

Guiding Questions for Practice and Self-Recoding

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Objective elements: Intonation, Tempo, Rhythm, Clarity

Am I playing/singing in tune with myself? Not just to a tuner, but from one note to the next?

Am I over- or under-shooting high/low notes?

Do I need to modify my pitch for Just Intonation, or match to a piano?

Is my sense of pulse consistent over time?

Can I play/sing my piece to a slow metronome?

ex in 4/4 time: Can I play/sing with met on 1&3? 2&4? Only on 1? On 3? On the &-of-1?

Can I phrase naturally and still maintain a consistent pulse with a slow metronome?

Are my rhythms placed accurately?

Can I play along with a metronome at a fast subdivision to clean my timing?

ex with triplet passage at 120: Can I set a metronome to 360 and exactly line my notes up?

Percussion: Can I cover a soft metronome with the start of my sound?

Winds: Can I cover a soft metronome by "bopping" the start of my notes?

Long tones: Can I fill my sustained tones with an exact number of fast subdivisions to a met?

Am I clearly presenting every **written** element on the page? Is everything obviously present?

Am I inappropriately adding anything **not** indicated on the page?

Are any elements (dynamics, articulations, consonants, etc) present that should not be?

Am I consistently presenting elements throughout the piece?

Vocal: Do the characteristics of my voice make certain musical elements difficult to execute?

Winds: Am I playing articulations the same way through a passage of related music?

Percussion: Are my dynamic levels and articulations obviously all different from one another?

Subjective Elements: Phrasing, Tone, X-factor

Am I adding interpretation that communicates understanding of the music?

Can I describe the emotions or ideas present in 2-3 words to focus my expression?

Can I modify my pacing expressively without losing the pulse?

Can I compress or stretch my subdivisions without obscuring the rhythm?

Do I have a "sound concept" appropriate to the time period, style, or genre?

Winds/Strings: Do I need a similar or contrasting tone for different pieces?

Percussion: Are my mallets and strokes supporting my tone concept or fighting against it?

Vocal: Am I using appropriate color, diction, and vowel sounds for the style or genre?

Do I embody the music? Do I bring an energy and confidence aligned to my performance?

Do I present an aesthetic which aligns to the ensemble I'm auditioning for? (professionalism)