

Tips & Resources

Overall Tips: Set up your Recording Space

- Find a space where you can move around freely taking care to move items that might impede your creative exploration. This is especially important for dance and movement.
- Ensure the camera portion of your device is at eye level. This way the camera can record you the way others see you. You can use a tripod (at least 60 inches tall) built for a smart phone or tablet. If you do not have a tripod, consider using a stack of books on a desk or box. Filming in “landscape” (horizontally) is always preferable, but not required.
- Do your best to find a space that is free of visual distractions. Solid colored walls are ideal, but any background that does not steal the focus from your performance is desired.
- Take care that your space allows for adequate lighting. Do not have a lamp or window directly behind you as it will cast a shadow over your face. Keep the lighting source behind your recording device or to the side of you so that your face is lit.

Slating Tips

- An example of a slate for a SONG might be, “My name is Audra McDonald and this is ‘Daddy’s Son’ from Ragtime.”
- An example of a slate for a MONOLOGUE might be, “My name is Lin-Manuel Miranda and this is Choir Boy by Tarell Alvin McCraney.”
- An example of a slate for a piece of DANCE might be, “My name is L. Morgan Lee, I am dancing to ‘Bad Romance’ by Lady Gaga, choreographed by Camille A. Brown.
- An example of a slate for a piece of DANCE that is “self-choreographed” might be, “My name is Eva Noblezada, I am dancing to ‘Burn’ from Hamilton, choreographed by me.”

Song Tips

- Many accompaniment tracks to musical theater songs are available on YouTube and other websites. If you do not have a way to work with a live accompanist or don’t have access to a recorded track of your music, consider using an app that will play the piano part for you. Harmony Helper is one such app that allows you to take photos of your sheet music, upload them to the app and then generate a piano track that you can use.
- When using prerecorded music, make sure the music source (the speaker or output) is closer to you than it is to the device on which you are recording. By having the accompaniment near you, your voice and the music will reach the microphone on your device in a more balanced manner.
- When choosing your material, try to find songs that use different parts of your voice. The higher part of your voice, also known as falsetto or “head voice”, might be used more prominently in one piece, whereas your chest voice (the area most people also speak in) could be used for another.

Monologue Tips

- Only perform Shakespeare if you feel comfortable. Because classical monologues are public domain, you can search for these on the internet and find many alternatives to Shakespeare that were written before 1950.
- It is always best to choose a monologue that is age-appropriate (generally within 5-10 years of your actual age) and that feels authentic to your culture, background, and experience. The piece should feel like it could be an extension of who you actually are. Active monologues are best for auditions; an active monologue takes place in real time right now and focuses on what you want - this should put you in a moment of direct communication with an imaginary scene partner. The monologue should deal with the present situation between you and this person and should not be a story or remembrance. Instead, it should be about what is happening at this moment. It is usually helpful to avoid monologues that rely on extreme emotions as it is hard to believably justify these responses in a short piece.

Dance Tips

- Applicants are encouraged to keep a full-length mirror behind the filming device so as to see themselves as they execute choreography.
- Make sure that you can execute all of the choreography well. It is to your advantage to choose steps and movement that highlight your strengths instead of your weaknesses.
- To assist applicants with the dance prescreen, a handful of the MTCP institutions provided the following resource videos for applicants who do not have access to a choreographed combo for the prescreen process. You may submit this choreography (or a combination of it) to any of the schools you are applying to that ask for a dance prescreen.
- MTCP Dance Combo Resource (generously provided by Texas State University)

Wild Card Tips

- Think about the wild card section as an opportunity to show your personality. Don't limit yourself, but make sure you teach the adjudicators something about you. Below is a list of ideas that have been successful in the past:
- Singing a pop song
- Performing your own SNL-styled skit where you create a comedic character
- Sharing a hobby or activity that means something to you
- Performing in a language other than English in which you are fluent
- Playing an instrument
- Making a "how-to" video on something you are an expert at
- Performing a poem, song, or dance you created yourself