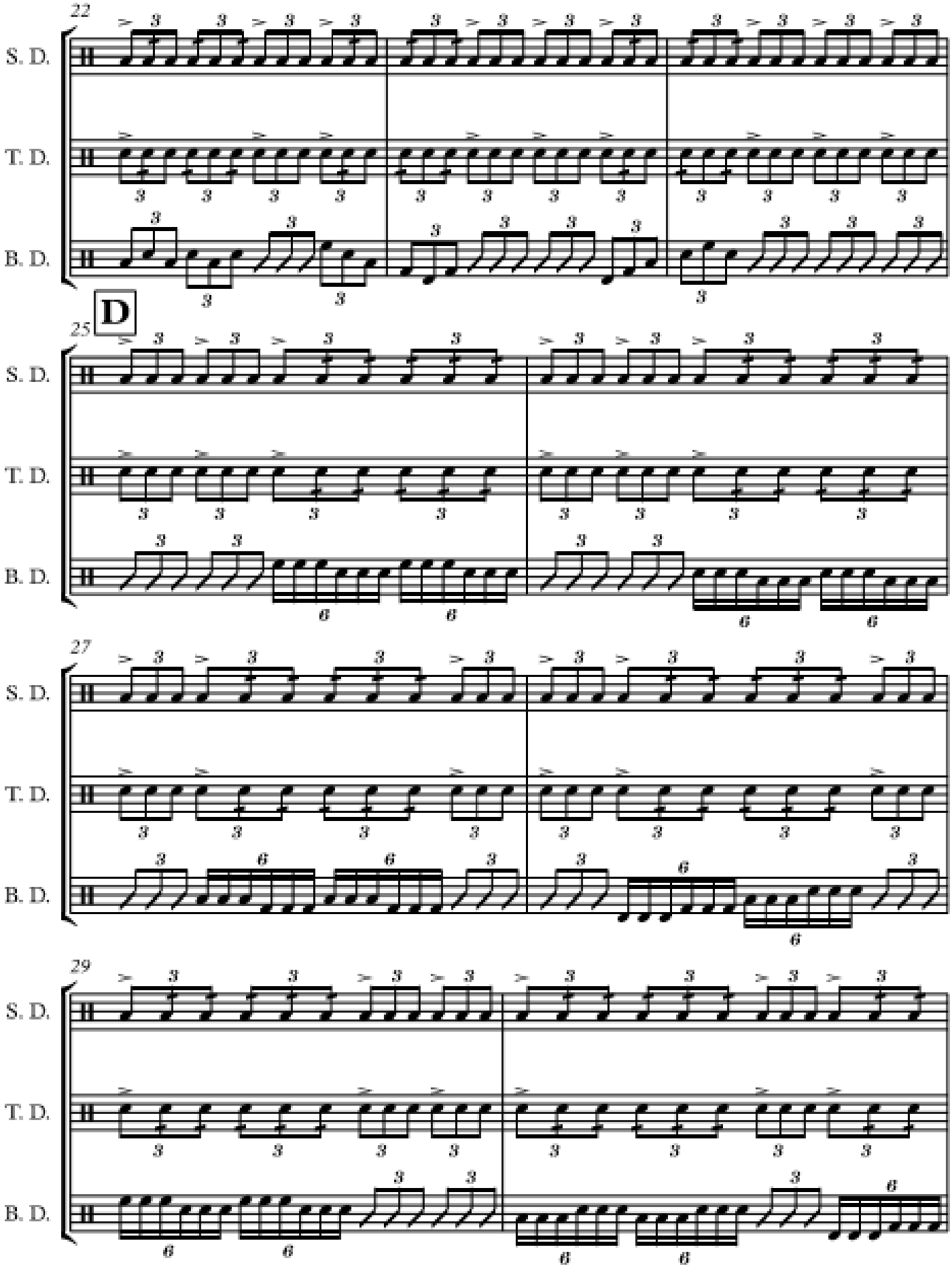
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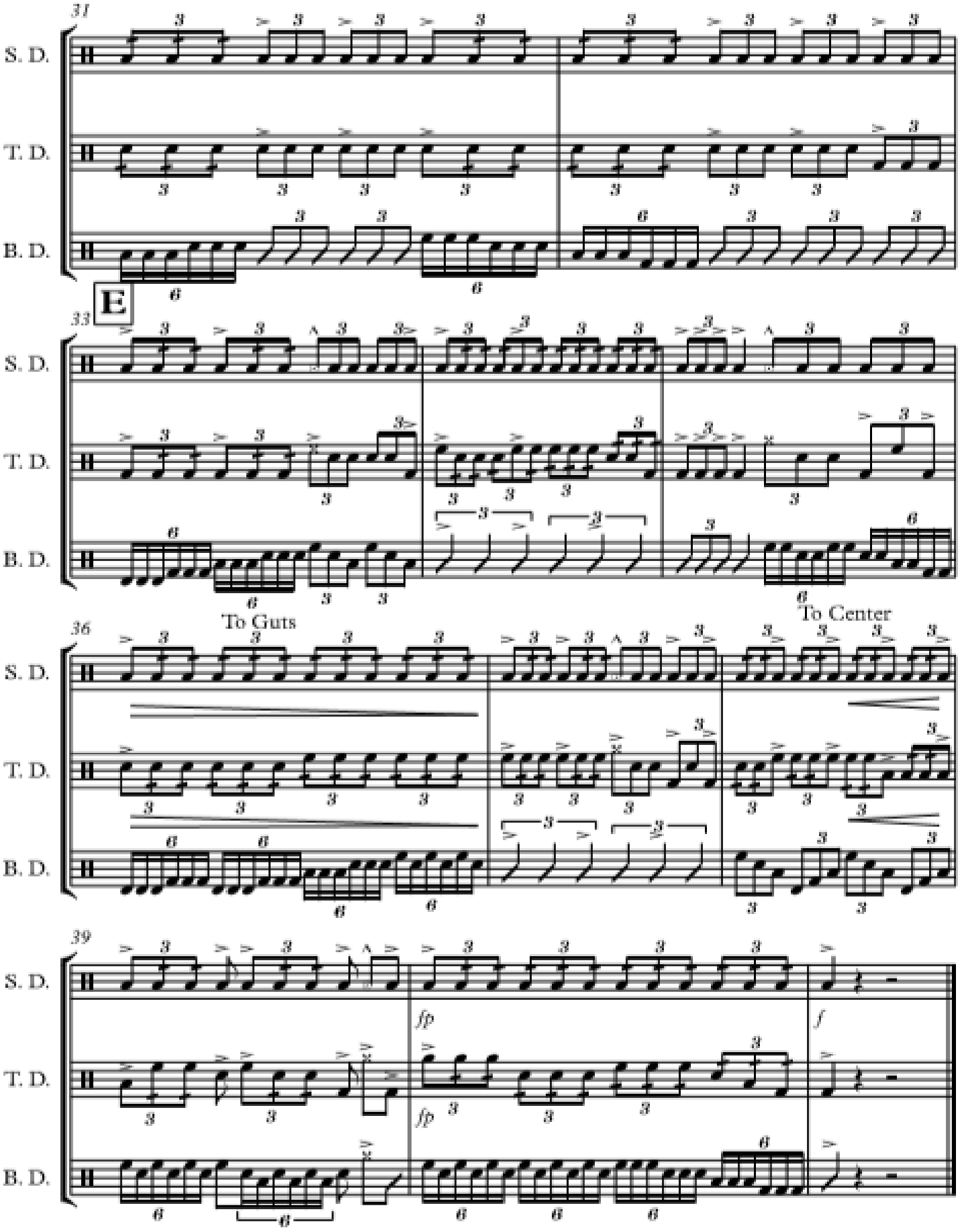
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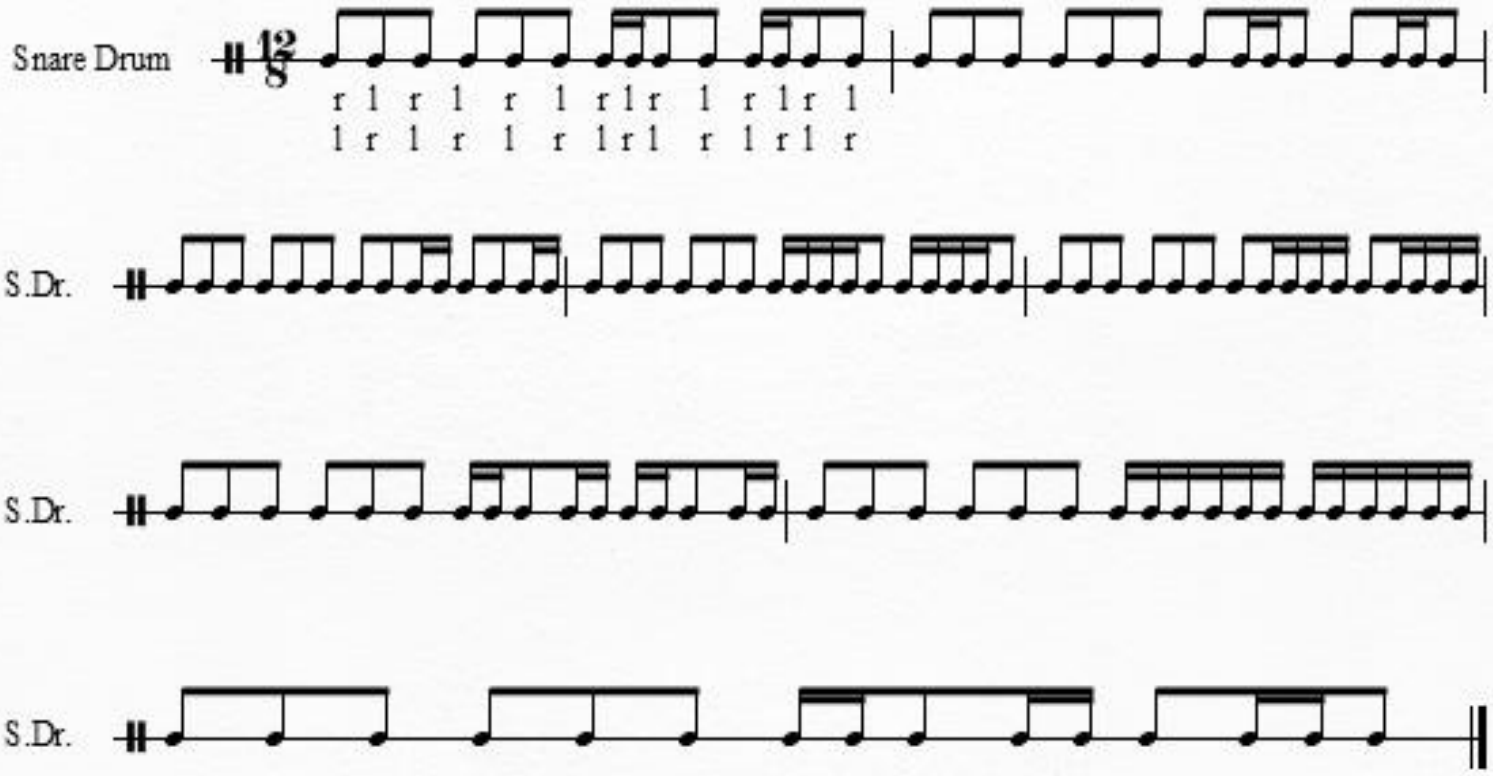
Triplet Singles