

Honors Chorus Auditions

Helpful tips for a successful audition

Teacher's Responsibility

- Regular rehearsals with the students to make sure students are prepared
- Don't rely on the audition track to take the place of YOU - you need to make sure you are having face to face rehearsals
- Make sure to have your students sing with the audition track before they walk into the audition
- Students bring a copy of the music
- Make sure students know how to sight sing. How to approach it. What method are they going to use.
- Students should be able to sight sing from DO to SOL - stepwise, skips of thirds while singing quarter, eighth, half and whole notes. Students should also be able to recognize quarter and half rests.
- Tell students how to dress
- This is a state level audition - think back to how you dressed for your college audition

What are judges listening and looking for in the audition

Tone -

Conductors of honor choirs first need a sound they can work with and grow over two days into an amazing musical experience for these children. So, in my opinion, a child chosen for honors chorus will have a pretty tone, not overly breathy and well supported by a full breath. Students are not likely to be chosen who do not have a tone that is pleasing to the ear, that is often off-pitch and not produced on the breath. Students will not be chosen who exhibit poor singing posture, who fidget during interludes and don't stay ready to sing. Students will not be chosen who sing very softly and timidly - no matter if they are decent musicians. They will be ready, but just not yet. On the other hand, operatic sounding voices are also not appropriate for this type of choir. The production of the tone is pushed and overly manipulated. They are unblendable. I realize these are middle school voices who are at a tender point in their development, but I am tasked with choosing those voices which will build an honor choir. Tone is first for me as a judge. That is what makes the sound beautiful when these voices unite.

Musicianship

After tone is musicianship. I look at the way the phrase is sung, where breaths are taken, and if dynamics are observed. I also look for movement forward with a slight crescendo in the long notes and clear cut offs. I also like to see that the emotion in the voice reflects the text of the piece. If the music is joyful, I want to know the singer knows the meaning of the text no matter the language. None of these observations are beyond the ability of a middle school singer good enough to be chosen for an honor choir

Any singer can miss a note or an entrance once or twice, however singers cannot be chosen who do not know the music and cannot sing with a recorded accompaniment.

I feel that students are more serious and focused for an audition when they “dress up.” Maybe a dress/skirt for the ladies and a tie for the guys.

Have a plan for how to sight sing. Solfege or numbers, and how to do the sight singing.

Students need to know the music selection COLD. One mistake or two, maybe, but in most sections of the choir if you make one mistake you will be eliminated.

Judge's Concerns

- ❑ I know this may seem obvious, but make sure to listen to your students individually before the audition. Not always as a group or section.
- ❑ I have found the workshops that are done to teach the notes, are very helpful and a good start for the students. Even if you have to drive a bit to get there.
- ❑ Check with your singer on the day of the audition. Are they sick or hoarse? I have had a number of singers at the audition that had trouble singing!?! I realize that they have worked hard for the audition but sometimes things happen. I think we all have had singers that missed the audition due to sickness.
- ❑ Practice singing the selection all the way through the song, even when they make a mistake. Many singers are so conditioned to stopping and fixing the problems that they try to do that on the day of the audition. This is high school, middle school, honor's chorus, solo small ensemble, governor's school, etc
- ❑ And most importantly to me is that they need to know the selection COLD. One mistake or two, maybe, but in most sections of the choir if you make one mistake you will be eliminated.

Students not prepared - Students have told me they received the music the day before. This seemed to occur with athletes who could not come after school to rehearse.

Don't bring them - it is unfair to the students to expect them to be successful when they have clearly not taken the time to prepare for the audition.

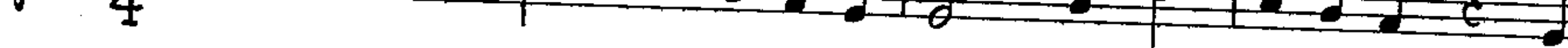
This is also a waste of my time as the judge

Every singer should understand sight reading and what to do. I had many students tell me they didn't know what to do. When I suggested singing solfege they did not know what that was. Then use numbers, la, or anything.

Have a method and use it.

Sight Reading

- ❑ **It will always start and end on DO**
- ❑ **Do not get stuck on what key it is going to be written in. Teach your students that DO is moveable and can start on any line or space.**
- ❑ **It will be four measures**
- ❑ **Some argue that four measures is too short and they need eight measures**
- ❑ **If they know how to sight read it doesn't matter how many measures there are**
- ❑ **As judges I will know within the first few notes whether or not the student can sight read**
- ❑ **I don't want to have to sit through eight measures – four – over and done**
- ❑ **Make sight reading a part of your rehearsal everyday**



What to wear?

- Casual Dress - like dressing for church or going out for a nice dinner
 - Gentleman - khaki/dress pants, dress shirt, tie, dress shoes, shirt tucked in
 - Ladies - sun dress/dress, dress pants, skirts, blouse, dress shoes, dressy slides



What NOT to wear!!!

- Gym Clothes - play shorts
- T-Shirts
- Jeans
- Flip Flops - you are not going to the pool or beach
- Tennis Shoes
- Work Boots
- Hoochie Mama Dresses
- Muscle Shirts



Audition Piece

Achieved Is The Glorious Work

From “The Creation”

Joseph Haydn

Pepper #5255682

Students will need to prepare the whole piece for the audition. Cuts will be posted on the website if a decision is made to do so.

Audition Dates and Locations

East Site - Wednesday, September 28th

Joy Schreckengost - Site Chair

- ❑ Oak Forest Church of Christ
- ❑ 2705 North Park Drive, Goldsboro 27534
- ❑ Joy Schreckengost@onslow.k12.nc.us

❑ **Central Site - Thursday, September 29th**

- ❑ Catherine Butler - Site Chair
- ❑ Holy Trinity Episcopal Church
- ❑ 607 Greene Street, Greensboro 27401
- ❑ catherinebutler17@gmail.com
- ❑ Catherine's Address - 2415 Springwood Drive - Greensboro 27403

❑ **West Site - Friday, September 30th**

- ❑ Sherry January - Site Chair
- ❑ Site - TBD
- ❑ sjanuary@caldwellschools.com

Honors Chorus Clinician 2016

Rollo Dilworth

Accompanist - Sherry Young

The background features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of blue, ranging from light sky blue to dark navy blue. These shapes are primarily located on the left and right sides of the frame, creating a modern, dynamic feel. The central area is a plain white space where the text is placed.

Questions?