

# **National Association of Teachers of Singing**



## **Southern Region NATS Student Auditions**

### **2019 Guidelines and Categories**

CLASSICAL CATEGORIES

Number	Title	Semesters of Study	Ages	Repertoire
3.	High School Treble	No Limit	14-19	Three contrasting selections from classical repertoire. One art song in English.* One art song in a foreign language. One additional art song or aria.
4.	High School TBB	No Limit	14-19	Three contrasting selections from classical repertoire. One art song in English.* One art song in a foreign language. One additional art song or aria.
7A.	Freshman Treble	1-2	20	Three contrasting selections from classical repertoire. One art song in English.* One art song in a foreign language. One additional art song or aria.
8A.	Freshman TBB	1-2	20	Three contrasting selections from classical repertoire. One art song in English.* One art song in a foreign language. One additional art song or aria.
7B.	Sophomore Treble	3-4	22	Three contrasting selections from classical repertoire. One art song in English.* One art song in a foreign language. One additional art song or aria.
8B.	Sophomore TBB	3-4	22	Three contrasting selections from classical repertoire. One art song in English.* One art song in a foreign language. One additional art song or aria.
11A.	Junior Treble	5-6	23	Four contrasting selections from classical repertoire. One aria. One art song in English.* One foreign language art song. One additional selection. At least three languages must be represented.
12A.	Junior TBB	5-6	23	Four contrasting selections from classical repertoire. One aria. One art song in English.* One foreign language art song. One additional selection. At least three languages must be represented.
11B.	Senior Treble (4 <sup>th</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> year undergraduate)	7-10	25	Four contrasting selections from classical repertoire. One aria. One art song in English.* One foreign language art song. One additional selection. At least three languages must be represented.
12B.	Senior TBB (4 <sup>th</sup> and 5 <sup>th</sup> year undergraduate)	7-10	25	Four contrasting selections from classical repertoire. One aria. One art song in English.* One foreign language art song. One additional selection. At least three languages must be represented.
13A.	Lower Advanced Treble (graduate)	4-7 years post-high school	22-26	Five contrasting selections from classical repertoire. One operatic aria. One oratorio/cantata aria. One foreign language art song. One art song in English.* One additional selection from the classical repertoire. At least three languages must be represented.
14A.	Lower Advanced TBB (graduate)	4-7 years post-high school	22-26	Same as 13A.
13B.	Upper Advanced Treble (graduate)	7+ years post-high school	25-30	Same as 13A
14B.	Upper Advanced TBB (graduate)	7+ years post-high school	25-30	Same as 13A

\* One art song in English\*. English must be the original language of the art song.

MUSICAL THEATER CATEGORIES

Number	Title	Semesters of Study	Ages	Repertoire
1.	High School Music Theater Treble	No Limit	14-19	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.
2.	High School Music Theater TBB	No Limit	14-19	Same as category 1.
5.	Lower College Music Theater Treble	1-4	22	Same as category 1.
6.	Lower College Music Theater TBB	1-4	22	Same as category 1.
9.	Upper College Music Theater Treble	5-10 (Undergraduate)	25	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 music theater song literature
10.	Upper College Music Theater TBB	5-10 (Undergraduate)	25	Same as category 9.

**ADDITIONAL CATEGORIES. NOTE: Categories 16, 17 and 18 are not eligible for National Auditions. The Hall Johnson Spiritual Category happens every other year at National Auditions.**

Number	Title	Semesters of Study	Ages	Repertoire
15.	Hall Johnson Spiritual Category	No limit	17-23	Three contrasting selections from Hall Johnson spiritual repertoire.
16.	Adult Avocational Treble and TBB	Non-college	22+	Three contrasting selections from classical repertoire. One art song in English.* One art song in a foreign language. One additional art song or aria.
17.	Lower Student Adult Treble and TBB	1-4	21+	Three contrasting selections from classical repertoire. One art song in English.* One art song in a foreign language. One additional art song or aria.
18.	Upper Student Adult Treble and TBB	5-10 semesters (undergrad)	24+	Four contrasting selections from classical repertoire. One aria. One art song in English.* One foreign language art song. One additional selection. At least three languages must be represented.

The Southern Region NATS Student Auditions follows the [guidelines](#) of the NATS Student Auditions, which are found at [nats.org](http://nats.org) (Competitions, National Student Auditions, NSA Resource Center, Regulations), with the following exceptions for the Southern Region:

1. Rather than sing for an allotted amount of time, singers will choose their first song, and then sing one of the judges' choosing. In categories where singers prepare five songs, they will sing a third song of the judge's choosing.
2. Generally, four finalists will be chosen in each category. If there is a tie for 4<sup>th</sup>, all singers tied will advance to finals. Singers must also score an average of 90 (or receive two scores of 90 or higher) *in semifinals* to advance to finals.
3. Finalists will be stopped after four minutes, beginning with the first note of singer or piano. Singers may start at a later point than the beginning to facilitate cooperation with this rule.

The Auditions Chair for 2019 is Kelly Neill. He can be contacted at [kneill@harding.edu](mailto:kneill@harding.edu) with questions.

# NATS Auditions Rating/Scoring System

All Student Auditions and National Student Auditions must use the same scoring system, enabling scoring data comparisons across all NATS Regions. Scoring is based on a national standard. Most Student Auditions have preliminary and final rounds. Larger enrollments may require semifinal rounds or split categories. Live auditions with a large number of singers in a category may be divided into two or more groups for the preliminary round.

Depending on the structure and size of the auditions the following options are possible:

Preliminary round: All singers will be scored with comments. (Scoring will not be used in comments only categories)

Semifinals (where necessary): All singers will be either (A) scored with comments **OR** (B) ranked numerically with or without comments

Finals: All singers will be ranked numerically without comments

Occasions may occur where scoring indicates that no semifinal round is necessary in some categories (small numbers of entrants, small numbers advancing to the next round).

## A. PRELIMINARY ROUND

1. Singers in all classifications will sing one song of their choice and then songs selected by the adjudicators within the time limits.
2. During the preliminary round, adjudicators will write constructive comments and a score between 70 and 100 on their scoring sheets. These sheets will be made available prior to the start of the next round, if possible, in order that the singers may benefit from the written comments.

## B. SEMIFINAL ROUND

1. Only students who have received 2 scores of 90 or above or an average score of 90 or above in the preliminary round will enter the semifinal round.
2. There is no limit on the number of semifinalists.
3. Each student will sing one selection of his/her choice in its entirety. This selection must be one of the numbers submitted in the preliminary round entry. (Entities may opt to allow more than one selection in this round)
4. Each adjudicator will give only one score between 70 and 100 **OR** rank the singers numerically on a ranking sheet provided. If comments are written in this round they will be made available prior to the final round, if possible. If there are no written comments the rating sheets will not be made available. If using scores, highest average scores advance. If ranking numerically, the lowest total scores advance.
5. Final tabulations will be made by the Auditions Chair and assistants.
6. The adjudicators are not to confer until after their rating sheets have been delivered to the Auditions Office.
7. A maximum of 5 singers will enter the finals unless there is a tie. Some entities may choose to advance a maximum of 3 to the finals due the size of the auditions.

## C. FINAL ROUND

1. Each student will sing one song of his/her choice in its entirety. This selection must be one of the numbers submitted in the preliminary round entry. Note that some auditions may place a time limit on the final round selection so repertoire chosen should take into consideration such constraints.
2. The adjudicators will not confer. Each adjudicator ranks the finalists from 1 (highest) to 5 (lowest). Results are returned to the Auditions Office and tabulated. Lowest total scores are awarded appropriate prizes/recognition.
3. All awards are presented during the Finals. See options below.

**TIES:** Should there be more than one first place winner, the awards for the first and second places will be pooled and divided equally among the winners. All will be called First Place Winners. This regulation holds for ties in all the places. In the event that there are more than five finalists, a certificate of "Honorable Mention" will be awarded to other finalists.

## OPTIONS:

1. Entities with only one round of auditions should follow the process for the Preliminary Round with highest average

scores receiving awards.

2. If auditions have only a preliminary and final round, the agreed upon number of singers based on scores will advance to the final round. In the event of ties, the semifinal round procedure will be used as a run-off to determine the finalists.
3. Entities may choose to organize the Final Round as a plenary event with all participants in attendance or present all winners or a subset of winners (ex. 1<sup>st</sup> place in each category) in a winners or honors recital as a culminating event. The construct of these events is often determined by space and time constraints.
4. Monetary prizes and other awards will be developed at the discretion of the entity holding auditions. See below.

**SCORING SYSTEM**

The scoring system is developed to allow for objective as well as subjective measures of a singer’s performance. Further, it is structured to provide more detailed guidance to adjudicators as they seek to provide appropriate and constructive feedback to singers. All auditions should use the official NATS Student Auditions Adjudication Form available as appendix A and also available online.

Adjudicators shall:

1. Provide scoring for each singer in comparison to a standard developed specifically for these auditions. Judging relative to a common standard (see adjudication rubric) will provide a better overall result than comparing singers in a given category to one another when scoring.
2. Place an X in the following areas on the adjudication sheet to indicate a general level of accomplishment. Note that while a specific numerical score is not listed in each area, the Low to High range is divided into three sections corresponding with the 70-100 overall scoring range. Note that the Ensemble marking should not factor into the final scoring due to the fact that some singers may be using a staff accompanist with whom they have had little rehearsal.

	<i>low</i>		<i>high</i>
Tone	-----/-----/-----		
Breathing/Alignment	-----/-----/-----		
Language / Diction	-----/-----/-----		
Musicianship / Accuracy	-----/-----/-----		
Artistry / Expression	-----/-----/-----		
Ensemble (comment only)	-----/-----/-----		

3. In the preliminary round, provide constructive comments on the performance that correspond with the ratings provided in #2. The adjudication rubrics for classical and music theater provide guidance to the adjudicator in constructing comments in agreement with their ratings. Entities may elect to also provide comments in semifinal rounds where appropriate.
4. Assign a final overall score between 70-100 that generally corresponds to a compilation of markings given in #2. For example, if all the markings are in the highest 1/3 of the line a score in the 90-100 range is appropriate.

**ADJUDICATING STANDARD**

The national standard is stated in the first column of the adjudication rubric. (See pp. 14-15) The language describes the qualities an ideal singer will have. As adjudicators hear singers they should compare the singer’s performance against the general standard for the category they are adjudicating. One way this could be addressed would be to add the clause “...for a xxx category singer” to each standard.

# National Student Auditions (NSA) Regulations and Organization

## Regional Rounds

The National Student Auditions begin at the regional level and progress to the national preliminary round, semifinal round and final round. Regional auditions should include all of the categories contained in the "Categories, Repertoire, Age, and Time Requirements" section of this document. In order to ensure across the board fairness and appropriate rigor to the National Student Auditions, regions may only advance singers to NSA categories from a regional audition.

Exceptions to this regulation must be approved by the NSA Coordinator, NATSAA VP NATS and Office Staff.

Winners of Chapter or District auditions may not be automatically advanced to the National Student Auditions.

Each Region advances the top five singers in each category to the National Preliminary Round - YouTube Screening (i.e., five each from Lower College Men, Lower College Women, etc.). In the event of ties, all singers with top five outcomes may advance.

In Regions where audition categories are subdivided according to the regulations above, the top five singers from each eligible regional category will advance to the National Preliminary Round - YouTube Screening (i.e., five each from regional Freshman Women, five each from regional Sophomore Women for a total of ten to compete in Lower College Women at the National Preliminary Round - YouTube Screening).

At the time of application for the National Student Auditions, the Regional Governor or Regional Auditions Chair should forward the repertoire list of the singers and certify that the repertoire submitted was the same repertoire that the singer submitted at the regional level.

Music Theater students who exceed the age limits for the College/Independent Studio Music Theater categories are encouraged to enter the National Music Theater Competition.

## National Preliminary Round - YouTube Screening

The national rounds of the competition will begin with eligible singers from each region completing online registration for the national auditions and submitting YouTube videos for initial judging and comments. If regions use the subdivided categories, all of the repertoire selections for the applicable audition category as set forth in the requirements for the National Student Auditions must be included on the YouTube videos, and the footage of the videos must not be edited. Fourteen singers from each audition category will be invited to the live National Semifinal Round.

## National Semifinal Round

The National Semifinal round will take place during a National Conference or Summer Workshop. Each singer participating in the national semifinal round will begin with a selection of his or her choice and continue with selections chosen by the Adjudicators according to the national repertoire requirements and within the prescribed time limits for each audition category. Three singers from each audition category will advance to the National Final Round.

## National Final Round

The National Final Round will take place during a National Conference or Summer Workshop. Each participating singer will sing one selection of his or her choice. This selection must be one of the pieces submitted in the semifinal round of the competition. Award certificates will be presented to all three finalists with monetary awards for the First, Second and Third Place Winners in each audition category.

## Number of Contestants

Regions submit the top five singers from each of their various regional categories.

Normally fourteen singers per category will advance to the National Semifinal round.

Three singers per category will advance to the National Final round.

## National Rounds Schedule

Immediately following Regional Auditions - Deadline for Regional Governor to submit a list of eligible singers and the repertoire for each to the National Student Auditions Chair.

End of April - Deadline for YouTube submissions

Beginning of May - Deadline for judging results from YouTube submissions

Middle of May - Date to notify semifinalists (Approximately 6 weeks prior to semifinals)

Late June/Early July - National Student Auditions Finals at the NATS National Conference or the NATS Summer Workshop.

**Audition Fees**

Registration Fee: \$75

This is a registration fee for the national rounds of the National Student Auditions: National Preliminary Round - YouTube Screening, Semifinals and Finals. This fee provides for a pianist at the Semifinal and Final rounds of the competition, should the singer so desire, and includes national conference/summer workshop registration for all sessions. This is separate from any Chapter, District, and/or Regional audition fees. **A separate registration fee is paid for each category entered.**

**Collaborative Pianists**

Collaborative pianists are valued partners in auditions. Each singer may collaborate with his or her own pianist at all levels of the competition. For those singers who elect to use a Staff Collaborative Pianist, one will be provided at the National Semifinal and Final rounds at no extra cost to the singer. While no rehearsals will be possible with the Staff Collaborative Pianists prior to or during the Semifinal round, singers who advance to the Final round and are using a Staff Collaborative Pianist will be allotted a ten-minute rehearsal with the pianist preceding the finals audition.

**Adjudication**

Adjudication panels for the National Preliminary Round - YouTube Screening, the National Semifinals, and the National Finals will be selected by the National Student Auditions Coordinator in consultation with the National Vice President for NATSAA. Sources for eligible adjudicators may include:

- Any teacher with a singer who is competing may be invited to adjudicate a category in which his or her student is not competing.
- NATS members attending the Conference or Workshop may indicate on the registration form a willingness to serve as an adjudicator.
- NATS members who reside in the area of the Conference or Workshop may be contacted to serve as adjudicators.

The adjudication panel ranks the singers from one through the number of entrants in their category (or portion of a category) and the singers with the lowest total scores are chosen to advance to the semifinal round.

**Awards (2015 Award Amounts: Future year awards may be adjusted)**

High School, Lower College Categories\*

First Place	\$1200
Second Place	\$600
Third Place	\$450

Upper College and Graduate Categories\*

First Place	\$1600
Second Place	\$900
Third Place	\$500

\*Should there be a tie, an award will be pooled and divided evenly between the singers. Both winners will be named Place Winners. Not all prizes must be awarded in all categories, depending on enrollment and/or judging.

## NATS Policy on Copyright Laws

click on this link to review the policy

[http://www.nats.org/Library/docs/copyright\\_policy\\_revision1-2012.pdf](http://www.nats.org/Library/docs/copyright_policy_revision1-2012.pdf).

### Resolution of a Copyright or Repertoire Violation

If legal photocopies or unbound music are being used by the collaborative pianist it is suggested that the singer address the adjudicators upon entering the room and provide proper copyright approval prior to their performance in the form of a CD Sheet music approval form or other accepted documentation (e.g., publisher approval letter, public domain notice) prior to announcing their first selection.

If the student DOES NOT provide the proper documentation an adjudicator has the right and responsibility, at the conclusion of the audition, to request the student to provide such if they notice that copies or unbound music are used and the following list of steps should be taken. These steps also apply to potential repertoire discrepancies.

- Adjudicators should not disrupt the audition process to question the student.
- Nothing should be written on a comment sheet by adjudicators regarding any suspected violation. Please write a note on a separate sheet of paper.
- Write comments and score the student as if there were no violation.
- Rank or score the student as if there were no violation.
- When the auditions are completed, all adjudicators should consult the Auditions Chair and discuss the potential violation.
- The Auditions Chair may need to research the issue or consult others before making a final ruling.
- If it is determined that a violation exists, the Auditions Chair makes every effort to discuss the violation with the student's teacher prior to notifying the student. This is to be done by the Auditions Chair and not the adjudicators.
- The singer is disqualified if, in fact, a violation has occurred.

### History of NATS Auditions

Inclusive national guidelines for Student Auditions (SA) were first formulated in 1977. In 1992-93, a national survey of chapters and regions was undertaken to research the changes that had occurred in Student Auditions across NATS. A 1993 revision committee comprised of Richard Berry, Myra Brand, Jerry Daniels, Edward Deckard and Judith Nicosia Civitano, Chair, drafted the excellent 1993 revision of the Guidelines for Student Auditions, which has served the Association well for the last 16 years.

In 2007 another survey of the policies of chapters, districts and regions was conducted to assess current trends in Student Auditions. The 2008 and 2009 Student Audition Guidelines committee Kathleen Arecchi, Elaine Case, Roma Prindle, Connie Roberts and Anne Christopherson provided a mission statement for Student Auditions; outlined the responsibilities of NATS Members who coordinate and facilitate Student Auditions; and provided examples of "best practices" to fulfill the mission and responsibilities of the Student Auditions.

In 2010-2011 a committee chaired by Norman Spivey was charged with investigating the possibility of a student audition process that would be progressive from the regional level and culminate at the national level by gathering information from the 14 regions regarding their current audition practices and beginning discussion of a national model for auditions. In 2011-2012 a committee chaired by Deborah Williamson completed the National Student Auditions (NSA) Guidelines document to present to the NATS Board of Directors. Deborah represented the NSA committee at the NATS Board of Directors meeting in Orlando, Florida in July 2012 and presented the proposal where it was passed.

In 2012-2014 a committee chaired by Deborah Williamson implemented the audition categories, repertoire requirements, and audition fees based upon recommendations from the Board of Directors and redesigned the National Student Auditions (NSA) Guidelines document into a format that was posted on the NATS website. In 2013, the NATS Board of Directors approved the launch of NSA auditions. The first national semifinal and final rounds were held in Boston in July 2014. More than 150 singers from across all NATS Regions participated in the semifinal round of the first annual National Student Auditions at The Boston Conservatory. Thirty-seven students advanced to the final round and 24 students won a combined \$30,000 in awards.

In July 2014 a committee chaired by Dan Johnson-Wilmot (NSA Coordinator), with Karen Brunssen, Mark McQuade, Robert Wells,

and Melanie Williams developed a national model for Student Auditions (SA) based on the National Student Audition (NSA) Audition Guidelines that is workable for region, district, and chapter auditions across the fourteen regions of NATS. This revised structure of NATS Student Auditions is necessitated by many factors that have a far-reaching impact on the work of NATS members. In order to have a system that facilitates the flow of auditions to a national level a wider level of consistency in several areas is required. The result is a structure that will ultimately allow singers and their teachers to compare their performance with those in their immediate locale, while also being able to compare it to singers at their level throughout the country. With over 10,000 auditions being heard every year, the ability to make this comparison gives both teachers and students additional feedback on their progress.



National Association of Teachers of Singing  
Student Auditions Adjudication Form



Singer Name or # \_\_\_\_\_ Category \_\_\_\_\_

Offer constructive evaluation and score taking into consideration  
the criteria below as appropriate to category of the singer.

	<i>low</i>	-----/-----/-----	<i>high</i>
Tone		-----/-----/-----	
Breathing		-----/-----/-----	
Alignment		-----/-----/-----	
Language / Diction		-----/-----/-----	
Musicianship / Accuracy		-----/-----/-----	
Artistry / Expression		-----/-----/-----	

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Ensemble (comment only)	-----/-----/-----
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Comments:

Adjudicator \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

SCORE



## NATS Audition Rubric – Classical Categories

As adjudicators hear singers they should compare the singer’s performance against the general standard for the category they are adjudicating.

STANDARD	Lowest 70-79	Average 80-89	Best 90-100
<b>Tone:</b> Resonance and timbre are appropriate to the style, with balanced chiaroscuro throughout range. Onset and offset are clean, clear and balanced allowing for vibrancy. Tuning is accurate throughout range. Dynamic flexibility is present; singer has the ability to make subtle changes appropriate to style and character.	Resonance is incomplete, chiaroscuro not evident in vocal range. Onsets are often delayed and with extra noise or air much of the time. Offsets have extra air or extraneous noise much of the time. Tuning is often problematic. The flexibility and warmth of the voice is not fully evident in the performance.	Resonance is developing, chiaroscuro through some of the range. Onsets are immediate most of the time but occasionally either tighten the tone or allow excess breath in the sound. Offsets have occasional extra air or extraneous noise. Tuning is mostly accurate. The flexibility and warmth of the voice is sometimes evident in the performance.	Resonance is complete, ringing chiaroscuro throughout range. Onsets are immediate and promote clear, complete timbre at all times. Offsets are silent and allow rebound in the breath system. Tuning is always accurate. The flexibility and warmth of the voice is fully evident in the performance.
<b>Breathing/Alignment:</b> Inhalation is easy, full and efficient. Exhalation provides stability, support, vibrancy, and vocal energy. Buoyant alignment assists a balanced engagement of the tone.	Inhalation is often noisy or insufficient. Exhalation does not provide stability, and the singer tenses or collapses in the body. The singer requires extra breaths to complete phrases. Buoyancy is occasional.	Inhalation is mostly easy and sufficient. Exhalation provides stability, support, and vocal energy some of the time, with some collapsing in the body at the ends of phrases. Buoyancy is developing.	Inhalation is silent, easy and sufficient all of the time. Exhalation provides support, balanced stability, and energized phrasing. Alignment is buoyant.
<b>Language/Diction:</b> Languages are sung with accurate pronunciation and effective articulation, with idiomatic inflection beyond basic phonetics. The singer displays thorough understanding and communication of the text.	Languages are often inaccurate in pronunciation and articulation, and lack idiomatic characteristics. The singer often does not communicate the meaning of the text.	Some languages are accurate in pronunciation and articulation, and demonstrate idiomatic characteristics. The singer communicates the meaning of much of the text.	All languages are accurate in pronunciation and articulation, and demonstrate idiomatic characteristics. The singer communicates the meaning of all text.
<b>Musicianship:</b> Pitches and rhythms are accurate. The markings of the composer, editor, or arranger are observed and presented with idiomatic style. Performance is easily sung from memory.	Many pitches and rhythms are inaccurate. Attention to the score is unclear or lacks understanding. The style requires further study. Memorization is incomplete with several errors.	Pitches and rhythms are accurate most of the time. Most of the markings in the music are observed, and much of the style presented is idiomatic. Memorization is natural and complete with some errors.	All pitches and rhythms are accurate. The markings of the music are observed, and the style presented is idiomatic. Memorization is natural and complete.
<b>Artistry / Expression:</b> The physical life, musicality, and vocalism of the singer fully express the music and story, and engage the listeners in a fulfilling aesthetic experience.	The singer has difficulty making physical, musical and vocal choices, and their individual artistry does not engage the listeners in the entire performance. The performance is expressive and meaningful some of the time.	The physical, musical and vocal choices made by the singer allow their individual artistry to engage the listeners in part of the performance. The performance is personally expressive and meaningful most of the time.	The physical, musical and vocal choices made by the singer allow their individual artistry to engage the listeners in the entire performance. The performance is personally expressive and meaningful all of the time.
<b>Ensemble: COMMENT ONLY</b> The singer and pianist are well rehearsed, and coordinate their efforts toward the same artistic goals in the performance.	The singer and pianist seem unsynchronized, and the artistic goals of the performance were unclear.	The singer and pianist are coordinated in their efforts toward the same artistic goals in the performance some of the time.	The singer and pianist are fully coordinated in their efforts toward the same artistic goals in the entire performance.

# NATS Audition Rubric – Music Theater Categories

As adjudicators hear singers they should compare the singer’s performance against the general standard for the category they are adjudicating.

STANDARD	Lowest 70-79	Average 80-89	Best 90-100
<p><b>Tone:</b> Singer shows mastery of the vocal technique required for their chosen selections (belt*, mix*, and/or legit*), and has the ability to make subtle changes appropriate to the style and character. Changes in registration are relatively smooth and even. Refer to the FAQ for additional explanation.</p> <p><b>Belt:</b> This high-energy sound is often described as “called,” or “brassy,” an outgrowth of mix. While it must be possible to be vibrant in a belt, vibrato is a stylistic choice.</p> <p><b>Mix:</b> This sound is often described as “speech-like,” and may be light or heavy based on the needs of the character. This sound is clearly distinguishable from typical classical timbre.</p> <p><b>Legit:</b> This sound is often described as “lyrical,” “sweet,” and “round,” employing similarities to classical singing, but able to move easily to “mix” as needed.</p> <p><b>For audio examples of each style, refer to: <a href="http://nats.org/nsaresources.html">nats.org/nsaresources.html</a></b></p>	<p>The singer shows little mastery of the vocal technique required for their chosen selections (belt, mix, and/or legit), and makes few appropriate choices in keeping with the style and character. Changes in registration are abrupt or uneven much of the time.</p>	<p>The singer shows mastery of the vocal technique required for some of their chosen selections (belt, mix, and/or legit), and makes some appropriate choices in keeping with the style and character. Changes in registration are smooth and even some of the time.</p>	<p>The singer shows mastery of the vocal technique required for all of their chosen selections (belt, mix, and/or legit), and makes appropriate choices in keeping with the style and character. Changes in registration are smooth and even.</p>
<p><b>Breathing/Alignment:</b> Inhalation is easy, full and efficient. Exhalation provides stability, support, and vocal energy. The alignment assists a balanced engagement of the tone and is appropriate for the character.</p>	<p>Inhalation is often insufficient. Exhalation does not provide stability, and the singer tenses or collapses in the body. The singer requires extra breaths to complete phrases. Buoyancy is occasional or may not be appropriate for the character.</p>	<p>Inhalation is mostly easy and sufficient. Exhalation provides stability, support, and vocal energy some of the time, with some collapsing in the body at the ends of phrases. Buoyancy is developing or somewhat appropriate for the character.</p>	<p>Inhalation is easy and sufficient all of the time. Exhalation provides stability, support, and vocal energy. Alignment is buoyant and appropriate for the character.</p>
<p><b>Language/Diction:</b> The text is sung with accurate pronunciation and effective articulation in the style or vernacular appropriate to the character. The singer displays thorough understanding and communication of the lyric.</p>	<p>The text is pronounced inaccurately or with articulation inappropriate to the character. The singer communicates little of the meaning of the lyric.</p>	<p>The text is pronounced well and articulated easily as appropriate to the character some of the time. The singer communicates the meaning of the lyric some of the time.</p>	<p>The text is pronounced well and articulated easily as appropriate to the character all of the time. The singer fully communicates the meaning of the lyric.</p>
<p><b>Musicianship:</b> Pitches and rhythms are accurate. The markings of the composer are observed and presented with idiomatic style. Performance is easily sung from memory.</p>	<p>Many pitches and rhythms are inaccurate. Attention to the score is unclear or lacks understanding. The style requires further study. Memorization is incomplete.</p>	<p>Pitches and rhythms are accurate most of the time. Most of the markings in the music are observed, and much of the style presented is idiomatic. Memorization is natural and complete with some errors.</p>	<p>All pitches and rhythms are accurate. The markings of the music are observed, and the style presented is idiomatic. Memorization is natural and complete.</p>
<p><b>Artistry/Expression:</b> The physical life, musicality, and vocalism of the singer fully express the music and story, and engage the listeners in a fulfilling aesthetic experience.</p>	<p>The physical life, musical and vocal choices made by the singer often do not communicate the intentions of the character, and do not engage the listeners in the entire performance; gestures are missing or resemble mannerisms and are not integral to the character and situation.</p>	<p>The physical life, musical and vocal choices made by the singer communicate the intentions of the character some of the time, and engage the listeners in part of the performance; gestures are sometimes genuine and integral to the character and situation.</p>	<p>The physical life, musical and vocal choices made by the singer clearly communicate the intentions of the character, and engage the listeners in the entire performance; gestures are genuine and integral to the character and situation.</p>
<p><b>Ensemble: COMMENT ONLY</b> The singer and pianist are well rehearsed, and coordinate their efforts toward the same artistic goals in the performance.</p>	<p>The singer and pianist seem unsynchronized, and the artistic goals of the performance are unclear.</p>	<p>The singer and pianist are coordinated in their efforts toward the same artistic goals in the performance some of the time.</p>	<p>The singer and pianist are fully coordinated in their efforts toward the same artistic goals in the entire performance.</p>