



Judges General Information

MUSIC

We are pleased that you have accepted the responsibility as a Judge in the Music Contest sponsored by the *Illinois Elementary School Association*. The philosophy of the IESA is to always embrace the encouragement of young people toward participation. **Students' future activities are often determined by the decisions of judges. For this reason, participants should not be served by judges on a professional or highly restrictive basis, but rather with an open mindedness that recognizes the junior high school range of ability and training.**

- ❖ A judge should always be attentive and interested in all students as they compete for ratings. This means he/she should display a friendly smile and show he/she is a caring person. A judge should exhibit a desire to assist the student in becoming a better person through their music experience.
- ❖ A judge must show patience while in a contest situation. There is no reason for a judge to show apparent disgust toward a student appearing late or out of order since generally it is not the student's preference, but rather a necessity, that precipitated the change.
- ❖ The general rule of ethics is to make all students feel as comfortable as possible when they are competing. The judges who attain that goal are the ones most respected by the students and directors.

To assist you in your preparation for this program, we have prepared the following list of instructions and suggestions.

1. You will meet with the Contest Host before the Contest begins. The host school will review judging details and answer any questions you might have.
2. Arrange your judging desk so that you will have a good view of the contestant.
3. Be consistent in evaluating the contestants. We recommend the following criteria for judging:
 - I--For an exceptionally fine performance with few, if any, flaws
 - II--For an acceptable performance, but with noticeable flaws in the performance
 - III--For a fair performance--many flaws technically, tone, rhythm, dynamics, or in general a much lower degree of musicianship
4. Consider the **GRADE** and **YEAR IN CONTEST** of the student or organization as indicated on the adjudication sheet. Remember these are children you are judging. They need your suggestions for improvement and they need your encouragement.
5. Judge each contestant **ON THE PERFORMANCE OF THE SELECTION** on each of the criteria listed on the adjudication form. **WE EXPECT YOU TO WRITE SOME CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISMS FOR EVERY STUDENT.** Explain in your comments what is weak/strong and briefly offer suggestions for improvement!
6. **Important:** A kind word at the beginning of a contestant's performance may help ease the tension. We also encourage oral praise and constructive criticism following a contestant's performance. Please try to keep oral comments brief. It is important to be mindful of the schedule.

7. You are to be provided with an original score (or a receipt if purchased online and downloaded) of the music with measures numbered. **If they are not numbered, please put an X in the bottom of the Rating Code Box.** All vocal solos and ensembles are to be memorized. An extra point is awarded if instrumental solos are memorized, and you should check this on the adjudication form. Instrumental ensembles **do not** need to be memorized.
8. It is permissible to help students tune if they are having a difficult time with contest room pianos. **However, a judge should never actually play a student's instrument.**
9. A student may not ask to have the audience cleared from a room for a performance.
10. Encourage students who can stand to do so in their performance. Standing is not mandated by IESA rule so you should not give a lower rating if the student does not stand.
11. Use a pencil to complete your adjudication sheets. The contest office will verify final results/ratings.
12. Please do not converse with other judges on performances while judging organization events.
13. Be aware of all regulations to be followed. Contestants shall be disqualified in the contest office if not precisely following regulations. Contact the host manager if there is a question regarding regulations.
14. You may listen to four or five selections before a runner collects your adjudication forms. Complete the adjudication form for the contestant before allowing the next contestant to start. Do not hold back forms for comparison purposes.
15. Final rating for all music organization events shall be determined only in the following manner:

<u>Individual Judges' Ratings</u>			<u>Final Rating</u>
I	I	I, II or III	I
I	II	II or III	II
II	II	II or III	II
III	III	I, II or III	III

16. Scales are not required. If performed, scales will be awarded as a one point bonus on the adjudication sheet. ***This bonus point option is only available for soloists and no additional points will be awarded for memorization.*** Students can bring scale requirement sheets with them to read during their performance.
 - a. Instrumental: Judge's choice of two of the four concert major scales (Bb, F, Ab, Eb) ascending and descending one octave.
 - b. Vocal: Judge's choices of an ascending and descending one octave major scale and of a major or minor triad. (student would choose the starting pitch)
 - c. Percussion: Judge's choice of two of the four concert major scales (Bb, F, Ab, Eb) ascending and descending one octave or two of the four percussion rudiments (paradiddles, 5 stroke rolls, flam taps, single drags).
 - d. Piano: Judge's choice of two of three major scales both hands (C, F, G) ascending and descending.
 - e. String: Judge's choice of two of four major scales (D,G, C, A) ascending and descending one octave

17. Best of Day for S&E: At the end of the day, **each judge will select one "Best of Day" for their room.**
Note ➡ Please fill out the form for Best of Day and return it to the host school so that all the "Best of Day"

winners from the contest can be submitted online to the IESA office. The individual or ensemble shall receive a certificate from the IESA office designating this honor.

Tips for Music Adjudicators

1) Technique

Tone quality- proper production, breath support, clarity, purity, breath control, head tone verses chest tone, appropriate tone for the style of the music

Articulation of notes- staccato, legato, accents

Intonation- accurate pitch especially in a cappella selection

Precision and Accuracy- accurate notes

2) Rhythm

Tempo- is the tempo appropriate for the musical composition? Is it steady and maintained? Should it be faster or slower? Scores submitted by the director should be marked carefully regarding any changes or specific indications of flexibility in the tempo whether specified by the composer or the conductor's rhythmic interpretations.

Accuracy- correct performance of rhythmic patterns, correct rhythmic proportions between quarters, eighths, triplets, and sixteenth notes

Pulse- students should know the difference between tempo and pulse. Do the students sing the rhythm like a series of accented metered measures or are they singing with the rhythm of the phrase? Do the students sing with a continuous flow of rhythmic phrases?

3) Interpretation

Tempo- How well are the rhythmic effects produced by changing the tempo? How skillfully do the conductor and performers employ fermatas?

Dynamics- use of dynamics regarding the manner in which the intensities are changed, use of accents and any subtleties of nuance

Phrasing- is the accuracy of phrasing in keeping with the composer's and conductor's indications, the skill with which the conductor and performers show the relationship of the phrasing to the form of the composition?

Style- how well does the conductor and the performers understand the style of the composition? Is there distinction between melody and the counter-melody or melodies? Is there balance between the melody and harmony parts? Are stylistic elements emphasized that are appropriate to the particular music being performed? How well is this done?

4) Musical Effect

Concept- execution, skill, interpretation effectiveness, personal projection; How effective was the group's interpretation? How effective was the personal projection of the conductor? How are the composer's feelings projected to the listener? How totally involved are the students in the performance? Do they perceive the concept of the composition as a whole and suitable

relationships as part of the whole? How well are the skills of the group and conductor executed in the overall performance?

5) Performance Poise

Appearance- uniform dress is best

Stage presence- performance position, any mannerisms that may detract from the musical effect, behavior on and off stage, group discipline, group focus on conductor; Do the students project their love of music? Are they enjoying performing? Do they establish a good relationship with the audience? Do they acknowledge applause graciously?

Notes:

- *Pay attention to the creation of a performance that is stylistically correct.*
- *Students are not required to stand, but can be encouraged to do so.*
- *Students or Directors may not ask to have the room cleared for a performance.*

Assume Your Role

Take your role seriously! The students and teachers really want to hear what you have to say, and most hope to take something home with them that they can work on to improve their skills. Keep a smile on your face and tell them something they did well, even if it's just wearing attractive outfits.

Keep It Positive

Positive comments interspersed with a few ideas for growth will go a long way in making the judging process a beneficial one for both students and directors.

Keep It Simple

We need to remember this lesson well and ask ourselves if what we say is general enough to make a lasting impression on the student.

Who Are We Really Judging Anyway?

Keep in mind that, especially in the large group setting, the student has little if any say in the decision making process of both the selection of tunes and their musical performance. To comment on either of these is fine, remembering that the director made most, if not all of these decisions. Rather than long comments on your interpretation of their music, make comments that may help the students with problems they can deal with- correct breathing techniques, technical issues on their instrument or voice, general comments on correct tone production and the like. Always try to include a compliment of the work their teacher is doing- remember, the director cared enough to "lay it on the line" and bring his or her students into this often times nerve-wracking situation.

Write, Write, Write

Remember that written word is important too. This will be taken home and mulled over; it may even cause some further discussion in the classroom or studio, and it is what may cause some real learning to occur. Given a form on which to write, try to comment on every category, even if just to say that there are no problems here. The students will feel that you've paid attention to all of the details and taken every area into consideration when assigning that final mark or rating.

Organization Contest Judges

There shall be three judges seated at separate tables for all organization events. The judge seated in the center shall be responsible for notifying the director to proceed to the next selection. ***One of the three judges may be a tape judge.*** (By-law 4.1361)

Tape Judge: If a tape judge is used then this judge will record verbal feedback on tape while the ensemble is performing. The tape judge should start with a friendly greeting. The judge should identify him or herself, state the date and location of the event, and wish the group “good luck”.

Sample: “Good Morning, Anytown Middle School 8th grade chorus. I am Mrs. Judge Judy, and I will be judging your group at the IESA State Organizational Music Contest on Saturday, April 30, 2005 here at Othertown Grade School. I will be judging your overall performance and offering some verbal comments. Hopefully you will find these comments helpful as you continue to improve your program. I look forward to hearing your performance and wish you the best of luck.”

During the performance, the judge should listen to the ensemble and make verbal comments. Use the criteria on the adjudication sheet as your guide. Focus on constructive feedback, balancing criticism with specific information that will help the ensemble improve. **Never compare groups to one another.** Instead, address the performance before using the criteria on the adjudication form.

Critique Judge: Immediately following each group’s performance one judge will talk to the ensemble and provide brief verbal feedback. The contest manager may provide you with a microphone depending on the acoustics of the room. Each critique will only last two to five minutes. We do not intend to add additional time to the schedule or to lengthen the contest day. These comments are meant to be a brief critique and not a full blown clinic.

Before starting, the critique judge may briefly confer with the other judges to determine any major areas to address. When talking to the group, focus on constructive feedback. It is ok to address errors or weaknesses, but the judge must and should follow-up with suggestions on how to improve. Share your overall impressions of the performance, including many positive aspects of what you have heard.

Note ➡ **Best of Day Award:** At the end of the day, **each judging panel will select one “Best of Day”.** For example, a judging panel that has judged all the instrumental groups will choose **one** “Best of Day” from among all the groups they have judged that day. Please fill out the form for Best of Day and return it to the host school so that all the “Best of Day” winners from the contest can be submitted online to the IESA office. Each “Best of Day” ensemble shall receive a special insignia on their award bar designating this honor.



Best of Day Award Form

Judges: Choose one performance from those you have evaluated that are truly outstanding. Performances can be from any category. Please complete and return to the contest office at the end of your scheduled day.

Choose performances based on the overall quality of the performance. A Best of Day should be given to an individual or group that performed their piece exceptionally well based on control, pitch accuracy, fluency, expression, phrasing, temp, dynamics, stage presence, appearance, artistry and entertainment value.

Choose only the top performance you have judged.

Contest Area: _____

Judge: _____

*Participant(s) Name(s): _____

Participant(s) School: _____

Selection: _____

Event ID: _____

***Note:** If the selection picked is a choir please list only the school name not the individual's name(s).