

Florida Vocal Association



2005-2006 All-State Musicianship Examination Terms Study Guide

Edited - 2005

1. a tempo - return to the original tempo after some deviation
2. accelerando - becoming faster
3. accidentals - symbol used to raise or lower a given pitch by 1 or 2 semi-tones, or to cancel a previous sign or part of a key signature
4. adagio - slow, leisurely
5. al fine - to the end, generally used after a repetition
6. alla breve – a tempo marking indicating quick double time; *i.e. 2/2 instead of 4/4 with the half note rather than the quarter note as the beat*
7. allegro con spirito – fast tempo with spirit
8. amabile - sweet, loveable
9. ancora meno mosso – once more, but a little slower
10. andante - rather slow, at a moderate walking pace
11. aria - a self-contained composition for solo voice, usually with instrumental accompaniment and usually found within the context of an opera, oratorio or cantata
12. arpeggio - the notes of a chord played in succession to one another, rather than simultaneously; a broken chord
13. atonal - music that lacks a tonal center; absence of key
14. augmented - raised or enlarged. Generally refers to the raising of a pitch by one half-step
15. ballad - a strophic, narrative song
16. berceuse - a lullaby
17. cantabile – singable; singing
18. chorale - a congregational song or hymn of the German Protestant Church, originally for the entire congregation to sing
19. chord - 3 or more pitches sounded simultaneously or functioning as if sounded simultaneously
20. chromatic - motion by half steps; also describes harmony or melody that employs some of the sequential 12 pitches (semi-tones) in an octave
21. crescendo - increasing loudness
22. D.C. or Da Capo - repeat from the beginning of the composition
23. D.S. or dal segno - repeat from the sign
24. decrescendo - decreasing loudness
25. descant - a high-pitched ornamental part lying above the melody
26. diminished - lowered, or reduced; generally refers to the lowering of a pitch chromatically by one half step
27. dolce - sweetly, usually also softly
28. dynamics - the degrees of loudness in a musical work

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29. fermata - a pause or hold
30. fine - the end
31. flat - the symbol which indicates the lowering of a given pitch by one half-step
32. folksong – anonymously composed music handed down orally for many generations representing the general character of the people of a nation or community; opposed to the art music of trained musicians
33. forte (*f*) - loud
34. giusto – maintaining a fitting or strict tempo
35. glissando (*gliss.*) – an instrumental term referring to a sliding scale of continuously changing pitch not to be confused with the vocal term *portamento*
36. grave - grave, solemn
37. harmony - any collection of pitches as they sound simultaneously, or when pitches are in agreement
38. hymn – originally composed to praise the Greek gods, the Christian hymn is a non-Scriptural song consisting of various stanzas sung to the same melody; traditionally sung in four-part harmony
39. interval - the relationship between two pitches, the distance between an upper and a lower pitch
40. key - the pitch relationships that establish a tonal center
41. key signature - sharps or flats at the beginning of each staff to indicate which pitches are to be raised or lowered from their natural state during the piece
42. largo - very slow and broad
43. leading tone - the seventh degree of the diatonic scale, when it is only a half-step below the tonic, gives the feeling of wanting to move up a half-step to the tonic
44. ledger lines - lines written above or below the staff representing a continuation of the staff, used to indicate pitches above or below the staff
45. legato - smoothly, with no separation between notes
46. leggiero (*leggero*) – light (soft)
47. lunga – a long pause that is determined by the performer (*director*)
48. major scale - a diatonic scale where the half-steps fall between the third and fourth, and the seventh and octave
49. marcato – marked, stressed
50. molto espressivo – very expressively
51. motif - a short musical idea or melodic theme, usually shorter than a musical phrase
52. natural - a note that is not affected by either a sharp or a flat, a natural sign cancels a previous sharp or flat
53. notation - any means of writing down music, usually indicating pitch, duration, timbre and loudness
54. ossia – an easier to perform alternative musical passage

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55. phrase - a single musical idea or element which is often defined by a repeated rhythmic pattern or a melodic contour
56. pianissimo (*pp*) - very soft
57. piano (*p*) - soft
58. pizzicato (*pizz.*) – strings are plucked with fingers rather than bowed
59. poco a poco - little by little
60. portamento – special manner of singing where the voice glides from one tone to the next through all the intermediate pitches
61. prestissimo – as fast as possible
62. primo – first or upper part
63. psalm – a musical composition whose text is taken from the Book of Psalms, the most productive single source of texts for music compositions
64. rallentando (*rall.*) - slowing down; the same as *ritardando*
65. ritardando (*rit.*) - slowing down gradually
66. ritenuto – the same as *ritardando* but used to describe a marked reduction of tempo
67. rubato - making the established pulse flexible by accelerating and slowing down the tempo, an expressive device
68. secondo – second or lower part
69. sempre – always
70. sforzando (*sf* or *sfz*) - strongly accented, forced
71. sharp - the sign that indicates the raising of a given pitch by one half-step
72. simile (*sim.*) – continue to perform in a similar manner
73. sotto voce – softly; with subdued sound; performed in an undertone
74. staccato (*stacc.*) - detached, crisply played
75. strophic – describes a song where the stanzas are all sung to the same music
76. subito - suddenly, quickly
77. tenuto (*ten.*) – fully sustained, occasionally even a bit longer than the note value requires
78. time signature - the sign placed at the beginning of a composition to indicate its meter
79. tonic - the key center, the foundation of a scale or melody.
80. vivace - lively, briskly

* Terms adapted from The New Harvard Dictionary of Music, The Harvard Brief Dictionary of Music and The Harvard Dictionary of Music (second edition-1977)

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MATERIALS BELOW: FOR YOUR INFORMATION ONLY – NON-TEST MATERIAL

Handel, George Frederic (1685-1759) – German-born, but British-naturalized citizen, Handel was an instrumentalist and composer of most music genre of the Baroque Period (*Awake the Trumpet's Lofty Sound*) contributing his most important works while living in England. He studied in Italy where he obtained his style for Italian opera and oratorio. Unsuccessful in making Italian opera a fixture in London, even with the backing of the Royal Academy of Music, Handel was appointed a composer for the Chapel Royal in 1723. After another less-than-profitable foray into opera during the 1730's, Handel traveled to Dublin in 1741-1742 where, to aid charities, he wrote *Messiah*. The rest of his life was dedicated primarily to composing and performing oratorio. He was buried in Westminster Abbey hailed at the time of his death as one of the great composers of his time. Handel, along with Johann Sebastian Bach, German church organist and composer, are viewed today as two of the leading influences of the Baroque Period in music.

Hogan, Moses (1957-2003) – a pianist (first place in the 28th annual Kosciuszko Foundation Chopin Competition in New York), conductor, and arranger (*The Battle of Jericho*) born in New Orleans. He was appointed artist in residence at Dillard University in New Orleans in 1993 and served as artistic director of the internationally acclaimed Moses Hogan Chorale.

Jessop, Craig – the 2006 FVA Senior High (9th-12th) All-State Chorus clinician, conducts the Mormon Tabernacle Choir in Salt Lake City, Utah. As a USAF lieutenant colonel he conducted the Singing Sergeants, the Band of the USAF in Ramstein, Germany and the Air Combat Command Heartland of America Band in Omaha. After retirement he conducted Rhineland-Pfalz International Choir of Germany and the Omaha Symphonic Chorus and frequently sang as a baritone soloist.

McDonald, Mary – from Knoxville, TN, is a composer, arranger, producer, pianist and organist, editor of Monarch Music (division of the Lorenz Corporation), active as a choral clinician and composer of nearly 300 published choral anthems (*Make Me an Instrument of Thy Peace*), she is a member of the Executive Council for the Church Music Conference of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Nelson, Dr. Ron (1929-present) - a composer of choral (*Fanfare For A Festival*), band and orchestral works, born in Joliet, Illinois, a Fulbright Scholar, studied at the Ecole Normale de Musique and the Conservatory of Music in Paris, earned his Bachelor's, Master's and Doctorate Degrees from the Eastman School of Music, retired as Full Professor from Brown University in 1993 and currently resides in Arizona.

Rachmaninoff, Sergei (1873-1943) - a Russian composer (*All-Night Vigil*, Opus 37), pianist, and conductor, studied at the St. Petersburg Conservatory, before going to Moscow, where he studied piano with Nikolay Zverev and Alexander Siloti, harmony with Anton Arensky and counterpoint with Sergei Taneyev. His first serious pieces for the piano were composed and performed when he was thirteen years old.

Wilberg, Dr. Mack – former director of choral activities at Brigham Young University, Dr. Wilburg is a prolific American composer, arranger (*Cindy and Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing*), concert pianist and is presently the director of the Temple Square Chorale and associate director of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir

Repository of Sacred Music – 1813 - (*Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing* - melody source) – was published by a non-musician, John Wyeth (1770-1853), and is the second part of an eclectic “shaped-note”, for-profit compilation of New England sacred tunes of American and British origin used primarily in 19th century Protestant churches and singing-schools.