

NATS National Student Audition Best Practice Adjudication Goals



As NATS adjudicators we should adjudicate singers in an impartial and objective manner, encourage each singer with insightful and perceptive comments written in a positive style, score singers fairly and in congruence with the standards of the NATS rubrics, write or print comments as legibly and comprehensively as possible, and be familiar with audition process of the category being adjudicated.

Best Practices of NATS Adjudication*

Questions to ask yourself:

- Do I understand the process to be used for evaluation of the singers in this category including the writing of comments and scoring method?
- Is my knowledge base sufficient and what is the appropriate vocabulary for this category?
- Have I viewed any videos deemed necessary to adjudicate this category?
- Am I familiar with the NATS rubric for this category?
- Do I understand how to adjust the standards of the rubric to the level of singer in this category?
- What do I need to listen for in this category?
- Is my cursive writing or printing more legible?

We should seek to be:

- Perceptive (focused listening)
- Encouraging (enthusiastic affirmation)
- Appreciative (thank you for singing)
- Empathic (recognition that we all have had our own struggles)
- Sensitive (thoughtful writing style)
- Informative (accurate reporting)
- Insightful (good diagnostics)
- Inspiring (good ideas)
- Engaging (accessible and conversational)
- Educational (constructive)

Do your comments have the following:

- Truth (clear description)
- Tact (diplomatic tone)
- Tidiness (in writing and formatting)
- Efficiency (understandable terminology)
- Encouragement (positive tone)
- Specificity (relating to specific measures of the repertoire, or properties of singing and performance)

Writing Comments

- Start and end with a positive observation
- Focus on important aspects of the performance
- Prioritize concerns
- Use action verbs and start sentences with strong words like: aim, consider, explore, imagine, strive for, continue to, ...

Questions to ask when you are finished adjudicating

- Are my comments helpful—especially from the students and teacher's point of view?
- Are the comments well written and legible?
- Are my comments complete thoughts or shorthand notes
- Do my comments align with the scores (70-100) in the standard headings and the overall score?
- Are my scores relatively low and the comments highly complementary without constructive analysis, assessment or evaluation or concrete suggestions for improvement. Conversely, are my scores relatively high and the comments highly critical lacking specificity, empathy or affirmation?

*Special thanks to Allen Henderson and his PowerPoint titled: "The Art of Being a Great Adjudicator"