

All-State Jazz Choir Rubric  
2015

**1. Pitch-**

"Pitch" in the jazz style is found in the perfect center of pitch on a note. Because of the intricate harmonies that are found in vocal jazz music, the pitch must be within the center of the note, rather than sharp or flat to even the slightest degree.

<b>14 to 15</b>	<b>11 to 13</b>	<b>8 to 10</b>	<b>5 to 8</b>	<b>1 to 4</b>
A perfect center of pitch is maintained ALL of the time. No tendency towards sharpening or flattening notes.	A perfect center of pitch is maintained MOST of the time. Student tends to sharp or flat in extreme registers or vocal "breaks."	A perfect center of pitch is maintained SOME of the time. Student tends to sharp or flat throughout their vocal range at times.	A perfect center of pitch is maintained OCCASIONALLY. Student sharps or flats consistently with some moments of perfect pitch.	A perfect center of pitch does NOT occur. Student has little sense of intonation.

**2. Rhythm/Meter - "Rhythm in the Jazz Style"**

"Rhythm/Meter" is defined as the characteristic Jazz "Swing" rhythm. Students must understand the inherent triplet figure implied in the eighth note pattern. As the meter changes, students will have a difficult time "internalizing" the eighth note and tend to rush the beat and/or tempo. When the eighth notes are swung properly, the student is said to be "in the pocket," or "in the groove."

<b>14 to 15</b>	<b>11 to 13</b>	<b>8 to 10</b>	<b>5 to 8</b>	<b>1 to 4</b>
Subdivision of swing triplet is internalized ALL of the time. Rhythm is "in the pocket."	Subdivision of swing triplet is internalized MOST of the time. Slower swing tends to rush.	Subdivision of swing triplet is felt SOME of the time, but not internalized. There is some inconsistency in tempo and beat.	Subdivision of swing triplet is felt OCCASIONALLY, but student constantly rushes or lags behind beat.	Subdivision of swing triplet is NOT felt at all. Eighth notes are not "swung", but sung in duple or straight eighth notes.

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### 3. Vocal Technique

Vocal Quality in the jazz style is defined by solid “vocal technique”. Vocal Jazz is difficult to sing correctly, but can be done with excellent technique and voice placement with no harm to the instrument. The way the student’s posture and breathing directly corresponds with the singer’s quality of singing. The technique also refers to the vocal range, registration, and flexibility/agility in the voice.

14 to 15	11 to 13	8 to 10	5 to 8	1 to 4
Student demonstrates excellent vocal technique at ALL times. There is absolute freedom in the tone without stress or vocal "press," with a strong core to the sound.	Student demonstrates excellent vocal technique MOST of the time. There is freedom in the voice but stress occurs in extreme registers or at vocal "breaks."	Student demonstrates excellent vocal technique SOME of the time. There is some freedom in the voice but stress occurs throughout their vocal range at times.	Student demonstrates good vocal technique OCCASIONALLY. There is consistent vocal stress in the voice with some moments of freedom. Excess air escapes from the instrument producing an "airy" tone with no core.	Student does NOT demonstrate good vocal technique. There is a great deal of vocal stress and excess air produced in the tone with no core.

### 4. Attention to Musical Detail-

Accuracy in pitch and rhythm, as well as tempo and style will be graded.

Jazz Concepts may be defined as the performer's realization of the composer's aesthetic intent and the performer's artistic expression. The following components are considered in this portion of the audition:

- *Dynamics*: The contrast between loud and soft.
- *Phrasing*: The shaping of a musical idea.
- *Articulation*: The performance of the separation and/or connection of notes as written.
- *Interpretation*: This is most often a "swing" tune and should be sung in the "swing" style at the tempo provided. See "Time/Feel" above.
  
- *Style*: The understanding of the composer's musical intent consistent with the type of Jazz.
- *Communication*: Using articulations in communicating the music. The proper stress as marked in the editing.

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Student incorporates ALL concepts as defined. Musical artistry is displayed at a superior level.	Student incorporates MOST of the concepts as defined. Some musical artistry is displayed with minor weaknesses in one or two areas.	Student incorporates SOME of the concepts as defined. Musical artistry is displayed in one or two areas with deficiencies and/or weaknesses in the other areas.	Student incorporates concepts as defined OCCASIONALLY with very little use of musical artistry.	Student does NOT incorporate concepts as defined with no use of musical artistry.

**5. Vocal Tone and Color- Quality of Voice**

"Vocal Tone and Color" in the jazz style is defined by solid vocal technique. Vocal Jazz is difficult to sing correctly, but can be done with excellent technique and coloring in the Voice. Vibrato IS used in vocal jazz, but usually only for solo effects or at the ends of phrases. Vocal Jazz ensemble singing should be sung with pure tone to maintain a perfect center of pitch in difficult harmonic chord structures. The use of wide vibrato can cause intonation problems in this medium.

14 to 15	11 to 13	8 to 10	5 to 8	1 to 4
Student demonstrates excellent color in the voice at ALL times. Tone is focused and centered.	Student demonstrates excellent vocal color MOST of the time. Pure tone is evident.	Student demonstrates excellent vocal technique SOME of the time. Pure tone is inconsistent. Vibrato is used more than just ending phrases.	Student demonstrates good vocal technique OCCASIONALLY. Vibrato is over used, little understanding of pure tone.	Student does NOT demonstrate good vocal technique. There is no control over vibrato and notes are pitchy due to lack of support.