

Howard Community College

Definitions of Assessment Criteria

A) Technical Issues

1. **Posture/ Stance:** refers to the *alignment* of the spine, the *positioning* of the head, jaw, shoulders and hands, as well as the *positioning* of the feet, and the *balancing* of body weight.
2. **Breath Support:** refers to the *means by which a singer begins and maintains* a sung tone using various coordinating muscle groups including the diaphragm.
3. **Flexibility:** refers to the *manner that the singer is able to negotiate rapid scales* or passage work. If melismatic passages are not present in the performed piece, consider the manner that the singer is able to negotiate rapid changes of range.
4. **Onset & Release:** refers to the *adduction of the vocal folds*, how the folds are initially brought together during phonation. Release refers to the opposite matter, *how the folds cease phonation*.
5. **Intonation:** refers to *singing on pitch*, and *maintenance* of the desired pitch.
6. **Purity of Diction:** refers to the *basic linguistic skills of language articulation*, that is, how any given language is sung using the mouth, tongue, teeth, lips and jaw.

B) Vocal Qualities

1. **Tone Quality:** refers to the *color or timbre* of any given voice, especially in regards to the overtones, or overtone series.
2. **Projection of Tone:** refers to the *movement of the sung tone* so that it carries at a distance, that is, that the sung tone is capable of filling the performance venue.
3. **Evenness of Scale:** refers to *blending of "registers" into a seamless* or near seamless, unified vocal range.
4. **Vocal Freedom:** refers to the *degree of ease* by which the sung tone is begun and maintained throughout the length of the musical piece.

C) Musicianship

1. **Melodic Accuracy:** refers to the *correctness of the sung tune* to that which is musically notated.
2. **Rhythmic Accuracy:** refers to the *correctness of the sung rhythm* to that which is musically notated.
3. **Dynamic Accuracy:** refers to the *correctness of the sung dynamics* to those which are musically notated, with the understanding that the use of dynamics must be viewed as being relative to the size of the individual voice.
4. **Melodic Phrasing:** refers to the *scope and breadth* of any given musical phrase, that is, how the phrase is made to *flow, expand*, etc.
5. **Tempo/ Tempi:** refers to the *correctness of the sung tempi* to those which are notated within the score, whether the notations are metronome markings or language indicators, such as, Allegro, Andante, etc.
6. **Memorization:** refers to the *ability to recall and reproduce musical notation and text without the use of printed music* during any given performance.

D) Vocal Artistry

1. **Appearance:** refers to the *manner in which the student is clothed*. Is the attire appropriate to the importance of the performance as well as being appropriate to the venue?
2. **Stage Deportment:** refers to the *manner in which the student presents* himself or herself and “carries” himself or herself before, during, and after their performance.
3. **Text Communication:** refers to the *coloration of the sung text as an expressive device*, and as a “guide” to help the listener discern the emotional intent of the sung text.
4. **Facial Communication:** refers to the *appropriate physical use of the facial muscles to tell the story* of the sung text. Is the student telling a story with their face, or are they uninvolved or perhaps too technically distracted or impeded to be an effective communicator?