

Twenty Suggestions for Success at Solo & Ensemble MPA

1. Memorize your music well before the performance. Know all the dynamics and the meaning of any foreign language in your music.
2. Get a good night sleep each night of the week of MPA and especially the night before. Remember that when you don't get enough sleep the first thing to go is your voice, and the second is your sense of humor!
3. Eat a healthy breakfast the day of your performance. Don't show up on an empty stomach!
4. As a soloist, dress up to show respect for your art. As a member of an ensemble discuss what you will wear with all other members. Create an attractive, professional, uniform appearance.
5. Arrive early so you can check the location of your performance room ahead of time.
6. Use the restroom beforehand. Bring a bottle of water so you don't have to search for a water fountain.
7. When you begin your performance, greet the judge, and introduce yourself. Do not make any excuses, like "I have a cold" or "I've been sick all week," just do your best!
8. If you find yourself getting nervous, take three low, slow, deep breaths. This will slow down your heart rate and your oxygen use. You will feel calmer. Remember to think about the work you are about to do, not how you feel about the quality of your work.
9. Before you begin your performance, introduce yourself! Include your name, age, grade, and the number of times you've sung a solo at Solo & Ensemble. Finally, announce the title and composer of your song.
10. Do your best to communicate the meaning of each piece of music and give an artistic performance. Remember that you are an artist! Sing from your soul! Be the Song!
11. After each song, show good manners by bowing in thanks for the audience's applause. Smile!
12. If you make a mistake, do not show it on your face or in your body. Go on. A baseball player is considered a great hitter if they hit 33% of the time. You are going to sing a much higher percentage of the notes and rhythms correctly!
13. Sing to your audience and your judge. Don't look at your accompanist while you sing.

14. When you are finished with both songs, the judge will work with you for a few minutes. Listen carefully to the suggestions they make. Remember as much as you can! This is the reason we go.
15. When your clinic is over with the judge, thank him or her and shake their hand.
16. Thank your accompanist!
17. Even though the reason we go to Solo & Ensemble is to learn, you will most certainly be interested in receiving the judge's comments and final rating. The only people who can go in the office and get the rating are the directors. Your director will CALL YOU at home with your rating as soon as possible—probably later the same day.
18. If your rating is not what you thought it would be, do your best to accept it with grace. This is not always easy. Remember that your rating is one person's opinion on one day. A different judge might have given you something completely different. Remember that the main reason we go is to learn and improve!
19. Invite your parents to come to hear you sing. They love you and probably paid for this!
20. Support all your fellow singers from our school by going to their performances and giving them moral support. Clap, do not shout, whistle, or cheer at the end of their performances.

Do Your Best! We Are Proud of You!