

Principles of Effective Adjudication

Effective adjudication occurs when the comments and score are mutually reflective. If you can read the comments then guess the rating, it is an effective evaluation.

Respond to the sound:

Ask yourself, what do I expect to hear?

Then, write an account of how what is played compares this to ideal

Use adjectives and descriptors that are reflective of the rating level:

10 = flawless, artistic, exceptional

9 = accurate, musical, outstanding

8 = nearly accurate, emerging, very good

7 = generally accurate, occasional, good

Etc.

Phrase all language positively, even when offering a negative critique:

“There was no dynamic contrast.” Playing with a large range of dynamics will make this dance sparkle.

“The LH was too loud and drowned out the RH.” Strive to keep the LH softer throughout, allowing us to hear your lovely RH phrasing.

Strike a balance between specific and generalized commentary:

In mm. 10-12, observe the rests in the LH.

There was a secure pulse and rhythmic vitality throughout.

Avoid:

- Teaching through the comments
- Passing on a personalized interpretation
- Espousing a personal approach to technique
- Rejecting an effective interpretation that differs from your own
- Responding to perceived “talent,” either in or against the students favor

Remember:

- The student may or may not be prepared
- Students will be nervous; put them at ease by being friendly
- Be flexible with students while being efficient and timely
- Your role is to provide an *unbiased* account of what was played
- There is an acceptable range of tempo and style for every piece; be aware of what is opinion and what is a deficiency
- When in doubt, lean in the student’s favor
- Perfect and near perfect scores must be given freely when they are deserved

Piano Progressions-Performance:

- Greet the student warmly
- Allow the student to try out the piano if they like
- Encourage the student to announce their piece—do not lower the score if they do not have an announcement
- Coaching?
- What if a student has a large memory gap?
- If you are conflicted about a score, you may speak to the private teacher
- Overall spirit should be that of encouragement

Piano Progressions—Skills

- Hear a wide variety of skills that covers the gamut of the level
- Comments should reflect the score
- Comments on technique and hand positions are ok
- Poor hand position should not lower a score, unless it is affecting the sound (evenness, etc)