

### Considerations for Selecting Repertoire

#### I. Musical/Educational Considerations for Selecting Repertoire

1. **Physical Considerations:** The elements related to physiological development.
  - a. **Age:** Knowing the age of the singers allows for planning developmentally appropriate educational experiences. It is important for the director to understand where these singers are in their laryngeal development to plan appropriately for technical problems.
  - b. **Technical problems:** Many technical problems, such as decreased range or change in quality, present at or around certain ages.
  - c. **Experience:** Experience with choral singing can ultimately determine the student's ability to navigate and overcome any technical problems s/he experiences at certain ages.
  
2. **Vocal Considerations:** The elements concerning the act of singing.
  - a. **Range:** A comfortable range for most elementary choruses lies from Bb below middle C to the top-line F.
  - b. **Tessitura:** Most notes should fall in the octave from the D above middle C to fourth-line D.
  - c. **Placement of vowels throughout tessitura:** It is very difficult for young singers to sing closed vowels at the top of their range.
  
3. **Expressive and Emotional Considerations:** A group's ability to express the emotional content of the repertoire.
  - a. **Director enthusiasm:** It is easier to help students connect to a piece emotionally when the director has an authentic emotional connection to that piece.
  - b. **Emotional maturity:** The emotional maturity of the group will play a large role in their ability to connect to the music and convey the message.
  - c. **Temperament/Personality:** Temperament impacts preferences. It is important to perform repertoire students like to keep them engaged in the music-making process.
  - d. **Text:** The chorus should be able to understand and convey the meaning of the words to an audience. Find texts that can be easily understood, memorized effectively and communicated in an artistic manner. It is best to avoid texts that are too childish and texts relating to love.
  
4. **Musicianship:** The ability of the singers to negotiate the composer's instructions accurately.
  - a. **Individual developmental variance:** Children of the same age can develop musically at very different rates. Some students will match pitch well while others will find it more difficult.
  - b. **Melody:** It is best the melody be linear, avoiding a great number of leaps, awkward intervals and long melismatic or chromatic passages.
  - c. **Harmony:** Vocal lines that are unique and melodic in each voice are the most appropriate for very young students. Parallel harmonies can be difficult for young students.
  - d. **Accompaniment:** A supportive accompaniment is preferred, though students should have experiences singing *a capella* to strengthen their musicianship. Appropriate accompaniments are interesting arrangements that do not overpower the young voices.
  - e. **Voicing:** The musicianship level of a group should decide the number of manageable vocal parts.
  - f. **Unison:** Singing songs in unison can strengthen musicianship because children can concentrate on musical elements rather than carrying their part.
  
5. **Quality:**

*Internal quality* concerns the compositional elements of a piece.  
*External quality* concerns the role of a piece within the performance and the audience enjoyment.

  - a. **Composition:** Aesthetic beauty and the masterful combining of musical elements such as, accompaniment, texture, form, tessitura, text setting and dynamics demonstrate the internal compositional quality of a piece.
  - b. **Facilitation of vocal development:** Repertoire that is singable, challenging and contains new elements will help singers gain new vocal skills.
  - c. **Encouragement of musical development:** Repertoire should expand students' knowledge about genres, styles, forms and overall musicianship.
  - d. **Diversity:** The pieces within a performance should be varied, representing an array of languages, cultures, genres, styles and forms.
  - e. **Context/Audience:** The pleasure for the audience and the appropriateness for the occasion should be considered.

## II. Extra-Musical Considerations for Selecting Repertoire

### 1. Extra-Musical Considerations

#### Considerations that address elements outside of typical musical considerations

- a. **Students:** Learning styles (kinesthetic, tactile, visual, aural, verbal), attention span (around 10 minutes) and interests should be considered.
- b. **Resources:** Budget (school funds, donations of time and services), personnel (instrumentalists and accompanists, parent volunteers, student volunteers, etc.) facilities (rehearsal space, piano, technology), etc.
- c. **Community:** Values, culture, etc.
- d. **Program:** Purpose/occasion (holiday, spring, memorial day), length (minutes or hours), position in and portion of concert (other performing groups, order of groups) etc.

#### 2014 National Core Music Standards: Anchor Standards

- #1. Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.
- #2. Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.
- #3. Refine and complete artistic work.
- #4. Analyze, interpret, and select artistic work for presentation.
- #5. Develop and refine artistic work for presentation.
- #6. Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.
- #7. Perceive and analyze artistic work.
- #8. Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.
- #9. Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.
- #10. Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.
- #11. Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural and historical context to deepen understanding.  
(SEADAE, 2014a)

#### 2014 Ensemble Performance Standards:



(SEADAE, 2014b)

#### Side-by-side Comparison 1994 & 2014 National Standards:



(Shuler, 2014)

#### Additional Considerations for K-2 Choristers

##### **Involve movement**

##### **Scaffold learning SLOWLY**

- 4 measures, 8 measures at a time

##### **Scheduling**

- Ask classes to meet during other music times

##### **Conducting**

- Don't be tied to a pattern
- TEACH your gestures

##### **Types of Music**

- FUN and engaging
- THEN beautiful and melodic
- You have to be excited!

##### **Amount of Literature**

- LESS is MORE
- 3 holiday, 5-7 spring

##### **Voicing/Arranging**

- Unison -> Partner Song -> Canons -> Rounds
- Assign grades to parts
  - Arrange part music so that kindergarten always has melody
  - Give "thirds" to 2<sup>nd</sup> grade
- Assign verses, all sing chorus
- Add extra voices to songs in common domain

##### **Accompaniment**

- Guitars, pianos, orchestral instruments, recordings
- Ask accompanist to arrange for a melody
- Senior students play
- Choristers play instruments

### Suggested Literature

Suggestions drawn from personal experience and selected resources  
(Brumit & Holmes, 2012<sup>^</sup>; Knapp, n.d.<sup>+</sup>; Nowmos, 2012<sup>#</sup>; Rutkowski, Shelley, Kooistra, 2012<sup>\*</sup>; Wilson, 2003<sup>^</sup>)

#### Folk Songs

*Folk songs provide students with a musical common ground and experience from which to draw.*

How Can I Keep from Singing <sup>+</sup>	arr. G. Littleton	U	BriLee Music
Still, Still, Still <sup>^</sup>	arr. P. L. Harris	U	Heritage Music
Music Alone Shall Live <sup>#</sup>	arr. D. Moore	2-pt	Alfred Publishing
Yonder Come Day <sup>^</sup>	J. C. Tucker	3-pt	World Music Press

#### Songs from Multiple Cultures

*Teaching diverse repertoire exposes the students to diverse cultures and can help the students garner respect for cultures other than their own.*

Dormi, Dormi (Italy) <sup>^+</sup>	arr. M. Goetze	U	Boosey & Hawkes
The Sally Gardens (Ireland) <sup>+</sup>	B. Britten	U	Boosey & Hawkes
Al Yadil Yadi (Palestine) <sup>#</sup>	arr. John Higgins	2-pt	Hal Leonard
Dodi Li (Israel) <sup>+</sup>	arr. D. Rao	2-pt	Boosey & Hawkes
Hitori (Japan) <sup>#</sup>	arr. Donnelly/Strid	2-pt	Hal Leonard
The Old Carrion Crow (Nova Scotia) <sup>+</sup>	arr. M. Goetze	2-pt	Boosey & Hawkes
La Paoloma se Fue (Puerto Rico) <sup>^</sup>	A. Jimenez	2-pt	World Music Press
Tutira Mai (Polynesia, Maori) <sup>#</sup>	arr. Leck/Ellis	2-pt	Hal Leonard
Kookaburra (Australia) <sup>^</sup>	Arr. C. Curtright	3-pt	Boosey & Hawkes

#### Spirituals & Gospel

*Traditionally taught in the oral traditions, spirituals provide opportunities for solo singing, call-and-response singing as well as part-singing.*

Didn't My Lord Deliver Daniel <sup>+</sup>	arr. R. Emerson	2-pt	Hal Leonard
The Drinking Gourd <sup>+</sup>	arr. A. Thomas	2-pt	Heritage Music Press
Joshua Fought the Battle of Jericho <sup>`</sup>	arr. J. DesJardins	2-pt	Carl Fischer
My Lord, What a Morning <sup>^</sup>	arr. J. C. Tucker	3-pt	World Music Press
Yonder Come Day <sup>`</sup>	arr. S. E. Page	3-pt	Hinshaw Music

#### Art Music

*Young students are very capable of achieving the level of musicianship and beauty demanded by art songs.*

Bandicoot <sup>^</sup>	Hoberman/C. Jennings	U	G. Schirmer
How Beautiful Are The Feet Of Them <sup>+</sup>	Handel, arr. Rao	U	Boosey & Hawkes
Blue Song <sup>^</sup>	Hugh & Elizabeth Aitken	2-pt	Julliard Repertoire
How Beautiful is the Rain <sup>^</sup>	Longfell/M. L. Lightfoot	2-pt	Heritage Music
Will There Really Be a Morning <sup>+</sup>	C. H. Johnson	2-pt	Alliance Music Publishing
Three Mark Twain Settings <sup>+</sup>	N. Page	2/3-pt	Hal Leonard

#### Pop/Contemporary

*Pop/contemporary songs should be well-written, relevant and provide rich, teachable moments.*

Kids Are Music <sup>^</sup>	R. Artman	U	Jenson Publishing
Galop <sup>+</sup>	K. Berg	U/2-pt	Pavane Publishing
Over the Rainbow <sup>#</sup>	arr. A. Snyder	U/2-pt	Alfred Publishing
Jingle Bell Swing <sup>+</sup>	arr. D. J. Elliott	2-pt	Boosey & Hawkes
Play for Me a Simple Melody <sup>^</sup>	arr. K. Shaw	2-pt	Hal Leonard
Shoo Fly Pie and Apple Pan Dowdy <sup>`</sup>	Gallop/Wood, arr. Shaw	2-pt	Hal Leonard
Side by Side <sup>^</sup>	Woods/Artman	2-pt	Kendor Music
Reflections of a Lad at Sea <sup>`</sup>	Besig/Price	2-pt	Shawnee Press
My Favorite Things <sup>+</sup>	arr. J. Hirokawa	3-pt	Hal Leonard

#### Patriotic Songs

*Patriotic songs provide can provide students experiences with historical contexts in accordance with the national standards.*

America <sup>*</sup>	Traditional	U	Key of F
Yankee Doodle <sup>*</sup>	Traditional	U	Key of G
You're a Grand Old Flag <sup>*</sup>	Traditional	U	Key of F
Sing a Song of Peace (with This Is My Country) <sup>#</sup>	arr. J. Gallina	2-pt	Shawnee Press
My America <sup>`</sup>	Carey/Smith, arr. Eilers	2-pt	Hal Leonard

### Additional Repertoire Lists

1. Knapp, C. B. (n.d.). **Recommended literature, rehearsal and curriculum ideas**. Retrieved from <http://www.nyacda.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/02/Childrens-Choir-Repertoire-Recommended-Literature-List.pdf>  
Compiled in part by the NY/ACDA Repertoire & Standards Chairperson, Children's Choirs. It contains over 40 songs, ranging from Unison to 3-part in many languages and styles. Composers and arrangers include Mozart, Handel, Mary Goetze, and John Rutter to name a few.
2. Brumit, C., & Holmes, M. (2012). **Quality literature for elementary school children's choirs can be accessible!** [Presented at Massachusetts Music Educators Association All-State Conference]. Retrieved from <http://massacda.org/children/quality-literature-for-elementary-school-childrens-choirs-can-be-accessible/>  
Charlotte Brumit has been a repertoire and standards chair for the Massachusetts ACDA and Martha Holmes has been the president of the Boston area Kodaly educators. The authors presented this repertoire at an Elementary School Choral Reading Session. There are over 20 selections useful for the elementary choral educator.
3. Nowmos, C. (2012, October 10). **Elementary choir repertoire**. [Web log post]. Retrieved from <https://www.nafme.org/forums/topic/elementary-choir-repertoire/>  
Retrieved from a NAFME discussion board pertaining to selecting elementary repertoire. This list contains over 40 selections with a review of each.

### Resources & References

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- State Education Agency Directors of Arts Education [SEADAE] (2014a). National core arts standards: Dance, media arts, music, theatre and visual arts. Retrieved from <http://www.nationalartsstandards.org>
- State Education Agency Directors of Arts Education [SEADAE] (2014b). 2014 music standards (ensemble). Retrieved from <http://www.nafme.org/wp-content/files/2014/11/2014-Music-Standards-Ensemble-Strand.pdf>