



# 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>