

MUSICAL THEATER GUIDELINES

Musical Theater

1. Musical Theater Ensemble/Solo is the art of presenting one scene/song from a published musical theater work combining the arts of acting, singing, dancing, and blocking/staging. If dialogue was written surrounding the song, it may be incorporated into the presentation, but it is not mandatory.
2. An entry in Musical Theater Ensemble may consist of two to ten eligible students. All students participating in the piece must play active roles in the scene which may include acting, singing, and dancing when appropriate. There may be no ensembles in which one person acts/sings and the rest simply react.
3. A time limit of 7 minutes is allowed for both Ensemble and Solo Musical Theater entries. There are 90 seconds for setup and 90 seconds for tear down.
4. Costumes and makeup are allowed for entries in the Musical Theater category. Costumes must be appropriate for effective presentation, but modest in presentation and appropriate for this festival and effective communication of the story.
5. The dialogue and lyrics for Musical Theater entries may not be altered and must be presented in the way in which it was published.
6. The entire presentation must be memorized.
7. Small handheld props are allowed in Musical Theater entries. Props are limited to what presenters can carry by hand into the presentation space.
8. Accompaniment:
 - a. An accompanist is not considered part of the entry.
 - b. The accompanist may be an adult or student.
 - c. Accompanists are allowed to use music.
 - d. A piano is the only accepted form of live accompaniment and is provided by the festival.
 - e. If an accompaniment track is used, it may not contain any vocals.
9. If an accompaniment track is used and if the selected scene contains dialogue prior to the song, the individual or group must provide an individual to begin the track on cue.
10. The use of a director or conductor is not permitted. Rhythm, balance/blend, cut-off cues, etc. from anyone in the audience is not allowed and will result in a rule violation.
11. The actor/actors may not play or transition to multiple characters within the scene unless the original piece was intended to be played in that way.
12. All aspects of the scene must take place within the boundaries of the stage or presentation space.
13. Chairs may be used as props. However, standing on chairs is not allowed and may result in disqualification. The only chairs allowed are the chairs available on-site in the presentation room. Participants and groups may not bring their own chairs.
14. Musical Theater participants are required to introduce themselves to the evaluators and audience by name or group name and give the title of the song they will be presenting, and the published musical from which the song was selected. Introductory comments do not count toward the setup or presentation time limits.

Musical Theater Evaluation Criteria

• Selection

- o Appropriate – appropriate for this festival; appropriate level of difficulty.
- o Arrangement – well-rounded, cohesive musical/theatrical statement.

• Communication

- o Character development – a full realization of who the character(s) become(s) throughout the presentation.
- o Choreography – use of levels, group work, and variety of movements to support dance style if used.
- o Communicative skill – ability to connect with audience.
- o Expressiveness – both facial expression and use of body language; nonverbal communication (i.e., facial expressions, gestures, posture) enhances the mood of the presentation.
- o Posture – relaxed body stance for proper breath support and management. Stage presence – command of stage; control, confidence, and comfort.
- o Unity – demonstrates ensemble cohesiveness.
- o Vocal clarity – appropriate volume; proper pronunciation of words with effective tone and inflection.

• Presentation and Technique

- o Artistry – connection to and interpretation of song(s).
- o Action – natural movement of the actor(s) that is both original and creative, enhancing the idea of the presentation.
- o Actor's focus – to whom or where is the actor speaking? Ability to remain in character.
- o Blocking – proper staging; movement with purpose; staging that best allows full view of actor's face and body placement with appropriate spacing to provide a clean and uncluttered stage picture.
- o Breathing – proper breath management.
- o Staging – excellent use of presentation space; use of formations (with correct spacing); use of creative transitions and movement from one formation to another; seamless transitions.
- o Characterization – believable representation of human motives, thoughts, actions, and emotions.
Timing/dialogue – understanding and excellent execution of the pacing of the scene and the delivery of the lines and execution of songs and dance.
- o Delivery – strong delivery of lines/songs using proper pronunciation of words to help develop an effective mood and tone of the line/scene.
- o Blend – creating a balanced sound. Diction – proper enunciation of words.
- o Dynamics – effective use of contrasting volumes for excellent line/song interpretation.
- o Execution of technical skill – if dance is used, proper execution of technical elements and movements (turns, leaps, jumps, kicks, extensions, and floor work); includes basic fundamentals of dance (posture, turnout, initiation of movement, and control).
- o Intonation – ability to sing in tune.
- o Musicality – execution of vocals and dance combined throughout the scene. Phrasing – completeness of a lyrical statement.
- o Tone quality – ability to produce clear and pleasant tone.

• Overall Effectiveness

- o Demonstration – demonstrated with sincerity and passion.
- o Memorization – strong knowledge of lines and lyrics and melody of song.
- o Preparation – an apparent effort of thought and time in preparing the selection.
- o Understandable concept – the combination of music selection, communication, presentation and technique, and effectiveness in attaining a response.