

# Auditioning and Casting

## **Auditioning Casting**

**The students will audition for one another, evaluate and vote on who will play the characters in their opera.** The process of auditioning and casting is very exciting and can easily become competitive. If the creation process has been one of respect and group cooperation the competitive nature is lessened. So, before embarking on this wonderful adventure:

**Opera Rules:  
All Everyone  
participates  
No one gets  
hurt**

**Let the children  
do it**

- ? The whole class must learn all the words and music for the entire opera.
- ? Reinforce the opera rules.
- ? Talk about how each character is important in telling the opera story.
- ? Select 3-4 measures of different character's songs to audition with.
- ? Practice the selected measures together as a class.
- ? Have students sign-up for **one** character to audition for, and list their second & third choice (for teacher to use in case of a tie or other complexity in the casting process). Everyone in the class does not have to audition for each character, but every child may audition for all the characters he wants.
- ? Character groups may audition in groups.

## **Audition Process:**

### **1. Explain to students that each performer must be able to:**

**Project  
Enunciate  
Sing in Tune  
Be Believable**

- ? **Project** – sing loudly enough to be heard in the back of the room (not shouting)
- ? **Enunciate** – sing with clear, articulate diction so that the words are understood
- ? **Sing in tune** – it sounds nice
- ? **Be believable** – act like the character or show emotion in a believable manner



### **2. Have the students audition using one of the following two methods:**

- A.** Give each student a copy of the audition form and explain how to use it:
- ? Enter the name of the part being auditioned in the top left space.
  - ? Enter the name of each person auditioning for the part on the lines along the top of the form.
  - ? Give each student points from 1-5 in each of the four areas depending on how well they performed.
  - ? Five points equals the highest or best and one point equals the least.
  - ? Repeat this process until all parts have been auditioned.
  - ? The teacher then collects the forms and totals them privately.
  - ? The results should be announced at the **next rehearsal**.
  - ? For younger students, the teacher may direct the class to put their heads down and close their eyes. They may vote by raising hands for the student they thought had the best audition.

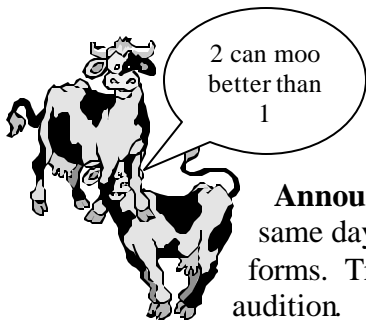
Since it is far easier to audition after someone else has already finished, it may be a good idea to have the first student audition **first and last, being judged the last time**. Or have character groups audition first.

**Sample Audition Form**

Character: "The Hero"	John	Mary	Sam	Ann
<b>Project</b>	4	3	1	2
<b>Enunciate</b>	3	5	4	5
<b>Sing in Tune</b>	5	5	5	3
<b>Believable</b>	5	4	4	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>

**Casting Process:**

The above audition form represents how one student might judge the performers auditioning for "The Hero". Evaluate each performer's total as compared to the others. This determines who plays each part. Every student should receive one form for each part being auditioned.



**In the event of a tie** – make your best judgement. Ask yourself, Could two performers play the part? If the answer is yes, tell the class they selected two wonderful performers to play the part. Work through the exciting discovery with your class.

**Announce the results the next day.** Never announce the cast on the same day as auditions. Give yourself time to fairly tabulate the audition forms. Try to allow the students who were absent an opportunity to audition.

**Caution:** It may be a temptation to "double cast" the opera, but that will not be satisfactory. All of the children need to perform every time their opera is presented.

**Be positive and excited about the cast announcement** – “I’m excited about how thoughtful you were during the auditioning process and I know you chose a great cast!” Encourage all the students and deal with any emotional “fall out” immediately. The positive experience could turn negative in a flash.



***Evaluation:***

- ? **During the Process** – Did the students take risks, and show creativity in the auditions? Were the students courteous and aware of others abilities in acting and singing? Did students demonstrate an understanding and increased ability to project their voices and enunciate words sing in tune all while demonstrating believable emotion and action?
- ? **After the process** – Did the students demonstrate increased expressiveness as they read? Do the students show evidence of increased risk taking? Do the students demonstrate an increase in evaluation skills?