



# National PTA® Reflections

## Music Composition Rules

National  
**PTA**  
everychild.one voice.®

**ILLINOIS PTA**

**MUSIC COMPOSITION** is the process of creating a new piece of music. The *composer* (student submitting entry) is a person who expresses their own thoughts and ideas through the use of sound. The student composer may submit an entry performed by an individual or group and/or make use of a sound library generated performance of a composed score. Student composers are not required to perform their composition. *Middle and high school grade divisions require music score/tablature/notation, either traditional or tablature.*

**Consider the following musical styles and instruments to portray your original composition:** A cappella, blues, choral, country, electronic, hip hop, jazz, world music, musical, orchestral, pop, R&B, religious, rock, symphonic/concert band and traditional.

All instruments, sounds, styles and combinations are accepted. Software may be used to produce an audio recording that does not include commercially pre-programmed imported MIDI or other source files. Entries containing algorithmic composition techniques are not accepted. An explanation of the origin of the music and/or the significance of the music style might be a useful addition to the artist statement when submitting a music composition that involves traditional, cultural or regional instruments. Whether an entry displays formal composition technique or a simple approach, it will be judged primarily on how well the student uses his or her artistic vision to portray the theme, originality and creativity.

**Originality:** Only new and original songs inspired by the theme may be submitted. Each entry must be the work of one student only.

**Copyright:** Use of copyrighted material is prohibited. Plagiarized entries will be disqualified.

**Presentation:** Audio must not exceed 5 minutes in length and 1GB (one gigabyte) in file size. Videos are not accepted.

**Ideas for Audio Quality:** Do not place the recording device on top of an instrument(s) or speakers. Turn off all noise-making devices in the room (air conditioners, fans, telephones, etc.). Record a short test and listen to it. If needed, change the record volume or microphone location. Allow for two seconds of silence at the beginning and end of your recording.

**Notation & Score Required for Middle School & High School Divisions Only.** Notation software may be used to create a score. Whether the score is handwritten or computer-generated, appropriate instrumentation and voicing are required for the performance. Number each page. Print on 8.5x11 (one sided only) or save/scan score as a single PDF.

### **Packaging:**

- Accepted audio file formats include: MP3, MP4, WMA, WAV, ACC (M4A) and FLAC.
- Label audio file, notation/score (if applicable) and CD/USB Drive with your State, Arts Category, Grade Division, Last Name, First Name (Example: PA.DANCE.PRI.SMITH.JOHN)

### **Local chairs must ensure the following packaging guidelines are followed:**

- Place the project directly into a gallon size zip lock bag with the project facing forward, and the entry form facing out the back of the sheet protector. Music, dance and film can be submitted on a USB drive or on a disc – these items must be labelled clearly as described above.

***All participants must also follow Official Rules for Participation.***