



**Area + State**  
**Marching Band Contest**  
(5-judge system)

**Judge Orientation**

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## I. Introduction

Thank you for your willingness to serve as a UIL Area/State Marching Band Contest adjudicator. These events are paramount in the lives of students, directors, parents, and marching band fans across Texas. The success and credibility of UIL competitions are dependent on the quality of adjudication and the consistent application of the UIL Area/State adjudication system.

The following information is intended to help you prepare for this important judging assignment. Our current adjudication system has developed and evolved through many years of study and testing. It is designed to help maintain an emphasis on the fundamentals of music and visual performance while reinforcing the educational priorities that are valued by the majority of music educators in our state.

The purpose of this document is to guide you through a review of the key components of the UIL Marching Band adjudication system. Other materials in the packet include the Music Comment Sheet and Placemat, the Visual Comment Sheet and Placemat, and a glossary of terms.

You will be asked to refer to this material as you proceed with your judging assignment. Your goal is to become familiar with the glossary of terms and the descriptive phrases found in the Area/State Comment Sheets and Placemats. The contest day will move quickly, and there is rarely time to reference this information in detail as the competition unfolds. Therefore, it is imperative that you are able to mentally recall this criteria as you evaluate each band's performance.

## II. Philosophy of Adjudication

*“The achievement level as displayed by the performers at a given contest shall be the sole basis for the evaluation. Achievement results from the simultaneous considerations of content (or responsibilities) and the extent to which the students perform them. Each judge must simultaneously consider both the WHAT and the HOW. Each band can make a wide variety of choices. The system encourages and rewards those bands that provide the public with a sense of engagement and entertainment. Additionally, the scoring system encourages and rewards innovation and artistry in performance and design. It also rewards a carefully balanced variety of all the important facets of design and performance. The UIL scoring system provides tools for teaching and positive criticism with the goal of improving each and every program in Texas. Proper use of the scoring system will provide educational value for all. It will allow each band to project its own identity as it chooses. All student-performers are worthy of recognition and dignity for their efforts.”*

Each sheet of the tiered UIL system is an interaction with both the directors (WHAT) and the student-performers (HOW). The performance of the students is always of critical importance, and all programs begin with an equal opportunity for success. Strengths and weaknesses are measured from the start of the program through to its conclusion. Any summary of the program should reflect both the strengths and weaknesses over the full length of the presentation. Listening and watching the entire show must offer a seamless look at the relationship between the music and the visual. The directors/designers select and create the program, and the staff/student leaders bring training to the performers. Our major objective is to understand that the performers work not only to deliver a

performance of compelling programming to the audience, but also to bring precision to the performance.

### **What and How**

Judges must focus on two areas: the WHAT and the HOW. Ideally, a judge would comment on WHAT and follow that comment with an assessment of HOW it is achieved. We should avoid spending so much time talking about the “HOW” that the directors think we totally missed what was being asked of the performers. And we should avoid spending too much time talking about the “WHAT” that we fail to assess the achievement and training of the students. The intent of the descriptors on the front is to provide an overview. This intent continues on the back, where there are several guiding questions. Judges should refer to (and reflect on) as many of these questions as possible during the adjudication process. One or more of the bullet points/questions may well become more important, but aim to be balanced and thorough.



## **III. Comment Sheets**

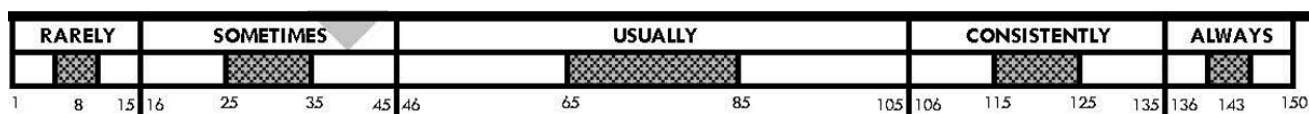
### **a. General Instructions**

Before you begin, please view the newly-drafted comment sheets beginning on page 12 of this document. There are two sheets for the UIL Area round for all classifications, as well as for the UIL State Marching Band Contest: a music sheet (adjudicated by three judges) and a visual sheet (adjudicated by two judges). The sheets are organized into captions so that you can address each element of a band’s music and visual performance relevant to a successful performance at this event.

In addition, there is a linear scale located at the bottom of each subcaption box to help you accurately and efficiently determine a numerical score for each element. The linear scale gives you two points of reference: the first being a sequence of the total available points for the subcaption divided into five boxes, with each box divided into thirds (top, middle, bottom); and a list of scoring-specific terminology to help guide your analysis of and commentary for each ensemble.



Your sole reference for determining the appropriate subcaption score is the Area/State placemat found starting on page 13. The descriptive phrases seen here have been carefully crafted to ensure clear expectations of what qualities are performed “consistently”, “usually”, or “rarely”. The score earned by each ensemble shall reflect your answer to each of these concise questions found on the placemat. In other words, if you wish to place an ensemble in the “consistent” range of performance, you must conclude that the questions asked on the placemat are best answered with the word “consistently”. An example can be seen below:



**CONTENT** - To what degree does the repertoire for the ensemble demonstrate:

- ▶ effective utilization of all performers on the field?
- ▶ a clear musical reinforcement of the visual content?
- ▶ suitable musical content for the performers?
- ▶ musical repertoire performed while contributing to the visual content?
- ▶ content that challenges the performers?
- ▶ a sense of flow and pacing which is logical and artistic?

Once you determine the box in which a group belongs based on the use of scoring-specific language in your recorded commentary, you must next determine which “third” of the box best fits the ensemble for the particular subcaption:

#### **The Lower Third – Emergence**

This box is a bridge between the next-lower box. The band will display most of the components within the description of the box area; however, there may be some components that belong to the lower box. As a judge, you may be unclear about whether the band is actually in the next-lower box or not as you begin your evaluation.

#### **The Middle Third – Realization**

The band typically displays all of the attributes of the box itself. To be in the middle third, the band displays the components but without any distinction that might lead in the direction of the next higher or lower box.

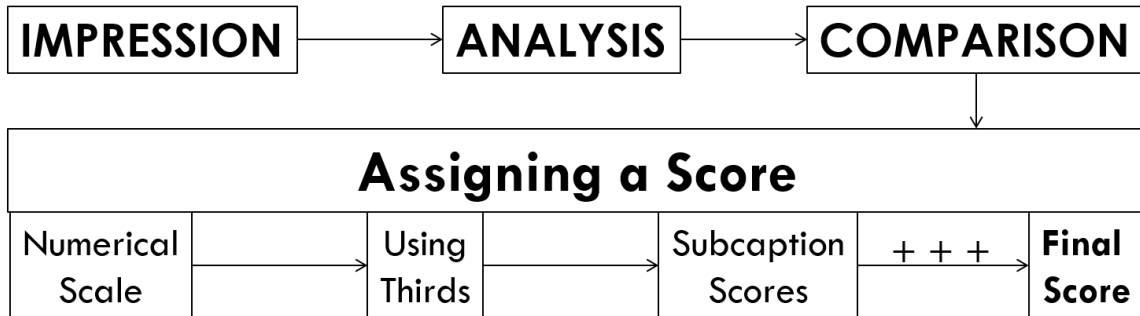
#### **The Upper Third – Fulfillment**

Some of the components are displayed with a distinction that leads towards the next-higher box. As a band displays more of the components that seem to be in the next higher level, the band moves closer to the numerical change of boxes.

Your goal is to assign a number that reflects your appraisal of each element as it appears on the sheet. In doing so, it is important to use each descriptor accurately, completely, and, most importantly,

independently. You should avoid the practice of assigning a bottom-line score and then adjusting the individual subcaption scores to reflect it. If you utilize the linear scale consistently and accurately within each subcaption, the bottom line total will reflect your analysis of the ensemble's performance.

At the conclusion of the competition in a given conference, these total scores will be used to assign each band a ranking. A computer program will be used to determine each judge's rankings. All ranks will count toward the band's total. The high and low will not be dropped. The judging cycle should progress as follows:

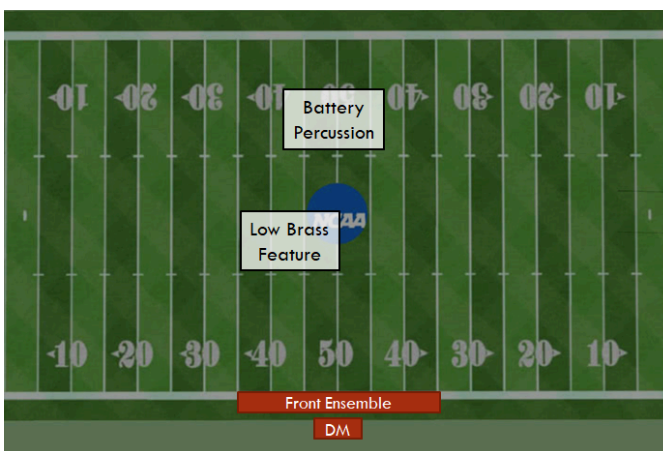


### Environmental Challenges

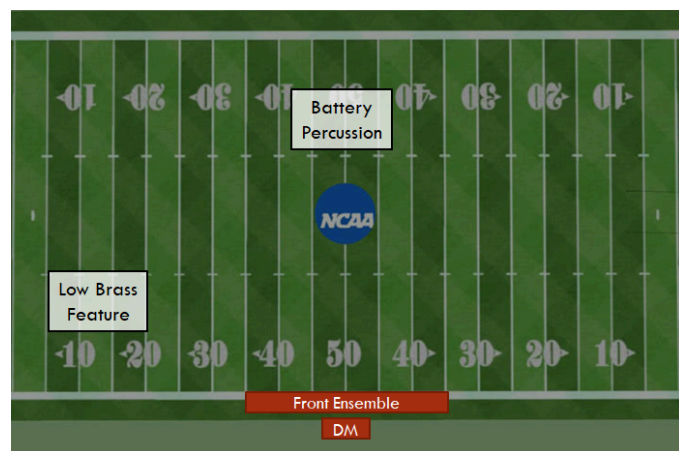
Judges should carefully consider "environmental challenges" as part of our commentary to the ensembles. When a moment falters, aim to go beyond the "what" and the "how", but also utilize a teacher-mindset to ascertain the "why". Did the brass enter late because of a lack of training, or are they staged in a challenging place on the field in relation to the battery? And by the same, if the brass achieve a cold-start from the endzone perfectly in-time with the battery on the 50 yard line, our commentary should acknowledge the risk the ensemble took and laud their successful performance of that daring choice.

Judges should consider proximity and distance. We know that separation can increase the challenges faced by the performers. Being mindful of all of the circumstances that surround an individual on the field and his/her environmental challenges ought to be a part of our awareness. As well, consideration should be given to the written musical challenges and compositional demands expected of the performers in the ensemble. An awareness and understanding of the environmental challenges created by staging, grouping, and/or individual distances between performers are all part of the judge's responsibility.

#### Low Level of Environmental Challenge

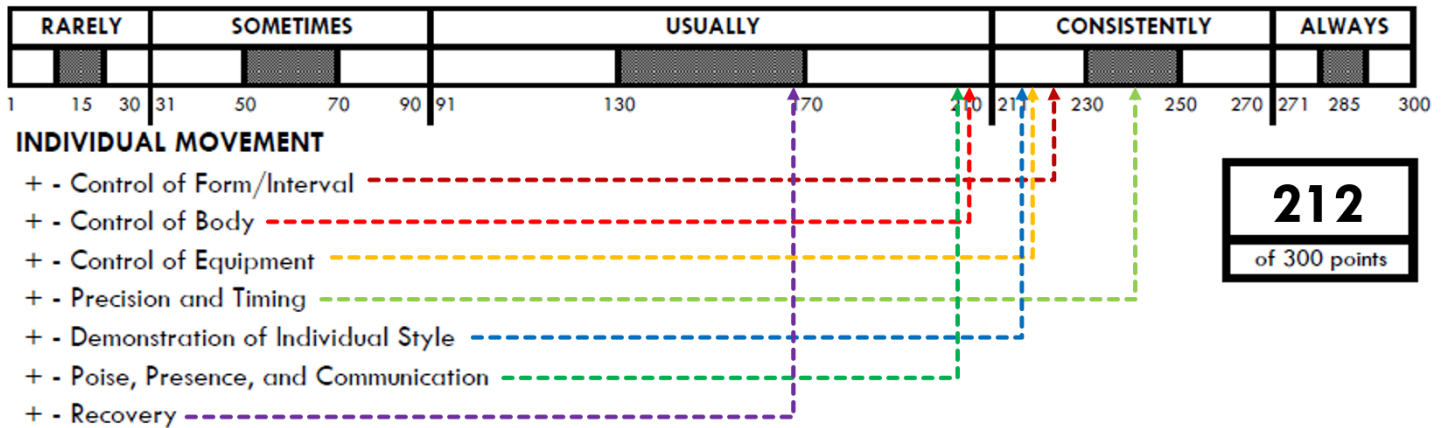


#### High Level of Environmental Challenge



## Using Thirds - A Detailed Description

A more-specific way to work with the numerical scale and thirds is to imagine drawing an arrow from each descriptor to its place on the number line while using scoring-specific language. For instance, the group profiled in the grid below, with regard to individual movement, heard the following statements on the judge's recording.



- **Control of Form/Interval (bottom of box 4)**
  - “As the woodwinds setup these large ranks and files over on side two, the performers consistently halt in well-defined cover-downs with a few noted exceptions.”
- **Control of Body (top of box 3)**
  - “During sets involving larger step sizes, the trumpets usually maintain strong body lines, but it is not yet consistent throughout the entire section.”
- **Control of Equipment (bottom of box 4)**
  - “The individual performers in the guard consistently handle the flag work during the change of speed on the accelerando, with a few minor flaws.”
- **Precision and Timing (middle of box 4)**
  - “The low brass consistently move with their feet in time, and their changes of direction are accurate and well-taught. Bravo!”
- **Demonstration of Individual Style (bottom of box 4)**
  - “In watching the percussion, their clarity of motion during the crab step taking them across the 50 from side 2 back to side 1 is fairly consistent, though the tenors struggle with foot placement.”
- **Poise, Presence, and Communication (top of box 3)**
  - “During the sax feature, the students usually maintain strong posture and communication as they perform choreography on the props, but several are off-balance and stumbling as they transition.”
- **Recovery (middle of box 3)**
  - “The performers usually recover from drill issues with an appropriate degree of accuracy.”

With a set of comments like those above, a band director who listens to the recording prior to seeing the caption score should assume that the students earned a placement somewhere on the box 3/box 4 line, with a mix of language centered on “consistently” and “usually” - likely in the range of 200-220 out of 300.

## Scoring-Specific Language

As you embark on a long day of judging, the five box descriptors of “rarely”, “sometimes”, “usually”, “consistently”, and “always” can become repetitious. Here are some suggested synonyms you can use in place of these terms to ensure your commentary remains scoring-specific and varied:

<b>BOX 1 - RARELY</b>	<b>BOX 2 - SOMETIMES</b>	<b>BOX 3 - USUALLY</b>	<b>BOX 4 - CONSISTENTLY</b>	<b>BOX 5 - ALWAYS</b>
Deficient	Ambiguous	Acceptable	Assured	Amazing
Hardly Ever	Commonplace	Adequate	Confident	At all times
Imperfect	Concerned	Commonly	Constantly	Breathtaking
Incomplete	Confusing	Decent	Delighting	Brilliant
Inferior	Doubtful	Enjoyable	Dependable	Enchanting
Infrequently	Indefinite	Fair	Discerning	Exceptional
Lacking	Indistinct	Generally	Effective	Exemplary
Never	Insecure	Intermittent	Favorable	Extremely Skillful
None	Plain	Occasionally	Frequently	Fantastic
Not Often	Problematic	Ordinarily	Fulfilling	Incomparable
Partial	Questionable	Passable	Gratifying	Incredible
Poor	Uncertain	Pleasing	Greater	Magnificent
Seldom	Unclear	Safe	Mostly	Marvelous
Substandard	Undefined	Satisfactory	Positive	Outstanding
Unacceptable	Unsure	Standard	Prime	Permanently
Unfinished	Vague	Sufficient	Refined	Superlative
Unsatisfactory	Somewhat	Typically	Reliably	Unbelievable
	Somewhat Uniform	Unequal	Rewarding	Unparalleled
			Satisfying	Unrivaled
			Sophisticated	Very Accomplished
			Steady	
			Tasteful	
			Uniform	
			Worthy	



## **b. Music Comment Sheet**

The Music sheet asks you to consider **Ensemble Performance** (250 points), **Brass Performance** (200 points), **Woodwind Performance** (200 points), **Percussion Performance** (200 points), and **Content** (150 points). The Woodwind, Brass and Percussion subcaptions contain the descriptors Tone Quality, Intonation (Precision and Timing for Percussion), Technique and Accuracy, and Blend and Balance. You will want to speak specifically to these elements independently and assign an appropriate score for each. Under these subcaptions, each section must be assessed independently based on their presence in the overall presentation.

The **Ensemble Performance** subcaption (250 points) should reflect the highest standards of musical performance that are the hallmark of Texas high school band programs on the marching field and the concert stage. Judges should focus on the areas of Phrasing and Artistic Expression; Blend and Balance; Precision and Timing; Dynamic Contrast; and Style and Articulation with respect to the entire ensemble. Lastly, a focus on the Effective Use of Electronics (when present) should be addressed here.

The **Content** subcaption (150 points) allows you to reference the effective utilization of all performers on the field; a clear musical reinforcement of the visual content; the suitability of musical content for the performers; the programming of musical repertoire performed while contributing to the visual content; content that challenges the performers; and a sense of flow and pacing which is logical and artistic.

## **c. Visual Comment Sheet**

In reviewing the Visual Comment Sheet, the first two captions are entitled **Individual Movement** (300 points) and **Ensemble Movement** (400 points). These subcaptions represent the fundamental visual expectations that are of importance for this event. Regardless of the marching style or other visual components, a band is expected to perform at a high level in these fundamental areas if it is to be successful.

In the third subcaption entitled **Content** (300 points), you are asked to assess the effective utilization of all performers on the field; the appropriate visual reinforcement of the musical content; the suitability of the visual content for the performers; the frequency and demand of movement; and the logical and artistic construction of the show with regard to flow and pacing. The Content subcaption offers you the opportunity to react to a broad spectrum of marching styles and design choices. It allows a diverse set of bands to be successful, provided they show evidence of training at both the Individual and Ensemble levels.

## IV. CONTEST DAY EXPECTATIONS

On the day of the contest, you will be asked to take a few minutes to review these definitions independently or with your judging colleagues so that the panel addresses them from a shared perspective that is consistent in language and concept. This will be a valuable exercise as you begin your judging day.

### a. Objectives

When the contest begins, your objectives are as follows:

- 1) Offer **recorded commentary** that is lucid, positive, and instructional.
- 2) Prepare a **complete adjudication sheet** that uses the “+” and “-” indicators to give a clear profile of each band’s performance.
- 3) Provide a **brief written summary** under each subcaption.
- 4) Formulate a **subcaption score** that reflects your appraisal of the band’s performance through the cycle of Impression-Analysis-Comparison aligning with bands in the same classification.
- 5) **Add your subcaption scores** to arrive at your total out of 1,000 points.
- 6) Be sure to **track your total** for each band on the provided **tote sheet** (page 21) to ensure you have no bottom-line ties and manage your numbers effectively. Links to digital and paper versions are available at the end of this document.

### b. Staying Within Your Caption

Throughout the judging day, it is essential that you strive to stay within your caption. Visual judges should focus on visual content and achievement. Music judges should speak to and evaluate the audible elements of a band’s performance. It is equally important that you avoid allowing your comments and/or scores to “bleed” from one caption to another. Nothing exists in isolation: the visual can influence the music (and vice-versa), but remember your primary focus for scoring and commentary.

### c. Setting Tolerances and Avoiding Outliers

The contest staff will assist you in your individual judging process and numbers management by carefully watching bottom-line totals as they come to the tabulator. If you are an outlier with your fellow judges, a contest staff member will speak with you on a break and will notify you by using the following language:

*“In reviewing your bottom-line total for XYZ high school, I wanted you to know that your score is a significant outlier from that of your colleagues. I am not asking you to change your score, but to ensure that you feel confident in the score earned by the ensemble, and that all of your subcaption profiles still feel valid after judging a few additional performances.”*



UNIVERSITY INTERSCHOLASTIC LEAGUE  
**AREA/STATE MARCHING BAND CONTEST**  
**MUSIC ADJUDICATION SHEET**

School \_\_\_\_\_ Conference \_\_\_\_\_ Region \_\_\_\_\_ Area \_\_\_\_\_

Director \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Performers \_\_\_\_\_ Contest Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_



**ENSEMBLE PERFORMANCE**

- + - Phrasing and Artistic Expression
- + - Blend and Balance
- + - Precision and Timing
- + - Dynamic Contrast
- + - Style and Articulation
- + - Effective Use of Electronics (when present)

of 250 points
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**WOODWIND PERFORMANCE**

- + - Tone Quality
- + - Intonation
- + - Technique and Accuracy
- + - Blend and Balance

of 200 points
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**BRASS PERFORMANCE**

- + - Tone Quality
- + - Intonation
- + - Technique and Accuracy
- + - Blend and Balance

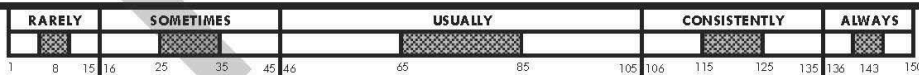
of 200 points
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**PERCUSSION PERFORMANCE**

- + - Quality
- + - Precision and Timing
- + - Technique and Accuracy
- + - Blend and Balance

of 200 points
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**CONTENT**

- + - Coordination and Effective Use of All Performing Elements
- + - Effective Musical Reinforcement of the Visual
- + - Suitability of Musical Content
- + - Frequency/Demand of Movement While Playing
- + - Content with Respect to Challenge
- + - Continuity and Flow/Pacing

of 150 points
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Signature of Adjudicator \_\_\_\_\_

of 1,000 points
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# AREA/STATE MARCHING BAND CONTEST MUSIC ADJUDICATION SHEET

	RARELY	SOMETIMES	USUALLY	CONSISTENTLY	ALWAYS
1	13	25 26 43 60 75 76	109 142	175 176 193 210 225	226 238 250

- ENSEMBLE PERFORMANCE** - To what degree do the performers demonstrate:
- phrasing and artistic expression that is of the highest musical value?
  - blend and balance that is clear and appropriate throughout the presentation?
  - a refined sense of rhythmic precision and timing?
  - a purposeful approach to dynamic contrast throughout the sections?
  - an approach to style and articulation that is clear and consistent through all instrument voices?
  - an effective performance of electronic content where appropriate?

	RARELY	SOMETIMES	USUALLY	CONSISTENTLY	ALWAYS
1	10	20 21 34 47 60 61	88 115	140 141 154 167 180	181 190 200

- WOODWIND PERFORMANCE** - To what degree do the performers demonstrate:
- appropriate, characteristic tone quality?
  - proper intonation across multiple ranges and dynamic levels?
  - technique and rhythmic accuracy that is refined to the highest levels?
  - blend and balance that is clear and appropriate throughout the presentation?

	RARELY	SOMETIMES	USUALLY	CONSISTENTLY	ALWAYS
1	10	20 21 34 47 60 61	88 115	140 141 154 167 180	181 190 200

- BRASS PERFORMANCE** - To what degree do the performers demonstrate:
- appropriate, characteristic tone quality?
  - proper intonation across multiple ranges and dynamic levels?
  - technique and rhythmic accuracy that is refined to the highest levels?
  - blend and balance that is clear and appropriate throughout the presentation?

	RARELY	SOMETIMES	USUALLY	CONSISTENTLY	ALWAYS
1	10	20 21 34 47 60 61	88 115	140 141 154 167 180	181 190 200

- PERCUSSION PERFORMANCE** - To what degree do the performers demonstrate:
- appropriate, characteristic quality of sound?
  - a refined sense of rhythmic precision and timing?
  - technique and rhythmic accuracy that is refined to the highest levels?
  - blend and balance that is clear and appropriate throughout the presentation?

	RARELY	SOMETIMES	USUALLY	CONSISTENTLY	ALWAYS
1	8	15 16 25 35 45 46	65 85	105 106 115 125 135	136 143 150

- CONTENT** - To what degree does the repertoire for the ensemble demonstrate:
- effective utilization of all performers on the field?
  - a clear musical reinforcement of the visual content?
  - suitable musical content for the performers?
  - musical repertoire performed while contributing to the visual content?
  - content that challenges the performers?
  - a sense of flow and pacing which is logical and artistic?

## **GLOSSARY OF MUSIC TERMS**

### **ENSEMBLE PERFORMANCE**

**+ - Phrasing and Artistic Expression** – performing appropriate musical phrases with a sense of musicality and artistry of line. Judges should refer to expressive qualities demonstrated by the ensemble to ensure that the length, breadth, and depth of phrase is well-suited for the content.

**+ - Blend and Balance** – the proportion of melodic content to supporting content as evidenced by the performers (including amplified soundscapes when present), ensuring that the combination of sounds is musically-appropriate for the genre. As well, that the ensemble, through their utilization of characteristic tone qualities on all instruments, is able to mix and unite voices resulting in a sound which is stylistically accurate and sonorous.

**+ - Precision and Timing** – the clarity with regard to pulse and tempo through which the student-performers execute the show content; common references in this area can include “subdivision”, “accuracy”, and “vertical alignment”.

**+ - Dynamic Contrast** – the ensemble’s tasteful use of crescendos, decrescendos, forte-pianos, and other changes of volume to enhance the notes and rhythms of the musical score. Dynamic contrast ensures that a phrase has inherent direction and artistic merit.

**+ - Style and Articulation** – the treatment of the beginnings and ends of notes and the space in between so as to best communicate the intent of the musical score inside of a particular genre or style. Common references can include “staccato”, “legato”, “marcato”, and “tenuto”.

**+ - Effective Use of Electronics (when present)** – the seamless use of electronic content to highlight or enhance the acoustic performance of the woodwind, brass, and percussion sections. This descriptor focuses mainly on balance and blend, but may also address the fidelity, creative use, and appropriateness of the chosen content.

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### **WOODWIND/BRASS PERFORMANCE (descriptors are the same for both)**

**+ - Tone Quality** – the use of correct and appropriate individual and section tone qualities within the woodwind and brass voices is the hallmark of quality Texas marching bands. Judges should carefully listen to and analyze the full ensemble sound, the woodwind and brass choir sounds, and the individual student-performer sounds within the section to offer a high level of commentary.

**+ - Intonation** – while often synonymous with Tone Quality, the ability of the performers to play in-tune should be addressed with respect to content, understanding that demands on the highest and lowest ends of the tessitura and/or challenging key centers and dynamic levels may result in portions of the show that require additional attention.

**+ - Technique and Accuracy** – the technical facility of the woodwind and brass performers with respect to the challenge presented by their assigned content; as well, the precision and vertical alignment on display during both lyrical and technical passages for the performers.

+ - **Blend and Balance** – the proportion of sounds inside of both the woodwind and brass choirs as evidenced by the performers, ensuring that the combination of sounds is musically-appropriate for the genre. Also, that the ensemble, through their utilization of characteristic tone qualities on all instruments, is able to mix and unite voices resulting in a sound which balances all individual tone qualities into a satisfying whole.

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## **PERCUSSION PERFORMANCE (descriptors are similar to Woodwind and Brass)**

+ - **Quality** – the use of correct and appropriate individual and section tone qualities within the battery and front ensemble (when present) is the hallmark of quality Texas marching bands. Judges should carefully listen to and analyze the full ensemble sound, the battery and front ensemble sounds, the snare, tenor, and bass drum sounds (for example), and the individual student sounds within the percussion section to offer a high level of commentary in the area of Quality. As well, a discussion regarding the fidelity of amplified percussion content (when present) may also be included here.

+ - **Precision and Timing** – the clarity through which the student-performers execute the content scored for the percussion section; common references in this area can include “subdivision”, “accuracy”, and “vertical alignment”.

+ - **Technique and Accuracy** – the technical facility of the percussion performers with respect to the challenge presented by their assigned content; as well, the precision on display during both lyrical and technical passages for the percussion program.

+ - **Blend and Balance** – the proportion of sounds inside of both the battery and front ensemble sections (when present) as evidenced by the performers, ensuring that the combination of sounds is musically-appropriate for the genre. Also, that the ensemble, through their utilization of characteristic sounds on all instruments, is able to mix and unite voices resulting in a sound which is stylistically accurate and sonorous. Finally, judges should address the use of amplified percussion elements with regard to clarity and fidelity inside of the overall ensemble balance.

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## **CONTENT**

+ - **Coordination and Effective Use of All Performing Elements** – the forethought invested in the curriculum for the marching ensemble’s musical score for woodwinds, brass, and percussion. Exemplary coordination ensures that the most important aspects of the musical score are managed and balanced in such a way so as to ensure the student-performer’s success, and that the musical content leads to intentional pathways for performers, encouraging growth and development. The design should prioritize the utilization of every musical performer on the field – from the woodwinds, to the brass, to the battery and front ensemble (when present) – this descriptor asks if everyone is actively taking part in contributing to the overall musical “whole” across the full breadth and depth of the show.

+ - **Effective Musical Reinforcement of the Visual** – the design concept centered around the “audio” matching the “video”. This is evidenced by a clear sense of visual musicality, whereby the musical score for the woodwind, brass, and percussion sections matches the drill and choreography viewed by the audience. Common areas of focus here can discuss visual design concepts like “mass”, “color”, “symmetry”, and “organization” and how it is aurally represented by the musical content.

+ - **Suitability of Musical Content** – the element that used to be referred to as “demand of music”; this descriptor references the notes, rhythms, and musical elements assigned to the performers and how those phrases are achievable, appropriate, and artistic within the structure of the overall show.

+ - **Frequency/Demand of Movement While Playing** – the ability of a group to function as an ensemble who plays and marches at the same time. In the past, judges would address “standstill time”. Ensembles in Texas are expected to “march-and-play”, not “march-then-play”.

+ - **Content with Respect to Challenge** – the musical content assigned to the performers contains an inherent level of challenge, especially when considering the visual assignments tasked in collaboration. This descriptor allows an adjudicator to comment on the level of rigor asked of the performers derived from the content chosen by their directors.

+ - **Continuity and Flow/Pacing** – assigning content that flows logically from one moment to the next and shows a sense of variety. A show that is well-designed musically is similar to a work for concert band that showcases multiple sections performing aspects of a theme (or a variety of themes) in a multitude of ways, and that the transitions from moment-to-moment feel purposeful, engaging, and well-crafted. Discussions in this area can center on “development”, “climax”, and “resolution”.

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### **Levels of Listening for Woodwind and Brass Judges**

**TUTTI** - the full woodwind section in relation to the brass, percussion, and electronics (when present), for example; or the full brass section in relation to the woodwinds, percussion, and electronics (when present).

**SOLI** - the full woodwind section in relation to itself - flutes to clarinets and clarinets to saxes - this can principally be evaluated at woodwind-feature moments; or the full brass section in relation to itself - trumpets to trombones and trombones to tubas.

**SOLI** - a small ensemble of woodwind and/or brass performers - a sax quartet, for example - who performs either amplified or acoustically; it is vitally important that we listen not only for tone quality, intonation, and timing, but also for musicality, phrasing, nuance, fidelity, and balance (internal to the quartet and external to the accompaniment). See the NOTE below.

**SOLO** - a solo woodwind or brass performer - a flugelhorn, for example - who performs either amplified or acoustically; it is vitally important that we listen not only for tone quality, intonation, and timing, but also for musicality, phrasing, nuance, fidelity, and balance. See the NOTE below.

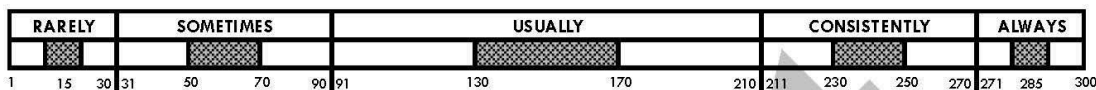
**NOTE:** *At any level of listening, if the accompanimental content overshadows the melody, we should address not only the issues of balance and blend, but also the lack of fidelity and our inability to discern nuance, phrasing, and musicality within the featured voice. It is not enough to simply “hear a flugelhorn”; we must hear expression and nuance as well. Just as the full-ensemble moments should be of the highest caliber based on the State of Texas’ standards, the chamber ensembles and soloists a program chooses to feature should also be of the highest musical level, offering an “All-State”-level interpretation of the chosen repertoire.*



# AREA/STATE MARCHING BAND CONTEST VISUAL ADJUDICATION SHEET

School \_\_\_\_\_ Conference \_\_\_\_\_ Region \_\_\_\_\_ Area \_\_\_\_\_

Director \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Performers \_\_\_\_\_ Contest Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_



**INDIVIDUAL MOVEMENT**

- + - Control of Form/Interval
- + - Control of Body
- + - Control of Equipment
- + - Precision and Timing
- + - Demonstration of Individual Style
- + - Poise, Presence, and Communication
- + - Recovery

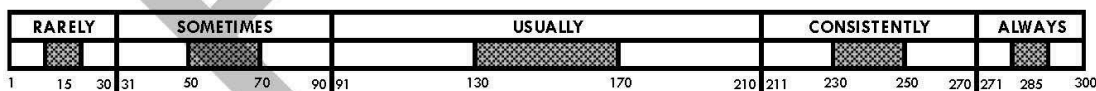
of 300 points
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**ENSEMBLE MOVEMENT**

- + - Achievement of Form/Interval
- + - Precision and Timing
- + - Uniformity of Style
- + - Professionalism
- + - Recovery

of 400 points
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**CONTENT**

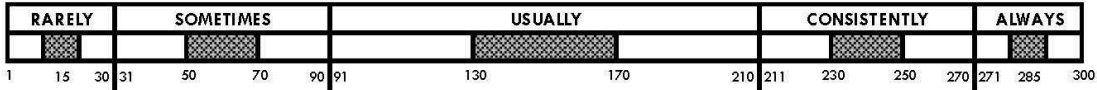
- + - Effective Use of All Performing Elements
- + - Effective Visual Reinforcement of Music
- + - Suitability of Visual Content
- + - Frequency/Demand of Movement While Playing
- + - Continuity and Flow/Pacing
- + - Coordination and Staging

of 300 points
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Signature of Adjudicator \_\_\_\_\_

of 1,000 points
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# AREA/STATE MARCHING BAND CONTEST VISUAL ADJUDICATION SHEET



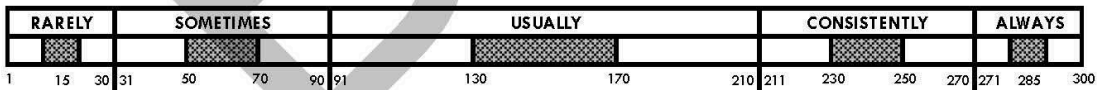
**INDIVIDUAL MOVEMENT** - To what degree do the performers demonstrate:

- a refined sense of achievement with regard to form control and intervallic relationships?
- depth of training resulting in a clear, uniform approach to control of body and equipment?
- a refined sense of rhythmic precision and timing with regard to movement?
- a clearly-communicated style of motion from performer-to-performer?
- a sense of poise, presence, and communication throughout the performance?
- a successful effort to recover from errors when present?



**ENSEMBLE MOVEMENT** - To what degree do the performers demonstrate:

- a refined sense of achievement with regard to form control and intervallic relationships?
- precision with regard to the timing of visual events?
- depth of training resulting in a clear, uniform approach to style?
- professionalism in all aspects of the presentation?
- a successful effort to recover from errors when present?



**CONTENT** - To what degree does the content for the ensemble demonstrate:

- effective utilization of all performers on the field?
- appropriate visual reinforcement of the musical content?
- suitable visual content for the performers?
- appropriate frequency and demand of movement?
- a sense of flow and pacing which is logical and artistic?
- coordination of all visual elements which highlights the artistic expression of the ensemble?

## GLOSSARY OF VISUAL TERMS

### INDIVIDUAL MOVEMENT

+ - **Control of Form/Interval** – the ability of student-performers to individually control the interval between themselves and the performers around them. This serves as strong evidence of training and engaged learning. Common discussions should center on individual efforts made inside of linear shapes (ranks and files) as well as curve-linear forms.

+ - **Control of Body** – the ability of students to manage their body while moving around the field; judges can refer to “posture”, “body line”, “shape”, and “shoulders”. Be certain to address the Control of Body within the woodwind, brass, percussion, and guard sections.

+ - **Control of Equipment** – the ability of students to manage their equipment (wind instruments, percussion instruments, flags, rifles, sabres, and props) in a manner that is appropriate and artistic for the chosen style. Judges can refer to “instrument carriage”, “horns up/down”, and “flag/rifle technique”. For additional resources regarding Color Guard, please see page 21.

+ - **Precision and Timing** – the clarity with regard to timing through which the individual student-performers march and/or dance throughout the show; common references in this area can include “foot timing”, “accuracy”, and “in-step/out-of-step”.

+ - **Demonstration of Individual Style** – the understanding demonstrated by the student-performers of the chosen style for the ensemble. There is no specific marching style for bands in Texas; rather, this descriptor focuses on the uniformity and clarity of the chosen style (how alike the performers march). Common references can include discussions of leg shape, arm shape, body line, and posture.

+ - **Poise, Presence, and Communication** – while not adjudicated on the Region sheet, at Area/State, student-performers are assessed on the level of professionalism displayed through their performance. Common references can include an ability to professionally recover from errors, an ability to communicate a character visually up to the press box, and an ability to connect with the audience on an intellectual or emotional level.

+ - **Recovery** – a student’s ability to recover from a visual error made on the field. A quality recovery can generally be achieved quickly without compromising posture or clear visual technique.

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### ENSEMBLE MOVEMENT

+ - **Achievement of Form/Interval** – the ability of the ensemble to manage spacing and clarity of the overall form while stationary and on-the-move. This serves as strong evidence of training and engaged learning. Common discussions here can center on linear shapes (ranks and files) as well as curve-linear forms.

+ - **Precision and Timing** - the clarity with regard to timing through which the full ensemble, viewed as a whole, marches and/or dances throughout the show; common references in this area can include “foot phase”, “pulse accuracy”, and “in-step/out-of-step”.

+ - **Uniformity of Style** – the understanding demonstrated by the full ensemble of the chosen style. There is no specific marching style for bands in Texas; rather, this descriptor focuses on the uniformity and clarity of the chosen style (how alike the whole ensemble marches and/or dances).

+ - **Professionalism** – while not adjudicated on the Region sheet, at Area/State, ensembles are assessed on the level of professionalism displayed through their performance. Common references can include an ability to professionally recover from errors, an ability to communicate a character visually up to the press box as a group, and an ability to connect with the audience.

+ - **Recovery** – an ensemble's/section's ability to recover from a visual error made on the field. A quality recovery can generally be achieved quickly without compromising posture or visual technique norms.

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## CONTENT

+ - **Effective Use of All Performing Elements** – the utilization of every performer on the field – from the woodwinds, to the brass, to the percussion and the color guard – this descriptor asks if everyone is actively taking part in contributing to the overall visual package throughout the full length of the show.

+ - **Effective Visual Reinforcement of Music** – the design concept centered around the “video” matching the “audio”. This is evidenced by a clear sense of visual musicality, whereby the drill, choreography, and guard writing (when present) matches the music heard by the audience. Common areas of focus here can discuss a musical style like “staccato/legato, pianissimo/fortissimo” and how it is visually represented by the band and/or guard.

+ - **Suitability of Visual Content** – the element that used to be referred to as “demand of drill”; this descriptor references the drill and choreographic content assigned to the performers and how these elements are achievable, appropriate, and artistic within the structure of the overall show.

+ - **Frequency/Demand of Movement While Playing** – the ability of a group to function as an ensemble who plays and marches at the same time, or, in the case of guard, dances and spins at the same time. In the past, judges would address “standstill time”; here, we look not only at the amount of time ensembles are moving while playing, but also the content of their drill/movement with respect to challenge. Ensembles in Texas are expected to “march-and-play”, not “march-then-play”.

+ - **Continuity and Flow/Pacing** – assigning content that flows logically from one moment to the next and shows a sense of variety. A show that is well-designed visually is similar to a work for concert band that showcases multiple sections performing aspects of a theme (or a variety of themes) in a multitude of ways, and that the transitions from moment-to-moment feel purposeful, engaging, and well-crafted. Discussions in this area can center on “visual development”, “climax”, and “resolution”.

+ - **Coordination and Staging** – the forethought invested in the curriculum for the marching ensemble's overall visual design, ensuring that the most important aspects are staged in a way so as to ensure their success, and that the drill and choreography lead to intentional pathways for performers that encourage their growth and development.

# Special Notes for Color Guard Commentary

## **VISUAL - Guiding Questions for Individual Visual:**

What is the height of the toss?

How many rotations are in the toss?

Are there any creative pathways into the release of the toss?

Is there a creative catch position used to finish the toss?

Is there a contribution of the body while the toss is in the air?

Are the performers manipulating equipment with other parts of the body (shoulder roll, etc.)?

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## **VISUAL - Guiding Questions for Ensemble Visual:**

Does the majority of the group execute the assigned content at a high level?

Can you assess if the guard is having a bad day or is there a lack of training?

How professionally do the individual guard performers recover from error?

Does the guard complete phrases (not unlike wind players fading the ends of musical phrases)?

How does the guard move through space and time? Functionally or professionally? In character?

Does the guard elevate the performance to a higher level?

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## **VISUAL - Guiding Questions regarding Content:**

What is the design of the flag/rifle/sabre/prop?

Does the design compliment the overall look of the ensemble/individual performers?

Does the design of the flag/rifle/sabre/prop align with the theme?

Is the flag/rifle/sabre/prop used in a way that is more than just functional?

How is the guard integrated into each moment in the drill?

Does the guard staging seem to be part of the overall production, or an afterthought?

Does the guard writing/choreography indicate a depth of dynamic range?

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## **VISUAL - Other Areas of Focus:**

Is there gradation of speed to the flag/rifle/sabre writing?

Is the vocabulary well-placed and planned?

Is there variety to the writing/choreography, or are you seeing the same phrase over and over?

Does the guard transition well between equipment? Functionally or professionally? In character?

Does the guard remain in character throughout the show? Even with recovery efforts?

How does the guard communicate musicality, nuance, and emotion? Do you “see” staccato and legato?

