



TMEA High School /Middle School Session

So Little Time... So Much to Teach

Presented by

Tammy Patterson, Coordinator of Secondary Music, Cy Fair ISD

Mike Ware, Managing Director MERN Mentoring Network

Thursday, February 11, 2010

2 PM-3 PM

CC 102

So Little Time, So Much to Teach

Creating a Rehearsal Process



Presented by: Tammy Patterson
Coordinator of Secondary Music
Cypress-Fairbanks I.S.D.
Houston, Texas

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2:00 – 3:00 P.M.

So Little Time, So Much to Teach: Creating a Rehearsal Process

General Principles:

- Invest your time in the beginning and move slowly.
- Focus on quality rather than quantity.
- Teach concepts rather than activities.

Always:

- Start where your students are.
- Know where you want them to go.
- Know how to get them there.
- Expect that they will get there.

And continue to:

- Drill, practice and reinforce.
- Give consistent feedback.
- Evaluate outcome.

The key is consistency in planning every detail of the rehearsal so that you are in control of the learning process. Starting this from the beginning is critical so that you do not find yourself trouble shooting at the end. Detailed planning takes preparation and organization of time and successful directors prepare themselves daily.

In order to maximize rehearsal time, have a routine that is:

- Efficient
- Specific
- Sequential
- Consistent

The sooner students are taught the routine, the faster they will be able to learn and perform music at a higher level.

THE REHEARSAL

Warm-ups

Use this time wisely as it sets the tone for your entire rehearsal!

Make them **voice builders** that teach the concept of:

- posture and breathing.
- creating resonance in the tone.
- legato singing.
- diction, including pure vowels and consonants.
- intonation.

Make them **musical/ensemble builders** which incorporate:

- listening to self and others.
- matching tone quality, energy and resonance.
- musical phrase and style.
- motion across the bar line.
- the dot after a note in the context of a musical phrase.
- that any note or series of notes has direction.

Warm-ups can be rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic patterns found in the literature.

Warm-ups need to challenge both thinking and listening skills by focusing on one or two basic skills/concepts at a time and gradually layer new ones.

Sight reading

Reinforce concepts established in the warm-ups into music reading.

- Rhythm
 - Chant legato.
 - Keep a beat/conduct.
 - Use finger counting.
 - Perform strong and weak beats.
 - Relate patterns to the literature.
- Pitch
 - Sing solfege and hand sign in the context of the style.
 - Use echo singing and interval drills related to the literature.
 - Interpret the musical markings.

Sight reading is another opportunity to reinforce everything as it relates to what you are doing with literature. The students will see it as a part of the musical process and not as a separate entity isolated from the literature.

Literature

Continue to develop and reinforce concepts previously established in rehearsal.

- Design a strategy for teaching each piece of music.
 - Isolate and drill challenging rhythms and chord progressions.
 - Speak and sing using proper vowel and vocal technique.
 - Teach breath and consonant releases.
 - Teach phrasing and dynamics.
- Transfer to the music and apply the strategies previously taught.
 - Speak in musical language and teach students to read the markings in the score.
 - Practice singing text on a neutral pitch before moving to the melodic line.
 - Introduce syllabic stress as it relates to each piece.
 - Use the words to interpret the meaning of the text.
 - Evoke the expression of the text.

In Conclusion:

- Teach students that it is unacceptable to sing with incorrect rhythms and pitches, sing with poor vocal production, or sing with no element of musicality.
- Teach students that there is a process for everything in your rehearsal.
- Insist upon good habits from the beginning and reinforce them daily.
- Teach students that you are willing to accept only their best effort and sound and that will raise their overall performance level.

So Little Time... So Much to Teach

CREATING A REHEARSAL PROCESS

MIKE WARE, MANAGING DIRECTOR, MERN MENTORING NETWORK

TMEA 2010 IN COLLABORATION WITH TAMMY PATTERSON

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Bennett Reimer, *A Philosophy of Music Education*, Prentice Hall 1970 pp 2 and 9

“Conductors must have a plan and be prepared to execute the plan in a process that the students understand and trust. Quality performance is a direct result of the educational process we create. During your rehearsals, students must experience a sequence that is the result of every new step being a logical extension of something previously learned. Teaching with this kind of building block approach guarantees success at each stage of the learning process. Therefore, you must create lesson plans from the literature that as the process unfolds the singers understand how the whole is put together. You must provide a balance between learning repertoire and providing singers with the skills they need to learn and read music on their own. This kind of teaching empowers the singer to think as musicians and gives them the confidence they need to perform publicly and encourages them to make music a life-long endeavor. “

Things to consider as you create your lesson plans and rehearsal process:

- HOW WOULD YOU WANT THE TONE OF YOUR CHOIRS TO BE DESCRIBED?
- DO YOU HAVE A PLAN TO ACHIEVE THIS TONE FROM YOUR CHOIRS?

1. TEACHING VOICE IN THE CHORAL REHEARSAL

RESOURCES:

- A) THE COMPLETE VOICE TEACHER’S HANDBOOK, RICHARD ALDERSON
- B) THE CONDUCTOR’S TUTOR, TRAINING THE EAR TO DIAGNOSE VOCAL PROBLEMS GIA JAMES JORDAN

VOCAL TECHNIQUE (VOWELS)

- A) BREATHING
- B) VOCALISES / EXERCISES THAT SUPPORT YOUR MUSIC OR ADDRESS SPECIFIC VOCAL ISSUES

- *DO YOU HAVE A PLAN TO TEACH YOUR CHOIR HOW TO READ MUSIC?*

2. TEACHING YOUR CHOIR TO READ MUSIC *JAMES JORDAN THE LITERATE CHOIR “TEACH HEARING IN YOUR CHOIR AND MUSIC READING WILL BE A CONVENIENT BY PRODUCT” TEACHING MUSIC THROUGH PERFORMANCE IN CHOIR VOLUME 2*

- A) *“TEACH THE EAR FIRST AND THEN THE EYE “ ZOLTAN KODALY*
- B) **TEACH THEM TO HEAR HARMONIC PROGRESSIONS DAILY AND THEN READ MUSIC CONTAINING THAT VOCALBULARY**
- C) **TEACH THEM TO HEAR AND SEE MUSICAL MARKINGS**
- D) **TEACH MAJOR SCALE AND MINOR SCALES WITH ALTERED SYLLABLES**
- E) **MAKE THEM CHANT SMOOTH AND SLOW AND CONNECTED NORRIS BLEVINS**
- F) **INCLUDE DYNAMICS AND PHRASING IN YOUR CHANTING**
- G) **ARRANGE YOUR CHOIR IN A STANDING ARRANGEMENT WHERE YOUR READERS CAN LEAD. LET THE READERS LEAD!!!!**

- **DO YOU HAVE A PLAN TO TEACH THE PIECE?**
- THE BOOK OF PROVERBS *“ WHERE THERE IS NO VISION THE PEOPLE PERISH”*

3. REHEARSALS THAT MAXIMIZE YOUR TIME

- *WHAT GUIDES YOUR REHEARSAL PROCESS?*
- *WHERE IS THE CHOIR “AT” MUSICALLY*
- *HOW DOES THE CHOIR HEAR*
- *“WHY DO SOME REHEARSALS FEEL NATURAL WHILE OTHERS FEEL CONTRIVED?” JERRY BLACKSTONE TEACHING MUSIC THROUGH PERFORMANCE IN CHOIR VOLUME 2*
- *WHAT MAKES REHEARSALS FLY BY OR DRAG? WHAT IS YOUR BAROMETER FOR A GOOD REHEARSAL?*
- *IS IT REALLY ABOUT PERSONALITY? WITH ALL THE TIME AND ENERGY IT TAKES TO JUST LEARN THE NOTES, WHO HAS TIME TO BE MUSICAL?*
- *IS THE MAIN GOAL OF A CONDUCTOR TO FIX WRONG NOTES?*
- ***DOES MY CONDUCTING REALLY MAKE A DIFFERENCE?***

- A. *“THE SUCCESSFUL PROCESS FROM STUDY THRU PERFORMANCE INVOLVES LEARNING AND KNOWING THE SCORE, HAVING A FINISHED PRODUCT IN MIND, SHOWING THAT PRODUCT IN YOUR CONDUCTING, TRANSFORMING THE INITIAL EARLY REHEARSALS INTO THAT FINISHED PRODUCT.”*

*ELEMENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL REHEARSAL ANN HOWARD JONES
AS YOU PREPARE TO TEACH A PIECE CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING:*

- *BEGIN WITH WARMUP EXERCISES THAT SUPPORT YOUR VOCAL PHILOSOPHY OR TEACH SKILLS IN THE MUSIC*
- *USE VARIED DYNAMICS*
- *USE DIFFERENT REGISTERS*
- *RHYTHM / COUNT SINGING ROBERT SHAW*
- *PITCH / SOLFEGE*
- *DYNAMICS GAGE CRESENDO DECRESENDO RYTHMICALLY*
- *TEST INFLECTION, RYTHMIC DICTION TEXT MEANING*
- *PHRASING,*
- *TONE COLOR*
- *ARTICULATION*
- *BALANCE (CAN AFFECT TUNING)*

ROBERT SHAW

PREMISES 'IN REHEARSALS CREATE AS LITTLE OPPORTUNITY FOR ERROR AS POSSIBLE, USE PIANO OFTEN

- THE RIGHT NOTE AT THE WRONG TIME IS THE WRONG NOTE STEADY TEMPO
- LISTEN MORE TALK LESS SING LESS SING EVERYTHING OFF THE VOICE TO SAVE THE VOICE AND TO HEAR BETTER
- MARK MEASURES
- MARK EACH VOCAL LINE FOR BREATHS AND CONSONANTS
- MARK DYNAMICS MARK STRESSED SYLLABLES
- MARK ARTICULATIONS WRITE IN TRANSLATIONS

BEV HENSON

- MUSICAL PERFORMANCES ARE THE RESULT OF MUSICAL VISION THAT IS PLANNED AND REHEARSED
- YOU WILL ACCOMPLISH SO MUCH MORE IF YOU DO NOT LEARN THE SCORE WITH YOUR CHOIR.
- IT IS POSSIBLE TO TEACH MANY THINGS WHILE TEACHING NOTES.
- NO TWO NOTES ARE SUNG OR PLAYED THE SAME UNLESS MARKED THAT WAY
- WE SING THE SOUNDS OF WORDS
- MUSIC IS EITHER MOVING TOWARD OR AWAY
- BREATH THROUGH THE VOWEL
- VIBRATO IS INTENDED TO ENHANCE THE PITCH NOT CONFUSE IT
- VIBRATO ACCOMPANIES A CRESCENDO NOT PRECEEDS IT
- IF ALL YOU DO IS TEACH NOTES, YOU RUN THE RISK OF THE CHOIR GOING BACK TO THE FIRST UNMUSICAL RENDITION UNDER CONCERT PRESSURE.
- YOU CANNOT TALK YOUR CHOIRS IN TO SINGING WELL, YOU MUST REHEARSE THEM AND SHOW THEM WITH YOUR CONDUCTING.
- WHETHER IT IS A DISCIPLINED OR UNFOCUSED, LAX REHEARSAL, YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE OUTCOME. YOU MUST CHOOSE WHICH PATH TO TAKE AND ACCEPT THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE RESULTS. ARTISTRY COMES FROM DISCIPLINE.