

ALABAMA BANDMASTERS ASSOCIATION - MUSIC PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT GUIDING QUESTIONS

This document seeks to guide adjudicators in evaluating performing ensembles according to the ABA Music Performance Assessment Rubric. It also provides the same guidance to performing directors in their preparation for the state band assessment. These guiding questions for each primary category should be constantly considered when determining that category's box score for the performing ensemble.

TONE

- To what extent does the ensemble play with a developmentally appropriate characteristic tone consistently throughout the performance?
- Is tone quality maintained or compromised in extreme ranges/dynamics?
- Does tone quality of individual players enhance or detract from ensemble blend?

INTONATION

- Do the individual players in the ensemble have an understanding of what it means to play in tune and adjust pitch during live performance?
- Do the individual players in the ensemble understand the pitch tendencies of their respective instruments and to what extent are those tendencies compensated for?
- To what extent does the ensemble have a unified tonal center in regards to tuning chords?

BALANCE

- To what extent do the individual players understand their role in the ensemble in terms of blend and balance?
- Does the ensemble perform with a well-organized approach to melodic line vs accompaniment?
- To what extent does each section understand their collective role in overall ensemble balance? (Winds to Percussion, Percussion to Winds, Brass to Woodwinds, etc.)

TECHNIQUE

- Are the fundamentals of music (pitch/rhythm accuracy, maintenance of a given tempo, etc) present throughout the performance?
- To what extent does the ensemble successfully employ a variety of articulations to convey musical style?
- Are technical passages performed with clarity and precision?

RHYTHM

- To what extent does the ensemble perform with cohesion throughout the performance?
- Are the tempi chosen accurate representations of the composer's intent and are they achievable by the ensemble?
- To what extent does the ensemble maintain rhythmic clarity regardless of the technical demands of the literature?

MUSICIANSHIP

- To what extent does the ensemble perform with musical effectiveness in regards to the composer's intent indicated in the score?
- Does the ensemble perform with a variety of dynamic levels as indicated in the score?
- To what extent does the ensemble perform with an understanding of musical phrasing?
- Do the performance characteristics of the ensemble contribute to or detract from an overall musically effective performance?

CONTENT/PROGRAMMING

- Is the literature educationally appropriate for a state assessment evaluation?
- To what extent is the chosen literature suited to the ability of the ensemble?