

Music Selection

I. Points to consider in assessing the level of your chorus in addition to contest scores.

- A. **Comfort ranges for each of the four parts pitch wise**
 How do those ranges relate to each other?
 Do the individual sections work as a unit?
- B. **How well do they maintain pitch/tonality? As sections? As a chorus?**
- C. **Do they learn and retain the right notes/rhythms/breaths?**
- D. **Which vowel sounds ring the best for them?**
- E. **How easily do they handle key changes/modulations/transitions?**
- F. **What level of stamina do they have at the end of the song?**
- G. **How well do they handle rubato phrasing?**
- H. **How well do they sing a smooth vocal line within their parts/as a group?**
- I. **How well do the individual parts handle their register breaks?**
- J. **Are phrase endings lifted?**
- K. **Is breath support constant?**
- L. **Is vibrato excessive? Appropriate?**
- M. **How well do they execute dynamics?**
- N. **Are consonants articulated appropriately? Can you understand the words?**
- O. **Is the sound energized?**
- P. **Do you consistently hear outstanding voices? Why?**
- Q. **Chorus ability to keep tempo, do backbeat and syncopation**

II. How does the choice of music affect all four categories?

- A. **You are what you sing to most audiences -- the material you do says something about you and who you are as performers.**

- B. **If singers have to concentrate on technique because the music is too difficult for them, it affects the**

salesmanship of the music, which affects the showmanship category.

- C. **Sound: Part lines of song and how they effect balance (lead/bari relationship)**
- D. **Lyrical content (hard consonants, open vowels) effects both sound and expression - ability to match vowels effect sound.**
- E. **Vehicle that demands non-stop breathing patterns effects vocal delivery.**
- F. **Vehicle that calls for lots of choreography, clever physical movement (or the opposite - calls for drama but little movement) puts challenges on all categories because increases chance for out of tune/syncopation problems/diction difficulties.**

III. What should the timeline be for determining competition music?

- A. **The earlier the better. No matter how hard a director has worked to make sure that the arrangement will be good for the chorus, you never really know until you've learned it. And until you've learned it you don't know if it will show you off or show off your flaws.**
- B. **Having several competition numbers in your repertoire is a good idea, so that you have choices.**
- C. **Leave time for other music to prevent boredom and lack of interest.**

IV. What are the factors that make the music easy/ medium/ difficult?

- A. **Rangy melody lines usually require rangy harmony lines that are generally difficult to sing. Same thing is true for wide interval jumps in the melody, especially in uptunes.**
- B. **Spread voicings – two octave type chords**
- C. **Baritone lines that stay predominately above the lead rather than below or a mixture of above/below.**
- D. **Lots of accidentals that affect tuning.**
- E. **Singable songs need logical breathing places**
- F. **Key changes**
- G. **Medleys and the transitions from one song to another**
- H. **Tempo changes**
- I. **Degree of drama needed (dynamic changes) to deliver the message of the song**