

SHEARER

HOW TO SUCCEED ON A GUITAR PLAYING TEST

1. PREPARE, PREPARE, PREPARE!!!

- a. Make sure you understand all parts of the assignment
- b. Don't ignore symbols or words you don't understand! Learn them! Ask for help!
- c. Do you understand the "point" of the assignment? What are the objectives?

2. TEMPO

- a. **Slow and Steady**
- b. Only perform at a tempo that is comfortable
- c. Don't take the assignment at a tempo that causes mistakes you wouldn't make at a slower tempo
- d. Perform at a tempo at which you don't hesitate between chords or notes
- e. If someone can easily clap, snap, or tap their foot along with your performance, then your tempo is good

3. RHYTHM

- a. Make sure you understand how to count the rhythms.
- b. Make sure you give all notes their proper duration
 - i. Do not cut longer notes short just to go on
 - ii. The same goes for rests as well
- c. Rhythm can be affected by an unsteady tempo, so keep a steady tempo

4. CHORD/NOTE ACCURACY

- a. Review the chords and make sure you are playing all the correct frets
 - i. Make sure you are playing the correct strings for each chord
- b. Review the notes and make sure you are playing the correct frets
- c. Make sure you know how to play notes with sharps or flats
- d. Check the Key Signature

5. POSTURE

- a. Make sure you are holding the guitar and sitting properly
- b. This is one of the first things you learn in guitar class so be sure to maintain good playing posture habits!

6. TECHNIQUE

- a. When reading music (Melodies)
 - i. LEFT HAND!
 1. Thumb should be flat behind the neck opposing the fingers.
 2. The palm should be cupped and facing up
 3. Fingers should be nearly parallel to the frets! Not the fret board!
 - ii. RIGHT HAND
 1. Pluck the strings directly over the sound hole slightly closer to the fret board
 2. Alternate "i" and "m" fingers when picking finger-style
- b. When playing chords
 - i. LEFT HAND
 1. Make sure you are using appropriate and accepted fingerings for all chords
 2. Make sure strings that are supposed to sound are not muted.
 - a. Play one string at a time to double check
 - ii. RIGHT HAND
 1. Make sure you are using correct strum patterns
 2. Make sure your mute strum is correct
 3. Make sure you strum the strings directly over the sound hole slightly closer to the fret board