

Alabama Orchestra Association
OMPA Sight-Reading Rules and Procedures

1. PERFORMANCE REGULATIONS

- A. *Requirement:* All organizations and their participating ensembles which perform in concert contests are required to enter a sight-reading contest and perform for a rating.
- B. *Members:* All members of the concert organization who participated on stage are required to participate in the sight-reading contest for that organization.
 - a. Members who play a secondary instrument for multiple ensembles in the same organization must also sight-read on the secondary instrument.
- C. *Music Requirement:* Organizations with multiple ensembles that participate at the same concert level will sight-read the same music selection.
- D. *Judging Criteria:* The organization will be judged on accuracy of reading; flexibility in following the director; adherence to style, interpretation, and musicianship.
- E. *Use of Recording Devices:* The use of non-official recording devices during a group's sight-reading performance is prohibited.

2. SELECTION OF MUSIC

- A. Members of the Orchestra Music Performance Assessment committee will be responsible for selecting the music to be used for sight-reading.
- B. The sight-reading grade level is determined by the ensemble performance grade level as listed by the director on the registration form. The sight-reading grade level is one full grade level lower than the performance grade level listed.

3. PRIOR KNOWLEDGE OF THE MUSIC

- A. *Question:* The judge(s) is required to ask the director of each competing organization the following question:

“Has this organization or any of its student members heard, read, rehearsed or performed this selection (indicating the music) at any time prior to this contest?”

If the answer is “yes” the director will have two options:

- i. The director may have his/her ensemble read an alternate selection of equal difficulty which shall be available from the contest chair.
- ii. The director may excuse the student(s) who has/have prior knowledge of the music and proceed with the rest of the group in the preparation and performance of the designated selection.
 - (a) This can only be an option if it does not cause a missing part in the organization's instrumentation.

- B. *Consequences:* A false response to the question concerning prior knowledge of the music shall result in the organization and/or its director being penalized. The minimum penalty shall be disqualification of that organization from the music reading evaluation competition.

4. PROCEDURES FOR ORCHESTRA SIGHT-READING COMPETITION

- A. *Score Study:* Prior to the instruction period the director will be given a period of three (3) minutes to study the sight-reading music score.
- B. *Instruction Period:* Immediately following the Score Study period, the director will be given the following time constraints to instruct the organization.
 - i. Concert Performance Levels, 5 & 6: ten (10) minutes
 - ii. Concert Performance Levels, 3 & 4: eight (8) minutes
 - iii. Concert Performance Levels, 1 & 2: seven (7) minutes
- C. *Director Limitations:* During the instruction period, only one director may instruct and direct an organization at the contest. The director may instruct the group as he or she sees fit, including singing phrases or illustrating rhythmic figures. However,
 - i. The director may not perform the music on any instrument.
 - ii. The director may not allow students to tap rhythms or perform any part of the sight-reading materials.
 - iii. The director may ask questions; however, verbal student responses are **not** permitted.
- D. *Student Limitation:* During the instruction period students may not reproduce the sight-reading materials in any way.
 - i. Students may not ask any questions or respond to any questions from the director.
 - ii. Students are not allowed to perform or make sounds on their instruments.
 - iii. Shadow bowing is always allowed.
- E. *Marking Music:* Neither the director nor the students may mark on the music unless instructed to do so by a judge.
- F. *Warm-up and Tuning:* Immediately following the instruction period and prior to the sight-reading performance, the sight-reading music will be turned face down and the director may not discuss the sight-reading materials. Each performing organization may then perform a brief warm-up consisting of one of the following:
 - A. One whole note scale, from a key of the directors choosing.
 - B. Eight measures of a warm-up chorale.In addition, string players may check tuning. After the chosen exercise is performed, **no further warm-up, instruction or communication of any kind is permitted by the director, including the use of verbal counting to initiate the sight-reading performance.**

- G. *Performance:* The organization will then perform the music. In the event the director elects to halt the performance, it should be for the sole purpose of designating a starting point. The director may not give further instructions.
- H. *Warnings:* Failure to comply with any of the above regulations will result in a warning from the judge(s). Should a second warning be issued, the ensemble will be disqualified.
- I. *Disqualification:* An organization whose director makes an obvious contribution to the performance by either singing with or speaking to the students while they are performing shall be disqualified. The sight-reading judge will determine whether disqualification is merited; their decision is final.