

Individual Events

- Category 1: Female Vocal Solo
- Category 2: Male Vocal Solo
- Category 3: Brass Solo
- Category 4: Woodwind Solo
- Category 5a: String Solo (Bowed)
- Category 5b: String Solo (Plucked/Strummed)
- Category 6: Percussion Solo
- Category 7: Sacred Piano Solo
- Category 8: Classical Piano Solo

Group Events

- Category 9: Small Vocal Ensemble
- Category 10: Large Vocal Ensemble
- Category 11: Choral Group
- Category 12: Small Instrumental Ensemble
- Category 13: Large Instrumental Ensemble
- Category 14: Orchestra/Band
- Category 15: Handbell/Handchime Ensemble
- Category 16: Handbell/Handchime Choir
- Category 17: Sacred Piano Duet
- Category 18: Classical Piano Duet
- Category 19: Youth Choir

Music General Rules:

1. Vocal and instrumental selections will be from the following types of music: sacred, spirituals, patriotic, folk, semi-classical, or classical.
 - a. The term “classical” will not be limited to denote music from that period of history, but will apply to selections of a classical nature as opposed to those of popular music.
 - b. Piano selections must be sacred or classical according to the rules of the category.
 - c. Folk music is the body of literature that identifies with a culture or a country in the form of ballads, religious songs, work songs, cowboy songs, patriotic and political songs, and love songs. Many such folk songs have been taught by one generation to another generation and may not bear any composer identification. However, no protest songs, songs of any subversive cultural movement, or modern pop-related folk songs of any type are permissible.
 - d. Semi-classical music is that which is like classical music in form, style, and quality, but is generally less complex in nature and has a more immediate appeal. Discretion should be used in selecting semi-classical music for competition. It must meet high standards of quality in both words and music.
2. Medleys will be acceptable.
3. No rock style, gospel country, jazz, or music in like vein will be permitted. A “night club” sound or “contemporary” sound is not acceptable. Participants are to avoid contemporary movie themes, though the music itself may be acceptable, and are not to use songs produced and/or popularized by current pop or rock stars even though the song itself may be acceptable.
4. The ACEA Competition Director shall have full authority for making any determination in this regard. Music determined to be inappropriate for this competition will be penalized or disqualified.
5. No student or group will perform the same selection in two consecutive years. In addition, the same selection is not to be used by multiple groups from the same school in the same year.
6. Refer to specific rules for each category for questions about entrants’ qualifications.
7. No choreography, planned or unnecessary bodily movement (including hand clapping, foot stomping, deaf signing, finger snapping, etc.) may be used even if scored by the composer or arranger. For soloists, gestures that are a natural expression of the piece will not be penalized.

Area Two: Music

8. Memory is required of piano solos, vocal solos, and vocal groups. Memory is not required of instrumental solos (except piano) or instrumental groups. Failure to memorize when required will result in disqualification.
9. Live piano or acoustic guitar, or a recording of piano or acoustic guitar, will be permitted for all music categories which need accompaniment. If you use recorded music, you must provide a way to play the recording as well as someone to play the recording. **A recording should be used if there are no other options for accompaniment. Live accompaniment is preferred.**
10. Each student or group may provide an accompanist who will not be considered as part of the group in size determination or grade level requirements.
11. No competitors are permitted to use page turners; accompanists may use a page turner.
12. No electronically amplified musical instruments will be permissible.
13. Solo contestants will need 1 original of each selection of music performed for judges to reference.
14. Group contestants will need 2 originals of each selection of music performed for judges to reference.
15. If the contestant(s) or accompanist will be using music for any performance, they will need original music.
16. The contestant must number at least every fifth (5th) measure on the music given to judges. Numbers must be very clear and legible. Numbers may be written in pencil. Judges are instructed **not** to mark on music. Failure to clearly number at least every 5th measure will result in an automatic penalty of 3 points per selection.
17. Personal arrangements and deviations from printed music should be clearly marked on the judges' music or points will be deducted after the performance is finished.
18. Warm-up rooms will be provided when available.
19. Instrumentalists may tune their instruments with the piano before performing.
20. For all handbell competition, schools will be required to provide all equipment (bells, pads, etc.) except tables.
21. Either the soloist, one member of a duet or small ensemble, or the director of a large ensemble or group shall announce the name of the participant/group, the school, the title, and composer/arranger of the selection. Timing will then begin.
22. Students will be penalized for going over time or under time in any category of competition where time limits are established. When a student violates his time limit by more than 1 minute, the student will receive a ten (10) point deduction on the overall score. However, if he is over time or under time by less than 1 minute, points or a fraction of a point will be deducted which may prevent an otherwise first-place winner from placing first, a second-place winner from placing second, or a third-place winner from placing third.
23. **Attach a completed Music Performance Tag to the original music.** Host schools or ACEA Office will not be responsible for returning music left at competition site.
24. No flash photography can be used during competition. The recording of a single entry by representatives of the participant's school for personal use is permitted. The recording of all or portions of the performance of more than one entry in an event is prohibited. In any case, the head judge in a competition may prohibit recording. No recording made by anyone other than competition officials may be considered for adjudication purposes.

Rules by Category (Individual Competition)

Category 1: Female Vocal Solo

Category 2: Male Vocal Solo

Category 3: Brass Solo

Category 4: Woodwind Solo

Category 5a: String Solo (Bowed)

Category 5b: String Solo (Plucked/Strummed)

Category 6: Percussion Solo

Category 7: Sacred Piano Solo

Category 8: Classical Piano Solo

Category 1, 2: Female Vocal Solo, Male Vocal Solo

1. All vocal solos will be memorized. Failure to memorize will result in a ten (10) point deduction of the overall score.
2. Selections for elementary vocal soloists may be either sacred or classical.
3. Students (grades 4-6) will perform one selection or medley within 5 minutes.

Category 3, 4: Brass Solo, Woodwind Solo

1. Memory is not required of instrumental solos (except piano).
2. Students (grades 4-6) will perform one selection or medley within 8 minutes.

Category 5a: String Solo (Bowed)

1. This category is for bowed instruments. The only non-bowed instrument allowed is a harp. (Guitars, banjos, and other plucked or strummed instruments are not allowed.)
2. Memory is not required of instrumental solos (except piano).
3. Students (grades 4-6) will perform one selection or medley within 8 minutes.

Category 5b: String Solo (Plucked/Strummed)

1. This category is for guitars, banjos, and other plucked or strummed instruments.
2. Memory is not required of instrumental solos (except piano).
3. Students (grades 4-6) will perform one selection or medley within 8 minutes.

Category 6: Percussion Solo

1. A percussion solo must be a solo or concert etude. It must be from "standard concert literature" and must conform to the General Rules for music. Since much of this literature is unaccompanied, an accompanist is optional.
2. Memory is not required of instrumental solos (except piano).
3. The solo must fit one of the following categories:
 - a. Snare Drum Solo
 - b. Timpani Solo
 - c. Mallet Percussion: any instrument with notes arranged in piano keyboard fashion including, but not limited to orchestra bells (or glockenspiel), xylophone, marimba, or vibraphone.
 - d. Multiple Percussion: multiple percussion has no standard set of instruments, but often has a combination of snare drums, concert toms, and small instruments such as a triangle, wood blocks, or cymbals.

Area Two: Music

4. No electronic devices are permitted. No drum sets are permitted.
5. Handbells are not permitted in this category.
6. Students (grades 4-6) will perform one selection or medley within 8 minutes.

Category 7, 8: Sacred Piano Solo, Classical Piano Solo

1. All piano solos will be memorized. Failure to memorize will result in a ten (10) point deduction of the overall score.
2. Students (grades 4-6) will perform one selection or medley within 8 minutes.

Rules by Category (Group Competition)

Category 9: Small Vocal Ensemble

Category 10: Large Vocal Ensemble

Category 11: Choral Group

Category 12: Small Instrumental Ensemble

Category 13: Large Instrumental Ensemble

Category 14: Orchestra/Band

Category 15: Handbell/Handchime Ensemble

Category 16: Handbell/Handchime Choir

Category 17: Sacred Piano Duet

Category 18: Classical Piano Duet

Category 19: Youth Choir

Category 9, 10: Small Vocal Ensemble, Large Vocal Ensemble

1. A small vocal ensemble consists of 2 to 6 voices, plus piano accompaniment if desired. It may be directed.
2. A large vocal ensemble consists of 7 to 12 voices, plus piano accompaniment if desired. It may be directed.
3. Memory is required of vocal groups. Failure to memorize when required will result in a ten (10) point deduction of the overall score.
4. Students (grades 3-6) will perform one selection or medley within 8 minutes.

Category 11: Choral Group

1. A choral group consists of 13 to 24 members. It may be directed.
2. At least one selection must be sacred. At one selection must be in English. The intent is that the piece is 100% English. Incidental use of a foreign word or phrase would be accepted. An entire verse in a foreign language would result in a penalty.
3. Memory is required of vocal groups. Failure to memorize when required will result in a ten (10) point deduction of the overall score.
4. Students (grades 3-6) will perform two numbers within 12 minutes.

Category 12, 13: Small Instrumental Ensemble, Large Instrumental Ensemble

1. A small instrumental ensemble consists of 2 to 6 instruments (plus piano accompaniment if desired). It may be directed.
2. A large instrumental ensemble consists of 7 to 12 instruments (plus piano accompaniment if desired). It may be directed.
3. Memory is not required of instrumental groups.
4. Percussion ensembles are allowed in the large instrumental ensemble category (Category 13). No electronic devices are permitted. No drum sets are permitted. The following instruments are allowed:
 - a. Snare Drum
 - b. Timpani
 - c. Mallet Percussion: any instrument with notes arranged in piano keyboard fashion including, but not limited to orchestra bells (or glockenspiel), xylophone, marimba, or vibraphone.
 - d. Multiple Percussion: multiple percussion has no standard set of instruments, but often has a combination of snare drums, concert toms, and small instruments such as a triangle, wood blocks, or cymbals.
5. Percussion ensembles are excluded from the small instrumental ensemble category.
6. Students (grades 3-6) will perform one selection or medley within 8 minutes.

Category 14: Orchestra/Band

1. An orchestra or band consists of 13 or more musicians. (Class A – 13-24; Class B – 25 and above). It may be directed.
2. Memory is not required of instrumental groups.
3. Students (grades 3-6) will perform two numbers within 15 minutes.

Category 15: Handbell/Handchime Ensemble

1. A handbell/handchime ensemble consists of 2 to 6 musicians (plus piano accompaniment if desired). It may be directed.
2. Memory is not required of instrumental groups.
3. For all handbell competition, schools will be required to provide all equipment (bells, pads, etc.) except tables.
4. Students (grades 3-6) will perform one selection or medley within 8 minutes.

Category 16: Handbell/Handchime Choir

1. A handbell/handchime choir consists of 7 or more musicians (plus piano accompaniment if desired). It may be directed.
2. Memory is not required of instrumental groups.
3. For all handbell competition, schools will be required to provide all equipment (bells, pads, etc.) except tables.
4. Students (grades 3-6) will perform two numbers within 15 minutes.

Category 17, 18: Sacred Piano Duet, Classical Piano Duet

1. Sacred piano duet consists of two students and one piano. Only sacred music is acceptable.
2. Classical piano duet consists of two students and one piano. Only classical music is acceptable.
3. Memory is not required of instrumental groups.
4. Students (grades 3-6) will perform one selection or medley within 8 minutes.

Category 19: Youth Choir

1. A youth choir consists of 25 or more members. It may be directed.
2. Students (grades 3-6) will perform two selections or medleys within 15 minutes.
3. Memory is required of vocal groups. Failure to memorize when required will result in a ten (10) point deduction of the overall score.