

North Carolina Orchestra Music Performance Adjudication Rubric

SOUND QUALITY

	Superior	Excellent	Good	Fair	Needs Improvement
TONE QUALITY	Achieves superlative tone quality. Tone is well focused, full, open, resonant, consistent, uniform in color, texture and sonority at all times. Utmost clarity is achieved.	Excellent tone achieved most of the time. Lapse and problems are infrequent, usually caused by the most demanding musical passages. Individual problems are minor and quickly corrected. Tonal color, focus and timbre are uniform, consistent and well-controlled, though sometimes adversely affected in extremes of volume and range. Tonal clarity achieved most of the time.	Good basic approach demonstrated. Focus is often good. Uniform texture and color is demonstrated in less demanding passages. Harshness and distortion are problems at upper volumes and registers. Fuzziness and/or lack of resonance are problems at softer volumes. Bow control or breath support is generally good, although not always maintained.	Basic understanding of tone quality concepts not yet developed throughout the ensemble. Some individuals demonstrate good tone production. Volume and register extremes not controlled well, often harsh. Focus and resonance achieved occasionally. Uniformity of color and texture is weak. Bow control and/or breath support is often weak and inconsistent.	Little understanding of basic concepts of tone production. Poor bow control, air support, or embouchures contribute to tone that is thin, airy, dull, harsh at upper volumes and registers, fuzzy at lower volumes and registers.
INTONATION	Instruments are tuned very well. Melodic and harmonic intonation is superior. Ability to control difficult tuning situations is well-developed. Excellent control of pitch in all registers. Superior listening and adjusting skills.	Instruments are tuned very well. Melodic and harmonic intonation is very good. Problems sometimes occur in range and volume extremes and difficult passages and situations, but are of short duration and/or quickly corrected. Listening is very good, with good ability to correct most problems.	Instruments tuned relatively well. Intonation is often good, but with inconsistencies. Less demanding melodies, intervals and harmonic structures are performed successfully. Wide intervals, octaves, unisons are performed with partial success. Listening is good; attempts are made to correct obvious problems.	Instruments are somewhat in tune. Melodic and harmonic intonation is inconsistent. Difficult intervals and harmonic structures are major intonation weaknesses. Individual and sectional intonation problems are seldom corrected.	Instruments not tuned well. Melodic and harmonic intonation is weak. Few attempts are made to correct problems.
BLEND & BALANCE	Superior blend and balance maintained at all times, both within and between sections. Tonal blend is uniform and consistent. Extremes in register and volume do not detract from superior blend and balance. Quality is characteristic of the best ensemble sound. Superior listening is demonstrated at all times.	Excellent blend and balance established and maintained most of the time. Tonal blend is almost always uniform and consistent. Balance between and within sections is very good most of the time. Problems occur only during the most difficult passages and are usually short in duration. Lapses are infrequent and generally minor. Characteristic ensemble sound fully achieved most of the time. Overall listening skills are well-developed.	Good blend and balance, though at times sections and/or individuals tend to dominate the sound. Less demanding passages have good blend, balance and voice relationships. Problems occur during extremes in volumes, and/or range, dynamic changes, dense harmonic structures, etc. Clarity is good but sometimes lacking. Good characteristic ensemble sound usually achieved. Good overall listening skills often demonstrated.	Blend and balance sometimes achieved during less demanding passages. Faster, louder and higher passages are not well-balanced. Individual performers and/or sections tend to dominate the ensemble's sound most of the time. Good characteristic ensemble sound seldom achieved. Listening and attentiveness are inconsistent; often neglected.	Blend and balance between and within sections not achieved most of the time. General listening skills not yet developed.

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TECHNICAL ACCURACY

	Superior	Excellent	Good	Fair	Needs Improvement
RYTHYM & PRECISION	Superb control of pulse, tempo and rhythmic patterns. Ensemble cohesiveness is outstanding at all times. Precision and clarity are exemplary. Flaws, if any, are very minor and quickly corrected.	Rhythmic accuracy and precision are excellent. Pulse and tempo are under control most of the time; lapses are infrequent and usually happen in more difficult situations. Clarity and ensemble cohesiveness is excellent most of the time.	Rhythm accuracy, precision, note accuracy and understanding of subdivisions good much of the time. Performers demonstrate good awareness of pulse and tempo although problems occur occasionally and may be difficult to overcome. Rhythmic patterns are interpreted correctly and uniformly much of the time. Problems occur with finer details of more complex rhythmic patterns and structures. Ensemble cohesiveness is good most of the time.	Basic rhythmic accuracy demonstrated in simple passages, although rapid or complex passages are weak. Rhythmic uniformity is inconsistent quite often. Precision achieved in simple passages. Pulse not always controlled; tempos not maintained at all times. Note accuracy fair.	Rhythmic accuracy and precision are weak. Pulse is poorly controlled. Uniformity is lacking. Note accuracy is weak.
ARTICULATION & BOWING	Outstanding and comprehensive knowledge of articulation/bowing styles and techniques is demonstrated at all times. Wide variety of articulations or bowings played with excellent consistency and uniformity.	Articulation/bowing technique is well developed. Thorough knowledge of articulation/bowing styles is demonstrated. Uniformity is very good with weaknesses only shown by individual performers during complex passages.	Articulation/bowing technique and style are good most of the time. Styles performed uniformly much of the time, but lack complete consistency and accuracy. Complex articulations lack clarity and control.	Articulation/bowing technique is correct some of the time. Articulation/bowing styles are accurate and uniform some of the time.	Articulation/bowing technique not yet developed. Poor clarity and accuracy. Articulation/bowing styles neglected most of the time.
FACILITY	Technical facility is superb. Superior flexibility and dexterity exhibited by entire ensemble. Only minor flaws happen during the most demanding and complex passages. Concentration is superior, creating an extremely solid, polished performance.	Technical facility is well developed. Manual dexterity is excellent. Flexibility is quite good. Difficult passages are well-played with only minor flaws. Excellent concentration. Performers respond to director very well.	Technical facility is good most of the time. Problems and breakdowns occur during difficult passages. Performers demonstrate a good degree of flexibility and dexterity. Correct technique usually demonstrated by many performers. Concentration is good but occasionally inconsistent. Performers pay attention to the director much of the time.	Technical facility is fair. Flexibility and dexterity are persistent problems. Faster, more complex passages tax players beyond their ability. Good technique is demonstrated by some performers. Concentration seems to drift. Performers pay some attention to the director.	Technical facility is poor. Finger dexterity is undeveloped. Knowledge of fingerings is lacking. Concentration is poor. Very little attention is given to the director.

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MUSICALITY

	Superior	Excellent	Good	Fair	Needs Improvement
INTERPRETATION & STYLE	Thorough and stylistically valid interpretation at all times. Uniformity of style is consistent at all times. Performers exhibit a thorough understanding of style, tempos and interpretation, and successfully communicate this knowledge throughout the performance.	Good uniform and meaningful interpretation most of the time. Some passages may be lacking in interpretation, but do not detract considerably from an otherwise excellent performance. Style is good most of the time, seldom rigid or mechanical. Stylistic accuracy is good and consistent most of the time. Tempos are consistent and stylistically accurate most of the time.	Meaningful and uniform interpretation some of the time. Style is good some of the time, but can often be rigid and mechanical. Stylistic accuracy is demonstrated at times. Tempos are consistent and stylistically accurate some of the time.	Little meaningful interpretation of musical passages. Style is undeveloped and inconsistent. Tempos are inconsistent.	Very little meaningful interpretation.
PHRASING	Phrasing is always natural and uniformly performed by all sections and individuals.	Phrasing is thorough and natural most of the time. Uniformity of phrasing is consistent throughout most of the performance.	Phrasing is basic, uniform and somewhat consistent some of the time although not always natural; often mechanical.	Mostly mechanical and non-musical. Very little uniformity.	No uniformity in phrasing.
EXPRESSION	Clear, meaningful and expressive shaping of musical phrases at all times. Expression is natural, sensitive and highly effective. Communication is superior throughout.	Expressive shaping and contouring of phrases and passages is very good with only occasional lapses. Expression is seldom mechanical or contrived. Communication is very good most of the time.	Dynamic shaping and contouring of phrases is sometimes apparent. Communication is occasionally good, but with many lapses.	Some attempts at expressing melodic lines, but with rigid, mechanical and uncomfortable results.	Expression is almost non-existent.
SENSITIVITY	Superior demonstration of use of artistic subtleties. Sensitivity is achieved throughout the performance.	Excellent use of accents, stress, rubato and flexibility in phrasing to create a free-flowing performance most of the time. Good demonstration of skills necessary to transcend technical and mechanical aspects creating artistic results most of the time.	Good use of accents and stress at times, but not always consistent. Some demonstration of ability to perform beyond technical and mechanical aspects to create an aesthetic product.	Little use of accents & stress. Little ability to perform beyond technical and mechanical aspects of music.	Lack of confidence is overriding any attempts at a sensitive performance.
DYNAMICS	Superior dynamic range with excellent control of all levels. Thorough use of all dynamic levels with excellent dynamic sensitivity. Superior use of musical techniques to create a sensitive, effective, naturally communicated artistic performance.	Good use of dynamics throughout the performance with some lack of dynamic control. Good "ff's" and "pp's," but full dynamic range is not completely explored. Overall performance is expressive, sensitive and tasteful most of the time. Overall communication of musical ideas is very good.	Some successful attempts at basic dynamic variation though limited in scope and range. Lower dynamic levels not well-used. Upper dynamic levels not always performed tastefully. Performers demonstrate some knowledge of artistic concepts, but with incomplete success	Some attempts at altering dynamics, but with limited range. Dynamic changes not well controlled and lack uniformity. Little communication of musical ideas.	Very little use of dynamics.

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OTHER FACTORS

	Superior	Excellent	Good	Fair	Needs Improvement
APPEARANCE	Appearance is uniform and neat. Group approaches and exits the performance area in a prideful, poised and orderly manner. Individuals remain focused and confidently attentive throughout the event.	Appearance is generally uniform and neat. Group approaches and exits the performance area generally in a prideful, poised and orderly manner. Most individuals remain focused and attentive throughout event.	Appearance of some individuals distracted from the group. Some individuals lost focus and attentiveness to the event at hand.	Appearance, lack of focus and attentiveness measurably distracted from the performance.	A general impression of lack of pride emanates from the group because of appearance or complete lack of focus and attentiveness to the event at hand.
CHOICE OF MUSIC	Literature performed is appropriate for the festival and aesthetically pleasing. Programming is both effective and of varied styles and periods. Music performed challenges the group musically and intellectually, yet is within their capabilities given musical skills demonstrated.	Literature performed is appropriate to the festival and aesthetically pleasing, but programming lacks variety because of stylistic issues, such as variety in time-period or form. Most of the music performed is within the capabilities of the group given musical skills demonstrated.	Not all literature performed is appropriate to the festival because of difficulty level for group and/or style of music selected.	Most of the literature performed was not appropriate to the festival because of difficulty, lacks stylistic contrast or not appropriate for festival performance.	Literature was completely inappropriate to the festival because of difficulty and/or style.