



## 2008-2009 National Youth Theatre Awards

### Scoring Guidelines

Please use this scoring guide to help you assign points. Although we do expect you to use this guideline, we also expect you to use your best professional judgment for situations that may fall outside the boundaries of our descriptions. For example, a musical number may deliberately use disharmonies for a particular *intended* effect.

#### Scoring Scale

On a “one to ten” scale, with ten being the highest, consider “five” to be “average and what is expected,” and begin your judging from that point. Judge a specific category whether it is average or above average by assigning a number from 1 to 10. Fractions out to 2 decimal places (i.e., 8.75) are acceptable, but not 8.752.

We have grouped the scores into **10-9**, **8-7-6**, **5-4**, and **3-2-1** for simplicity. Assign higher or lower scores within those ranges depending upon the quality of the performance or production. Please use up to two decimal points to help further distinguish performance levels as appropriate.

Remember that a score of 5 is average. In every category, a score of 10 means a level of perfection was achieved that can't be topped, and should be used sparingly. On the other end of the spectrum, a score of 1 denotes a truly embarrassing or awful performance or production. Hopefully those will only have to be used sparingly, too.

Keep in mind that the score for overall production is not an average of all the category scores, but your general impression of the overall effect of the production. Sometimes the whole is greater than the sum of its parts!

As always, we are interested in your feedback as we continue to improve our scoring procedures. Please note any suggestions, enhancements or changes and email them to [rob@nationalyouththeatre.com](mailto:rob@nationalyouththeatre.com).

We wish you a very smooth and enjoyable theatrical season!

Artistically,

The National Youth Theatre Awards Committee

**Acting**

<b>ACTING</b>	
<b>10 9</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completely embodies the role; a truly memorable performance.</li> <li>• Creates and sells a totally believable character, whether or not that character is likeable and sympathetic or a villain.</li> <li>• Has an engaging stage presence that elicits a strong emotional response from the audience.</li> <li>• In a musical, exhibits superior acting, singing and dancing ability; a "triple threat".</li> <li>• Incorporates all elements of 6-7-8.</li> </ul>
<b>8 7 6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suspends audience's disbelief and engages the audience into the action and storyline.</li> <li>• Displays the style of acting appropriate to the genre of the play or musical (whether overt and theatrical, or subtle and conversational) and consistent with the director's vision.</li> <li>• Incorporates movement, body language, and physical nuances appropriate to the character.</li> <li>• Interacts believably and naturally with other characters in the play</li> <li>• In a musical, exhibits singing and/or dancing ability appropriate to the role, musical direction and choreography.</li> </ul>
<b>5 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery and movement is adequate, but not memorable.</li> <li>• Character is developed, but may lack nuances of body language and movement.</li> <li>• Interaction with other characters is adequate, but may seem staged at times.</li> <li>• In a musical, singing and/or dancing may be uneven with clear strengths and weaknesses (i.e. acting is strong, but weak vocals or dance, or strong vocals, but weak acting, etc.).</li> </ul>
<b>3 2 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery and movement seems unnatural; lines may be noticeably forgotten, flubbed or overacted.</li> <li>• "Telegraphs" lines or actions.</li> <li>• Breaks character or becomes visibly distracted.</li> <li>• In a musical, singing and/or dancing may be less than adequate for the role's demands.</li> </ul>

## Choreography & Scenic Design

Please consider that the responsibilities of choreographers vary depending upon whether they are creating/staging original choreography or re-creating an existing work.

	<b>CHOREOGRAPHY DESIGN:</b>	<b>SCENIC DESIGN</b>
<b>10 9</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extremely exciting and visually interesting.</li> <li>Creates a compelling expression of the mood of each song in a way that captivates the audience's attention.</li> <li>Displays the qualities of a 5 and above at higher levels.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Superior workmanship and construction.</li> <li>Versatile, well-designed sets, works in harmony with actors' movements and scene changes.</li> <li>Creates a memorable visual picture on stage that captivates the audiences' imagination; evokes the feeling of being there (literal sets).</li> </ul>
<b>8 7 6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visually expresses the nuances of the musical score.</li> <li>Creatively and dynamically uses space, rhythm, movement, levels, and energy.</li> <li>Adds greatly to the overall impact of the show.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adds to the effectiveness of the staging and/or choreography.</li> <li>Historically accurate and appropriate locales within the context of the play.</li> </ul>
<b>5 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integral to the plot and supports the story line.</li> <li>Reflects the mood of the musical piece.</li> <li>Furtheres the story line.</li> <li>Gauged to the age and ability level of the performer.</li> <li>Has visual entertainment value.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scene changes (if any) are practical and enabled by the design of the set.</li> <li>A visual reinforcement of the play.</li> <li>Functions for the movement needs of the play.</li> <li>Depicts the socio-economic levels of the play.</li> <li>Adequate workmanship/construction.</li> </ul>
<b>3 2 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Little visual entertainment value.</li> <li>Uses overly repetitive or predictable movements or stagnant staging.</li> <li>Distracts from the story line.</li> <li>Not geared to the ability level of the performers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Obvious historical inaccuracies.</li> <li>Detracts from the overall effect/message/mood.</li> <li>Shoddy workmanship/construction.</li> <li>Interferes with the movement/needs of the play.</li> </ul>

## Costume Design

<b>COSTUME DESIGN</b>	
<b>10</b> <b>9</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outstanding craftsmanship with extremely creative execution of styles.</li> <li>• Fabric, styles, and color create a unity of style, a compelling mood and add to the impact of the play.</li> <li>• In a musical, fabric and styles highlight the effect of the movement or choreography.</li> <li>• Adds greatly to the visual impact of the play.</li> </ul>
<b>8</b> <b>7</b> <b>6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exceptional workmanship.</li> <li>• Colors chosen work well with the story, set lighting.</li> <li>• Styles and fabric work well with the movement in a musical.</li> <li>• Creates a unity of style throughout the design and set.</li> </ul>
<b>5</b> <b>4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effectively reflects the interpretation of the play and is historically accurate.</li> <li>• Appropriate to the age/gender requirements of the character within the context of the play.</li> <li>• Reflects the socio-economic status and/or occupation of the character.</li> <li>• Well-tailored.</li> </ul>
<b>3</b> <b>2</b> <b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not historically accurate.</li> <li>• Inappropriate to the age/gender of the character.</li> <li>• Does not reflect the socio-economic status and/or occupation of the character.</li> <li>• Does not reflect the time of day/year/ weather.</li> <li>• Poorly tailored.</li> </ul>

**Direction**

<b>DIRECTION</b>	
<b>10</b> <b>9</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A clear concept for the piece carries through to each aspect of the production.</li> <li>• Actors deliver dynamic performances; moving the audience appropriately for the piece.</li> <li>• Actors' movement &amp; placement on stage (blocking) is highly effective; stage pictures created are appropriate to the piece and visually appealing.</li> <li>• Show flows smoothly and seemingly effortlessly.</li> <li>• Pacing (character movement, set changes, actors' cues) is spot-on; audience is completely involved with the plot.</li> </ul>
<b>8</b> <b>7</b> <b>6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concept for the piece is present in most elements of production--but not all.</li> <li>• Flow of the show is generally smooth; occasional minor glitches.</li> </ul>
<b>5</b> <b>4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blocking is adequate but stale or uncreative.</li> <li>• Concept for the piece is not consistent.</li> <li>• Actors' performances are imbalanced.</li> <li>• Flow of the show is erratic.</li> <li>• Scene changes take too long.</li> <li>• Evidence of technical problems that could've been avoided (through more efficient blocking; better-prepared running crew, etc.).</li> <li>• Design elements do not contribute to the concept of the show.</li> </ul>
<b>3</b> <b>2</b> <b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actors don't seem to understand the concept of the show or seem unconvincing.</li> <li>• No evident concept for the piece, or the concept is poorly executed or researched.</li> <li>• Blocking is ineffectual or unmotivated; audience has trouble seeing what is going on.</li> <li>• Actors make big mistakes (i.e., talking upstage; horrible diction; clearly do not understand their roles).</li> <li>• Show does not capture audience's attention; pacing is way off (either speeding through or dragging on).</li> <li>• Design elements actually detract from concept of the show.</li> <li>• Relationships between characters seem forced or unconvincing.</li> </ul>

## Season Lighting & Sound Design Rubrics

	LIGHTING DESIGN	SOUND DESIGN
10 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The lighting design perfectly enhances the ambience, mood, and psychological effect of the play.</li> <li>Creative and effective lighting greatly adds to the overall effectiveness of the story or musical.</li> <li>Creative use of special lighting effects (i.e. backlighting, scrims, or colored gels to denote action on stage, etc.).</li> <li>Qualities described in scores 5-8 also apply.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Greatly enhances the ambience, mood and psychological effect of the play or musical.</li> <li>Creates a strong emotional response appropriate to the dialog and action on stage.</li> <li>Well-thought, creative, historically accurate, and perfectly designed music cues from seating music to curtain call.</li> <li>Perfectly placed sound effects/cues and smooth fade-ins and fade-outs throughout and where appropriate.</li> </ul>
8 7 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excellent use of special lighting effects.</li> <li>Consistently and accurately expresses time of day/year/weather throughout the play.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sound is well balanced throughout the theatre</li> <li>Slight inconsistencies in overall placement of sound effects, cues, fade-ins and fade-outs.</li> </ul>
5 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creates the appropriate mood, atmosphere and psychological effect for the play.</li> <li>Appropriate for the location represented.</li> <li>Allows for appropriate visibility while maintaining selective focus and sustaining the mood of the scene.</li> <li>Expresses time of day/year/weather when appropriate.</li> <li>Consistent in approach throughout.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sound effects/music adequate, but may have a few inconsistencies in sound effects or cue placement.</li> <li>Seating music creates appropriate ambience.</li> <li>Historically accurate.</li> <li>Emanates from the correct area/direction/source.</li> <li>Rhythm and sound well-integrated with the play.</li> </ul>

3 2 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inappropriate for the mood, atmosphere or psychological effect of the play.</li> <li>• Inappropriate focus or limited or no visibility of the current action or actors' placement on stage.</li> <li>• Incorrectly represents time of day, year, or weather in relation to the action on stage.</li> <li>• Inappropriate to the location represented.</li> <li>• Inconsistent in approach or the lighting transitions relative to the action on stage.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sound effects/music inappropriate for the theme of the play, current action, or dialogue (including scene music, seating music, and intermission music).</li> <li>• Volume level too loud or too soft or inconsistent throughout play.</li> <li>• Imbalanced or does not emanate from incorrect direction/area/source.</li> <li>• Inappropriate for the time and place in which the play is set.</li> <li>• Incorrect timing of effects or music that does not sync with the action or dialogue on stage.</li> </ul>
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**Please be aware that these categories judge the design, not the execution, of these elements. Execution is the responsibility of the sound/lighting technicians.**

## Musical Direction

Please be aware that the responsibilities of the Musical Director vary depending upon the use of live or recorded music.

<b>MUSICAL DIRECTION</b>	
<b>10 9</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall, the music complements the feeling and flow of the show; the piece has a nice cohesion.</li> <li>• Clear and present dynamics bring the audience to tears or dancing in their seats.</li> <li>• Great depth of feeling is conveyed in each song; one feels moved.</li> <li>• Actors understand the lyrics and are able to interpret them.</li> <li>• All elements of 6-7-8 are present.</li> </ul>
<b>8 7 6</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lyrics are clear, loud and confident.</li> <li>• Harmonies are clear and apparent and blend nicely with the melody.</li> <li>• Orchestra's music is "tight," "clean" and well rehearsed.</li> <li>• Orchestra is well balanced, with a full sound.</li> <li>• (Pianist Only) – Pianist has absolute control over the music and creates a full, emotional sound.</li> </ul>
<b>5 4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally enjoyable, no glaring errors. Cast and band do an acceptable job.</li> <li>• Songs feel a bit out of place (whether a bit rushed or slow); may feel separate from the show.</li> <li>• Some small problems between musicians exist: mistakes or out-of-place notes.</li> <li>• Some lyrics are unclear; occasional poor diction.</li> <li>• Lack of fullness, vocally.</li> <li>• Some actors aren't interpreting or emoting, but overall actors are in-touch with the music.</li> </ul>
<b>3 2 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some dynamics are present, but overall, music feels flat and boring.</li> <li>• (Pianist Only) – Artistic interpretation is lacking at times, feels mechanical; the pianist doesn't fully understand the piece.</li> <li>• Frequent problems. Lack of energy, feeling, confidence.</li> <li>• Orchestra sounds thrown-together or unrehearsed.</li> <li>• (Pianist Only) – Mechanical playing. Flat, unfeeling; does not complement actors.</li> <li>• Sloppy pronunciation, frequent poor diction.</li> <li>• Obvious mistakes, actors unclear of the lyrics or their parts.</li> <li>• Absent or disappearing harmonies.</li> <li>• Mechanical singing; no study of the lyrics is apparent. Feels cold and sterile/fake.</li> <li>• Music detracted from the quality of the production.</li> </ul>