

IYCSY Young Composers Competition Judging Rubrics

(updated 9/20/25)

Submissions will be evaluated by a panel of experienced musicians based on the following criteria for each respective level. These rubrics outline what judges will be looking for to ensure fair and consistent evaluation.

Note: Judges will provide feedback based on these criteria to help participants understand their strengths and areas for growth.

I. Beginner Level Judging Rubric: "Make It Yours" Melody Transformation

This rubric evaluates how creatively participants have transformed the given melody and their understanding of basic musical concepts.

Criteria	Weight	Basic Description/Evaluation
Creativity and Originality	40%	How imaginative and unique are the changes applied to the provided melody? Does the transformed melody sound fresh and distinct while still being coherent?
Understanding of Melody	30%	Does the altered melody flow well? Do the added or changed notes demonstrate a basic understanding of melodic contour, rhythm, and musical sensibility?
Effectiveness of Explanation	30%	How clearly and insightfully does the accompanying paragraph explain the compositional choices? Does it effectively articulate <i>why</i> specific changes were made and what musical effect was intended?

II. Intermediate/Advanced Level Judging Rubric: Poem Setting

This rubric assesses the overall artistic merit, musical craftsmanship, and effective interpretation of the provided poem.

Criteria	Weight	Basic Description/Evaluation
Creativity and Originality	30%	How unique and compelling is the musical interpretation of the poem? Does the composition demonstrate a strong individual voice and innovative musical ideas?
Musicality and Expressiveness	30%	Is the composition musically engaging, coherent, and expressive? Are elements like melody, harmony, rhythm, and form used effectively to create a complete and impactful musical statement?
Text Setting	25%	How effectively does the music enhance and interpret the poem's meaning, mood, and natural rhythm? Is the text clear and understandable within the musical context?
Notation Clarity	15%	Is the musical score accurate, readable, and professionally presented? Are all musical instructions clear and consistent?