

## NFMC JUNIOR COMPOSERS CONTEST

JR 7-4

## INFORMATION FOR JUDGES

**MISSION:** The mission of the National Federation of Music Clubs Junior Composers Contest is to provide musicians through the age of 18 the opportunity of expressing their creativity through music composition.

There are two manners in which a student is rewarded and recognized.

1. All students receive points associated with their ratings at the state level. The optional NFMC Gold Cup program allows these points to accumulate and be applied towards graduated gold cups.
2. Top students in each class, as chosen by the state adjudicators, will compete at the regional level and then the national level, for standings and monetary awards.

**AGE CATEGORIES:** Students enter in classes according to their ages, even though they might have a wide variety of musical experiences.

|                  |                  |
|------------------|------------------|
| Junior Class I   | Ages 9 and under |
| Junior Class II  | Ages 10 - 12     |
| Junior Class III | Ages 13 - 15     |
| Junior Class IV  | Ages 16 - 18     |

**COMMUNICATION WITH CHAIR:** You will receive your materials, an mp3 recording of the composition, a PDF of the score, and a writable PDF of the JR 7-3 rating sheet, via email or a shared dropbox-type folder. The chair will communicate when your materials are ready.

**All judges:** After you have completed your judging and chosen your winners, let the chairperson know that you are done and forward a list of the winners. Ties are not permitted at any level of the contest.

## STATE LEVEL

**JUDGING:** The creation of music is never about the points; it is about the process and about how all the elements come together to create a work of art. You will hear a wide variety of types of compositions, some quite experimental, and this is often difficult to quantify so we are encouraging you to write a complete assessment of what you hear.

- Consider the age category you are judging and write your comments accordingly. Remember that less experienced students will not write long pieces (maybe only 16 measures), but that may be appropriate.
- Using form JR 7-3, give a written critique which mentions strengths as well as suggestions for improvement and does both in an encouraging way. We would like to see the students try again next year.
- In your comments, consider the following elements and how they interact with one another: melody, harmony, rhythm, form, originality, appropriate writing for the instrument(s), idiomatic constructs, expressive content, and notation as well as anything else that would be helpful.
- Use the mp3 recording only as a guide; if there is a discrepancy between the sound entry and the score, judge the score.
- You are not limited in the number of superior ratings that you give.
- Select a first and second place winner in each class to advance to the regional level.

If you need something more concrete to work from, we recommend this distribution of points:

- |  |           |
|--|-----------|
| • Originality/Expressive Content/Idiomatic Writing | 35 points |
| • Formal Structure                                 | 20 points |
| • Melody/Harmony/Rhythm                            | 25 points |
| • Notation   | 20 points |

Total Points = 100

**RATINGS:** All students should receive encouragement in the creative process. Thus, we are including only the three rating categories below. If you want to give special recognition by adding a +, you may do so, e.g. Superior+.

- Superior
- Excellent
- Satisfactory

### **REGIONAL LEVEL**

At this level, you do not have to write a critique, although you may send a note to the young composers if you desire. Choose your winners but do not rank them as 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, etc.; all winners move to the National Contest as equals. Let the regional chair know whom you have chosen as winners in each category. You may designate honorable mentions if you wish. The maximum number of compositions received from each state for adjudication at your regional level is eight per state. Please select the following number of winners from each class:

|                  |           |
|------------------|-----------|
| Junior Class I   | 2 winners |
| Junior Class II  | 2 winners |
| Junior Class III | 3 winners |
| Junior Class IV  | 3 winners |

### **NATIONAL LEVEL**

At this level, you do not have to write a critique, although you may send a note to the young composers if you desire. Many monetary prizes are awarded at this level, and any individual student may win only one national award. You will be given a National Winners Worksheet by the NFMC Composition Chair to help you in ranking the students. The maximum number of compositions to be adjudicated at the national level is 50.

Thank you for your time and energy expended.  
The National Federation of Music Clubs deeply appreciates your valuable service.