

*New Mexico Federation of Music Clubs*

# Festival Judge's Meeting

March 2017



Chairperson: Lisa Woromay Villanueva

Actual Judge's Comments

**Comments to students should be specific and encouraging.**

"Missed a couple notes, but pretty good"

"Again staccato used is a bit much" (never made a first comment on staccato).  
PP level

All need to be more specific.

"There was staccato where legato was indicated at the beginning" Now we're getting specific.  
PP level

"Think about phrasing & emotion . A little rushed in middle- a little nervous?" PP level.

"Think about both hands being even." PP level

"Forgot some notes - nervous?" "Rushed a little bit" "Not quite steady" PP level.  
These are negative and non-specific.

"Great piece, but you are not ready to play this at this tempo. 16th notes are often uneven." EIV level.  
Needs to be positive.

"Siting too close. LH too loud M 7-16, 25-38. Dynamics needed for M 7-24. Shorter staccato throughout. Make sure even eighth notes M2,4,6,etc. Good RH chords, but not strong enough." More of the same, only 3 positive statements with "buts"... PIII level

A running commentary while student is performing saves time, but be sure to mention some positives! It's not about how much you know, but how to help & encourage the students.

## FEDERATION FESTIVALS - INFORMATION FOR JUDGES

JR 3-5

The NFMC Federation Festivals provide young musicians (through age 18) and adults (age 19 and above) opportunity and encouragement for continued musical growth. Entrants do not compete against each other, but are rated on individual merits. The festivals are for musicians at all levels of capability, not just the exceptionally talented.

The term "judge" is used even though the event is non-competitive.

The judge will give each entrant a rating:

Superior	5 points (compares with 91% - 100%)
Excellent	4 points (compares with 81% - 90%)
Satisfactory	3 points (compares with 71% - 80%)
Fair	2 points (compares with 61% - 70%)
Needs Improvement	1 point (compares with 60% or less)

In the context of festival, a "superior" performance is one in which the entrant presents each piece intact with rhythmic continuity, accuracy, attention to detail and an understanding of the mood and dynamics. The verbal rating should not be taken literally; for example, "satisfactory" would not really be satisfactory, but indicates a "C" or average grade.

Since the purpose of a festival is to promote study and stimulate interest in American and world literature and to encourage each participant to reach a high standard of musical achievement, please consider carefully the following suggestions and guidelines:

- Positive aspects of a performance should always be mentioned while giving constructive criticism and suggestions for improvements.
- Rate participants in terms of what can reasonably be expected at their age level and in the event entered.
- Indicate specific strengths and weaknesses by using as many of the rating sheet categories as may be appropriate.
- The rating given must be supported by objectively stated written comments in addition to the "plus/minus" marks.
- Assign a rating to the overall performance, rather than to the individual pieces.
- Make ratings and comments individually; do not consult with other judges.

Please note that because your comments will be passed on to the teachers, and/or participants, comments that critical of the teacher's preparation are unacceptable and inappropriate.

**Under no circumstances** will a judge talk to parents, or participants, before, during, or after the festival about the selection of music, level of achievement, technique, posture, or even about wearing apparel. ALL problems or concerns are to be directed only to the Festival Chairman.

Help make the day truly festive by maintaining a pleasant atmosphere in each audition room and by ENCOURAGING ALL participants involved.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated; our sincerest thanks to you for your valued services.

NFMC FEDERATION FESTIVAL RATINGS - DEFINITIONS

JR 3-9a

SUPERIOR (compares with 91% - 100%)

An outstanding performance which is consistently musical, stylistically correct, and accurate. Attention is given to dynamics, phrasing and musical expression. Memorization is secure with rapid recover from minor slips. Errors do not detract from the participant's interpretation. A **complete** performance.

EXCELLENT (compares with 81% - 90%)

A strong performance that is musical and stylistically correct. The performance shows accomplishment and very good potential, but there are discrepancies in rhythm, dynamics, phrasing, and/or interpretation. Hesitation and/or memory slips detract from the participant's presentation. A **promising** performance.

SATISFACTORY (compares with 71% - 80%)

Shows accomplishment; however, numerous errors occur. Additional work in one or more areas needed in order to achieve a convincing presentation.

FAIR (compares with 61% - 70%)

Some commendable aspects in performance and preparation are present, but severe deficiencies in fundamentals (for example, rhythm, notes, memory, etc.) are also apparent. Not fully ready for performance.

NEEDS IMPROVEMENT (compares with 60% or less)

The participant is obviously poorly prepared and appears unconcerned with the performance.

*Note: Percentages will appear only on instructions to judges, not on the rating sheet itself.*

## Judges please remember:

- Be positive, constructive and concise.

- Choose to comment on only a few important points.

There is not enough time to address everything you would like to in your comments.

A quick + or - under the "Required" and "Choice" column on the rating sheet will cover a lot of areas and save you from having to write out a sentence.

Anything you've marked ++ or - under the "Required" or "Choice" columns could guide you towards something you wish to explain more fully under "Remarks".

- Use short phrases.

- Please PRINT.

- Your comments must match your rating.

Comments that praise a wonderful performance shouldn't be followed by an Excellent rating.

- When judging Primary levels it's good to stick to the basics.

Notes, rhythm, dynamics, tempo and memory (or recovery).

- When judging Upper levels you can focus on:

- particularly beautiful and exciting sections.

- difficult sections.

- Interpretation in regards to the time period of the piece.

## What if .....

....the music listed on the rating sheet is not what the students has handed to you? Make no comment to the performer. Write down what was actually played and rate the performance. Write a post-it note about the discrepancy and attach it to the rating sheet.

....a student left their music at home? Do everything as usual. Write a post-it note and attach it to the rating sheet.

....you think that the choice piece in not an original composition? Make no comment to the performer. Write a post-it note stating you think the piece is an arrangement and attach it to the rating sheet.

....at E1 or above you think that the choice piece is an American composer? (Piano Solo only) Make no comment to the performer. Write a post-it note and attach it to the rating sheet.

....you meet a parent or teacher in the hall who wishes to speak to you before or after a student performance? Tell them that you are getting someone to help them and find Lisa Villanueva or Monica Demarco. Please do not try to answer their questions or to help them in any other way except to be reassuring that their problem will be solved.

## As a judge I will....

- ....Smile, smile, smile... students are scared. Do my best to put them at ease.
- ....Follow the suggested room procedure.
- ....Praise things done right in my comments
- ....Encourage students about things that can be improved in my comments.
- ....Use post-it notes to communicate with the other judge instead of speaking.
- ....Clap after each performance, give the performer my full attention in that moment.
- ....Thank everyone for coming and wish them a nice day!

## As a judge I will NOT.....

- ....Allow disruptive video/ cameras in the judging rooms.
- ....Ask a student if they have practiced or if they are ready.
- ....Allow children to play with anything in the performance room.
- ....Share with the group that a particular composer/song is your favorite.
- ....Make promises. Refer issues to Lisa Villanueva or Monica Demarco.
- ....Discuss performance or other issues with parents/students in the hallway. Refer them to Lisa Villanueva or Monica Demarco.

## **A - Plus: Adjudication with Awareness**

**Test your Adjudication Quotient - Circle all of the items that apply to you.**

The "Ideal" Adjudicator is one who:

1. has knowledge of the psychology of young pianists and experience in dealing with their problems.
2. establishes eye contact at some point with the performer (preferably before and after the playing).
3. makes an effort to smile and look pleasant.
4. enjoys all types and styles of music.
5. writes legibly (print).
6. listens quietly and attentively.
7. makes comments as direct and specific as possible.
8. stays within the time frame allowed.
9. has the ability to recognize and evaluate many aspects of musical growth (technique, musicianship, projection etc.).
10. can paint creative pictures with words.
11. has a broad-based knowledge of repertoire.
12. remains ethical and professional at all times.
13. can think and write (almost at the same time!).
14. chooses words so beautifully that her criticism **supports** rather than attacks the efforts of the student.
15. has performed enough in either formal or informal situations to appreciate the particular pressures of public performance.
16. is prepared to offer possible solutions to a student's problems.
17. takes his written word seriously, being constantly aware she will not be present when the evaluation is read.
18. enjoys hearing young people perform.
19. avoids the many "rubber-stamp" comments that are so transparent to the students.
20. CARES....., cares a lot about helping a fellow musician.

**SCORING:** 1 point per item. 19 - 20 = A-Plus - you are an adjudicator with awareness. You are wonderful!

Source: Lecture presented by Suzanne Guy & Victoria Slaymaker: January 1983.



This is a list of phrases which have been used by examiners in the festival. It is meant only as a guide and is far from definitive. You may use it as a reference when putting together your own comments.

Especially for duets:

Togetherness is the Key!  
Listen to each other.  
Super on the dynamics & ensemble!  
Need more togetherness.  
Lovely well-balanced performance.  
Secondo--bring out your melody here.  
Good balance between parts.  
Nice ensemble.  
The ensemble needs a little more work.  
Secondo is a little heavy.  
The principal part was clearly heard.  
Very good balance between partners.  
You listened to each other and achieved  
a fine balance.  
Secondo--don't drown primo!  
You sound as one!  
You two make a great team.  
Nice secondo melody.  
Be sure both are ready to begin together.

General:

Firm commanding beginning.  
I enjoyed your well shaped phrasing and  
dynamic contrast.  
Your piece was descriptive.  
Nice feel for music.  
Lovely position at the piano  
Accent more and be more animated and playful.  
Lovely smooth phrasing.  
Nice waltz tempo.  
Control your fingers.  
Make yourself count evenly.  
Good firm chords at end.  
You have really worked on finger control!  
Good strong, steady beginning!  
Good mood set for this piece.  
Fine interpretation!  
Keep steady tempo throughout.  
You painted a musical picture.  
Enjoyed your crisp staccatos.  
You play with confidence.  
Very musically played- controlled and confident.  
I would like a lighter left hand.  
How about a snappier staccato?  
Be sure the 16th notes are clear.  
You have talent and feeling for music!  
Such brilliant sounds?  
Very clean pedaling.  
You recovered well from memory slip.  
Nerves can happen to anyone!  
Fine job of shading louds and softs.  
Involve yourself with the music.

General:

Control tempo.  
Need a stronger sense of rhythm.  
I liked the controlled soft beginning.  
Steady beat kept this piece moving.  
Well prepared and played.  
Wonderful dexterity on 16th notes.  
Sit back for more freedom.  
Nerves--you play too well to let them  
take charge.  
We all forget sometimes!  
Made me feel like dancing!  
Dynamic shading made it sound interesting.  
Connect all the notes in a phrase.  
I feel nerves rushed you a bit.  
Rhythmically perfect!  
You show poise and confidence at the piano.  
Do work on the counting.  
Rests are important, too.  
Your tempo made me cheerful!  
What a sensitive musician--you played with  
feeling.  
I like your flair .  
More dynamic contrast needed.  
You handled the complicated rhythm nicely.  
Make the melody sing out.  
Memorize thoroughly so you feel secure.  
What nice phrasing!  
Work for smooth running notes.  
Terrific recovery!  
You aren't bothered by changing rhythms.  
Weight of fingers into keys--good!

## RATING SHEET FOR FEDERATION FESTIVAL

JR 3-9

Entrant Number or Name:	
Event:	Class:
Required Composition:	
Choice Composition:	
INSTRUCTIONS FOR JUDGES: Entrants do not compete against each other; each is rated on his/her own merits. Indicate strengths and/or weaknesses by + or - and make supportive comments. All factors should be considered in determining the final rating. Be certain that your comments and final rating are compatible. <b>Circle appropriate rating in ink at the bottom of the page.</b>	

Performances of Pieces	Required	Choice	Judge's Remarks (use reverse side if needed)
<b>I. MEMORY</b>			
<b>II. ACCURACY</b>			
Correct Notes			
Marks of Expression			
Note Values			
<b>III. RHYTHM</b>			
Appropriate Tempo			
Continuity			
Control			
Steadiness of Beat			
<b>IV. TECHNIQUE</b>			
Body Position			
Fingering			
Hand Position			
Pedal			
Breath Control			
Diction			
Tonguing			
Use of Bow			
<b>V. MUSICIANSHIP</b>			
Articulation			
Balance			
Dynamics			
Interpretation/Style			
Intonation			
Phrasing			
Tone			

Circle Appropriate Rating: Superior Excellent Satisfactory Fair Needs Improvement  
 SU - complete, outstanding performance, attention to all details, rapid recovery from minor slips (do not detract from interpret)  
 EX - promising, strong performance showing accomplishment, minor discrepancies in details, slips detract from presentation  
 SA - shows accomplishment, addition work needed in one or more areas for convincing presentation  
 F - some commendable aspects, severe deficiencies in fundamentals show lack of preparation, not ready for performance  
 NI - obviously poorly prepared and appears unconcerned with performance

Judge's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_