

Vocal Competition Guidelines

Tone: Placement, focus, warmth, and freedom. Consistency of sound. Vibrato

- Excellent: Tone is free, open, on the breath, and pleasing. Tone is consistent through the student's registers. Vibrato (if present) is natural and consistent.
 - Developing: Tone is pleasing, but may lack consistency throughout student's range. Vibrato (if present) is natural, but may be inconsistent throughout the singer's range.
 - Needs improvement: Tone is restricted, closed, held, or tense. The student's range is severely limited and most or all tones are produced with difficulty and great effort. No vibrato, or student's vibrato indicates technical issues.
-

Rhythm: Accuracy, stability, note values, ties and rests

- Excellent: Note values, ties and rests are accurately performed. Tempo is stable and enhances the performance. Tempo is correct for the piece and the performer's abilities.
 - Developing: Note values, ties and rests are reasonably accurate, with some mistakes. Tempo is mostly stable, and correct for the piece and the performer's abilities.
 - Needs improvement: Rhythmic inaccuracies are major and frequent, and detract from the performance. Tempo is erratic and/or incorrect for the piece and/or performer's abilities.
-

Technique: Body alignment, respiration and support, articulation

- Excellent: Body alignment is best for student's instrument and results in deep respiration, and a clear, free tone, supported by the controlled release of compressed air. Basic articulations of legato and staccato are performed correctly.
 - Developing: Student appears to understand basics of body alignment, respiration and articulation, but is somewhat inconsistent in the performance of these techniques.
 - Needs improvement: Student's body alignment prevents good singing. Respiration is clavicular and shallow. Student exhibits no understanding of the basics of respiration or articulation.
-

Intonation: Consistency, control, listening skills

- Excellent: Consistently accurate. Any minor intonation problems due to instrument's lack of maturity and not the student's ear. Well-developed listening skills. Able to adjust pitch most of the time.
- Developing: Accurate intonation most of the time, but some out of tune pitches. Evidence of listening skills present, but needs significant growth and development.

- Needs improvement: Significant intonation problems. Undeveloped listening skills. Unable to correct intonation.

Musicianship: Dynamics, phrasing, style, meticulousness and sensitivity

- Excellent: Performance is musical. Phrases have shape and direction. Consistent attention to dynamics and musical/tempo markings. Displays sensitivity to the music.
- Developing: Displays some awareness of dynamics and musical/tempo markings and some attention to detail. Performance may be rigid, awkward or inconsistent.
- Needs improvement: Phrases are without shape or direction. Inattention to dynamics and other musical details. Performance is insensitive and non-musical.

Diction and Text: Production and clarity of vowels and consonants, pronunciation, comprehension, communication of text and meaning

- Excellent: Diction is intelligible throughout range, and does not affect vocal technique. Vowels are on the breath and without unnecessary tension. Consonants are rapid, late and clear. Pronunciation is correct and authentic. Student understands and communicates text and ideas.
- Developing: Diction is basically clear, but not throughout range, and it disturbs vocal technique. Text delivered with some effort and tension. Pronunciation suffers from some inaccuracies. Student only partially connects to the text or partially communicates meaning.
- Needs improvement: Diction is unclear, produced with a tense tongue and jaw. Serious pronunciation errors. Students makes little effort to communicate, makes obvious errors in pronunciation.

Performance: Memory, emotional communication, energy and charisma, choice of literature, poise mannerisms

- Excellent: Student performs from memory and communicates the emotional sense of the piece. Student appears calm, confident and comfortable on stage and in control of his/her performance. She/he is excited and engages the audience.
- Developing: Student performs from memory and communicates the piece's emotions somewhat. Student may appear anxious or unsure at times, but manages her/his anxiety and doesn't allow it to sabotage the performance. Student has some difficulty connecting to and engaging the audience.
- Needs improvement: Student does not perform from memory and does not communicate the piece's emotion. Student performs poorly and appears noticeably nervous, uncomfortable, tense, awkward or fearful. Student is unable to connect to the audience.