

AUDIO MAKERS

Related to musicality is the use of audio makers or musicians to create sound on stage. While we do not judge the skills of the musicians or the quality of the sound making, everything presented on the stage and everything within our visual and aural range is to be considered when judging the repertoire and composition. For example, we don't judge the trombone being out of tune or inaccurate articulations (musicianship), but:

- We would comment on flags hitting cymbals to create sound as part of the design.
- We would comment on the location of the musicians, whether they travel and relate to the other elements of the show, how they evolve over time, and how integral they are to the program concept and production.
- We would comment on the quality of the audio – for example: live poetry reading where the words are inaudible.
- All choices are part of the design and repertoire.
- Creating the music / audio does not inherently add more value.
- We must consider the choice and its intention, fit, enhancement, risk, inventiveness, and achievement.

Please do comment on the choices and the value perceived or the effectiveness realized. Does it make it more memorable? Does it add to overall challenge and responsibility for the performers? Does it fit into the concept and composition seamlessly? Is it the point of the concept or composition? Consider the risk of the choices when determining achievement. And ensure the score reflects the success when achieved or failure of the choices if something goes wrong (e.g., electronics, miscue, etc.).

Think about where these choices can be rewarded. Production value is an obvious place while remembering production value is not just about the initial setup of the show. Look for the contributions to mood and emotional contouring and variety through production elements over time. Casting a spell and creating a seamless experience takes crafting. However, be cognizant of the range, variety, and depth of the choices as you consider the impact over time. For example, just choosing a color and an instrumentalist in the corner may set mood and be memorable. However, over time how many ways is the choice used or demonstrated through emotion, color, impact, detail, dynamics, and nuance? Use of performers creating sound or music is just one aspect of the design choices, production, and emotional journey. We can certainly consider pacing and variety over time and the overall effect experienced. And this one choice needs to have unity within the context of the composition and have an appropriate place within the overall repertoire and contouring. Give each choice the weight it deserves within the entirety of the show and across the points of comparison.

PHRASE LENGTH

Across all captions, we must improve our specificity in recognizing skills, quality, and achievement through the lens of each sheet's points of comparison. As part of our continual growth, we will identify *catch-all* phrases and ask all of us to work to be clear with more scoring significant commentary when they are used. *Range, variety, and depth* is often a catch-all expression when not tied to a specific detailed statement. Another catch-all term is *phrase length*. We hear it too often as a blanket comment or as an obvious way to score more points or as a limitation in programs. Phrase length is not a skill in and of itself and does not have inherent value as a standalone element. We must consider the actual value of the skills and their combination over time rather than automatically value any combination of skills displayed through continuous motion.

Here are some ideas to consider:

- ***Phrase Length is a “device or vehicle used to show skills” - the length of time itself is not the skill.*** Some teams may do “a lot of stuff” tied together; however, it is our responsibility to evaluate the value of the skills within that context, not the time frame itself.
- In the past, lesser skills with safe connections over time may have expected to be elevated to “virtuosic” simply because of the accumulation of continuous activity over time. Judges must dig deeper when length of phrase is being used, to consider the meaningful challenges to the performer and program.

- Phrase length CAN be a multiplier of skills when the length of time exists and a lack of recovery within a phrase becomes a valid consideration. Be open to a variety of approaches to the creation of phrases within the program and view it as the device to display skills.
- Phrase length is a spectrum of time, not skill:
 - Short phrases can contain significant skill or contain very little skill display.
 - Long phrases can contain significant skill or contain very little skill display.
 - Differentiating between long and short phrases may well be an unreliable attempt at measurement, irrespective of skills.
 - Through time --- whether a lengthy time frame or brief time frame --- consider the skills and the totality of skills and achievement.
- Phrase length can also bring endurance into the equation if the challenge merits.
- Phrase length is one of the compounding factors like proximity and speed that are factored into the cumulative vocabulary (challenges) when considering depth.
- Phrase length has the potential in DA as a design choice and in GE as part of the Range and Variety of Effects. Phrase length can contribute to Effective Design of EQ/MV/Staging, and Dramatic Contour in GE, as well as Use of Performers' Maturity and Advanced Level of Development in DA.

When recognizing and rewarding skills we must clarify our continued use of “phrase length” as part of our commentary and recognition process. Often phrase length is a “go-to” in commentary and may not clearly communicate analytical information regarding skills presented during the time period. The length of a phrase or continuous motion over time is not a specific value nor is it a point of comparison. We must dig deeper to actually recognize skills, how they add to range and variety, and how they contribute to depth over time.

Virtuosic

Webster's: Virtuosic pertaining to Virtuoso

“Describing a person who has a special knowledge of skill in a field”

Related word that applies here: “Superlative”

Virtuosic is considered a class standard for the world classes. It is the “top of their field at the highest point of development” that is to be emphasized in the word for our WGI usage. Page 13 in the manual raises this topic and it is included at the top of the world class score sheets. Even though the virtuosic descriptor is not listed on the scholastic world sheet, superlative and special knowledge of skills are demonstrated by those high schools given the level of sophistication and depth often displayed.

The focus here is to affirm common understanding of the word and when and how it could be used. As part of the bloom, and our ongoing work to expand our ability to recognize and comment upon moments and challenges within programs and “how well” the team is accomplishing, this word becomes a way to differentiate world teams. Similar to wanting clear meaning to the words range, variety, and depth we want you to be clear when you use the word virtuosic.

We want our commentary and recognition to explore the class standards of training, skill, and consistency in the areas of what, how well, over time, and in what setting. This truly begins to set teams apart once you answer these questions. An isolated moment might be expected for the class standard whereas a variety of ways in which equipment, character, movement, form, and risk are demonstrated may place a team in a different neighborhood. A team choosing to display virtuosity in one area such as tosses or agility alone would be vulnerable if virtuosity is not explored and proven in all or most challenges and achievement possibilities.

Note the descriptors for the world class score sheets:

- “demonstrate advanced/virtuosic to standard-setting qualities in repertoire and performance,”

- “comprised of the most sophisticated, advanced/virtuosic levels of depth, quality of design, and excellence,” and
- “comprised of advanced/virtuosic to standard-setting levels of vocabulary skills and excellence.”

The key emphasis and clarification for us is that advanced and virtuosic are the basis for the world class expectations. Virtuosity in and of itself alone may not set new standards or elevate the overall achievement. It is an expectation for the world class teams to demonstrate advanced and virtuosic levels in all areas. To score higher, virtuosity should be shown in all families of skills, not just the toss/agility skills that tend to be the fashion of the moment. This word is meant to highlight the contribution of well-rounded abilities, vocabulary, and choreographic choice that includes the full range of possibilities as filtered through each caption’s lens.