

WGI Visual & Effect-Visual

Combined Caption Alignment for the 2026 Emphasis Plan

The Framing Principle (Both Captions)

The 2026 Emphasis Plan serves as our strategic roadmap for the season. It does not introduce new evaluative criteria, modify the sheets, or shift the philosophy; rather, it is a disciplined recalibration of our focus.

The emphasis plan asks adjudicators to:

- Be **intentional** about where attention is placed and how we verbalize our assessments.
- Maintain **caption integrity**.
- Evaluate moments and performer contributions **proportionally**.
- Recognize what makes **indoor percussion unique**.

1. Embracing the Uniqueness of Indoor Percussion

Indoor percussion is the only marching arts medium where the percussionists are the cornerstone of the presentation. We must evaluate through this specific lens, moving away from "marching band," "drum corps," or "winter guard" mentalities to better reflect and respond to the unique demands, opportunities, and intricacies of this art form.

Shared Caption Responsibility

Both captions explicitly credit and reward:

- Layered responsibilities
- Performer physicality
- The marriage of visual and musical elements
- Achievement demonstrated over time
- The performers' role as the primary communicators of the program

Visual Caption Lens (Composition & Performance)

Visual recognizes uniqueness through all sheet considerations, in both the composition *and* performance sub-captions. Some examples would include:

- **Simultaneous Responsibilities** (Composition)
- **Orchestration of Visual Devices** (Composition)
- **Accuracy, Presence, Uniformity, Cohesiveness** (Performance)
- **Adaptation and recovery** as observable aspects of achievement (Performance)

Judges should intentionally value:

- Proximity and intimacy of the indoor space
- Achievement while navigating equipment, props, set pieces, etc.
- Clarity under restriction/responsibilities
- Physical responsibility layered with musical responsibility

This is ***not*** to lower expectations; it is **recognition of the unique challenges and responsibilities inherent within this artform**. It is an effort to put these front of mind when we sit down in the indoor percussion seat.

Effect-Visual Caption Lens

Effect-Visual recognizes uniqueness through:

- The Visual Journey
- Excellence as Effect
- Coordination
- Engagement
- Communication
- Range of Effects

Judges should intentionally value:

- Proximity and intimacy of the indoor space
- Performer-driven communication
- Physical virtuosity as a generator of effect
- Effect achieved *because* of constraint, not in spite of it

Combined Calibration Reminder

- Visual evaluates **how clearly and consistently performers achieve**
- Effect-Visual evaluates **how effectively that achievement creates engagement and meaning**
- Equipment, restriction, and proximity amplify responsibility — they should be **valued, not neutralized**

2. Achieving a 50/50 Balance in Visual Commentary (Composition vs. Performance Quality)

Our objective in this area is to ensure a more balanced split in focus between **Composition** (the "what") and **Performance Quality** (the "how"), as verbalized through our recorded commentary.

Visual Caption (Internal Balance)

The Visual sheet is structurally divided:

- Composition → assessing the quality of the written work
- Performance → assessing the quality of the performers' skill and application

Judges must intentionally balance commentary between:

- What has been composed
- How it is being performed

An imbalance is a **commentary choice**, not a sheet limitation.

Effect-Visual Caption (Internal Balance)

Effect-Visual is divided into:

- Overall Effect
 - Program
 - Creativity
 - Communication

- Engagement
- Coordination
- Range of Effects
- **Visual Effect**
 - The Visual Journey
 - Creativity
 - Musicality
 - Artistry
 - Excellence as Effect

Judges should balance commentary between:

- Conceptual journey and artistic intent
- Performer communication and real-time effect generation

Cross-Caption Balance Reminder

- Visual should not absorb Effect commentary
- Effect-Visual should not become a proxy for Visual Performance Quality
- Performance achievement feeds Effect—there is overlap between the two—but the captions remain largely distinct and differentiated

Balanced commentary across both captions ensures performers are recognized for **what they do** and **what that does to the audience**.

3. Elevating the Evaluation of Primary Moments

Proportional Prioritization: Peak events deserve peak evaluative focus. These are the moments where significant design and rehearsal time have been invested.

Shared Principle Across Both Captions

Primary moments are where:

- Responsibility is most layered.
- Intent is most concentrated.
- Achievement and effect are most observable.

Transitions matter—but they **serve the moment**, not replace it. They are a means to an end.

The "Interrupt Rule": If you find yourself talking about transitional aspects and a large primary moment begins, it's appropriate to **interrupt yourself** to take in and respond to the primary moment, and then circle back to the transition feedback/assessment afterward.

Visual Caption: Primary Moments

In Visual, primary moments reveal:

- Clarity of Intent & Vertical Orchestration (Composition)
- Accuracy, presence, movement, and uniformity (Performance)
- Ensemble cohesiveness and recovery immediately following the event

Judges should prioritize:

- Whether the moment was clearly written
- Whether it was consistently achieved
- The primary skill set involved in the moment
- How quickly and cleanly the ensemble recovers from any issues

Transition commentary should be proportional and moment-supportive.

Effect-Visual Caption: Primary Moments

In Effect-Visual, primary moments reveal:

- Strength of the visual journey
- Communication and engagement
- Excellence as effect
- Range and pacing of effects

Judges should prioritize:

- Impact of the event itself
- Performer connection with the audience
- Whether the moment sustains or enhances effect over time

Transitions are evaluated **primarily as they enhance or diminish the effect of the moment**.

Caption Relationship Summary

| Visual | Effect-Visual |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Understanding & achievement | Engagement & impact |
| Responsibility & control | Communication & journey |
| Consistency over time | Pacing & range of effects |
| Recovery as achievement | Continuity as effect |

They work **in parallel**, not in competition.

Closing Alignment Statement

Visual evaluates the **quality** of the composed work and the **skill** of the performer.

Effect-Visual evaluates the **degree of engagement** and the **artistic result** of that work.

When both captions are applied with this discipline, we ensure that the **creative vision of the designers** and the **exceptional effort of the performers**—as both musicians and athletes—are fully recognized, valued, and rewarded.