

# **Puget Sound Chapter Auditions Handbook 2023-2024**

**Guidelines, Procedures,  
Categories, and Requirements for  
Teachers, Students, and  
Accompanists**



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## Update of Rules

Dear Chapter Members,

In an effort to maximize participation, auditions will alternate between virtual and in person beginning this year. 2023 will be virtual and 2024 will be in person and so on and so forth. There have been many changes at the National level of competition and therefore **we strongly encourage all chapter members to carefully review the instructions and rules, old and new alike, contained within this document.**

Sincerely,

The Auditions Committee

### **A few key points to watch out for:**

- The competition will be held in an online format. The Registration Period to submit video recordings **opens on Thursday December 14th and closes on Thursday Dec. 28th at 11:59pm.**
- All singers will make performance recordings with either live pianists or accompaniment tracks. **Please note: we will accept tracks at the chapter competition level for all categories, but if your singer moves on in the competition to Regionals or Nationals, they will be required to use a live accompanist for all categories except Contemporary.**
- All teachers with participating students will be expected to serve as **online judges between January 2nd - January 11th 2024.**
- Winners will be announced on **Saturday, January 13th 2024**
- Regional Submissions, for those placing 1st-3rd in our chapter Auditions, will be due Thursday, February 29, 2024.

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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## **Purpose**

### MISSION STATEMENT

As an expression of the goals of the National Association of Teachers of Singing, the NATS Student Auditions:

- Inspire and encourage students and teachers to continue their dedication to, and growth in, the art of singing
- Embrace all genres of vocal music as art worthy to be studied, respected, and appreciated
- Create a collegial and supportive atmosphere that encourages excellent artistic singing
- Provide constructive, written feedback from a panel of experienced and impartial adjudicators
- Recognize and honor outstanding performances
- Create the NSA as a structure that continues to evolve and improve with each audition cycle

### **The National Student Auditions Regulations emanate from the Mission Statement and are designed to:**

- Standardize registration processes, categories, and repertoire based on research into NATS chapter, district, and 15 regions' student auditions, creating ease, uniformity, and fluidity across all NATS National Student Auditions
- Bring NSA to parity with other national organizations that have standardized requirements among their constituencies for local, regional, and national auditions
- Make audition scoring data comparisons possible across all National Student Auditions
- Create a common understanding of repertoire definitions in vocal music as they relate to the auditions
- Create common language, definitions, and scoring systems across all National Student Auditions so both students and teachers can cross chapter and region boundaries with knowledge and understanding of a NATS audition as a singer or adjudicator
- Create categories that reflect diversity, inclusion, and cultures represented in the ever-expanding NATS membership and their areas of expertise.

- Provide an opportunity for students of NATS members to develop the skills required to audition in a safe, supportive environment—that is not a talent competition.

Former NATS President Roy Delo believed that, “the idea of constructive criticism along with encouragement” is at the heart of our student adjudications. “Perhaps one of the greatest ties that binds us together as NATS members is the care we have for the students of our colleagues, as demonstrated at our student auditions.” *Journal of Singing, Vol. 57, No. 1, p.2*

Student auditions (SA) operate with the endorsement of the National Association of Teachers of Singing and, as such, they are expected to adhere to national bylaws and policies, including, but not limited to:

- NATS Code of Ethics
- NATS Policy on Copyright Laws
- NATS Auditions Regulations

For complete Regulations from Nationals, please go to:

[https://www.nats.org/Library/2023\\_24\\_NSA\\_Docs/9-19-23\\_Full\\_NSA\\_Regulations.pdf](https://www.nats.org/Library/2023_24_NSA_Docs/9-19-23_Full_NSA_Regulations.pdf)

## Eligibility

1. Teachers entering students must be current with National and Chapter dues.
2. A participating student must be an **active** member of the teacher’s studio at the time of the Auditions.
3. If the student has been studying less than 8 months with the teacher, the name of the previous teacher must be included on the application.
- 4. Students may enter in UP TO THREE categories. The fee for the first category is \$35, and each additional category is \$15.**
5. Teachers may not accompany students, **unless** the teacher is not in the camera shot or if they pre-record a piano track.
6. Participating teachers are expected to serve as adjudicators and attend a **mandatory Auditions Info Meeting on Sunday November 19th, 2:00pm.**

## AuditionNow Registration How-To:

**Click on the link to be taken to NSA’s complete instructions on Registering your students in the new AuditionNow.**

[https://www.nats.org/Library/NSA\\_Files/Logging\\_In\\_to\\_AuditionNow.pdf](https://www.nats.org/Library/NSA_Files/Logging_In_to_AuditionNow.pdf)

## Audition Procedures

### Teachers

1. Teachers will be informed of their judging assignments by January 2nd, 2024 by 5pm. Adjudications should be submitted no later than midnight on January 11th, 2024
2. Student evaluations will be available in AuditionNow once the judging period has closed.

### Students

1. All repertoire must be performed from memory.
2. No logos on attire.
3. Students will present each of their selections via YouTube submission.
4. Students who cannot complete their entire program within the allotted time will still be eligible for prize recognition. However, judges will cease judging after the allotted time.
5. The top four singers in every category will receive ranking 1st, 2nd, 3rd and Honorable Mention. Please watch your emails as payments will be sent through PayPal. **Note: It makes the payment process easier if the email listed for the student during registration is an email that is attached to their PayPal account.**

### Recording Location

You should record your video in the spirit of a live audition or recital performance. You may record in a home, school, church, synagogue, recital hall, rehearsal room, or voice studio with good natural acoustics with or without an audience. Treat it as if it were a live performance.

### Recording Instructions

1. Record a separate unedited video for EACH selection on your repertoire list.
2. Your camera should record from a fixed position as if three adjudicators were seated in front of you.
3. Please film in a horizontal, rather than vertical orientation (1080p x1920 resolution recommended for YouTube).
4. You should face straight forward to the camera as you would appear to adjudicators in a live audition.
5. Your video recordings must clearly show your face and as much of your body from the knees upward as is possible.
6. Here is a short and helpful video of best practices for video auditions:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KyhwMZwohbo>

### **COLLABORATIVE PIANISTS - NEW INFO FROM NATIONALS**

*\*\*\*For PSNATS Local Auditions, we will allow tracks in any category, but please note you cannot use tracks if you advance to regionals or nationals and will need to record new videos.*

## **Classical, Spiritual, and/or Musical Theatre Video Auditions:**

- Perform with a live pianist at least partially on camera.
- If your voice teacher is your accompanist, their face should not be visible on the video.
- Pianists must play either from memory or from copyright-compliant scores.
- A page turner other than your voice teacher may be visible on camera as needed.

## **Commercial Music Category Video Auditions**

- Perform with a microphone on camera for amplification—using no additional effects/filters.
- Choose to accompany yourself on an instrument, perform with one live instrumentalist on camera, OR perform with a pre-recorded track with no backing vocals.
- You may make the same or different accompaniment choices for each selection taking care to follow the NSA Commercial Music requirements for the category you enter.
- If your voice teacher is your accompanist, their face should not be visible on the video.
- Accompanying instrumentalists may play by ear, from memory, from a score the singer composed, or from copyright-compliant: lyric sheets, lead sheets, sheet music, music in a book, or altered published music.
- A page turner other than your voice teacher may be visible on camera as needed.

## **Tracks**

1. You may sing with recorded accompaniment in your video entries in all categories at the local level. *You can only use tracks in Commercial Music Categories if you advance to Regionals or beyond.*
2. You may use pre-recorded tracks that are **PIANO ACCOMPANIMENT ONLY, (unless it is the CM category)** utilizing such apps as Appcompanionist, Hal Leonard's Virtual Library, and piano only YouTube tracks. Students are strongly encouraged to utilize the accompanist list for pianists in our area who are willing to work with you to make a track to your specifications, though this is not necessary. Check with individual pianists about their accompanist fee.

## **Performance**

Introduce yourself and the selection at the beginning of the first video or at the beginning of each video by saying: "My Name is \_\_\_\_\_; "I will sing—Title of Composition—by— Composer (and Lyricist if MT)—and if appropriate—from—Title of Work". (The identity of your teacher,

school, and region should not be revealed.) **\*common practice, not required**

## **Disqualification**

1. In viewing your tablet or phone during the recording, if you give the impression you are using music for your audition instead of singing from memory, you may be disqualified.
2. Singers will be disqualified for submissions that were recorded more than six months from the competition submission date.
3. If your teacher's identity is revealed in any way, (name, visual cue, or location), your performance will be disqualified.
- 4. If your video contains accompaniment other than piano, it will be disqualified, unless it is in the CM category.**
5. If your video is found to be edited, other than trimming on the ends, it will be disqualified, such as videos using recording equipment that alters the acoustics of the venue or the sound quality of the singer by adding/subtracting reverb or altering the pitches being sung.
6. Videos that pan and zoom during performances will be disqualified.
7. Videos with private sharing options (see above) will be disqualified.

**\*\*Singers MAY use separate devices for recording sound and recording video, but they must be from the same take\*\***

## **YouTube Video Settings**

- Select "Unlisted" in the privacy settings found under the Broadcasting and Sharing Options, when uploading your video files to YouTube. No other settings are accepted in NSA.
- Each video title should be in the following format: NATS NSA – Singer's Full Name Video titles must be the same at all levels of NSA. Videos at any level must not contain any reference to chapter, district, or region, school, teacher, etc.)
- In the YouTube "Description" section, type: "Title of Selection" Title of LARGER WORK whenever applicable Composer's Name if a Musical Theatre selection ADD and Lyricist's Name
- YouTube Channel Titles & Images must NOT reveal Teacher, School, Location, Region, or Studio Names or affiliations.

## **Submission:**

Students should upload their own links to Youtube and send the video URL link to your teacher so they may submit it. If the teacher chooses to upload their student's videos to Youtube, it must be with an account that does not reveal the teacher's name or studio.

**Please note: it is the teacher's responsibility to vet their students' videos prior to submitting them in Auditionware. If there are disqualifying issues with the video, students may be able to participate, but for comments only.**

## **Judging:**

1. All teachers who have students participating in the Auditions are expected to serve as judges for a few categories in which they do not have students, as assigned by the Auditions Committee.
2. If you are unable to judge you must find a replacement who will agree to take on your judging assignments and then notify the Auditions Chair of this change.
3. Please **do not wait** until the last minute to do your judging.
4. Keep all comments both constructive and encouraging.
5. Judges **should never** mention attire or comment on general appearance, so that the Auditions remain equitable and inclusive.
6. In the judging examples below, please note that you will need to give individual scores for each aspect of the rubric, and then take an average of those scores to enter as a final score. Many times there are winners who win by only a decimal point, so please be precise.
7. Please note: the Puget Sound Chapter Auditions do not involve a "90% rule" in order for students to progress to Regionals. All 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners are eligible regardless of their score.

Please utilize these resources as you prepare for adjudication:

- [Rubrics](#)
- [Adjudication Forms](#)
- [NSA Children & Youth Adjudicator Training](#)
- [NSA Classical Adjudicator Training](#)
- [NSA Commercial Music Adjudicator Training](#)
- [NSA Musical Theatre Adjudicator Training](#)
- [NSA Spirituals Adjudicator Training](#)
- [Adjudication Best Practices](#)
- [Sample Comments for Classical Categories](#)
- [Sample SHORT and AMPLIFIED COMMENTS for Classical Categories](#)
- [Sample Comments For Musical Theatre Categories](#)

#### Video Resource Library

-  [The Art of Being a Great Adjudicator \(1:04:08\)](#)
-  [Tips for adjudicating musical theatre categories of the NATS Student Auditions \(46:17\)](#)
-  [Best practices for recording a quality audition video \(4:37\)](#)

# Sample Adjudication Forms:



## NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF SINGING NSA CL-MT-AS-HJ Adjudication Form



SINGER'S NAME or # \_\_\_\_\_ CATEGORY \_\_\_\_\_

← Check, if singing for **comments only**

### REPERTOIRE

Title	Larger Work	Composer
1. _____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____
5. _____	_____	_____

### ADJUDICATION

Using the NATS rubric as appropriate to the level of study and age of the singer, place an X along the tick line following each of the rubric's standards listed below. Standards vary in importance; and therefore, weight in a composite score. Assign a composite score between 70 and 100. A numerical score should only appear in the score box at the bottom of the adjudication form. Support your ticks below with constructive criticism and encouraging responses in your comments.

STANDARD	DEVELOPING	ADVANCING	MASTERING
Tone	----- ----- -----	----- ----- -----	----- ----- -----
Breathing/Alignment	----- ----- -----	----- ----- -----	----- ----- -----
Language / Diction	----- ----- -----	----- ----- -----	----- ----- -----
Musicianship / Accuracy	----- ----- -----	----- ----- -----	----- ----- -----
Artistry / Expression	----- ----- -----	----- ----- -----	----- ----- -----
REFLECTING SCORES	70-----79	80-----89	90-----100
Ensemble ( <i>comments only</i> )	----- ----- -----		

### COMMENTS

ADJUDICATOR'S SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

PRINT NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

**SCORE**

If singing for  
comments only,  
mark an X in the  
score box.

X

# Contemporary Music category:



## NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF SINGING NSA CM only Adjudication Form



SINGER'S NAME or # \_\_\_\_\_ CATEGORY \_\_\_\_\_

← Check, if singing for **comments only**

### REPERTOIRE

Title	Larger Work	Composer & Lyricist Team
1. _____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____
5. _____	_____	_____

### ADJUDICATION

Using the NATS rubric as appropriate to the level of study and age of the singer, place an X along the tick line following each of the rubric's standards listed below. Standards vary in importance; and therefore, weight in a composite score. Assign a composite score between 70 and 100. A numerical score should only appear in the score box at the bottom of the adjudication form. Support your ticks below with constructive criticism and encouraging responses in your comments.

STANDARD	DEVELOPING	ADVANCING	MASTERING
Artistic Interpretation	_____	_____	_____
Lyrics	_____	_____	_____
Vocal Stylisms	_____	_____	_____
Musicianship	_____	_____	_____
Tone	_____	_____	_____
Breathing	_____	_____	_____
REFLECTING SCORES	70	79 80	89 90 100
Ensemble ( <i>comments only</i> )	_____	_____	_____

### COMMENTS

ADJUDICATOR'S SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

PRINT NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

SCORE   
If singing for comments only, mark an X in the score box.

# RUBRICS:



## NATS Audition Rubric CLASSICAL CATEGORIES

Each singer's performance is adjudicated in comparison to the following standards as applied to the category of entry.

STANDARD	DEVELOPING 70 – 79	ADVANCING 80 – 89	MASTERING 90 – 100
<b>TONE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resonance and timbre are appropriate to the style with balanced chiaroscuro and ring throughout range.</li> <li>Transitions through passaggi are smooth and efficient.</li> <li>Onsets and offsets are clean, clear, and balanced allowing for uniform vibrancy and clarity.</li> <li>Dynamic flexibility is present.</li> <li>The singer engages the ability to make subtle changes in timbre appropriate to the style and character of the selection.</li> </ul>	<p>The singer is beginning to develop vocal resonance and balanced chiaroscuro timbre. Onsets and offsets delay or press the tone and cause extra noise or air. Transitions through passaggi are difficult or uneven. Dynamic flexibility is missing in much of the performance. Vocal colors do not enhance the style and character of the selection.</p>	<p>The singer is advancing in resonance and balanced chiaroscuro through some of the range. Onsets and offsets are mostly immediate, but some pressing or breathiness is present. Passaggi transitions are inconsistent. Dynamic flexibility is evident much of the time. Vocal colors mostly enhance the style and character of the selection.</p>	<p>The singer is mastering resonance. A balanced chiaroscuro tone rings throughout range. Onsets and offsets are immediate and promote clarity. Passaggi transitions are smooth and efficient. Dynamic flexibility is consistently evident in the performance. Vocal colors consistently enhance the style and character of the selection.</p>
<b>BREATH &amp; ALIGNMENT</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inhalation is easy, full, silent, and efficient.</li> <li>Exhalation provides stability, support, vibrancy, buoyancy, loft, and vocal energy.</li> <li>The alignment, coordination, and release of the head, neck, larynx, jaw, ribs, back, abdomen, legs, and feet assist a dynamic engagement of the vocal instrument.</li> </ul>	<p>The singer is developing appropriate respiration. Inhalation is often noisy or insufficient. During exhalation, the singer tenses or collapses requiring extra breaths to complete phrases. Buoyancy and loft are inconsistent. The lack of coordination and alignment of the body hinders a dynamic engagement of the vocal instrument.</p>	<p>The singer is advancing toward appropriate respiration. Inhalation is mostly easy and sufficient. Exhalation often provides stability, support, and vocal energy with some collapsing and tension. Buoyancy and loft are often present. The coordination and alignment of the body are mostly assisting a dynamic engagement of the vocal instrument.</p>	<p>The singer is mastering respiration. Inhalation is easy and sufficient. Exhalation provides support, balanced stability, and energy. Buoyancy and loft are consistently present. The coordination and alignment of the body consistently assists a dynamic engagement of the vocal instrument.</p>
<b>TEXT &amp; DICTION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Languages are sung with accurate pronunciation and effective articulation with idiomatic inflection beyond basic phonetics.</li> <li>The singer displays a thorough understanding in communicating the text.</li> <li>Phrasing and flow respect the nuance of each language.</li> </ul>	<p>The singer is developing some language proficiency but is often inaccurate in pronunciation and articulation. Idiomatic characteristics of the language are not present. The meaning of the text is ambiguous and poorly communicated. Phrasing and flow do not respect the nuance of each language.</p>	<p>The singer is advancing in language proficiency with accurate pronunciation and articulation. Idiomatic characteristics of the language are inconsistently present. The singer often communicates the meaning of the text. Phrasing and flow respect the nuance of each language inconsistently.</p>	<p>The singer is mastering languages with accurate pronunciation and effective articulation. Idiomatic inflection beyond basic phonetics is consistently present. The singer understands and communicates the meaning of the text. Phrasing and flow consistently respect the nuance of each language.</p>
<b>MUSICIANSHIP</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pitches and rhythms are accurate.</li> <li>Tuning is accurate throughout range.</li> <li>The markings of the composer, editor, or arranger are observed and present in the performance.</li> <li>Selections are accurately performed from memory.</li> </ul>	<p>The singer's musicianship is beginning to develop with many accurate pitches and rhythms. Some errors are present. Tuning is often problematic. The markings in the score are rarely observed or present in the performance. Memorization is incomplete.</p>	<p>The singer's musicianship is advancing with pitch and rhythmic accuracy most of the time. Tuning is mostly accurate and complete with some errors. Many of the markings in the score are observed and present in the performance. Memorization is mostly complete.</p>	<p>The singer's musicianship is refined. All pitches and rhythms are accurate. Tuning is consistently accurate. The markings in the score are observed and present in the performance. Memorization is accurate.</p>
<b>ARTISTRY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The performance synthesizes vocal and physical communication to embody and express the character and story/poetry.</li> <li>The performance embodies clear musical intent and embraces the uniqueness of the singer.</li> <li>The listeners are engaged in a believable and fulfilling aesthetic performance.</li> </ul>	<p>The singer's performance does not embody a thorough understanding of the text and music. Physical, musical, and vocal choices are not contributing to effective communication. The performance is self-conscious and insecure.</p>	<p>Physical, musical, and vocal choices coordinate to create believable moments. An authenticity that embraces the uniqueness of the singer is emerging. The singer is inconsistent in engaging the listeners in a fulfilling aesthetic performance.</p>	<p>Physical, musical, and vocal choices allow the singer to communicate effectively. An authentic performance embraces the uniqueness of the singer. The singer consistently engages the listeners in a believable and fulfilling aesthetic performance.</p>
<b>ENSEMBLE (comments only)</b> The singer and pianist coordinate their efforts toward the same artistic goals in the performance.	<p>The singer and pianist seem unsynchronized. The artistic goals of the performance were unclear.</p>	<p>The singer and pianist are often coordinated in their efforts toward the same artistic goals in the performance.</p>	<p>The singer and pianist are consistently coordinated in their efforts toward the same artistic goals in the entire performance.</p>



National Association of Teachers of Singing

## NATS Audition Rubric

# COMMERCIAL MUSIC CATEGORIES

- Students may choose to sing all their selections in one CM style or vary their selections in multiple CM styles.
- Each singer's performance is adjudicated in comparison to the following standards as applied to the category of entry.

STANDARDS	DEVELOPING 70 – 79	ADVANCING 80 – 89	MASTERING 90 – 100
<b>ARTISTIC INTERPRETATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The performance is authentic.</li> <li>• The performance offers a unique, stylized interpretation of the music.</li> <li>• The performance is specific to the selected style of commercial music.</li> </ul>	The singer needs an increased understanding of the stylistic elements of each selection. The interpretation lacks authenticity and is not unique to the singer.	The singer is advancing in the ability to communicate the stylistic elements of each selection. The interpretation has moments of authenticity unique to the singer.	The singer is mastering the ability to communicate the stylistic elements of each selection. The interpretation is authentic and unique to the singer.
<b>LYRICS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The lyrics are articulated in the style appropriate to the selected style of commercial music.</li> <li>• Vocal tract shaping and diction enhance the individuality of the performance.</li> </ul>	Articulation is incompatible with the style of the song. The singer is beginning to engage the lyrics to embody the essence of each style.	Articulation is often compatible with the style of each song. The singer is often engaging the lyrics to embody the essence of each style.	Articulation is compatible with the style of each song. The singer is consistently engaging the lyrics to embody the essence of each style.
<b>VOCAL STYLISMS*</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The song's artistic interpretation includes expressive vocal stylisms characteristic of the selected style.</li> <li>• Interpretive vocal stylisms may include varied vocal onsets, releases, nuances, and embellishments, which stylistically color the vocal tone with fry, cry, growl, breathiness, etc. (See <i>CM Terminology</i>)</li> </ul>	Vocal interpretations lack the vocal stylisms characteristic of each genre. The singer is beginning to develop a facility with vocal stylisms.	Vocal interpretations include some vocal stylisms characteristic of each selection's style. The singer is developing a facility with artistic vocal stylisms.	Vocal interpretations include vocal stylisms characteristic of each genre. The singer has proficient facility with artistically effective vocal stylisms.
<b>MUSICIANSHIP</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance is in tune.</li> <li>• Rhythmic groove enhances the performance.</li> <li>• Memorization is secure and accurate.</li> </ul>	Pitches need to be more accurate. The style and rhythmic groove require further study. Memorization is incomplete.	Most pitches are accurate. The style and rhythmic groove are developing. Memorization is organic and mostly accurate.	All pitches are accurate. The style and rhythmic groove enhance the performance. Memorization is organic and accurate.
<b>TONE</b> <p>Singer shows mastery of the vocal demands of songs selected and makes subtle or dramatic adjustments appropriate to the style and emotional expression of each selection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each commercial style requires a variety of authentic vocal colors and sounds culturally viable for the chosen style of music performed.</li> <li>• Vocal tone may include some form of a mix of Mode I (Chest/TA) and Mode II (Head/CT) as well as varied organic, primal sounds born of raw emotion.</li> <li>• All CM styles are reliant on amplification. The microphone is used dynamically to facilitate vocal stylisms as well as projection.</li> </ul>	The singer is beginning to show ability in meeting the demands of each song and is able to make some appropriate choices in keeping with the specific style of each song.	The singer shows advancing ability in meeting the demands of each song and is often able to make appropriate choices in keeping with the specific style of each song.	The singer is mastering the ability to meet the demands of each song and makes appropriate choices in keeping with the specific style of each song.
<b>BREATHING</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inhalation is efficient to the style and may be noisy or silent in response to raw emotion.</li> <li>• Exhalation provides stability and vocal energy. The appearance of effort may be intrinsic to style.</li> </ul>	The singer is beginning to inhale efficiently to meet the demands of each style. Exhalation needs to provide more stability and vocal energy.	The singer inconsistently inhales efficiently to meet the demands of each style. Exhalation inconsistently provides stability and vocal energy.	The singer is mastering efficient inhalation to meet the demands of each style. Exhalation provides stability and vocal energy.
<b>ENSEMBLE (comments only)</b> <p>The singer coordinates with the accompaniment effectively to accomplish artistic goals.</p>	The singer needs to coordinate more effectively with the accompaniment to accomplish artistic goals.	The singer is advancing in the ability to coordinate with the accompaniment to accomplish artistic goals.	The singer is mastering effective coordination with the accompaniment to accomplish artistic goals.

\*Edrie Means Weekly coined this term in her teaching of Commercial Music and Musical Theatre.



## NATS Audition Rubric MUSICAL THEATRE CATEGORIES

Each singer's performance is adjudicated in comparison to the following standards as applied to the category of entry.

**REMINDER: All vowels in MUSICAL THEATRE are some form of a MIX of Mode I (Chest/TA) and Mode II (Head/CT).**

**Speech Mix:** Based on the closed vowels of vernacular speech. A Mode I (Chest/TA) dominant quality.

**Belt Mix:** An acoustic strategy. A Mode I (Chest/TA) dominant call between G4 and D5. Resonance is achieved on American open vowels as in "hat," "met," and "shot." Above D5 in Mode I (Chest/TA) dominant resonance, high belt is achieved on American closed vowels as in "hoot" and "feet." A belt is used to express moments of soaring emotion. Belt is dynamically balanced with energized airflow. It may be vibrant or retain a straight tone.

**Legit Mix:** An acoustic strategy. Mode II (Head/CT) dominant. Legit refers to a more spacious resonance *similar* to classical singing but retains speech-like articulation.

Hear [audio examples](#) of varied Musical Theatre mixes

STANDARDS	DEVELOPING 70 – 79	ADVANCING 80 – 89	MASTERING 90 – 100
<b>STONE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The singer shows mastery of the vocal techniques required for the repertoire selected. (See above)</li> <li>The singer makes subtle or dramatic vocal adjustments appropriate to the style and character.</li> <li>The singer produces a wide variety of vocal colors throughout the song in the service of character, story, and style.</li> <li>Resonance is speech-like; intelligibility is a priority.</li> </ul>	<p>The singer is beginning to show ability in vocal techniques and is able to make some appropriate choices in keeping with the character, story, and style. Singer needs to explore more control of registration/resonance shifts and adjustments to serve character, story, and style.</p>	<p>The singer shows advancing skill in vocal techniques and is making some appropriate choices in keeping with the character, story, and style. The singer shows some control of registration/resonance shifts and makes some adjustments to serve character, story, and style.</p>	<p>The singer is mastering vocal techniques and makes appropriate choices in keeping with the character, story, and style. Singer shows intentional control of registration/resonance shifts and makes adjustments to serve character, story, and style.</p>
<b>BREATH &amp; ALIGNMENT</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inhalation is easy, full, and efficient.</li> <li>Exhalation provides stability, support, and vocal energy.</li> <li>Alignment is dynamic and free to express the physical life of the character.</li> </ul>	<p>The singer is beginning to show easy, full, and efficient inhalation. Exhalation needs to provide more stability, support, and vocal energy. Breath needs to flow more evenly without being pressed. Alignment needs to become more dynamic and free to express the physical life of the character.</p>	<p>The singer shows easy, full, and efficient inhalation with increasing consistency. Exhalation often provides stability, support, and vocal energy. Breath often flows evenly without being pressed. Alignment is often dynamic and free to express the physical life of the character.</p>	<p>The singer is mastering easy, full, and efficient inhalation. Exhalation provides stability, support, and vocal energy. Breath flows evenly without being pressed. Alignment is consistently dynamic and free to express the physical life of the character.</p>
<b>LANGUAGE &amp; DICTION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The lyrics are sung with accurate pronunciation and effective articulation in the style <i>and</i> vernacular appropriate to the character.</li> <li>The singer embodies a thorough understanding and communication of the lyrics.</li> </ul>	<p>The singer needs more accurate pronunciation and more effective articulation in the style <i>and</i> vernacular appropriate to the character. The singer needs to understand and communicate the lyrics more effectively.</p>	<p>The singer is often using accurate pronunciation and effective articulation in the style <i>and</i> vernacular appropriate to the character. The singer often embodies an understanding and communication of the lyrics.</p>	<p>The singer is mastering accurate pronunciation and effective articulation in the style <i>and</i> vernacular appropriate to the character. The singer embodies a thorough understanding and communication of the lyrics.</p>
<b>MUSICIANSHIP</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pitches and rhythms are accurate.</li> <li>The markings of the composer are observed and performed in idiomatic style.</li> <li>Memorization is organic and accurate.</li> </ul>	<p>Pitches and rhythms need to be more accurate. More markings of the composer need to be observed. The style requires further study. Memorization is incomplete.</p>	<p>Most pitches and rhythms are accurate. Most of the markings of the composer are observed and performed in idiomatic style. Memorization is organic and mostly accurate.</p>	<p>All pitches and rhythms are accurate. The markings of the composer are observed and performed in idiomatic style. Memorization is organic and accurate.</p>
<b>ARTISTRY</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The performance synthesizes vocal and physical communication to embody a specific character and story.</li> <li>The listeners are engaged in an honest and believable performance.</li> </ul>	<p>The synthesis of vocal and physical communication needs to embody the character and story more clearly. Performance skills and artistry are emerging. The performance is superficial or artificial.</p>	<p>The singer is advancing in the ability to synthesize vocal and physical communication to embody the character and story. The performance is mostly honest and believable.</p>	<p>The singer is mastering the ability to synthesize vocal and physical communication to embody the character and story. The performance is honest and believable.</p>
<b>ENSEMBLE (comments only)</b> The singer and pianist coordinate their efforts toward the same artistic goals in performance.	<p>The singer and pianist need to coordinate toward the same artistic goals in performance.</p>	<p>The singer and pianist are often coordinated in their efforts toward the same artistic goals in performance.</p>	<p>The singer and pianist are fully coordinated in their efforts toward the same artistic goals in performance.</p>

# CATEGORIES AND REPERTOIRE REQUIREMENTS

	<b>Category</b> Treble: Soprano, Mezzo-Soprano, Contralto and Countertenor TBB: Tenor, Baritone and Bass Voices	<b>Length of Study</b>	<b>Age Limit</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Repertoire: all repertoire sung from memory</b>
MT 1	Children Musical Theatre - all voices COMPETITIVE	No limit	11 and under (below 6th grade)	6 min	TWO contrasting age-appropriate musical theatre selections from musicals including film musicals, revues, operettas, musical theatre song cycles or musical theatre song literature. Only one selection may be chosen from an operetta or musical theatre song literature.
MT 2	Youth Musical Theatre - all voices COMPETITIVE	No limit	11 -14 (6th - 8th grade)	6 min	TWO contrasting age-appropriate musical theatre selections from musicals including film musicals, revues, operettas, musical theatre song cycles or musical theatre song literature. Only one selection may be chosen from an operetta or musical theatre song literature.
CL 1	Children Classical - all voices COMPETITIVE	No limit	11 and under (below 6th grade)	6 min	TWO contrasting age-appropriate selections from classical repertoire.
CL 2	Youth Classical - all voices COMPETITIVE	No limit	11 -14 (6th - 8th grade)	6 min	TWO contrasting age-appropriate selections from classical repertoire.
CM 1	Children Commercial Music - all voices COMPETITIVE	No limit	11 and under (below 6th grade)	6 min	TWO contrasting age-appropriate selections performed a CM style(s).
CM 2	Youth Commercial Music - all voices COMPETITIVE	No limit	11 -14 (6th - 8th grade)	6 min	TWO contrasting age-appropriate selections performed a CM style(s).

	<b>High School:</b>				
MT 3A-9	Lower High School Musical Theatre Grade 9 -Treble	No limit	14-16	10 min	Three contrasting music theater selections from musicals (including film musicals), revues, operettas, music theater song cycles or music theater song literature. Only one selection may be chosen from operetta or music theater song literature.
MT 3A-10	Lower High School Musical Theatre Grade 10 -Treble	No limit	14-16	10 min	Three contrasting music theater selections from musicals (including film musicals), revues, operettas, music theater song cycles or music theater song literature. Only one selection may be chosen from operetta or music theater song literature.
MT 3B-11	Upper High School Musical Theatre Grade 11 -Treble	No limit	16-19	10 min	Three contrasting music theater selections from musicals (including film musicals), revues, operettas, music theater song cycles or music theater song literature. Only one selection may be chosen from operetta or music theater song literature.
MT 3B-12	Upper High School Musical Theatre Grade 12 -Treble	No limit	16-19	10 min	Three contrasting music theater selections from musicals (including film musicals), revues, operettas, music theater song cycles or music theater song literature. Only one selection may be chosen from operetta or music theater song literature.
MT 4A-9	Lower High School Musical Theatre Grade 9 -TBB	No limit	14-16	10 min	Three contrasting music theater selections from musicals (including film musicals), revues, operettas, music theater song cycles or music theater song literature. Only one selection may be chosen from operetta or music theater song literature.
MT 4A-10	Lower High School Musical Theatre Grade 10 -TBB	No limit	14-16	10 min	Three contrasting music theater selections from musicals (including film musicals), revues, operettas, music theater song cycles or music theater song literature. Only one selection may be chosen from operetta or music theater song literature.
MT 4B-11	Upper High School Musical Theatre Grade 11 -TBB	No limit	16-19	10 min	Three contrasting music theater selections from musicals (including film musicals), revues, operettas, music theater song cycles or music theater song literature. Only one selection may be chosen from operetta or music theater song literature.
MT 4B-12	Upper High School Musical Theatre Grade 12 -TBB	No limit	16-19	10 min	Three contrasting music theater selections from musicals (including film musicals), revues, operettas, music theater song cycles

					or music theater song literature. Only one selection may be chosen from operetta or music theater song literature.
CL 3A-9	Lower High School Classical Grade 9 -Treble	No limit	14-16	10 min	Three contrasting selections from classical repertoire. One art song in English. One art song in a language other than English. One additional art song or aria.
CL 3A-10	Lower High School Classical Grade 10 -Treble	No limit	14-16	10 min	Three contrasting selections from classical repertoire. One art song in English. One art song in a language other than English. One additional art song or aria.
CL 3B-11	Upper High School Classical Grade 11 -Treble	No limit	16-19	10 min	Three contrasting selections from classical repertoire. One art song in English. One art song in a language other than English. One additional art song or aria.
CL 3B-12	Upper High School Classical Grade 12 -Treble	No limit	16-19	10 min	Three contrasting selections from classical repertoire. One art song in English. One art song in a language other than English. One additional art song or aria.
CL 4A-9	Lower High School Classical Grade 9 -TBB	No limit	14-16	10 min	Three contrasting selections from classical repertoire. One art song in English. One art song in a language other than English. One additional art song or aria.
CL 4A-10	Lower High School Classical Grade 10 -TBB	No limit	14-16	10 min	Three contrasting selections from classical repertoire. One art song in English. One art song in a language other than English. One additional art song or aria.
CL 4B-11	Upper High School Classical Grade 11 -TBB	No limit	16-19	10 min	Three contrasting selections from classical repertoire. One art song in English. One art song in a language other than English. One additional art song or aria.
CL 4B-12	Upper High School Classical Grade 12 -TBB	No limit	16-19	10 min	Three contrasting selections from classical repertoire. One art song in English. One art song in a language other than English. One additional art song or aria.
CM 3A	Lower High School Contemporary Music (Grades 9 and 10) -Treble	No limit	13-16	10 min	THREE contrasting songs in any CM style(s): Only one song may be an original song, instead of a cover. Only one song may be self-accompanied on an acoustic instrument, instead of performing with an instrumental track or a live collaborative instrumentalist. Singers can use karaoke tracks with full instrumentals. Singers should perform with amplification(Dynamic microphone) if possible.
CM 3B	Upper High School Contemporary Music (Grades 11 and 12) -Treble	No limit	16-19	10 min	THREE contrasting songs in any CM style(s): Only one song may be an original song, instead of a cover. Only one song may be self-accompanied on an acoustic instrument,

					instead of performing with an instrumental track or a live collaborative instrumentalist. Singers can use karaoke tracks with full instrumentals. Singers should perform with amplification(Dynamic microphone) if possible.
CM 4A	Lower High School Contemporary Music (Grades 9 and 10) -TBB	No limit	13-16	10 min	THREE contrasting songs in any CM style(s): Only one song may be an original song, instead of a cover. Only one song may be self-accompanied on an acoustic instrument, instead of performing with an instrumental track or a live collaborative instrumentalist. Singers can use karaoke tracks with full instrumentals. Singers should perform with amplification(Dynamic microphone) if possible.
CM 4B	Upper High School Contemporary Music (Grades 11 and 12) -TBB	No limit	16-19	10 min	THREE contrasting songs in any CM style(s): Only one song may be an original song, instead of a cover. Only one song may be self-accompanied on an acoustic instrument, instead of performing with an instrumental track or a live collaborative instrumentalist. Singers can use karaoke tracks with full instrumentals. Singers should perform with amplification(Dynamic microphone) if possible.
AS 3 (No regionals/nationals in 2023-2024 cycle)	High School Spirituals -Treble & TBB	No limit	14-19	10 min	Three American Negro Spirituals contrasting by composer, tempo, and text. See approved publication list: <a href="https://www.nats.org/American_Negro_Spiritual_Competition.html">https://www.nats.org/American_Negro_Spiritual_Competition.html</a>
	<b>College:</b>				
CL 5	Lower College Classical -Treble	1-3 Years Post High School	22	10 min	Three contrasting selections from classical repertoire: One art song in English. One art song in a language other than English. One aria or art song.
CL 6	Lower College Classical -TBB	1-3 Years Post High School	22	10 min	Three contrasting selections from classical repertoire: One art song in English. One art song in a language other than English. One aria or art song.
CL 7	Upper College Classical -Treble	3-5 Years Post High School	25	12 min	Four contrasting selections from classical repertoire: One art song in English. One art song in a language other than English. One aria. One additional art song or aria. At least three languages must be represented.
CL 8	Upper College Classical -TBB	3-5 Years Post High School	25	12 min	Four contrasting selections from classical repertoire: One art song in English. One art song in a language other than English. One aria. One additional art song or aria. At least three languages must be represented.

CL 9	Advanced Classical -Treble	4+ Years Post High School	30	15 min	Five contrasting selections from classical repertoire: One art song in English. One art song in a language other than English. One opera aria. One oratorio/cantata aria. One additional selection from the classical repertoire. At least three languages must be represented.
CL 10	Advanced Classical -TBB	4+ Years Post High School	30	15 min	Five contrasting selections from classical repertoire: One art song in English. One art song in a language other than English. One opera aria. One oratorio/cantata aria. One additional selection from the classical repertoire. At least three languages must be represented.
MT 5	Lower College Musical Theatre- Treble	1-3 Years Post High School	22	10 min	Three contrasting music theater selections from musicals (including film musicals), revues, operettas, music theater song cycles or music theater song literature. Only one selection may be chosen from operetta or musical theater song literature.
MT 6	Lower College Musical Theatre -TBB	1-3 Years Post High School	22	10 min	Three contrasting music theater selections from musicals (including film musicals), revues, operettas, music theater song cycles or music theater song literature. Only one selection may be chosen from operetta or musical theater song literature.
MT 7	Upper College Musical Theatre -Treble	3-5 Years Post High School	25	12 min	Four contrasting music theater selections from musicals (including film musicals), revues, operettas, music theater song cycles or music theater song literature. Only one selection may be chosen from operetta or musical theater song literature.
MT 8	Upper College Musical Theatre -TBB	3-5 Years Post High School	25	12 min	Four contrasting music theater selections from musicals (including film musicals), revues, operettas, music theater song cycles or music theater song literature. Only one selection may be chosen from operetta or musical theater song literature.
HJ 7	Hall Johnson -All Voices	Post High School Under grad Students	17 -23	10 min	THREE contrasting selections from approved Hall Johnson spirituals repertoire. See approved repertoire on page 7 of National Categories of Entry.
CM 5	College/Independent Studio Contemporary Music -Treble & TBB	Post High School Study	25	10 min	THREE contrasting full songs performed in a CM style(s): Only one song may be an original song, instead of a cover. Only one song may be self-accompanied on an acoustic instrument, instead of performing with an instrumental track or a live collaborative

					instrumentalist
	<b>Avocational:</b>				
CL 11	Adult Avocational Classical -Treble	Not currently a voice Major	18-59	10 min	THREE contrasting selections from classical repertoire: One art song in English. One art song in a language other than English. One additional art song or aria.
CL 12	Adult Avocational Classical TBB	Not currently a voice Major	18-59	10 min	THREE contrasting selections from classical repertoire: One art song in English. One art song in a language other than English. One additional art song or aria.
CL 15	Adult Avocational Classical IV -Treble & TBB	Not currently a voice major	60+	10 min	THREE contrasting selections from classical repertoire: One art song in English. One art song in a language other than English. One additional art song or aria.
MT 11	Adult Avocational Musical Theatre	Not currently a voice major	18-59	10 min	Three contrasting music theater selections from musicals (including film musicals), revues, operettas, music theater song cycles or music theater song literature. Only one selection may be chosen from operetta or musical theater song literature.
MT 12	Adult Avocational Musical Theatre IV	Not currently a voice major	60+	10 min	Three contrasting music theater selections from musicals (including film musicals), revues, operettas, music theater song cycles or music theater song literature. Only one selection may be chosen from operetta or musical theater song literature.
CM 11	Adult Contemporary Music -Treble	No Limit	18+	10 min	THREE contrasting full songs performed in a CM style(s): Only one song may be an original song, instead of a cover. Only one song may be self-accompanied or an acoustic instrument, instead of performing with an instrumental track or live collaborative pianist.
CM 12	Adult Contemporary Music TBB	No Limit	18+	10 min	THREE contrasting full songs performed in a CM style(s): Only one song may be an original song, instead of a cover. Only one song may be self-accompanied or an acoustic instrument, instead of performing with an instrumental track or live collaborative pianist.
	Adult Avocational Spirituals		18+	10 min	Three American Negro Spirituals contrasting by composer, tempo, and text. <a href="http://www.nats.org/American_Negro_Spiritual_Competition.html">www.nats.org/American_Negro_Spiritual_Competition.html</a>
	<b>Non Traditional Student:</b>				
MT 13	Adult Musical Theatre —Treble Voices	No Limit	18+	10 min	THREE contrasting musical theatre selections: from musicals including film

					musicals, revues, operettas, musical theatre song cycles or musical theatre song literature. Only one selection may be chosen from operetta or musical theatre song literature.
MT 14	Adult Musical Theatre —TBB Voices	No Limit	18+	10 min	THREE contrasting musical theatre selections: from musicals including film musicals, revues, operettas, musical theatre song cycles or musical theatre song literature. Only one selection may be chosen from operetta or musical theatre song literature.
CL 13	Adult Classical —Treble Voices	No Limit	18+	10 min	THREE contrasting selections from classical repertoire: One art song in English. One art song in a language other than English. One additional art song or aria.
CL 14	Adult Classical —TBB Voices	No Limit	18+	10 min	THREE contrasting selections from classical repertoire: One art song in English. One art song in a language other than English. One additional art song or aria.
CM 13	Adult Commercial Music —Treble Voices	No Limit	18+	10 min	THREE contrasting full songs performed in a CM style(s): Only one song may be an original song, instead of a cover. Only one song may be self-accompanied on an acoustic instrument, instead of performing with an instrumental track or live collaborative pianist.
CM 14	Adult Commercial Music —TBB Voices	No Limit	18+	10 min	THREE contrasting full songs performed in a CM style(s): Only one song may be an original song, instead of a cover. Only one song may be self-accompanied on an acoustic instrument, instead of performing with an instrumental track or live collaborative pianist.

## **IMPORTANT AND HELPFUL RESOURCES AS YOU PREPARE YOUR STUDENTS, INCLUDING TERMINOLOGY AND LINKS TO FIND SHEET MUSIC, ETC. PLEASE CHECK THEM OUT.**

- [American Negro Spiritual Category Resources](#)
- [Children & Youth Category Resources](#)
- [Commercial Music NSA Category Resources](#)
- [Hall Johnson Spirituals Competition Resources](#)
- [Musical Theatre NSA Category Resources](#)

## **National and Regional Student Auditions**

Additional opportunities for adjudication are available for the winners of our Chapter Auditions.

Singers who place first, second or third in each of the categories will be provided with the necessary information and instructions regarding advancing to the Regional and National Student Auditions following the close of the Chapter Auditions. Teachers should be sure to pay close attention to the repertoire specifics for subsequent levels of competition, as they may differ from those at our Chapter level.

### **Regional Auditions**

Guidelines are available at [nwnats.org](http://nwnats.org). Regional videos are due Thursday, February 29, 2024.

### **National Auditions**

Rules for the national rounds can be found at [https://www.nats.org/national\\_student\\_auditions.html](https://www.nats.org/national_student_auditions.html)

- Any Puget Sound chapter winner who wishes to pay the fee and compete will need to upload a video to YouTube for our regional judges.
- Categories and repertoire requirements may be slightly different in Regional and National Auditions.
- Those students older than college age will compete in advanced college and graduate categories. There is an avocational adult option at the regional level but not at the national level.

## **NATS POLICY ON COPYRIGHT LAWS**

The National Association of Teachers of Singing endorses a strict policy regarding copyright laws. The use of photocopied music is prohibited at all NATS-sponsored events, from the national to the chapter level.

Exceptions are:

1. Music that is out of print, still under copyright law, with permission from a publisher.
2. Sheet music or books for which the copyright has expired, but which are available in CD format (e.g., CD Sheet Music). Performers must be prepared to present proof of ownership upon request.
3. Sheet music purchased legally from an online vendor. Such music should have either a separate page proving the performer has purchased it OR a copyright notice at the bottom of the music that includes the performer's name. Performers must be prepared to present proof of ownership upon request.
4. Music available from approved public domain websites. Performers should take particular care when accessing these sites as some do not guarantee that all works are indeed in the public domain. Current approved online public domain sites are:

[www.imslp.org](http://www.imslp.org)

[www.sheetmusicarchive.net](http://www.sheetmusicarchive.net)

[www.jscholarship.library.jhu.edu/handle/1774.2/2085](http://www.jscholarship.library.jhu.edu/handle/1774.2/2085)