

Festival Listening Guide

These questions are intended to help develop students' understanding and appreciation for the music being performed. They can assist students in writing critiques which may be required by directors.

1. Does the choir have good posture, breath support, and voice production? Is the vocal tone appropriate to the selection? (Bright, strident, dark, breathy, open, etc.)
2. How well does the group sing in tune (intonation)? Are intervals accurate and chords lined up properly?
3. How well do the voices blend (uniform tone quality) within and between the sections? Are vowels uniform?
4. Do the sections sing in balance with each other so that important parts are heard clearly?
5. Is the choir accurate in their attacks, releases, correctness of notes and rhythms?
6. Are all parts of the words correctly pronounced? Are all consonants clear? Are all vowels well shaped?
7. Do the dynamics, tempo, and phrasing of the selection seem varied and interesting enough to bring each piece to life?
8. Does the choir sing with real expression and vitality, and communicate the meaning of the text (regardless of the tempo)?
9. How well does the ensemble watch and respond to the director? Do any individuals distract the audience from the music before, during, or after the performance? Does the choir sincerely reflect the meaning of the text on their faces?
10. Does the overall discipline and deportment of the choir (on and off stage) reflect a professional musical attitude?

SCVA Festival Code of Conduct

A choral music festival sponsored by the Southern California Vocal Association provides the opportunity for a satisfying experience in listening as well as in performing. These rules are designed to encourage concert behavior in which everyone may take pride. They are not meant to stifle enthusiasm or to detract from the enjoyment of a festival.

1. Each student is a guest of the host school and will follow the rules of that school. He/she will not leave the auditorium without permission of their director.
2. Each student will be seated with his choir prior to the opening of the festival and will remain in his place until its conclusion. Personal needs must be satisfied before the concert begins.
3. A courteous listener will sit up in his seat and will refrain from talking, chewing gum, eating, combing hair, applying make-up or doing homework. All electronic devices, including cell phones and MP3 players must be turned off; cell phone use is not allowed at any time during the festival.
4. Applause at the proper time is encouraged. However, activities such as standing, shouting and whistling are obviously inappropriate in a concert hall. Adjudicators may downgrade any performing group that displays poor concert behavior, or may withhold adjudication for obviously disruptive conduct.
5. California State Law prohibits smoking on school grounds.



Southern California Vocal Association

Choral Festival

The Southern California Vocal Association was founded in 1939 to advance choral music in Southern California. Beginning with choral festivals, SCVA events have expanded to include honor choirs, a vocal solo competition, and specialized festivals for small ensembles, barbershop, show choir, and vocal jazz/contemporary a cappella. Festivals remain central to the purpose of SCVA with SCVA sponsoring approximately 60 choral festivals each year that are attended by over 15,000 students.