Music Performance Assessments

STRING ORCHESTRA SIGHT-READING
Assessment Form

Updated 2026

Performance #: _____ MPA Date: _____ MPA Site: _____

School: _____Ensemble Name: _____Declared Grade Level: _____

SCORE				EVALUATION AREA	COMMENTS
SC. =	**RATING with DESCRIPTORS**			**SPECIFIC ASPECTS**	Use the space below and on the back for specific written input focusing on identifying and enhancing areas of strength as well as identifying and addressing areas of concern.
13-15	I	Superior	A+ Outstanding	**+** Area of strength; Noticeably strong within rating	
10-12	II	Excellent	A Advanced	**Blank** Commensurate to rating	
7-9	III	Good	B Proficient	**-** Area of concern; Noticeably needing attention within rating	
4-6	IV	Fair	C Basic		
1-3	V	Unprepared	U Below Basic		

SCORE	EVALUATION AREA	COMMENTS
	TONE	
	☐ Quality/Clarity/Characteristic Sound	
	☐ Use of the Bow	
	☐ Blend (within sections & the ensemble)	
	☐ Balance (between sections; within the harmony & texture)	
	INTONATION	
	☐ Consistency (throughout range of pitch & dynamics)	
	☐ Within & between sections	
	☐ Within the musical line (horizontal)	
	☐ Within the harmony & texture (vertical)	
	ACCURACY	
	☐ Time & Meter	
	☐ Notes & Rhythms	
	TECHNIQUE	
	☐ Right-hand/Bowing/Articulation (beginnings/slurs/releases)	
	☐ Left-hand (finger patterns/shifting)	
	☐ Consistency/Facility/Dexterity	
	☐ Unity (vertical alignment)	
	EXPRESSION	
	☐ Through Articulation	
	☐ Through Tempo	
	☐ Through Dynamics	
	☐ Through Phrasing (shaping of notes & lines)	
	☐ Through Texture (reflecting the changing roles of parts throughout)	
	☐ Unity of Idiomatic Style/Interpretation	
TOTAL	**FINAL RATING**	**TOTAL SCORE to FINAL RATING with DESCRIPTORS**
Add the five scores above	Convert the Total Score to the Final Rating according to the table on the right using the Roman numeral only. Do not include a '-' or a '+'	**63-75 I A+** (63-66 low 1) (67-71 I) (72-75 high 1) Superior/Outstanding **48-62 II A** (48-52 low II) (53-57 II) (58-62 high II) Excellent/Advanced **33-47 III B** (33-37 low III) (38-42 III) (43-47 high III) Good/Proficient **18-32 IV C** (18-22 low IV) (23-27 IV) (28-32 high IV) Fair/Basic **5-17 V U** Unprepared/Below Basic

OTHER FACTORS (+ , Blank or -) (Not scored; does not affect Final Rating)

☐	Conduct, Appearance & Posture
☐	Choice of Repertoire
☐	Conducting/Response to Conducting

_____
Adjudicator Signature

School:_____

Ensemble: _____

PMEA Music Performance Assessment

STRING ORCHESTRA SIGHT-READING

Assessment Form – BACK

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS BY PIECE	
PIECE #1	
PIECE #2	
OVERALL	

PMEA MPA Assessment Form: String Orchestra

ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTORS

Updated 2026

What Adjudicators are listening for within each Evaluation Area

EVALUATION AREA	ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTORS
Specific Aspects	

TONE	ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTORS
Quality/Clarity/Characteristic Sound	• Overall quality of the musical sound characteristic of the instruments Involved • Unified tone concepts • Consistency within sections and across the ensemble • Appropriate use of vibrato as an aspect of tone to beautify/color the sound • Flexibility throughout range of pitch and dynamics
Use of the Bow	• Posture, instrument, bow and hand positions impacting tone • Consistency of bow weight, angle, speed and placement; appropriate bowing distribution
Blend (within sections & the ensemble)	
Balance (between sections; within the harmony & texture)	• Balance within parts of chords • Balance within the texture reflecting the changing roles of parts throughout the piece (melody vs. accompaniment; upper voices vs. lower voices) • Balance within types of accompaniments (countermelody, rhythmic, sustained, bass line, etc.) • Balance adjustments reflecting moving parts, melodic interjections, melodic 'fills', etc.

INTONATION	ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTORS
Consistency	• Throughout the instrument ranges involved • Left-hand finger placement impacting intonation • Intervals and fingering relationships
Within & between sections	
Within the musical line (horizontal)	• Within the melodic line within the tonality
Within the harmony & texture (vertical)	• Within intervals and role within the chord structure and overall texture as evident within the range of texture density from thin to thick

ACCURACY	ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTORS
Time & Meter	• Steady beat within initial tempo and tempo changes • Clear sense of meter (duple vs. triple vs. quadruple, simple vs. compound, asymmetrical, mixed, etc.) • Meter changes
Notes & Rhythms	• Notes within the key and after key changes • Notes that aren't in the key signatures and applying written accidentals through the end of the measure • Throughout range of written notes • Length of notes and rests; execution of patterns and combinations, including syncopation and ties • Entrances (on beat and off beat) and releases

TECHNIQUE	ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTORS
Right-hand/Bowing/Articulation (beginnings/slurs/releases)	• Applying appropriate bowing techniques • Initiating notes; accurate slurring (ending slurs as written); not adding slurs where not written • Consistency and unity in the ensemble approach to articulations (including pizzicato, staccato/spiccato, etc.)
Left-hand (finger patterns/shifting)	• Consistency and fluency in performing left-hand demands throughout the range as written
Consistency/Facility/Dexterity	• Ease of execution of technical passages within and throughout the ensemble • Fluency, evenness and consistency throughout the instrument ranges within the repertoire
Unity (vertical alignment)	• Unity in coordinating right- and left-hand elements • Unity of rhythms and technical passages in being vertically aligned within and between sections, and as an ensemble.

EXPRESSION	ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTORS
Through Articulation	• Expressive use of articulation (•,>,^,-, sfz, etc.) within the style • Articulation as implied by and consistent with the style • Unity of ensemble approach to articulations within the given style
Through Tempo	• Expressive use and consistency of tempo and tempo alterations
Through Dynamics	• Expressive use of volume levels reflecting written dynamics and roles of parts within the texture throughout the piece • Expressive use and consistency within dynamic levels, changes and range
Through Phrasing (shaping of notes/lines)	• Expressive use of phrasing (breathing; playing 'musical sentences') • Expressive use of phrasing through shaping and contouring; inflection
Through Texture (reflecting the changing roles of parts throughout)	• Expressive reflecting of the changing roles of parts throughout the piece beyond balance, including bringing out counterlines, moving parts, melodic interjections, 'melodic fills' at the end of phrases, etc., within accompaniment roles.
Unity of Idiomatic Styles/Interpretation	• Unity in applying musically appropriate style and stylistic nuance throughout the ensemble; clear sense of 'ensemble' • Unity in applying historical performance practice standards • Interpreting the musical intent of the composer and/or arranger • Appropriate use of vibrato in expression