

Building Musicianship in the Choral Classroom

Jeff Morton 01/05/24 Bay Section CMEA Conference

Goal for session

For myself : Reverse lesson plan- observe what I did and evaluate what worked and what didn't. Let this reflection inform my future.

For you: share some of my practices and ideas on building musicianship in the Choral Classroom.

Students engage most when they help each other . Maybe having fun is good for engagement, as long as the fun is the learning, not a side distraction. The key is helping each other, having the social connection, being on both sides of the learning. Even/especially when doing software or worksheets (MyMusicianship.com, sonicfit.com)

▶ DoSoDo DRMFS B Warmups

- Physically engaging in many aspects: show hand-signs!
- Using partners, then small groups
- Leader must reinforce/correct each note
- Solfege builds a neurological link and becomes a tool

▶ One Student Pitch Matching, with solfege, the long hard work

- Long hard work starts with the most struggling students one on one whenever and wherever you can make it happen, preferably right before class. (note bell at 2:27)
- This shows you what at least one person needs, and other students buy into it as they know it makes the whole group get better and they know you care and are trying.
- Solfege gives more context, more to lock into
- RESPOND TO WHAT YOU HEAR.... In this particular video...
 - Student to replicate the last thing they sang
 - Sustain notes that shift
 - Build an anchor note, then expand- got DO, add RE... got DO RE MI, change keys...
 - If tonal center floats, change with them and start over. Find where they can sing and expand from there.

▶ LaTiDo Slides, Vowels, Tone

- Vowel and tone matter, and need to progress along with pitch development
- spoken voice clarifies pitch, vowel and tone
- slides to bring all on pitch
- Articulation and volume changes to help, or challenge, with pitch (pitch/vowel/volume)
- Good vowels of DO, RE, MI, FA SOL. Teach lip vowels and tongue vowels
- Use solfege/vowel/pitch work to teach a melody in your repertoire - multi-purpose!

▶ Warm-up solfege → melody by rote

- Work on scale degree skills with material from current repertoire (before/during/after)
- In this lesson, range has DRM above and DTLS below our anchor note DO
- In pairs, work on DTLS
- Pairs form groups of 4, DRM and DTLS
- Bring back together to teach the whole melody now that they worked the notes involved.

Print music first time routine:

- Is there a key signature?
- Is it sharps or flats?
- What is the rule for sharps (or flats) (ie, how do you find DO?)
- What is your first note?
- Decode solfege of first _____ measures or pages.

▶ decoding written notation Holly Jolly

- finding FA→MI and TI→DO locks in the notes, and you can get to them from anywhere without worrying about the interval involved.
- Learning solfege on a familiar melody increases its accuracy and helps students fuse the scale degrees and their tendencies.
- 01:22 find 'place of note' in scale, not worrying about interval. Fill in scale to help.

▶ Guided Reading piece for first time

- Alternate practice time (where they can help each other) with group time
- Group steps (CMEA style):
 - Speak solfege of each beat ("beat 1", "and", "beat 2")- not in rhythm (00:38)
 - Sing each beat, as above, just sung (01:08)
 - Add rhythm
 - Occasionally everyone on hardest part that isn't successfully happening (01:52)
 - Pep talks are good (03:13)

Sit on a Potato Pan- Following tempos

- Mirror pairs, follow leader of small group
- "Sit on a potato pan otis" DRMFSFMRD X3 offset

▶ Liebeslieder Waltzes 6 and 8, Homestead 2023 spring concert

- Hemiola and tempo fluctuation
- 'eurythmics' sway/step, speak (one & two & ti &), clap (rhythm)
- If you can only do 1, then KEEP THE pulse, if 2 then add speak the divisions, if all 3, awesome for you!
- ½ group doing eurythmics, ½ on words.
- inspired because my pianists couldn't handle tempo fluctuation or hemiola

Piano unit

- 3-4 students per keyboard helping each other
- Black notes group 2 or 3...
- Finding notes
- Up, down, little, a lot, sharp, flat
- Finding black notes
- Enharmonic
- W h steps
- Building DRMFS