



Carnatic Music - Vocal Syllabus

Level 1 (Practical and oral test)

Practical

The student should be able to sing the following:

1. Sarali Varisais (To be sung in 3 speeds)
2. Jantai Varisais
3. 5 Carnatic or devotional compositions (including geethams and bhajans) – with raga / tala / composer
4. Arohanam / avarohanam of any 6 ragams

Theory (Oral questions)

The student should be able to answer the following:

1. Sruthi related questions (About tambura or Shruthi box)
2. Names of Sapta Swaras
3. Demonstrate the following talas – Adi, Rupakam (3 beat), Khanda chapu, Misra chapu
4. 1 minute talk about any one of the following composers: Thyagaraja / Annamacharya / Purandaradasa

Aural Test

1. Student should know Mayamalava gowla swara sthanams and answer aural questions (recognize apaswarams when a pattern is sung)
2. Student should sing S P S for different shrutis

Level 2 (Practical and oral test)

Includes syllabus from Level 1

Practical

The student should be able to sing the following:

1. Any one of the following: Daatu Varisais, Mel sthayi varisais, Keezh sthayi varisais
2. Sapta tala Alankarams (To be in sung in 3 speeds)
3. 10 Carnatic or devotional compositions (including at least 2 geetham and 2 Trinity compositions) – with raga / tala / composer
4. Any 2 compositions - Swarajathis / Varnam

Theory (Oral questions)

The student should be able to answer the following:

1. Names of all swara sthanams
2. Demonstrate the Sapta talas in various jathis and name the angas
3. Explain 10 basic Carnatic music related terms (list of terms to be given by student)
4. 2 minute talk about any two of the following composers: Thyagaraja / Dikshitar / Shyama Shastri / Annamacharya / Purandaradasa

5. Student should be able to “sight read” arohanam / avarohanam when swara sthanams of an audava ragam are given

Aural Test

1. Student should hear swara pattern and recognize if it is a shuddha madhyama vs. prathi madhyama raga
2. Student should hear swara pattern of an audava raga and be able to sing arohanam / avarohanam
3. Raga recognition: Student should hear 2 brief snippets in different ragams (say, A and B) and recognize if a 3rd snippet is in Raga A or B

Level 3 (Practical and oral test)

Includes syllabus from Level 1 and 2

Practical

The student should be able to sing the following:

1. Janta varisais and Alankarams to be sung in 4 melakarta ragams, apart from Mayamalavagowlai
2. 8 Carnatic kritis (including at least 4 Trinity compositions; should include one chapu tala) – with raga / tala / composer
3. Any 1 from the following musical forms : Jatiswaram or Swara Pallavi or Swara sahityam or Swara jati
4. Tana Varnam in 2 speeds (Any 3)

Theory (Oral questions)

The student should be able to answer the following:

1. Explain 15 basic Carnatic music related terms (list of terms to be given by student)
2. Names and sing all swara sthanams (including vivadi)
3. Demonstrate any of the 35 basic talas
4. 2 minute talk about any three of the following : varnam / kriti / Papanasam Sivan / Bhadrachala Ramadasa / M S Subbulakshmi / violin in Carnatic music
5. Student should be able to “sight read” sancharams in a ragam (student to share a list of 3 audava and 2 other ragams for this exercise)

Aural Test

1. Student should hear swara pattern and recognize if it is a shuddha madhyama vs. prathi madhyama raga
2. Student should hear swara pattern of an audava / shadava / sampurna raga and be able to sing arohanam / avarohanam
3. Raga recognition: Student should hear 3 brief snippets in different ragams (say, A B and C) and recognize if a 4th snippet is in Raga A or B or C
4. Kriti appreciation: Student should hear a song snippet and answer simple questions – like recognizing the composer from the mudhra or name of the God to who it is dedicated etc

Level 4 (Practical , aural and oral test)

Includes syllabus from Level 1-3

Practical

The student should be able to sing the following:

1. Tana varnam (to be sung in 2 speeds) (Any 5)
2. Alankarams to be sung in different 6 different ragams, apart from Mayamalavagowlai (list to be given by student)
3. 10 Carnatic kritis (including at least 4 Trinity compositions; should include one khanda chapu and 1 misra chapu tala) – with raga / tala / composer
4. Introduction to Alapana and Kalpana swarams (Any 1)
5. Any 2 tukkadas: including Tevaram, Thirupugazh, Tiruppavai, Ashtapadi, Kavadihindu, Devarnama Any 2)

Theory (Oral questions)

The student should be able to answer the following:

1. Explain 15 basic Carnatic music related terms (list of terms to be given by student)
2. 3 min talk about each of the following – saptatala system ; melakarta scheme; classification of ragas
3. 3 minute talk about any three of the following : Your favorite musician / mrudangam / veena / pre-Trinity composers / post – Trinity composers
4. Student should be able to “sight read” sancharams in a ragam (student to share a list of 3 melakarta and 3 other ragams for this exercise)

Aural test

1. Student should hear swara pattern of an audava / shadava / sampurna raga and be able to sing arohanam / avarohanam and recognize the swara sthanams
2. Student should be able to attempt a spontaneous swara sancharam when given arohanam / avarohanam of an audava / shadava ragam
3. Raga recognition: Student should give a list of 10 ragams that they can recognize
4. Kriti appreciation: Student should hear a song snippet and answer simple questions – like recognizing the composer from the mudhra or name of the God to who it is dedicated etc
5. Concert appreciation: student should hear a concert audio or spontaneous performance by examiner and answer questions based on that (what type of manodharma was performed; eduppu for which Kalpana swaram was sung; tala structure for a pallavi line)

Level 5 (Practical , aural and oral test)

Includes syllabus from Level 1-4

Practical

The student should be able to sing the following:

1. Pada varnam (Any 1)
2. Varnams - 10 (including 5 to be sung in 2 speeds) (atleast 2 from the following dharu / ata tala / pada varnam)
3. Special kritis of the Trinity – any 5 – from Pancharatna / group kritis of the Trinity /swarajatis
4. 5 kritis in different ragams with manodharma – ragam / basic neraval / swaram in 2 speeds (list to be provided by student and should include at least 1 chaapu tala kriti)
5. 10 more Carnatic kritis in major ragams (including at least 4 Trinity compositions; should include one khanda chapu and 1 misra chapu tala) – with raga / tala / composer
6. Any 5 tukkadas: including Tevaram, Thirupugazh, Tiruppavai, Ashtapadi, Kavadihindu, Devarnama, Padam, Javali, Tillana

Theory (Oral questions)

The student should be able to answer the following:

1. Explain 20 basic Carnatic music related terms (list of terms to be given by student)
2. 3 min talk about each of the following – role of Trinity; concert planning; manodharma elements
3. 3 minute talk about any three of the following : Your favorite musician / Your favorite composer / Voice culture in Carnatic music / Types of gamakams with examples / Kritis / Role of accompanists in a Carnatic concert
4. Student should be able to “sight read” sancharams in a ragam (student to share a list of 5 melakarta and 5 other ragams for this exercise)
5. Student should attempt spontaneous alapana / Kalpana swarams for a given ragam (list of 8 ragams to be given by the student)

Aural test

1. Student should hear swara pattern of an audava / shadava / sampurna raga and be able to sing arohanam / avarohanam and recognize the swara sthanams
2. Student should be able to attempt a spontaneous swara sancharam when given arohanam / avarohanam of an audava / shadava ragam
3. Raga recognition: Student should give a list of 20 ragams that they can recognize
4. Kritis appreciation: Student should hear a song snippet and answer simple questions – like recognizing the composer from the mudhra or name of the God to who it is dedicated etc
5. Concert appreciation: student should hear a concert audio or spontaneous performance by examiner and answer questions based on that (what type of manodharma was performed; eduppu for which Kalpana swaram was sung; tala structure for a pallavi line)

Level 6 (Practical , aural and oral test)

Includes syllabus from Level 1-5

Practical (student should have completed level 5)

The student should be able to sing the following:

1. 10 kritis in different ragams with manodharma – ragam / basic neraval / swaram in 2 speeds (list to be provided by student and should include at least 1 chaapu tala kriti)
2. 3 comprehensive RTPs (list to be provided by student)

General:

1. A student may choose to skip Level 1 / 2 by obtaining their teacher’s consent and also submitting an audio sample for evaluation.
2. Each student is allowed 2 attempts upon payment of fee
3. Certificate – participation / completed with merit / completed with honors

Carnatic Music – Exam Fee Structure

Level 1 and 2 (fees to paid for each level from Oct 1 2024)

- For students in India Rs 4000
- For Asia students outside India Rs 6000
- For non-Asia students USD 150

Level 3, 4, 5 and 6 (fees to paid for each level from Oct 1 2024)

- For students in India Rs 5500
- For Asia students outside India Rs 8000
- For non-Asia students USD 200

Points to note:

- **Evaluation fee** for those looking to skip directly to level 2 or 3: For students in India Rs 1500
For Asia students outside India Rs 2000 ; For non-Asia students USD 50
 - a. Student should submit video sample (Google Drive / Youtube) from a selection of Level 1 and 2 practical (Soumya will select 3 items from level 1 and 2 practical syllabus and inform AT)
 - b. Soumya evaluates the video sample (Vidya to give inputs if needed)
 - c. Direct skipping application accepted / rejected; if rejected, student is sent a note in prescribed format as to why
 - d. AT should thereafter submit a declaration that student is generally conversant with the syllabus of the skipped level
 - e. Student, if approved, takes level 2 or 3 directly
 - f. No direct entry beyond level 3
- 2. **Post exam:**
 - a. Standardized grade sheet with score for each aspect (practical / theory / aural)
 - b. Score in each category out of 100
 - c. Average of the 3: If above 70% = honors ; above 50% = merit ; below 50% = participation
 - d. Those who miss their test appointment or score below 50% get one free re-test opportunity
 - e. EE to submit Grade sheet to Soumya within 1 week of exam
 - f. Exam certificate to be signed by Vidya & Soumya; feedback form signed by EE; both exam certificate and feedback form emailed to student within 3 weeks of exam date