



NATS Audition Rubric

Music Theater Categories

STANDARD	As adjudicators hear singers they should compare the singer's performance against the general standard for the category they are adjudicating		
<p>Tone: Singer shows mastery of the vocal technique required for the repertoire chosen (mix, belt, and/or legit), and has the ability to make subtle changes appropriate to the style and character. Changes in registration balance are relatively smooth and even. (Refer to the FAQ for additional explanation.)</p> <p>Mix: All sounds in music theater are some form of mixed registration. The resonance is "speech-like" and intelligibility is a priority. Choosing a head-dominant or chest-dominant mix depends on character, style, and story. Most contemporary music theater songs take advantage of a variable registration/resonance, crossing the spectrum from light to heavy</p> <p>Belt: An acoustic strategy, belt is sometimes referred to as the "calling voice." It is a bright chest- dominant mix accessible on open vowels, and occurs between F4 and D5. Above D5, it becomes the "high belt" chest dominant resonance popular in contemporary styles. A belt is frequently used to express moments of soaring emotion. It can be vibrant or retain a straight tone.</p> <p>Legit: This sound is often described as "lyrical" and "lofty." It shares a resonance similar to classical singing, but retains a more speech-like articulation.</p> <p>For audio examples of each style, refer to: https://www.nats.org/nsaresources.html#audio-examples</p>			
	Developing 70-79	Advancing 80-89	Accomplished 90-100
Tone (above)	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.	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.	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.
Breathing/Alignment: 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.	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.	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.	Inhalation is easy and sufficient all of the time. Exhalation provides stability, support, and vocal energy. Alignment is buoyant and appropriate for the character.
Language/Diction: 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.	The text is pronounced inaccurately or with articulation inappropriate to the character. The singer communicates little of the meaning of the lyric.	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.	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.
Musicianship: Pitches and rhythms are accurate. The markings of the composer 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.	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.
Artistry/Expression: The physical life, musicality, and vocalism of the singer fully express the music and story, engage the listeners in a fulfilling aesthetic experience, and are genuine and integral to the character and the situation.	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 unrelated to the character and situation.	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.	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.
Ensemble: COMMENT ONLY 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 are 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.