Choosing Instrumentation

Factors in determining the instrumentation for a passage:
(1) Character of the passage (Heroic, majestic, tranquil, meditative, etc.).
(2) Does the passage suggest a light or heavy scoring?
(3) What coloring (brilliant, warm, dark, etc.) seems appropriate?
(4) What is the function of the passage in the context of the entire work? How does it relate to what came before and what will come after?
(5) What instrument(s) can play the respective parts in terms of range and technical ability?
(6) What style of scoring is appropriate? Consider the period in which the piece was composed.
(7) Is the music chordal, homophonic, or polyphonic?

Scoring a homophonic texture for strings, woodwinds, and 4 horns:
(1) Analyze it! What is the melody and harmony? What is the form? Are there contrasting sections? What is the phrasing? Is there an antiphonal feel?
(2) In transcribing piano music, fill in the natural thinning of texture that occurs at the beginning of each measure (see example pg. 208 of Kennan - While in the piano version there is a gradual thickening of texture due to the accumulation of notes in each individual measure, the orchestral transcription should have a more constant texture - that is their idiom).
(3) Hold bass note (we did this in transcribing piano music with pedal markings).
(4) If appropriate, project melody by giving the melody one color and the background (the harmonic support) another.
(5) For light scoring use flute and strings. The oboe (substituted for flute) will project more; the clarinet (substituted for flute) will be warmer.

Woodwind Doublings (see Table 12.1, p. 212 in Kennan)
(1) 1, 2, 3, and even 4 octave doublings may be used.

Woodwind and Strings Doublings
(1) Unison Doubling - The woodwinds will be overshadowed by the strings.
(2) Possible Doubling Characteristics:
   a) flute and strings - adds a little body.
   b) oboe and strings - makes the string tone more nasal.
   c) Clarinet and strings - adds warmth and roundness; Dark richness in lower register.
   d) Bassoon with cello or viola - adds body.
   e) Horn and cello in tenor register - produces an expressive, noble character for slower/cantabile melodies.
(3) Doubling the strings at the octave with a woodwind will allow the woodwind instrument to project more clearly (flute works best). Clarinet and bassoons may double an octave below the strings.
(4) Don’t overuse blends use pure colors occasionally.
(5) Organize the development of color and blends in the orchestration.

See examples on pg. 216ff of the Kennan.