**Class Script**

**3 different performance levels and prioritized strategies for**

**moving to the next performance level**

**(C+ to B-/ B-to B/B to B+):**

**MOVING FROM C+ TO B-**

**C+:** A performance that earns a C+ usually demonstrates an understanding for the barbershop style. Vocal skills have been worked on but are not always intrinsic. Singers need greater stamina. Ensemble has an understanding of an interpretative plan but it is not always delivered as a unit.

**Sound Category:** Successful performers progress through this level by mastering and unifying basic singing skills. Most errors are attributable to wrong notes and incorrect singing skill at this level. At a C+, singers are starting to master their own vocal skills, but can’t always rely upon their consistency in performance. Focus on the mechanics of body alignment, breathing and stamina, resonance, vowel production, and all the elements of harmony accuracy will yield results here. Learn to balance a barbershop chord properly.

**Music Category:** In addition to vocal skills, music selection is of primary concern at this level. Vocal skills are starting to support more challenging music, but may not be within the grasp of all singers. Choosing music that suits the vocal range, singing and tuning abilities, and vocal style of the ensemble will result in a more successful outcome. Learn to interpret the barbershop style (especially rubato), and sing a simpler arrangement.

**Expression Category:** Vocal skills need to be the primary focus, especially breath management to build stamina and a broader base for supporting interpretive plans. Learn to breathe together to deliver the lyrical/musical line with unity and forward motion. Work phrase flow utilizing vowel-to-vowel singing with consonants as the transportation between vowel sounds.

**Visual Communication Category**: Build vocal skills especially breath support to create a bridge for characterization and energy. Keep character and body language connected and attached to the story. Work on confidence of the individual by building better vocal skills and command.

**MOVING FROM B- TO B:**

**B-:** Overall a performance that earns a B- score is generally inconsistent. The ensemble has a good solid understanding of the barbershop style. Artistry is beginning to emerge but is technically based. Vocal skills are solid but are delivered inconsistently.

**Sound Category:** Continue building and unifying vocal skills and harmony accuracy. The basic singing skill level is comparable to C+, and the ability to demonstrate a blended unit sound is what propels the ensemble into B-. Pay more attention to singing correct notes and words, as well as accurate intervals. Become more adept at singing a continuous wall of sound. Breathe and sing together (using listening skills) for better synchronization. More consistency in all the technical elements of the category will bolster success in the other categories.

**Music Category:** Better vocal skills lure singers to try advanced music arrangements, with mixed results. There is still a need to improve vocal skills and harmony accuracy, but there starts to emerge a sense of musicality and artistry as the ensemble works as a unit to make barbershop music.

**Expression Category:** Continue to build vocal skills especially breath management to fully support the interpretative plans. Delve into understanding artistry as a component of musicality that is more connected to emotional connection and storytelling. Develop a better focus on unity especially internal/external synchronization and unity in characterization.

**Visual Communication Category:** Vocal skills need greater consistency. A better understanding of stage command and energy needs to be incorporated into the character delivery and audience connection. Encourage more individual personality to shine through that allows for audience connection.

**MOVING FROM B TO B+:**

**B:** At the B level the performance is strong. What is lacking is a high level of confidence that allows the performance to be about the audience versus self (ensemble).

**Sound Category:** Vocal production skills become more instinctual. Build breath management skills to support every aspect of the vocal performance. Learn about and use energy and artistry to bring more dimension to your sound. Add dynamics and vocal character to show range and flexibility, as well as to bring your audience into your vocal performance.

**Music Category:** Vocal skills allow ensembles to display barbershop style and musicality with more frequency. Performances start to be less technical and more artistic, with momentary lapses in harmony accuracy. Skill in music selection results in a marriage of song and performer that adds to audience enjoyment.

**Expression Category:** Work individual vocal skills to make them habitual with singers and build individual confidence. Allow musicality to drive artistry and finesse. Allow the character and genuine involvement in communicating the message to frame and propel the performance.

**Visual Communication Category**: Build strong and habitual vocal skills. Develop characterization and theatrical skills that are a consistent part of the performance. Incorporate a high level of unified energy that comes through to the audience. Encourage a concern for audience that is shared and synergistic.