Music Composition Guidance

All participants must also follow Official Rules for Participation.

MUSIC COMPOSITION is the process of creating a new piece of music. The **composer** (the student submitting the entry) is a person who expresses their original thoughts and ideas through the use of sound changes over time. The composer may submit an entry performed by an individual or group and/or make use of a sound library generated performance of a score composed in its entirety by the student. Composers are not required to perform their composition themselves. A recording of the composition must be included. *Primary, Intermediate, and Special Artist divisions do not require musical notation. The student may choose to submit iconic ("made-up"), traditional, or tablature notation, if desired. Middle and high school grade divisions must include music score/notation, either traditional or tablature, or a written reflective statement that provides a musically technical explanation of how the music was created (100 words or less).*

- Notation software may be used to create a score.
- Whether the score is handwritten or computer-generated, appropriate instrumentation and voicing are required for the performance.
- For electronic copies of notation, accepted file type is PDF.

Consider the following musical styles and instruments to portray your original composition: A Cappella, Blues, Choral, Country, Electronic, Hip hop, Jazz, Latin, Musical, Orchestral, Pop, R&B, Religious, Rock, Symphonic/Concert Band and Traditional.

All instruments, sounds, styles, and combinations are accepted. Software may be used to produce an audio recording. Entries containing algorithmic composition techniques are not accepted. An explanation of the origin of the music and/or the significance of the music style might be a useful addition to the artist statement when submitting a music composition that involves traditional, cultural, or regional instruments. Whether an entry displays formal composition technique or a simple approach, it will be judged primarily on how well the student uses his or her artistic vision to portray the theme, originality, and creativity. Use of copyrighted material is prohibited.

Tips for Audio Quality
- Do not place the recording device on top of an instrument(s) or speakers.
- Turn off all noise-making devices in the room (air conditioners, fans, telephones, etc.).
- Record a short test and listen to it. If needed, change the recording volume or microphone location.
- Make sure the music is audible on the recording.
- Record two seconds of silence before and after performing your composition.

Submission Instructions:
- Only new pieces of artwork inspired by the theme may be submitted.
- Each entry must be the original work of one student only.
- Performance must not exceed 5 minutes in length or 1 GB (one gigabyte) in file size.
- Keep a recording of your entry.
- Accepted file formats are MP3 and WAV. Video files are not accepted.
- Submit electronically as instructed by Free State PTA