

School Video Production Guidelines and Tips for The World's Largest Concert

The guidelines and tips below are provided to ensure that each school will be able to submit a video that meets the necessary production specifications. Teachers should share them with their producers before submitting a proposal to eliminate any potential problems or disappointments should the producer not meet the technical requirements. Although we do NOT wish to eliminate any schools that have worked hard to create a video, tapes not meeting the production guidelines cannot be used. Please do not hesitate to contact the WLC Coordinator with questions at 800-336-3768.

We make every effort to use some portion of each school's video,
but it is important to note that **usage is not guaranteed.**

Production Specifications

- The video footage **must** be high quality. We can accept Digi Beta, Beta SP, DVCam, Mini-DV, DVCPPro, DVCPPro50, DVCPProHD, HDCam, HDSR, DVD, and VHS (least preferable). We *cannot* accept HDV (please make sure if you are recording with a DV camera, you are not in the HDV setting), XDCam, 3/4" videotape, hi-8, S-VHS, or other formats. ***Any videos submitted that are not in the appropriate format will not be used.***
- The tape **must** have *continuous* timecode recorded on the tape but the timecode *cannot* be visible in the video picture. (by *continuous* we mean that if the timecode starts running at, for example, 01:00:00:00 when you first start recording a tape, every time you start and stop the camera, the timecode on that tape should continue sequentially from where it stopped.)
- Two or more takes, as described below, are preferred. Each take should have audio and video slates, which may be done by holding a hand-lettered paper indicating the take number in front of the lens for five seconds and saying the take number into the microphone.

NOTE: It is helpful when taping in front of a large landmark, such as an historic building, to place the group in the foreground so it can be seen, with just enough of the landmark visible in the background to make it easily recognizable.

TAKE 1 must be a static (camera not moving), medium to wide shot showing the entire performing group. Hold this shot for the duration of the song. This enables us to see the entire group during the chosen video portion.

TAKE 2 should be another static shot of the group; possibly slightly closer, or framed from a different angle.

TAKE 3 should include medium panning shots, showing two or three rows of singers. Please start each pan movement with a musical phrase. This allows us to edit the shot as the phrase begins. If taping at a unique location, one take of wide shot(s) would be helpful.

TAKE 4 should include wide shots if filming at a unique location, or close ups of special features (soloists, props, scenery, etc.).

- **DO NOT EDIT THE TAPE!** It is best for us to excerpt/edit from raw footage.

Important Tips

- **Make your arrangements for the filming at the time that you submit your proposal.** This includes camera operators, sites, taping dates, coordination of staff/administrators/ parents to be in attendance, field trip arrangements, etc. It helps to plan ahead, since there may not be much time to create the video after we send you the synchronization recording.
NOTE: For low cost filming options, check with your local public access station, college media center, or local high school media department!
- **Keep the weather in mind!** You will likely be filming in November or December, so if it will be cold and/or snowy in your area, consider taping indoors. Keep in mind that snowy backgrounds can look washed out on film.
- **Remember that only a short segment of the video can be used.** Any staged activities/ choreography must be recognizable and quickly understood in a short time frame. (Choreography should not include inappropriate movements.)
- **Use the synchronization CD!** We will send each participating teacher the soundtrack to the already recorded audio tracks. Do NOT film your students before receiving this recording. When we edit your video into the final program, it is essential that your tempo match that of the already recorded tracks so all mouths are in unison! **Your students' voices will be heard on the WLC DVD, so be sure that the audio on your video recording is high quality. Do NOT place your CD player close to the source that records your students' audio.**
- **Include only students in the video.** An occasional shot of the teacher/conductor is okay *only* for close up or panning shots.
- **Choose clothing and/or costuming carefully.** Do not have students wear white - it does not pick up well and can render the effect of "floating heads." Please make sure students are appropriately attired (avoid revealing outfits).
- **Communicate with your camera operator/production crew.** You are the "production manager" for your video. It is important to communicate any questions, concerns, or necessary information to the producer/director/camera operator(s) as efficiently as possible. Keep the following in mind:
 - Students should be well lit, including dancers and musicians.
 - Avoid high contrast backlighting situations.
 - Do not overexpose the shots.
 - Focus on the students, keeping the conductor/teacher out of the frame for most takes.
 - Keep the pan (scanning) shots smooth.
 - Eliminate background noise if possible; your students' voices will be used and heard on the WLC DVD.
- **Tell us which takes are the best.** If there are specific portions of the video that you would like us to consider, please include a note describing the footage and where it can be found on the video (time code).