

# CHOOSING CONTEST MUSIC:

## IS IT SUITABLE FOR YOUR QUARTET/CHORUS?

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR QUARTET OR CHORUS:

For each voice part:

- Full range
- Comfortable range (tessitura)
- Bad notes (register change)

Breathing capabilities

Tempo and rhythm capabilities; do you feel the backbeat or the downbeat?

Difficult vowels

Personality/Image

### SONG & ARRANGEMENT RED FLAGS THAT AFFECT *ALL FOUR* CATEGORIES:

Part lines outside any part's comfortable range

Part lines that fall mainly in the register break

Jumpy part lines

Rangy part lines

Melody switch to other parts

Odd intervals

Abundance of accidentals

All four parts on an octave (no chord)

Lots of chord changes

Wide spread chords (2-octave spread)

Octave + gap between adjacent parts

Chromatic runs

Fast tempo

Rhythm demands (backbeat or odd rhythms)

Not enough natural breathing places

Abundance of hard consonant sounds

Abundance of short vowels

Wordy passages

Baritone above lead for extended passages

Baritone & lead crossing back & forth repeatedly

Cross relationships (one voice part has to find a note just ½ step away from the note another voice part just sang)

Cross-part jumps (one voice part has to find a note that's higher or lower than the note just sung by the adjacent voice part)

Parallel motion (all 4 voice parts moving the same direction at the same time)

Tag "hangers" in the voice part's register break

Tag "hangers" beyond the comfort zone for breath support

Other considerations:

Are there opportunities for appropriate dynamic variations?

Does it tell a story we all can buy into?

**UNLESS YOUR GROUP HAS BEEN SCORING AT B LEVEL OR ABOVE, KEEP YOUR CONTEST MATERIAL WELL WITHIN YOUR COMFORT ZONE!**

These issues will impact:

Demonstration of vocal skills (all categories)

Unity (all categories)

Note accuracy (Sound, Music)

Balance (Sound)

Tuning (Sound, Music)

Execution of tempo (Music, Expression)

Execution of vowels, consonants, diphthongs  
(Expression)

Creation of overtones (Sound)

Comfort level on stage (Showmanship)

Jan Meyer

**Sweet Adelines International Published Music--  
Contest Worthy and Suitable for Groups Currently  
Scoring at C Level and Below**

Ain't We Got Fun  
Baby Face  
Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree  
Every Street's a Boulevard  
Give My Regards to Broadway  
I'm All Alone  
I'm the One You're Looking For  
Lucky Day  
Please Don't Talk About Me When I'm Gone  
Side by Side  
Sunny Side Up  
That's My Weakness Now  
When I Leave the World Behind

\*\*This list is not necessarily exhaustive—there may be other suitable arrangements on the published music list. Competitors should also take into consideration their own group's strengths and weaknesses in choosing music. What is each voice part's range and tessitura, what are your breathing capabilities, what is your style and personality, are you a downbeat or backbeat group, are there some vowels you consistently have problems with, etc.

## CONTEST SONGS FOR C and C+ CHORUSES & QUARETS

These songs are also appropriate for higher scoring choruses and quartets. The list is not intended to recommend these song choices over others, it only lists several contact appropriate selections that have been performed successfully by choruses at this level.

*(Complied by Marge Bailey with the disclaimer that this is only one music judge's opinion. The songs still must be performed well to score well- regardless of how well the arrangement is written!)*

### UPTUNES:

Back in Those Says Gone By  
Bring Back Those Horse and Buggy Days  
By the Beautiful Sea  
Ev'ry Street's a Boulevard in Old New York  
Everybody's Crazy Over Dixie  
Floatin' Down to Cotton Town  
Give 'em a Show They'll Never Forget  
He's a Devil in His Own Home Town  
Tomorrow (I'll be in my Dixie Home)  
I'm Sitting on Top of the World  
Oh, How we Roared in the Twenties  
The Showboat Came to Town  
Take me Back to the 1920's

### BALLADS

All by Myself  
April Showers  
Chase the Rain Away  
Grandmother's Love Letters  
I Tired to Forget You in Vain  
Just a Baby's Prayer at Twilight  
Memories in Vain  
That Wonderful Mother of Mine (*this is not Pal of my Cradle Days*)  
When I Leave the World Behind  
You Can Have Every Light on Broadway

**This list is from Sharron Babb:**

Easier ballads:

Those Old Love Letters  
Even I need Love  
Back in the Old Routine

Easier Uptunes:

Give my Regards  
Who's Sorry Now?  
Side by Side  
Smile

Easier Swing:

When my Baby Smiles  
I Know a little bit about a lot of things

Challenging Ballads:

Oh How I Miss you Tonight  
I'm Alone Because I love You  
Bandstand in Central Park  
What'll I Do  
If you Love me Really Love Me  
Once Upon a Time  
When You Come Home  
If I Had My Way  
Old Songs, Old Friends  
I Never Meant to Fall in Love  
Crying Myself to Sleep  
Dancing this Dance in the Wrong Romance  
When I Lost You  
Sing Me that Song  
Singing Love Songs/Somebody Else  
Sweet Adeline  
Call me Back, Pal of Mine  
My Mother's Rocking Chair  
My Mother's Eyes

Challenging Uptunes:

Ya Gotta Know how to Love'em/  
I Can't Give You Anything but Love Medley  
Changes Medley  
Jeepers Creepers  
How's Ev'ry Little thing in Dixie  
Flirty Eyes  
How Many Hearts Have you Broken  
Two Tickets to Georgia  
South Rampart Street  
Dixie One-Step  
Dixieland Band  
Smile Medley  
Moment I Saw Your Eyes  
Cry Baby  
Honey's Lovin' Arms  
Ya Better Stop Babyin' Baby  
After You've Gone Medley  
Undecided