

Middle Tennessee Vocal Association Choral Festival Sightreading Guidelines

The following guidelines have been set for the sightreading portion of the MTVA Choral Festival. Based on the National Standards of Music, the rubric below is meant to set reasonable and age-appropriate sightreading goals for the choral ensembles in Middle Tennessee. Music written for the sightreading packet will be based on these guidelines. Two packets shall be made available each academic year: one sample packet (can include the packet from the previous year) which will be made available before November 15, and one packet which shall not be seen by any member until the Choral Festival begins. Ratings shall be given according to the following levels of proficiency:

- Superior (rating of I) = 90% accuracy**
- Excellent (rating of II) = 75% accuracy**
- Proficient (rating of III) = 50% accuracy**
- Deficient (rating of IV) = under 50% accuracy**

Elementary School Choirs

- Classified as a choir consisting of Grades 3-6 (6th Grade only if not combined with 7th-8th grade students)
- Each Choir will be required to sing at least one set of rhythms and one unison melody.
- Before each Rhythmic or Melodic example, the adjudicator will allow at least 15 seconds of reading time, during which there is to be no vocalization from the director or students.
- Each Rhythmic and Melodic example shall not exceed 8 measures in length.
- The Sightreading Clinician has the choice of dividing the ensemble to read a particular example during the rhythm and melody portions in order to assess proficiency.
- Each choir can perform the examples using whichever system they employ during class (fixed “do”, numbers, counting, clapping, etc.).

Rhythm

- Time Signatures can include 2/4, 3/4, 4/4
- Rhythms can include combinations of whole, half, quarter, and eighth notes.
- Rhythms can include quarter rests; no other rests will be used.
- Rhythms shall not include dots, ties, syncopation, or triplets.
- MM = 60-100.

Unison Melody

- Same Rhythm requirements.
- Treble Clef only.
- Stepwise only.
- The example shall begin and end on the tonic.
- Accidentals will not be used.
- Limited range of a 6th.
- Major mode only.
- The first pitch will be played

Middle School/Junior High Choirs

- Classified as a choir consisting of Grades 6-9 (9th Grade only if not combined with 10th-12th grade students).
- Each Choir will be required to sing at least one set of rhythms, one unison melody, and one multi-part piece.
- Before each Rhythmic or Melodic example, the adjudicator will allow at least 15 seconds of reading time, during which there is to be no vocalization from the director or students.
- Before each part-singing example, the adjudicator will give at least 20 seconds of reading time, during with there is to be no vocalization from the director or students.
- Each Rhythmic and Melodic example shall not exceed 8 measures in length.
- Each multi-part piece shall not exceed 16 measures.
- The director chooses the voicing of the multi-part piece; however, it is expected that it reflect the majority voicings of pieces sung during the performance portion of the Festival.
- Each choir can perform the examples using whichever system they employ during class (fixed “do”, numbers, counting, clapping, etc.)

Rhythm

- Time Signatures can include 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, 6/8
- Rhythms can include combinations of whole, half, quarter, eighth, and sixteenth notes.
- Rhythms can include whole, half, quarter, and eighth rests (rests will be used in simple meter only).
- Rhythms can include ties in simple meter, but shall not include ties across measures.
- Rhythms can include dots and syncopation., but shall not include triplets.
- MM = 60-100

Unison Melody

- Time Signatures shall include 2/4, 3/4, 4/4.
- Clef Specific to Voicing
- Stepwise or leaps of no more than a third within the Tonic or Dominant triad.
- Accidentals will not be used.
- If example does not start on the Tonic, the clinician shall explain on which step it begins.
- Limited range of a 6th.
- Major mode only

Multi-part Singing

- Same Rhythm and Melodic Requirements.
- If example does not start on the Tonic, the clinician shall explain on which step it begins.
- The clinician will play the starting pitch of each part prior to beginning the piece.
- Major mode only.

High School Choirs

- Classified as a choir consisting of Grades 9-12 (9th-Grade Choirs can choose Junior High or High School Classification).
- Each *section* in each choir will be required to sing at least one set of rhythms and one unison melody.
- The entire choir will sing one multi-part piece.
- Before each Rhythmic or Melodic example, the adjudicator will allow at least 15 seconds of reading time, during which there is to be no vocalization from the director or students.
- Before each part-singing example, the adjudicator will give at least 20 seconds of reading time, during with there is to be no vocalization from the director or students.
- Each Rhythmic and Melodic example shall not exceed 8 measures in length.
- Each multi-part piece shall not exceed 20 measures.
- The director chooses the voicing of the multi-part piece; however, it is expected that it reflect the majority voicings of pieces sung during the performance portion of the Festival.
- Each choir can perform the examples using whichever system they employ during class (fixed “do”, numbers, counting, clapping, etc.)

Rhythm

- Time Signatures can include 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, 6/8, 9/8, 12/8.
- Rhythms can include combinations of whole, half, quarter, eighth, and sixteenth notes and rests.
- Rhythms can include dots, ties, syncopation, and triplets.
- MM = 60-112

Unison Melody

- Same Rhythmic Requirements.
- Time Signatures shall include 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, or 6/8
- Treble and Bass Clef reading, not necessarily specific to voicing.
- Shall include stepwise, leaps within the tonic, dominant, or subdominant triads.
- Accidentals can be used
- Leaps shall not exceed an octave.
- If example does not start on the Tonic, the clinician shall explain on which step it begins.
- Major and minor modes.

Multi-part Singing

- Same Rhythm and Melodic Requirements.
- If one part in the example does not start on the Tonic, the clinician may or may not explain.
- The clinician will play the starting pitch of each part prior to beginning the piece.
- Major mode only.