

MTVA Middle School Honors

AUDITION PROCEDURES

General information:

- € Auditions are recorded and cd's/cassettes are *brought with you to the auditions*.
- € Application and fees are mailed to David Spencer, MTVA Treasurer, 940 Caldwell Lane, Nashville, TN 37204
- € Send a copy of the audition application form to the middle school honors chairperson.
- € Applications must be postmarked by January 8th, 2008.

Preparing the audition tapes:

1. Place the school name, the voice part, and number of students auditioning on the outside of each tape;
2. Use one tape/cd per voice part – one for soprano, one for alto, etc.
3. Have the student speak the number that corresponds to the printed list sent on the audition application form (be sure no personal names/schools, etc. are included on the recording—it should be totally anonymous). **IMPORTANT:** Make sure the numbers on the audition tape correspond precisely to what is on the list.
4. The pitch used on the audition tape must be within a quarter-tone of A-440.
5. Do not electronically enhance the students' voices in any way.

Recording procedures:

1. Students will sing the first verse of "My Country, 'tis of Thee" a cappella. There may be no other sounds on the tape than the starting pitch, which should be played—not sung.
2. TEMPO - Sing the song no slower than m.m. 120.
3. KEYS – Students sing according to the part for which they are auditioning:
 - a. Soprano – Key of A, begin on A (second space, treble staff)
 - b. Alto – Key of D, begin on D (first space below treble staff)
 - c. Tenor – Key of B, begin on B (just below middle C)
 - d. Baritone – Key of D, begin on D (third line, bass staff)
4. Audition Selection –
 - a) Students will sing the entire selection, Agnus Dei (download music and MIDI files at mtva.org) accompanied by the 4-part recording on the MTVA audition cd.
 - b) The recording should BEGIN with the sounding of the pitches.

Example audition steps – your first ALTO student:

1. Press "record" on recording device.
2. Student says "Number One"
3. Give "D" (above middle C) pitch (piano, recorder, pitch pipe, etc. – this should be clearly heard on the recording.)
4. Student sings "My Country 'tis of Thee" a cappella.
5. Press "play" on MTVA audition cd (4-part recording track).
6. Student sings alto part along with the cd recording
7. Press "stop" on recording device.

Director's Notes:

1. Auditions will be judged by the same standards as all-state.
2. Cassettes/CD's must be of acceptable audio quality in order to be judged—please check your recording before you come!
3. If you have students who you know will not be able to attend, or who are not of honor choir caliber, please do not send their auditions*.
4. Directors are expected to “screen” their own auditions – if you have students who clearly will not be selected (major pitch problems, don't know the audition piece, etc.), please do not send their auditions*. This screening saves time at the actual audition.

audition should be omitted from the recording brought to the adjudication. Example – if student number 5 clearly will not be selected, then your recording should go from Student #4 to Student #6 - #5 should be left blank on the form (or clearly marked out). DO **NOT RE-NUMBER STUDENTS, AS THIS CAUSES PROBLEMS ON ADJUDICATION DAY!*

5. **ADJUDICATION DAY DUTIES** – all directors submitting students to audition must bring their audition cd's/cassettes and be prepared to assist with the adjudication on **Saturday, January 26th, 2008**, at Blackman Middle School. Assignments for the day will be made prior to this day.

Helpful Hints:

- Use the best recording equipment you can find. Make sure the student can be clearly heard, as well as the pitches, on the MTVA audition cd. It's a good idea to play back your recording on a different piece of equipment to make sure it is clear and plays at the correct speed.
- If you've never used “Audacity” – it is well worth the effort to check it out. It is a free download from www.audacity.com. With this program, you can record all of your student auditions individually, and then burn them onto a cd in the order needed. It also makes it easy to omit auditions that you don't want to include.

Variations from the outlined procedures could result in disqualification. Should you have any question(s), please feel free to ask—we're here to help you!

Mary Jackson
MTVA Middle School Honors Chairperson
(615) 867-6817 (home)
(615) 306-0262 (cell)
(615) 904-3860 (school-leave message)
jacksonm@rcs.k12.tn.us
marytjackson@comcast.net