

Florida Vocal Association



2009-2010 All-State Musicianship Examination Terms Study Guide *Edited - 2009*

1. a tempo – return to the original tempo after some deviation
2. 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
3. adagio – slow, leisurely tempo
4. al fine – to the end, generally used after a repetition
5. 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*
6. **allargando – slowing of tempo, usually with increasing volume; most frequently occurs toward the end of a piece.**
7. allegretto – slightly slower than allegro, often implying lighter texture and character as well
8. allegro – fast
9. allegro con spirito – fast tempo with spirit
10. amabile – sweet, loveable
11. ancora meno mosso – once more, but a little slower
12. andante – rather slow, at a moderate walking pace
13. aria – a self-contained composition for solo voice, usually with instrumental accompaniment and usually found within the context of an opera, oratorio or cantata
14. arpeggio – the notes of a chord played in succession to one another, rather than simultaneously; a broken chord
15. **art song – a composed song in which the text, melody, and accompaniment, are interrelated to create a unified effect.**
16. atonal – music that lacks a tonal center; absence of key
17. augmented – raised or enlarged. Generally refers to the raising of a pitch by one half-step
18. bel canto – a style of singing characterized by lyricism, legato, pure vowels, and freedom of production which originated in Italy during the so called "Golden Age of Singing" (1685-1825). berceuse - a lullaby
19. cadenza – an improvised or written-out ornamental passage performed by a soloist usually near the final cadence
20. cantabile – singable; singing
21. **catch breath – a short or partial breath to renew lung supply quickly**
22. chorale – a congregational song or hymn of the German Protestant Church, originally for the entire congregation to sing
23. chord – 3 or more pitches sounded simultaneously or functioning as if sounded simultaneously
24. chromatic – motion by half steps; also describes harmony or melody that employs some of the sequential 12 pitches (semi-tones) in an octave
25. common time – 4/4 meter, denoted C
26. D.C. or Da Capo – repeat from the beginning of the composition
27. D.S. or dal segno – repeat from the sign
28. diminished – lowered, or reduced; generally refers to the lowering of a pitch chromatically by one half step
29. **divisi – performers singing the same part are divided to sing different parts.**
30. dolce – sweetly, usually also softly
31. dynamics – the degrees of loudness in a musical work

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32. embellishment – ornamentation added to music to make it more beautiful or effective, or to demonstrate the abilities of the performer
33. fermata – a pause or hold
34. **forward tone – focused tone; a tone with major frontal resonance of the mouth and vocal mask.**
35. grave – grave, solemn
36. **grazioso – graceful**
37. **gruppo ad lib – a group of notes played or sung at the will or pleasure of the performer**
38. half-step – a semi-tone. There are 12 half-steps in an octave.
39. harmony – any collection of pitches as they sound simultaneously, or when pitches are in agreement
40. head voice – the higher register of the singing voice
41. interval – the relationship between two pitches, the distance between an upper and a lower pitch
42. key – the pitch relationships that establish a tonal center
43. 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
44. largo – very slow and broad
45. 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
46. leap – melodic motion from one pitch to another that is more than a whole tone away
47. ledger lines – lines written above or below the staff representing a continuation of the staff, used to indicate pitches above or below the staff
48. **legato e pesante – smooth, connected and heavy**
49. leggiero (*leggero*) – light (soft)
50. lunga – a long pause that is determined by the performer (*director*)
51. major scale – a diatonic scale where the half-steps fall between the third and fourth, and the seventh and octave
52. marcato – marked, stressed
53. **misterioso – play or sing in a mysterious manner**
54. motif – a short musical idea or melodic theme, usually shorter than a musical phrase
55. natural – a note that is not affected by either a sharp or a flat, a natural sign cancels a previous sharp or flat
56. **niente – nothing**
57. notation – any means of writing down music, usually indicating pitch, duration, timbre and loudness
58. octave – an interval eight diatonic scale degrees above it. Two notes an octave apart have the same letter name, and form the most consonant interval possible.
59. phrase – a single musical idea or element which is often defined by a repeated rhythmic pattern or a melodic contour
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. presto – very fast, faster than allegro
63. primo – first or upper part

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64. rallentando (*rall.*) – slowing down; the same as *ritardando*
65. rubato – making the established pulse flexible by accelerating and slowing down the tempo, an expressive device
66. sempre – always
- 67. senza – without**
- 68. sequence – the repetition of a phrase at different pitch levels using the same or similar intervals.**
69. sforzando (*sf or sfz*) – strongly accented, forced
70. simile (*sim.*) – continue to perform in a similar manner
71. sotto voce – softly; with subdued sound; performed in an undertone
72. staccato (*stacc.*) – detached, crisply played
- 73. stringendo – pressing, becoming faster, hurrying**
74. strophic – describes a song where the stanzas are all sung to the same music
75. subito – suddenly, quickly
- 76. tacet – indicated that a particular voice or instrument is silent for an extended passage or movement**
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 that were removed from the 09-10 list:

a cappella
accelerando
ballad
crescendo
decrescendo
fine
flat
forte
legato
pianissimo
piano
poco a poco
ritardando
sharp

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