

District I Choral Directors Association  
Southern Choral Classic  
By-Laws Proposal  
2006-2007



Presented by:  
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District I Choral Directors Association

# District I Choral Directors Association Southern Choral Classic Festival Sight-reading Proposal 2006-07

Committee Members:

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## BACKGROUND:

This committee was given permission from the DICDA to come up with criteria for Southern Choral Classic and as to what can be in the sight-reading sample of our Southern Choral Classic festivals.

In the District I area there are five levels in their Choral Festivals for sight-reading.

## **Preface: Choir Sight-reading Music**

A primary goal of our music programs should be to produce students who are musically literate and prepared to experience a lifetime of musical enrichment. The development of sight-reading skills is central to the achievement of this primary goal and also facilitates the successful performance of a greater body of musical literature. Therefore, the development of specific sight-reading skills should be included at all levels of instruction and should encompass the essential elements of performance required to make appropriate, independent musical judgments and insure success during the initial reading of a musical work.

The primary purpose of the commissioned sight-reading music is to test musical literacy at specific levels. The guidelines stated for the sight-reading material provide the composer with a parameter of difficulty in composing music for each specific classification. All of the elements need not be used in each composition.

## **Specific Criteria for Composing Choral Sight-reading Music**

Composers of DIDCA sight-reading music are provided the following specific criteria:

\* Composers of are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the scoring practices that are common place in each grade of educational music.

Music directors of ensembles at each levels should realistically expect the music their students encounter in the sight-reading room to be similar in craft to the music they see everyday in the rehearsal hall.

For example extreme ranges, difficult or complex rhythmic, key and meter changes should be excluded.

1. Composer should number measures throughout the score.
2. Use specific metronome markings.
3. Strive to keep the notation as large as possible and the score page as uncluttered as possible.
4. \*Lyrical syllables should be limited to but not confined to one syllable per note, example: running eighth notes.
5. Be very careful to avoid extreme ranges (extreme ranges for changing boys voices should be avoided for , training choirs, middle school, junior high and

ninth grade) , accidentals, key changes, meter changes, poly-rhythms and note stems going in opposite directions can be confusing. Notes should move mainly in a stepwise motion not excluding intervals that may include a second, third, fifth, or fourth in any direction. Intervals such as sixths, sevenths, and octaves in any direction should be avoided.

6. The composition should have no more than sixteen measures.

The boxes will only be opened by the High School, Junior High, Elementary Chairpersons, and the President of the District I Choral Directors to be counted and ensure that there are enough copies for the event. The expense of the music and postage will be paid from festival receipts.

### **Southern Choral Classic Choral Festival Rules and Regulations:**

1. **Purpose:** To provide each performing group with an opportunity to improve and to evaluate its performance.

- a. By comparison with a set standard of excellence.
- b. By comparison with the performance of other groups.

### **2. Eligibility**

a. The Choral Director of each student participating in Southern Choral Classic Festival activities must be a current member, in good standing, of the District I Choral Directors Association.

- b. The student must be a member of the participating school or organization.

### **3. Regulations**

a. Registration blanks and fees from each school participating must be completed and mailed to the district chairperson on or before January 15. (Choral directors will not receive any information from the district chairperson prior to January 15.) District chairpersons will set deadlines (and enforce a \$100.00 late penalty) for submission of all required festival forms, titles of selections, etc. Specified performance times will need to be sent with the registration form. Changes cannot be made to the performance schedule after the deadline has passed.

- b. Notification of withdrawal must be made to the regional chairman postmarked no later than three weeks before the festival date; otherwise entry fees will not be refunded.

c. Each choral group will be permitted to participate in any SCC Festival for comments only and/or a rating. Each group requesting comments and/or rating will be awarded one of the following ratings: Superior, Excellent, Average, Below Average, or Poor.

d. Each choral group wishing comments and rating will select the classification from the six graded classifications. One piece must be from the Texas State list or a comparable list.

e. There will be no maximum limitations concerning the size of the choral groups. If a school has more than one choral group of like nature, each will be permitted to enter, provided there is no duplication of personnel within like groups unless director provides verification (signed by principal) of dual enrollment to site chairperson with festival application. Such groups need not enter the same classification. A student may participate in two groups of unlike nature (for example: male chorus and mixed chorus.)

f. Three selections must be performed.

g. Use of cassette tapes: All performance adjudicators will be asked to make his comments using a cassette recorder, the cassette to be provided by the festival chairperson at the time of registration. The adjudicator making comments by recording will use the standard printed form for recording his rating of the performance.

h. Special recognition of superior ratings - a trophy or plaque will be made available from the festival chairperson to all groups with superior and excellent ratings included in the cost of registration fees.

#### **4. Performance**

a. Each group will prepare from memory three selections of equal difficulty for those groups.

b. Music duplicated mechanically or by hand is a violation of the copyright laws and will not be accepted. If a piece is permanently out of print or an original composition, the director must submit a form at registration. Any selection that has been duplicated must be accompanied by written permission from the publisher that copies have been ordered.

c. Music from the choral public domain library may be legal and can be adjudicated at festival.

d. Ratings will not be posted in the performance area.

e. Timing: not to exceed 15 minutes per entry.

#### **5. Sight-reading**

Sight-reading will be optional. Directors may select in advance which voicing their groups will sight-singing. Sight-reading will be graded separately from performance and not included as part of the cumulative grade.

**Choirs and directors will have the following amount of time to look at the music:**

Grades I - V: (8) minutes

## **DICDA SCC Sight-reading Criteria**

Level: Elementary/Beginning/ Training Choir

Group/Grade One and Two Sight-reading Guidelines

Voicing: Unison/Two part

Key: C, G, F,

Meter: duple

Rhythm: Basic Patterns (whole, half, quarter, eighth note values and their corresponding rests.)

Length: Sixteen measures

Intervals: limit to steps and thirds

Group/Grade Three Sight-reading Guidelines

Level: Middle/Junior High/Training Choir

Same criteria as Group/Grade Two: EXCEPT:

Rhythm: add dotted quarter followed by an eighth note.

Voicing: Unison/ Two Part/SAB

Key: C, F, G,

Length: Sixteen measures

Intervals: add fourths and fifths

Group/Grade Four Sight-reading Guidelines

Level: Intermediate/9<sup>th</sup> grade/ Beginner High School

Voicing: TTB/SSA/SAB/SATB

Key: C, G, F, B-flat, D Major

Meter: duple/non changing

Rhythm: Basic Patterns

Length: Sixteen measures.

Intervals: Add thirds, fourths, and a fifth up or down.

## **Advanced Sight-reading Criteria**

Group/Grade Five Sight-reading Guidelines

Level: High School/ Advanced Mixed/ Women/Men

Same criteria as Group/Grade IV EXCEPT:

Meter: triple or duple/non-changing

Voicing: SSA/SAB/SATB/TTBB

Key: Add D Major, A Major, EbMajor

Rhythm: Two Sixteenths equaling an eighth note value may be used

a. The festival coordinator of choral activities shall be responsible for securing and distributing sight-reading material appropriate for all voice classifications and a stop watch for the sight-reading judge. There will be no observers, other than assigned student teachers, for sight-reading. The procedure will take place in a room close to the performance area. The site coordinator will secure an accomplished accompanist for sight-reading. A separate adjudicator will be employed for the sight-reading when necessary.

b. Each chorus should be met at the door by an attendant and told to file in and take seats quietly and quickly, rearranging to the accustomed seating arrangements. Attendants can assist in rearranging seats. If one group arrives before another has finished its performance, it should be detained at a point far enough away so that the members will be unable to hear the music distinctly.

c. The attendants may pass out the music after the chorus members take their seated positions. **The music is not to be seen until instructions have been given.** Any infraction will result in the group receiving one letter grade lower in sight-reading.

d. The judge shall go over the rules of the festival and/or deliver such other instructions as he feels will assist the organization in doing the best possible job of sight-reading **before starting the stop watch.**

The sight-reading judge may not be allowed to question the choir following the sight-reading session until after his/her adjudication sheet has been completed and sent to the festival chairman.

Any request by the judge may be denied by the director of the ensemble without penalty of any kind.

e. Each group shall perform one sight-reading example in the voicing selected by the director. The group will have 8 minutes to examine and perform the exercise.

f. The method of execution of the rhythmic exercise shall be at the discretion of the director. i.e., clapping or speaking any rhythmic syllables.

g. The director may not sing any part of the selection (rhythmic or melodic) or play it on the piano.

h. The director may ask the accompanist for up to five intervals taken from the sight-reading example for any level.

i. Students are each given a copy of the music face down. They and the director are given 8 minutes to study and discuss the music. The students may ask questions but may not sing or rehearse the music in any way. During this time frame, the key may be established by students singing the scale and/or tonic triad at the direction of their director. The pitches are given at the piano; the group may hum or sing their starting pitches and sing through using solfege syllables, scale degree numbers, of lyrics, the piece one time with piano accompaniment. **For High School groups, after they have sung through the piece one time, they may have one (1) minute to discuss the piece, then the pitches are given again and the piece is sung acapella,** using solfege syllables, scale degree numbers, or lyrics. During all readings, the director may only conduct. He/she may make no audible singing contribution to the group's performance. The group may stop in the middle of the performance to reestablish the tonal pitches without being penalized.

j. The sight-reading demonstration should be treated as a performance, not as a rehearsal. While it is not against the rules to call out numbers to the singers while they are performing or to stop and begin again, the director is admitting a sight-reading weakness which must be taken into consideration by the judge.

k. At the conclusion of the audition, members of the group should remain seated until all music has been returned and counted. The director should caution students to gather their belongings before exiting the room. The director should be given a few seconds for any instructions he /she wishes to give, and the singers should then be asked to leave quietly and quickly to make room for the next group.

#### Accompanist:

- a. It is the responsibility of the festival chairperson to make sure the accompanist has a copy of the sight-reading rules one week prior to the festival dates.
- b. It is the responsibility for the accompanist to read over and become familiar with all sight-reading rules and regulations before the festival dates.
- c. The accompanist may play up to five intervals from the sight-reading example at the request of the director.
- d. The accompanist is required to play pitches and accompaniment at the piano while the group may hum or sing their starting pitches and sing through using solfege syllables, scale degree numbers, or lyrics. The choir may sing through the piece one time with piano accompaniment for Grades I-V. For the high school, they may have one (1) minute to discuss the piece, then the second time through **the pitches are given again and the piece is sung a cappella**, using solfege syllables, scale degree numbers, or lyrics.
- e. The accompanist is paid \$150.00 per day, reimbursement for substitute if applicable, and \$.40/mile.
- f. Accompanists will be paid \$75.00 per half day (four hours or less), reimbursement for substitute if applicable, and \$.40/per mile plus expenses for hotels and meals. (alcoholic beverages are considered a personal expense)

#### **Festival Adjudicators:**

- a. Four adjudicators will be assigned to the Choral Festival. Adjudicators must have taught for five (5) years.
- b. Two adjudicators will be from the senior or junior high school teaching level and one adjudicator will be from the elementary teaching level. The fourth judge will be the adjudicator in the sight-reading room for all the choirs requesting to sight-read.
- c. When adjudicators assign honor ratings lower than the top rating, Superior, they will be asked to be specific in their comments.
- d. Adjudicators will be paid \$150.00 per day, reimbursement for substitute if applicable, and \$.40/mile.
- e. Adjudicators will be paid \$75.00 per half day (four hours or less), reimbursement for substitute if applicable, and \$.40/per mile plus expenses for meals and hotels (alcoholic beverages are considered a personal expense).