

Level	
A 86-93	Exceptional, professional level Experience shared by performer & audience; effortless; genuine, enthusiastic audience reaction
A- 80-85	Excellent, no distractions Excellent musical product; continuous individual/unit involvement in the show
B+ 74-79	Very good, only a few minor problems Solid musical product: clear structure, creativity, planning throughout; some technique
B 66-73	Very good, with more minor or a few major problems Obvious vocal skills and BBS technique; performers secure, but not commanding
B- 60-65	Good, noticeable problems, but not distracting Working at entertaining; enjoyable, but not yet fully confident/involved; lapses in energy/characterization
C+ 54-59	Average, acceptable Organized but uncreative; tuning/accuracy problems; not fully engaged much of the time
C 46-53	Fair, Below average, a few distracting problems Lack of preparation; attempts fall flat; self-focused (not audience-); some uncomfortable moments in theme/script
C- 40-45	Poor, with more than a few distracting problems Inconsistent performance; doesn't fully integrate musicality and entertainment

Topic	
Musicality	<b>Vocal Production, Intonation, Balance and Blend</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Right notes and words? Pitch accuracy? Consistent tuning? Supported, free, resonant? Color and tone appropriate? Breathing unobtrusive or stylistically appropriate Harmony/melody/rhythm balanced? Balance across/within parts? Dynamics interesting, appropriate, well done? Phrases shaped?</li> </ul> <b>Arrangement, Rhythmic Accuracy</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Music suits the voices? Difficulty? Creativity? (repetitious, texture changes, repeats?) Range appropriate? Precision, consistency, effective non-meter timing? Advanced Techniques?</li> </ul>
	<b>Sound</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unified Ensemble?</li> </ul> <b>Visual Cohesiveness</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unity? Movement appropriate to aims? Maintained throughout?</li> </ul>
Unity	<b>Transitions/Blocking</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Smooth and brief? Stylistically appropriate? MC flows into start of song?</li> </ul> <b>Effectiveness of Presentation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Theme appropriate to audience and the performer? Humor? Script well thought out and rehearsed? Overall effect professional? MC delivery?</li> </ul>
Theme/Script/MC/ Mic Technique	<b>The Concept</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interesting theme? Originality? Clever scripting, use of props/staging, costuming? Suitable for the audience in attendance?</li> </ul> <b>Arrangements</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interesting? Work for a cappella format?</li> </ul> <b>Creativity of Movement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stand out from the crowd? Creative energy evident?</li> </ul>
Creativity	<b>Interpretation/Appropriateness of Movement, Energy/Stage Presence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>True to style? Interesting? Convey emotion? Suit the song? Enhance or interfere with the music? Comfortable? Energized? All engaged in character, reactions (not just MC)?</li> </ul> <b>Audience Rapport, Professionalism</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audience connection? Eye contact? Emotional credibility? (believable or forced?) Would people pay to see this?</li> </ul>
Communication	

		<b>Has:</b>	<b>Needs more:</b>	<b>To move up:</b>
<p><b>C</b></p> <p>"me"</p> <p>(some)</p> <p>acceptability</p>	<p><b>C- • 40-45 • 80-91</b> Fair, low average</p> <p><b>C • 46-53 • 92-107</b> Acceptable, average, mechanical, cautious</p> <p><b>C+ • 54-59 • 108-119</b> Satisfactory, more right than wrong, "nice"</p>	<p>Can be uncomfortable, noisy</p> <p>More exuberance than skill</p> <p>Dodgy notes and words</p> <p>Low breath stamina</p> <p>Low energy</p> <p>Poor posture habits</p> <p>Have the basics, but don't really know how to apply</p> <p>More social than musical focus to membership</p>	<p>All singers committed to the same musical plan</p> <p>Increased vocal skills, stamina, motivation</p> <p>Be more engaged</p> <p>Smarter song choices, that showcase the voices and skills</p> <p>Less movement, if it affects musical stability</p>	<p>Continue learning and practicing good vocal production</p> <p>Develop unity</p> <p>Learn more about BBS style</p> <p>Develop skill with dynamics</p> <p>Build a continuous wall of sound</p> <p>Balance</p> <p>Moving without interfering with the sound</p>
<p><b>B</b></p> <p>"us"</p> <p>(most)</p> <p>achievement</p>	<p><b>B- • 60-65 • 120-131</b> Promising, risk-taking, a little sizzle</p> <p><b>B • 66-73 • 132-147</b> Good, solid, wall of sound</p> <p><b>B+ • 74-79 • 148-159</b> Very good, commanding, strong</p>	<p>Good skills, but technique is overriding feature</p> <p>Inconsistent everything</p> <p>Director leads the action</p> <p>Synch problems</p> <p>Choreo-driven movement</p> <p>Fine-tuning errors rather than gross inaccuracies</p> <p>"Conscious competence"</p> <p>Good, but can be boring</p> <p>Unity, but some glitches</p> <p>Commanding singers</p>	<p>Performance centered on the audience</p> <p>Precision of all technical aspects</p> <p>Increased vocal skills, stamina</p> <p>Visual enhances musical plan</p> <p>Every singer, every song!</p>	<p>Continue practicing good vocal production</p> <p>Learn about and use vocal and visual energy</p> <p>Finesse and artistry</p> <p>Learn freedom from tension and technique</p>
<p><b>A</b></p> <p>"them"</p> <p>(all)</p> <p>mastery</p>	<p><b>A- • 80-85 • 160-171</b> Excellent, outstanding</p> <p><b>A • 86-93 • 172-187</b> Near perfect, phenomenal, no doubt!</p> <p><b>A+ • 94-100 • 188-200</b> Flawless, perfect</p>	<p>Commanding unit</p> <p>Consistent wall of sound</p> <p>Personal commitment to driving the sound</p> <p>Technique fades into the background</p> <p>Natural movement enhanced by planned moves</p> <p>Ringing chords</p> <p>Singer Driven</p> <p>Director provides cues, not pulling it out of them</p> <p>Tones free, open, rich, focused and fully resonant</p> <p>Sounds like a big quartet!</p>	<p>Total consistency</p> <p>Instant accuracy</p> <p>Totally authentic, natural</p> <p>Performance experienced rather than heard</p> <p>Combine technique and artistry with emotional abandon</p>	<p>Make vocal skills habitual and intrinsic, effortless</p> <p>Build a performance image that's congruent with the music and visual plan</p> <p>Sing as one voice, and don't make the audience thing about technique!</p>

# Synopsis of the Judging Categories

## Sound

### Unit Sound 70%

Vocal Skills (Posture, Breathing, Phonation, Resonation, Articulation)  
Accuracy (Notes, Intervals, Chords, Tuning/Intonation Section/Part Accuracy, Synchronization)  
Barbershop Blend (Tone & Vowel Production)  
Barbershop Balance

### Artistic Sound 30%

Energized Vocal Line  
Tone Flow  
Dynamic Flexibility  
Vocal Style

The focus of the SOUND category is the evaluation of unit sound in the barbershop style. Unit sound occurs when tones are properly produced, accurately tuned, blended and balanced. In barbershop terminology, this is referred to as "lock-and-ring." Although the Sound Judge does not evaluate vocal technique in and of itself, the Sound category does include evaluation of the basics of correct singing. Reasonable proficiency in the basics of correct singing must be achieved before the performer's efforts in any of the four categories will be totally successful. The task of the Sound Judge is to recognize, identify and evaluate the locked, ringing, unit sound inherent in the barbershop style.

## Expression

*(All combine to 100%)*

### Technical Elements

Vocal Skills	Synchronization/Unity
Vowels	Word Delivery
Diphthongs	Enunciation
Consonants	Musicality

### Artistic Interpretative Plan

Lyric Flow	Phrasing
Forward Motion	Embellishments
Dynamics	Tempo/Rhythmic Elements
Inflection	Energy
Finesse and Artistry	Characterization
Emotional Communication	

The focus of the EXPRESSION category is the evaluation of the performer's ability to communicate musically and lyrically. In vocal music, communication is strengthened by meaningful delivery of lyrics, musical diction, artistic phrasing, appropriate dynamics, energy, vocal characterization and a projection of sincere emotion. The Expression judge listens to a performance with her primary concentration directed to the evaluation of the degree of artistry achieved in the verbal execution and lyrical delivery of the song. Although many specific areas contribute to the success of an artistic performance, they are inseparable in that blended together the result is an artistically satisfying experience.

## Music

### Song & Arrangement 30%

Merit As BBS Material  
Form/Melody/Lyrics  
Arrangement (Harmonization, Voicing)

### Performance 70%

Vocal Skills  
Harmony Accuracy  
Barbershop Style  
(Tempo, Rhythm, Musical Unity, Phrasing, Dynamics, Musical Energy)  
Musical Artistry  
Suitability To Performer

The primary focus of the MUSIC category is the performance of a song arranged in four-part harmony, barbershop style. The Music Judge evaluates the musicality of the performance, the quality of the song and arrangement, and the adherence of the performing ensemble to the barbershop style. While any song can be arranged in the barbershop style, the extent to which a song adheres to the barbershop style is determined by characteristics unique to this form of music: chord structure, arrangement, the cone-shaped sound, untempered tuning, delivery and interpretation, which contribute to the "lock-and-ring" quality of the barbershop style.

## Showmanship

### Performance 70%

Vocal Skills	Poise And Command
Physical Expression	Posture
Choreography	Unity
Characterization	Audience Rapport
Energy	Chorus Director

### Preparation 30%

Entrance/Break/Exit  
Costume  
Makeup/Grooming  
Choreography  
Creativity

The focus of the SHOWMANSHIP category is the evaluation of the salesmanship of the musical product. This includes the elements of preparation, the visual plan and the creation and communication of onstage magic. With effective showmanship, the performer is able to enhance what the listener hears by reinforcing it with what the viewer sees, creating a total performance. The Showmanship Judge assesses the performer's ability to incorporate the intangible art of showmanship into a performance that creates and communicates magic.

<b>Category → Level ↓</b>	<b>Sound</b>	<b>Music</b>	<b>Expression</b>	<b>Showmanship</b>
<b>C+</b>  54-59	Work on VS apparent, but still in progress Consistent minor intonation & tuning problems Consistent minor synch problems affect overall unity Frequent errors in vowel prod & resonance match Balance inconsistent due to vocal limitations Energy sporadic, with lack of consistent support Fleeting glimpses vocal artistry	Good arrangement, presents challenges for performer Work on VS apparent, but still in progress Consistent minor tuning problems impact chord clarity Sense of musical unity apparent, but inconsistent Interpretive plan evident Interpretive plan needs to be internalized for unit delivery Mechanical delivery overrides attempts at artistry	Work on VS apparent Consistent problems with internal synch Vowels not aligned as a unit, consonants interfere Interpretive plan evident but not executed as a unit Sporadic energy with lack of consistent stamina Insufficient support for effective stylistic use Concern with technique overrides sincere involvement	Work on VS apparent Consistent problems with internal synch Vowels not aligned as a unit, consonants interfere Interpretive plan evident but not executed as a unit Sporadic energy with lack of consistent stamina Insufficient support for effective stylistic use Concern with technique overrides sincere involvement
<b>B</b>  66-73	VS strong but not habitual Solid sound overall, but chords not consistently locked Minor synch problems affect chord accuracy Most vowels matched & properly resonated Balance suffers at extreme ranges & dynamic levels Energy & support for vocal lines inconsistent Technique still evident & generally overrides artistry	Good song, well arranged VS strong, but not habitual Chord clarity inconsistent Minor synch problems affect chord alignment Good design/interpretive plan Focus on technique interferes with delivery of plan Some achievement in artistry & finesse evident	VS strong but not habitual Internal synch problems with consonants & diphthongs Most vowels well matched, some consonant interference Good interpretive plan, but inconsistent unit delivery Some glimpses of artistry & finesse Inconsistent unit involvement in message Technique still evident & generally overrides artistry	VS strong but not habitual Comfortable on stage & generally in command Need to improve unit delivery of visual plan Moments of identification with character & story Audience not completely drawn into performance Inconsistent energy level within group Good visual plan does not interfere with music
<b>A-</b>  80-85	High level of VS demonstrated Chords usually tuned into locked, ringing unit Vowels usually produced with matched resonance Balance usually maintained throughout performance Vocal lines usually seamless & fully energized Strong BBS style usually there Performance usually transcends technique	Strong song, arrangement shows some creativity High level of VS demonstrated Chords usually tuned into locked, musical unit Creative interpretive plan appropriate to song Strong execution of interp plan Strong BBS style usually there Performance usually transcends technique.	High level of VS demonstrated Vowels consistently matched as a unit Consistent vertical alignment of word elements Minor flaws in execution of strong interpretive plan Strong sense of unit delivery in BBS style High degree of involvement in character & message Performance usually transcends technique	High level of VS demonstrated Poised/confident stage persona Character & personality well-defined & projected Strong rapport with audience High degree of energy consistently demonstrated Visual plan works well to enhance musical plan Fleeting moments of technique evident

Judge \_\_\_\_\_

Contestant's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Contestant # \_\_\_\_\_

Contest: Region # \_\_\_\_\_ Chorus Region # \_\_\_\_\_ Quartet Date \_\_\_\_\_

Int'l Quartet Semifinals  Int'l Chorus Semifinals  Int'l Quartet Finals  Int'l Chorus Finals  Harmony Classic

## JUDGING CRITERIA

**UNIT SOUND (0-70 points)**

**VOCAL SKILLS**

- Posture
- Breathing
- Phonation
- Resonation
- Articulation

**ACCURACY**

- Notes
- Intervals
- Chords
- Tuning/Intonation
- Section/Part Accuracy
- Synchronization
- BARBERSHOP BLEND**
- Tone Production
- Vowel Production
- BARBERSHOP BALANCE**

**ARTISTIC SOUND (0-30 points)**

- Energized Vocal line
- Tone Flow
- Dynamic Flexibility
- Vocal Style

## PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

SONG #1 \_\_\_\_\_ SONG #2 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

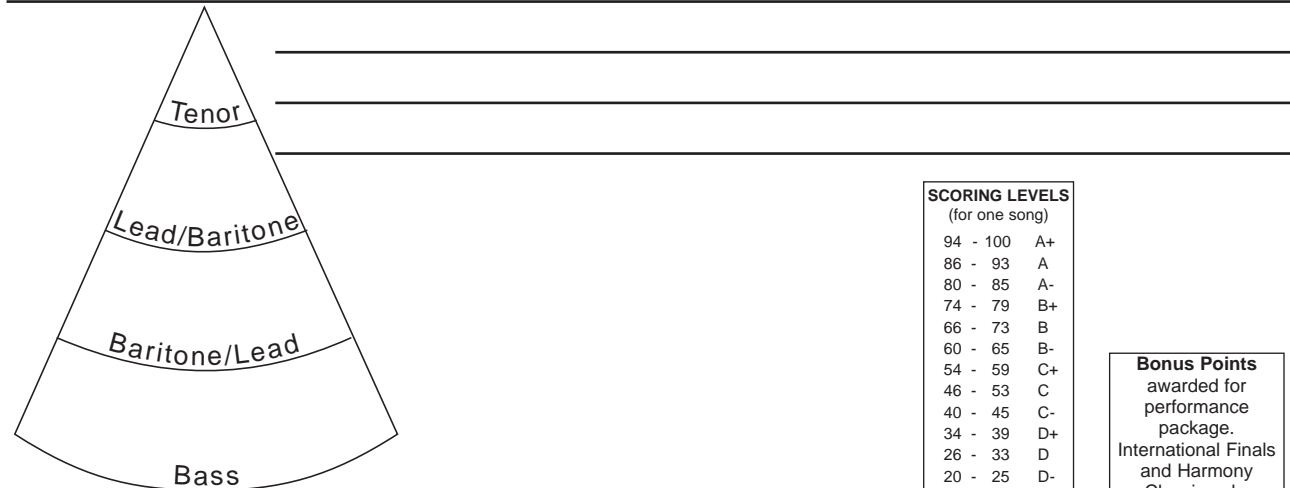
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score  
song 1

score  
song 2

**BONUS  
POINTS**

SCORING LEVELS (for one song)		
94 - 100	A+	
86 - 93	A	
80 - 85	A-	
74 - 79	B+	
66 - 73	B	
60 - 65	B-	
54 - 59	C+	
46 - 53	C	
40 - 45	C-	
34 - 39	D+	
26 - 33	D	
20 - 25	D-	
0 - 19	F	

**Bonus Points**  
awarded for  
performance  
package.  
International Finals  
and Harmony  
Classic only.

**TOTAL  
SCORE**

Judge \_\_\_\_\_





