

EFFECT OF MUSIC SELECTION ON THE FOUR CATEGORIES

The selection of music plays a significant role in the sound category in that the degree of the performer's overall vocal skills must match the demands of the musical composition and its delivery. Accuracy, especially in the areas of correctly tuned intervals, synchronization, and blend, can only be achieved when the singer can apply the vocal instrument to the music chosen with consistent support, open resonance, energy and freedom. Further, the elements of artistic sound can be addressed only after the performer has met the vocal requirements inherent within the music at all extremes of tempo, ranges, and dynamics.

The music judge evaluates the relative suitability of the song/arrangement to the chorus or quartet. They consider the vocal capabilities of the ensemble and the skill demonstrated in performing the arrangement. The singers must be able to execute the part lines accurately and demonstrate vocal ranges sufficient to handle the extreme highs and lows while remaining in balance (see sound category). The performer also needs to demonstrate sufficient vocal energy, support and musical stamina to handle the phrasing, dynamics and musical characterization required to convey the interpretive plan effectively.

As discussed in the music category, the choice of music appropriate to the skill level of the performer affects the performer's ability to convey the interpretative plan (expression category) effectively. If the level of difficulty is too high, the performer may be unable to perform the song in a sincere, competent fashion, thus creating a barrier to real emotional communication. When the listener is presented with distractions from a musical, unified presentation, the message can be lost.

Additionally, when the music selected is performed in such a manner that the skills of the performing group are challenged (e.g. a tempo that is too fast), the efforts at artistic elements cannot be fully rewarded by the expression judge. Music that presents opportunities to demonstrate the abilities of the group and is performed in a manner that showcases those capabilities will most likely result in a successful, emotionally satisfying performance.

The selection of music in the visual communication category is a key ingredient to creating onstage magic that will captivate and entertain an audience. Music must be chosen that highlights the groups' vocal skills while allowing their unique personality to shine through as they perform. Careful consideration of the story, emotion and point of view of the songs' lyrics is necessary to ensure that the ensemble can embody the attitude and character of the song they are singing.

Age demographic, group size, ability to perform with energy, characterization and the physical expression needed to bring the song to life are vitally important to the success of the performance.