

**PREPARING FOR THE
WSMA HIGH SCHOOL STATE HONORS
AUDITION**

Tips for Auditions

Auditions vs. Festival Performance:

Unlike a performance at a WSMA Music Festival, the outcome of an Honors audition involves additional recognition and possible placement in an Honors ensemble. While proper preparation for an audition requires many of the same steps as preparing for a WSMA Music Festival there are some additional elements to consider.

Audition Performance Goals:

A successful audition performance demonstrates technical skills and musical artistry skills beyond the printed page. The performance of the chosen solo is only one aspect of the audition. Make sure to actively practice all segments of the audition. The following suggestions will assist in achieving this goal.

Practice Slowly

Work on difficult passages using a metronome. Increase speed only when you have comfortably mastered all musical elements at slower tempos. Examine a rubric form from a WSMA Solo and Ensemble Festival as to the expectations of the adjudicator. Your music teacher can help you attain these forms.

Practice Often

There is no substitute for practicing and it is important to practice regularly. Record your audition material often and listen critically to the recording. Invite others to listen to your audition materials and critique you.

Perform with Confidence

Your audition selections should be performed with emotion and confidence. Put yourself in the music and practice communicating with your audience as you master the technical aspects of your music. The more prepared you are, the more confidence you will have.

Sight-Reading

Honors auditions require performers to sight-read. Sight-reading is a skill that can and must be practiced. You should sight-read every time you practice. Read through unfamiliar pieces of music at every opportunity. Before you sight-

read, check your music for the following musical elements using the STARS* acronym:

S - Sharps or flats in the key signature

T - Time signature and tempo markings (text, if you're singing lyrics)

A - Accidentals and Articulations (bowings, accents)

R - Rhythm (isolate difficult rhythm passages, and subdivide them)

S - Signs (dynamics, DC al Fine, repeats, changing meters or tempos, etc.)

*STARS acronym is from Essential Elements Comprehensive Band Method © Copyright Hal Leonard Corporation Milwaukee, WI All rights reserved. Used with permission.

Winds/Percussion/Strings/Piano Auditions:

- Memorize all required scales.
- Be prepared to perform as many octaves as possible in even tempos using the correct articulation pattern.
- All audition requirements are posted on the WSMA web site.

Vocal Auditions:

- Seek proper coaching on language pronunciations, style, and phrasing.
- Always warm-up carefully with breathing exercises.
- Never over-sing or strain your voice. Remember to practice vocal exercises to maintain your range.

Audition Timeline

November and December:

- Complete the audition application and obtain necessary signatures
- Send it in before the deadline! No late applications are accepted.
- Have your own copy of the audition requirements.
- Carefully review the audition requirements and ask your teacher to clarify any questions you might have.
- Obtain copies of all music for your audition. Remember you will need an original publisher printed copy of the music for your adjudicator.
- Develop a realistic practice schedule. Remember your other

- commitments such as co-curricular activities, sports, work, etc. Get in the habit of practicing all of your audition requirements (scales, etude, solo, sight-reading, etc.) every day.
- Secure an accompanist or a recorded version of your accompaniment if necessary for the audition.
 - Schedule several lessons with your music teacher before the audition.

January:

- Record your performances often, and evaluate your performance. Invite others to hear you perform.
- Ask your music teacher for assistance.
- Practice with your accompanist, if one is required for your audition.
- Practice scales, sight-reading, vocalizing, and other audition requirements.
- Clean your instrument and be sure it is in excellent working condition.

The Day Before the Audition:

- Get a good night's sleep.
- Drink plenty of water and avoid caffeine.
- Eat moderately and avoid spicy foods before you perform.

Audition Day:

- Make sure you take everything you need to the audition site to be successful. Remember all of your music and an original of your solo for the adjudicator.
- Choose clothes that are appropriate for the occasion.
- Arrive in plenty of time to check-in. Find the warm-up area and your audition room before you warm-up.
- Warm-up the way you've been taught. Don't imitate others or be intimidated by different warm-up sounds you'll hear.
- Arrive at your audition room at least 10 minutes before your scheduled time. Check with others to see if the judge is on schedule.

In the Audition Room

- Smile when you give the judge your music and evaluation form.
- Take the time to collect your thoughts before your performance.

- This is your time to show the judge what you have been preparing. Perform with confidence. When mistakes happen, simply continue. The audition is your opportunity to perform.

CONGRATULATIONS!

You took the initiative to audition, and you followed through with your commitment.

When the Audition is Completed:

- Listen carefully to any constructive comments the judge may give you.
- Thank the judge for evaluating your performance.

Audition Results:

- No matter what the outcome of the audition, be proud of what you've accomplished because you gave your best to your performance.
- If eligible plan to audition the next year.