

Adjudicator Guidelines

Oregon Federation of Music Clubs

About the National Federation of Music Clubs and Junior Festival

NFMC provides opportunities for musical study, performance and appreciation to more than 200,000 senior, student and junior members in 6,500 music-related clubs and organizations nationwide. Members are professional and amateur musicians, vocalists, composers, dancers, performing artists, arts and music educators, music students, generous music patrons and benefactors, and music lovers of all ages.

Since its founding in 1898, the NFMC has grown into one of the world's largest music organizations with club and individual members of all ages. The NFMC is chartered by the Congress of the United States, and is the only music organization member of the United Nations.

Dedicated to finding and fostering young musical talent, the NFMC conducts annual Junior Festivals with more than 117,000 participants.

Annually in Oregon, approximately 3300 student participate in Festival.

Taken from the Festivals Bulletin:

“The National Federation of Music Clubs Festivals Program is designed to promote study, stimulate interest in American and world music literature, and encourage each participant to reach a high standard of musical achievement.

The Festival is designed for all members of NFMC. It is not a competition but an opportunity to perform and receive evaluation.”

The purpose of the Festivals Program is to:

1. Encourage interest and involvement in music study.
2. Educate participants through evaluation.
3. Motivate them to continue music study at a high level of musical achievement.

Format and Ratings

Format of Festival

- Students are grouped into classes usually of 4 to 8 students. Classes are structured around skill level and sometimes age. Since students begin their study at different ages, it's not uncommon to find "older" beginners participating in a class with younger students, but at the same skill level.
- Students take turns playing. They begin with their required piece, and then finish with their choice piece. **Be sure to let someone in charge (monitor, area chairman, etc...) know if you would like the student to wait in between their pieces so that you have time to write comments.**
- After the last student has finished playing, you address the group as a class to discuss their music.

Students are graded on their own merit. It is not a competition between performers.

Ratings and Definitions

Please refer to form #JR-3-9 and JR 3-9a

- Ratings: Superior, Excellent, Satisfactory, Fair, Needs Improvement
- You may add a plus or minus sign to each rating
- Students earn points based on the rating they receive. Superior =5, Excellent =4, Satisfactory =3, Fair =2, Needs Improvement =1. When they accumulate 15 points in one event (such as piano solo), they receive a gold cup. Every time they accumulate 15 more points in one event (30, 45, 60, 75, 90) they receive a larger gold cup. Records are kept within the Festival area.
- Students also receive ribbons (an Oregon thing...), a rating card, and a superior certificate if they earn superiors.

You are not supposed to know how many points a student has earned, as it is not supposed to affect how you grade them.

Youngest class considerations: PP to P4 classes (value of Superiors?)

First year of lessons

First Festivals

First ever performance

Pieces are often very simple. (Sometimes not a lot to comment on?!)

Significance of evaluation: To 1) Encourage 2) Motivate 3) Educate

Middle Class considerations: E1 to Medium classes (value of Superiors and Excellent?)

Have usually had 2-4 years of lessons.

Have usually participated in Festival at least once.

Significance of evaluation: To 1) Motivate 2) Encourage 3) Educate

Advanced Class considerations: MD1 to MA 2

Experienced students.

Have generally performed lots.

Have participated in Festival several times.

Significance of evaluation: To 1) Educate 2) Motivate 3) Encourage

Comments

VERBAL COMMENTS TO THE CLASS

- Keep all verbal comments and suggestions concise and to the point.
- You may call the students up to the instrument if necessary, but only as a class, not individually.
- Demonstrate at the instrument when appropriate.
- Avoid singling out a student in a negative context: e.g., “Johnny didn’t have a steady beat.”
- Avoid comparisons. Remember, it is not a competition.
- Avoid “This is how it’s done statements.” Instead, try “You might want to consider...”
- Avoid belittling a composition. “This is not well written.”
- Avoid belittling an interpretation. “I think you should interpret this differently”
- ***Make skill and age appropriate comments!***

Always, always, always tailor your verbal presentation towards positive reinforcement, constructive criticism, and suggestions that serve to encourage, educate, and motivate. 😊

WRITTEN COMMENTS TO THE STUDENT

1. Written comments may be (and probably should be) more detailed than verbal comments. Still, be specific and not too wordy. What do students do with their comments? Are they more likely to remember written or verbal comments?
2. Written comments should support the grade given. This is very important! Nothing confounds teachers and students more than this discrepancy! E.g., you write “Wonderful performance. Clean playing, steady beat, and well interpreted!_You played very musically, and didn’t let the slips get you off track. Well done!” Grade: “Excellent”
3. Again, avoid singling out a student in a negative context: e.g., “You didn’t have a steady beat.”
4. Again, avoid comparisons. Remember, it is not a competition.
5. Again, avoid “This is how it’s done statements.” Instead: “You might want to consider...”
6. Again, avoid belittling a composition. “This is not well composed.” That is irrelevant, the student didn’t compose it.
7. Again, avoid belittling an interpretation. “I think you should interpret this differently” Instead, make suggestions.
8. ***Always try to make skill and age appropriate comments!***

Festival Protocol

“Heads-Up” information pertaining to adjudication of Festivals:

Here are some (hopefully) rare circumstances. Some of these may require consulting your Festival Chairman before a grade is given.

1. Student brings music up to the piano: Memory is **required** for all solo classes! Exceptions: Hymn, Organ, Brass and Woodwind Choice piece, Sonata events (except piano).
2. Special Needs Students: Please review SPECIALLY CAPABLE JUNIOR MUSICIANS (SCJM) in the Festivals Bulletin, P. 2
3. Photocopied music in the audition room. Please review SCORES and PHOTOCOPYING PROHIBITION in the Festivals Bulletin., P. 2 -3
4. Repeats and omissions: Please review REPEATS AND OMISSION in the Festivals Bulletin. (This is **not** something that would disqualify a student) P.3
5. Photography/Video of performances: Not allowed during a performance under any circumstances. If you see it, notify the area chairman. See the Bulletin, page 4
6. Parent addresses you about a grade. Not allowed. Be diplomatic if it happens.
7. A teacher addresses you about a grade. Not allowed. Be diplomatic if it happens.
8. Area chairman addresses you about your grading. This is allowed. However, no other teacher present during the Festival is supposed discuss grading with you or influence how you grade in any way. You may approach and discuss your grading in general terms with your area chairman if you feel that you need some feedback.
9. Re-rating of a student due to parents or teacher being unhappy with the rating: **Not allowed**. The rating you assign is final. However, if something occurred during performance that was outside of anyone’s control and both you and the area chairman agree that it affected the student’s performance, that student may be allowed rescheduled to play either within your Festival or in another Festival Area. (E.g., piano lid slams shut, baby screams, earthquake, etc...)
10. DISQUALIFICATION OF A STUDENT: Errors that disqualify a student (e.g., incorrect choice of literature, photocopies, etc,) should hopefully be caught well before the student performs for Festival. If you observe something that you feel disqualifies a student, do not assign them a grade, as all grades are final. Instead, notify the area chairman first. The student may be rescheduled to another time in the current festival, or the teacher may enter the student in a different Festival area at a later date. Students are not penalized for teacher errors.