

MUSIC PRODUCTION



OVERVIEW

Applying leadership and 21st century skills, participants produce an original musical piece that reflects the annual theme on the [TSA website](#) under *Themes & Problems*.

ELIGIBILITY

Three (3) teams per state may participate. Teamwork is strongly encouraged, but an individual may participate solo in this team event.

TIME LIMITS

PRELIMINARY ROUND

- A. All components of the chapter's entry (music piece URL and documentation PDF) must be finished, submitted, and accessible via the Internet by 11:59pm ET on a designated date mid-May.
- B. The musical piece must be more than one (1) minute and less than three (3) minutes in length.
- C. A deduction of five (5) points total will be incurred for each fifteen (15) seconds under the one (1) minute minimum and for each fifteen (15) seconds over the three (3) minute maximum length.
- D. The timing starts with the first sound and continues until the last sound ends.

SEMIFINAL ROUND

- A. Up to ten (10) minutes is allotted for the interview.

ATTIRE

TSA competition attire is required for this event.

PROCEDURE

PRE-CONFERENCE

- A. Participants review the TSA Honor Statement for Competitive Events found in the General Rules and listed in the individual competitive event rules.
- B. Participants access the annual theme on the [TSA website](#) under *Themes & Problems*.

- C. Participants record their design process within a documentation portfolio.
- D. Participants submit a URL to the audio file (in MP3 or suitable format) and a multi-page PDF of the required documentation by 11:59pm ET on a designated date in mid-May.
- E. The submission information and deadline will be provided in January on the [TSA website](#) under *Competition Updates*.

PRELIMINARY ROUND

- A. Judges independently assess the entries using the following procedure:
 - 1. Judges score the Music Piece criteria to determine the top twenty-four (24) preliminary contestants, which will not be posted.
 - 2. Judges score the Documentation Portfolio criteria of those top twenty-four contestants to determine the top twelve (12) semifinalist teams.
- B. A list of the twelve (12) semifinalists (in random order) will be posted on the first full day of the conference.

SEMIFINAL ROUND

- A. Two (2) representatives from each semifinalist team report at the time and place stated in the conference program to sign up for an interview time.
- B. No more than two (2) representatives from each semifinalist team report at the assigned time and place for the interview.
- C. The top ten (10) finalists are announced at the awards ceremony.

REGULATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

Students will work to develop their leadership and 21st century skills in the process of preparing for and participating in this TSA competitive event. The development and application of those skills must be evident in their submission, demonstration, and/or communication pertaining to the entry.

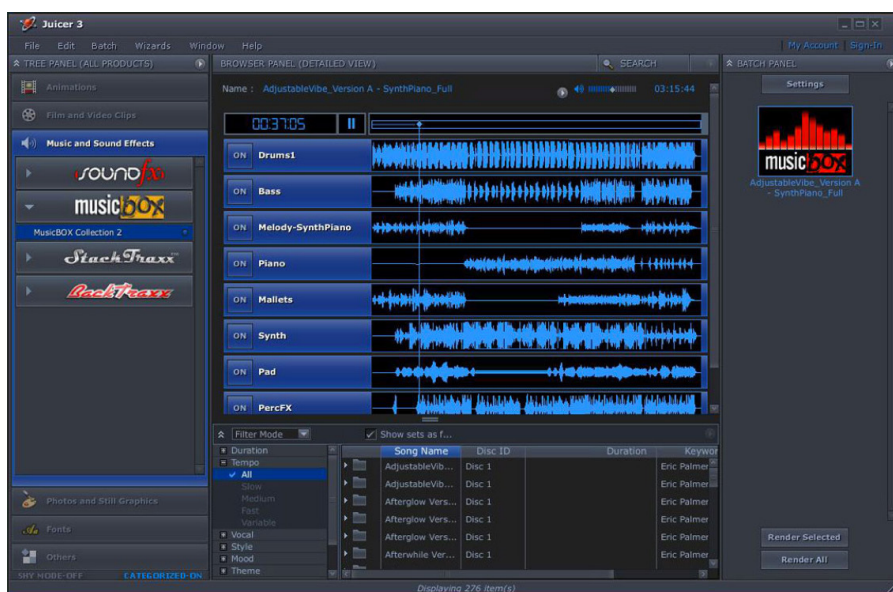
PRE-CONFERENCE

- A. The musical piece and required documentation must be uploaded or located online and accessible for evaluation by the posted deadline.
- B. The entry must point directly to the team's entry. Entries that require a software download or a request that access be granted will not be judged.
- C. Entries received, or changes made to submitted entries after this deadline will not be judged.
- D. Musical Piece:
 1. The URL to the musical piece must point directly to the file and not require any permissions or installation of software for evaluation.
 2. Lyrics may accompany the musical piece but are not required.
 3. The musical piece must be greater than one (1) minute and less than three (3) minutes in length.
 4. There will be a five (5)-point deduction for:
 - a. each fifteen (15) seconds under the one (1)-minute minimum
 - b. each fifteen (15) seconds over the three (3)-minute maximum length
 5. All musical pieces must be the original work of the team and must have been completed within the current school year.

6. Free, non-copyrighted sounds, loops, or other musical elements may be incorporated into musical pieces. The sources of these elements and the way in which they are used in the musical piece must be described in the portfolio, and the track list must illustrate these elements.
7. Each actual instrument, voice, and/or synthesized instrument track used in the final music piece must be illustrated in a timeline format in the portfolio.
8. Where applicable, all ideas, sounds, and loops from other sources must be cited. If copyrighted material is used, proper written permission must be included (see the Student Copyright Checklist in the Forms Appendix).

PRELIMINARY ROUND

- A. Documentation Portfolio:
 1. The documentation portfolio should be complete, well written, and professional in organization and appearance.
 2. Documentation materials (comprising a "portfolio") are required and must be submitted as a multi-page PDF document with pages in this order:
 - a. Title page with the title of the musical piece, the event title, the conference city and state, and the year; one (1) page



- b. Table of contents; pages as needed
- c. Work Log (see Forms Appendix); pages as needed
- d. Self-evaluation of the piece using criteria from the official rating form; one (1) page
- e. Lyrics (if desired); pages as needed
- f. Audio composition track list: Each actual instrument, voice, and/or synthesized instrument track used in the final music piece must be illustrated graphically using a timeline format similar to that shown in the graphic; pages as needed.
- g. When musical elements are used that were NOT created by the team, the source, effects applied, the way each element was incorporated into the song, and how each element corresponds to the musical piece's track list must be included; pages as needed.
- h. List of hardware, software, and instruments used in the development of the musical piece; one (1) page
- i. List of references that includes sources for materials (non-copyrighted); pages as needed
- j. Student Copyright Checklist (see Forms Appendix); one (1) page

EVALUATION

PRELIMINARY ROUND

Tier 1

- A. The musical piece

Tier 2

- B. The documentation portfolio

SEMIFINAL ROUND

- A. The interview

Refer to the official rating form for more information.

TSA HONOR STATEMENT

All work must be created and completed by individual competitors or teams. Plagiarism, the use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) software, copyright violation, cheating, and falsification of information are prohibited. Participants may NOT use any generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) tools (e.g. ChatGPT, Google Gemini, GitHub Copilot, etc.). Any attempt to gain an unfair advantage will not be tolerated. Competitors at any level of TSA competition understand and agree to abide by the TSA Honor Statement.

If it is determined that a student violated the TSA Honor Statement, a rules violation of twenty percent (20%) will be incurred.

STEM INTEGRATION

This event aligns with the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) educational standards.

LEADERSHIP AND 21ST CENTURY SKILLS

This event provides opportunity for students to build and develop leadership and 21st century skills including but not limited to – Communication, Collaboration/Social Skills, Initiative, Problem Solving/Risk Taking, Critical Thinking, Perseverance/Grit, Creativity, Relationship Building/Teamwork, Dependability/Integrity, and Flexibility/Adaptability

CAREERS RELATED TO THIS EVENT

This competition has connections to one (1) or more of the careers below:

- Artist
- Audio designer or engineer
- Audio operator or technician
- Broadcast technician
- Music composer

MUSIC PRODUCTION

2025 & 2026 OFFICIAL RATING FORM

HIGH SCHOOL

Judges: Using minimal (1-4 points), adequate (5-8 points), or exemplary (9-10 points) performance levels as a guideline in the rating form, record the scores earned for the event criteria in the column spaces to the right. The X1 or X2 notation in the criteria column is a multiplier factor for determining the points earned. (Example: an "adequate" score of 7 for an X1 criterion = 7 points; an "adequate" score of 7 for an X2 criterion = 14 points.) A score of zero (0) is acceptable if the minimal performance for any criterion is not met.

Go/No Go Specifications

- Before judging the entry, ensure that the items below are present; indicate presence with a check mark in the box.
- If an item is missing, leave the box next to the item blank and place a check mark in the box labeled ENTRY NOT EVALUATED.
- If a check mark is placed in the ENTRY NOT EVALUATED box, the entry is not to be judged.

- ☐ TIER 1 – Audio composition was submitted in proper format and accessible
- ☐ TIER 2 – PDF of the documentation portfolio was submitted
- ☐ ENTRY NOT EVALUATED

TIER 1 – MUSICAL PIECE (70 points)				Record scores in the column spaces below.
CRITERIA	Minimal performance	Adequate performance	Exemplary performance	
	1-4 points	5-8 points	9-10 points	
Creativity and Uniqueness (X1)	The musical idea is overly familiar or is a cliché; no variety or exploration of musical elements (range, timbre, dynamics, tempo, rhythm, and melody) are evident.	The work involves some original aspects or manipulations of musical ideas; it explores and includes at least one (1) or more musical elements.	The piece includes highly original, unusual, or imaginative musical ideas; it explores and includes at least two (2) or more musical elements.	
Artisanship (X1)	The piece gives no sense of a completed musical idea; there is no clear beginning, middle, or end section; the form appears random, rather than organized.	One (1) musical element has been used to organize the musical ideas and overall form, which are somewhat coherent.	The piece presents at least one (1) complete musical idea; the piece has a coherent and organized form with a clear beginning, middle, and end; musical elements are used to organize the musical ideas and form.	
Energy and Style (X2)	The piece lacks liveliness, vitality, and vigor; there is no flair, elegance, or grace to the form.	The piece generates an initial level of energy that appeals to the listener; the style is somewhat distinctive.	The liveliness and forcefulness of the piece excite the listener; the style is truly unique and electrifying.	
Appropriateness (X1)	The musical piece does not incorporate the theme well or at all.	The musical piece is acceptable and is fitting to the theme.	The musical piece is an excellent example to represent the given theme.	
Overall Appeal (X2)	The work does not present an effective general impression; the musical ideas do not hold the listener's interest.	The work includes some interesting musical ideas; the general impression is pleasant and moderately effective.	There is strong, interesting, and effective audio appeal; the work is designed to be enjoyed by the listeners.	
TIER 1 – MUSICAL PIECE SUBTOTAL (70 points)				
Rules violations (a deduction of 20% of the total possible points for the above sections) must be initialed by the judge, coordinator, and manager of the event. Record the deduction in the space to the right. Indicate the rule violated: _____				

TIME DEDUCTIONS					
There will be a five (5) point deduction for each fifteen (15) seconds under the minimum time or each fifteen (15) seconds over the maximum time allowed for the visualization.					
Total time under		Fifteen (15)-second intervals under		Under time deduction	
Total time over		Fifteen (15)-second intervals over		Over time deduction	
TOTAL TIME DEDUCTION					

TIER 1 – SUBTOTAL (70 points)	
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TIER 2 – DOCUMENTATION PORTFOLIO (30 points)					Record scores in the column spaces below.
CRITERIA	Minimal performance	Adequate performance	Exemplary performance		
	1-4 points	5-8 points	9-10 points		
Portfolio Components (X1)	The portfolio is unorganized and/or missing three (3) or more components.	The portfolio is adequately organized and includes most components.	All components of the portfolio are included, and the organization of the content is clearly evident.		
Work Log and Self-Evaluation (X1)	The Work Log and/or self-evaluation are incomplete, and/or missing key components.	The Work Log and/or self-evaluation are somewhat complete and incorporate reflections and efforts of the team.	A complete and concisely written Work Log and self-evaluation are provided and incorporate the efforts and reflections of the team.		
Track Timeline (X1)	The track timeline is incomplete and/or not created correctly; the timeline does not correlate with the actual music production.	The track timeline is largely complete and attempts to correlate with the actual music production.	The track timeline is of exemplary quality; it correlates completely with the music production and is easy to follow.		
TIER 2 – DOCUMENTATION PORTFOLIO SUBTOTAL (30 points)					

Rules violations (a deduction of 20% of the total possible points for the above sections) must be initialed by the judge, coordinator, and manager of the event. Record the deduction in the space to the right.	
Indicate the rule violated: _____	

PRELIMINARY SUBTOTAL (100 points)	
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SEMIFINAL INTERVIEW (40 points)				Record scores in the column spaces below.
CRITERIA	Minimal performance	Adequate performance	Exemplary performance	
	1-4 points	5-8 points	9-10 points	
Organization (X1)	The team/individual seems unprepared and unorganized for the interview.	The team/individual is adequately prepared and organized for the interview.	The responses to the interview questions are organized within the team and impressive.	
Knowledge (X1)	The team/individual seems to have very little understanding of the concepts and gives vague interview answers.	The team/individual has a generalized understanding of the concepts discussed and answers questions well.	There is clear evidence of a thorough understanding of the concepts discussed.	
Articulation (X1)	Communication of the design concept is unclear, unorganized, and or illogical; leadership and/or 21 st century skills are not evident.	Communication of the design concept is somewhat logical and clear; leadership and/or 21 st century skills are somewhat evident.	Communication of the design concept is clear, concise, and logical; leadership and/or 21 st century skills are clearly evident.	
Delivery (X1)	The team/individual is verbose and/or uncertain in the interview; posture, gestures, and lack of eye contact diminish the delivery.	The team/individual is somewhat well-spoken and clear in the interview; posture, gestures, and eye contact result in an acceptable delivery.	The team/individual is well-spoken and distinct in the interview; posture, gestures, and eye contact result in a polished, natural, and effective delivery.	
SEMIFINAL INTERVIEW SUBTOTAL (40 points)				
Rules violations (a deduction of 20% of the total possible points for the above sections) must be initialed by the judge, coordinator, and manager of the event. Record the deduction in the space to the right. Indicate the rule violated: _____				
SEMIFINAL SUBTOTAL (40 points)				
To arrive at the TOTAL score, add any subtotals and subtract rules violation points, as necessary.				
TOTAL (140 points)				

Comments:

I certify these results to be true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

JUDGE

Printed name: _____ Signature: _____

MUSIC PRODUCTION EVENT COORDINATOR INSTRUCTIONS

PERSONNEL

- A. Event coordinator
- B. Judges:
 - 1. Preliminary round, two (2) for each forty (40) entries
 - 2. Semifinal round, two (2)

MATERIALS

- A. Coordinator's packet, containing:
 - 1. Event guidelines, one (1) copy for the coordinator and for each judge
 - 2. TSA Event Coordinator Report
- B. One (1) stopwatch per group of judges
- C. Interview questions
- D. Tables and chairs for judges

RESPONSIBILITIES

PRE-CONFERENCE/PRELIMINARY ROUND

- A. National TSA will collect entries until 11:59pm ET on a designated date in mid-May. The submissions are shared with the CRC manager, event coordinator, and assigned judges.
- B. Review entries as they are submitted to the designated online storage utility.
- C. Manage communication and Pre-conference evaluation (at least two [2] or more judges should be recruited earlier in the year). Coordinate with National TSA and/or the Judge Manager.

AT THE CONFERENCE

- A. Attend the mandatory coordinator's meeting at the designated time and location.
- B. Report to the CRC room and check the contents of the coordinator's packet.
- C. Review the event guidelines and check to see that enough personnel have been scheduled.
- D. Inspect the area(s) in which the event is being held for appropriate set-up, including room size, chairs, tables, outlets, etc. Notify the event manager of any potential problems.
- E. At least one (1) hour before the event is set to begin, meet with judges/assistants to review time limits, procedures, regulations, evaluation, and all other details related to the event. If questions arise that cannot be answered, speak to the event manager before the event begins.
- F. Ensure the judges have access to the online judging system.

PRELIMINARY ROUND

- A. On the first full day of competition, post a list of the twelve (12) semifinalists in random order.

SEMIFINAL ROUND

- A. Semifinalists report at the time and place stated in the conference program to sign up for an interview time.
- B. Semifinalists report at the time and place stated in the conference program for the interview.
- C. Manage the interviews.
- D. Discuss rule violations (e.g. 20% deduction, disqualification) and have all relevant parties initial the rating form.
- E. If necessary, manage security and the removal of materials from the event area.