

**Sight reading in middle school choir: Strategies for success in
matching pitch and keeping students engaged**

by

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Abstract

In my 5 years of teaching sight singing in choir, I have noticed 2 major challenges: one, students lose interest during ‘chaos’ and about half struggle to match pitch. To spark student interest in the chaos portion of our sight singing, I developed some strategies. Students were placed in teams and given team names. Once students silently signed and sang the exercise, I chose a student to spin a wheel. The wheel has 4 components of chaos that I chose for the day. I chose from the following: Count yourself in, show hand signs, accents, persistence, project and intonation. Each group simultaneously did chaos for 1 minute, and I gave points based on the component that the wheel landed on. Every member of the group had to be doing that one component to receive the point. I immediately noticed significant results when I started the competition between teams. Students showed improvement in every aspect of ‘chappi,’ which is a mnemonic we created in class. We also discussed a prize that the winning team would get. Students were motivated by class competitions.

To better support students in matching pitch, I researched and implemented the A4 skillset, developed by Theresa Pritchard. I also researched the Rainbow Ears method, developed by Donald Brinegar. The A4 method is where students are taught through a series of vocal exercises to sing A4. The beginning exercises include high pitched sirens followed by the teacher instructing students to sing A4. If students sing something else, they are instructed to start at their lowest note and slowly slide up to A4 position. Once this is learned, students practice downward vocalization and then the goal is for students to be able to sing A4 without the sirens/vocalization. The Donald Brinegar method is based on the premise that students lack discrimination when hearing a particular pitch and instead are hearing ‘a rainbow of overtones and sometimes resultant tones’ (Munce, 2021). The most successful method was the A4 method.

When I tried this with my 6th grade boys, 8 out of the 9 were able to match, and when I tried it with me 7/8th grade boys, 6 of the 7 matched. When I attempted to help a student match pitch through an isolated note or phrase, in a small group setting, my success rate was high, but my greatest challenge was when students got back to the group setting. They would tend to go back to old habits. Other roadblocks are allowing for gender specific ensembles in a prek-12 school and finding time to give students the individual help they need.

My video teaching demonstration includes students preparing to sing a daily sight singing exercise by singing an ascending and descending scale, silently singing/signing the exercise, playing 'follow the hand' and finally participating in 'chaos' which is when students sing a sight singing exercise simultaneously with the rest of the class while showing hand signs and accenting the downbeat of every measure.

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Preface

It is helpful to note that I am the prek-12 music teacher at a very transient, rural school in Basin, Wyoming, population 1,363. Median household incoming is approximately \$52,888 with a poverty rate of 14.86%. The middle school enrollment and high school enrollment together is 137. Due to the unique nature of our small school's makeup, scheduling does not allow for as many music classes as larger schools, so I teach both band and choir in my classes. For example, my 6th grade music class meets Monday through Thursday with an alternating Friday schedule. We have choir M/W and band T/TH. I am completing my 2nd year at Riverside middle/high school, and it is the first time a choir program has been instituted for 6 years. Successful choral programs are more successful in a community where choral music is practiced, valued and appreciated. This has not been the case in the community where I teach, but we have made improvements.

Chapter 1 --Teaching Philosophy

John Dewey said “There is an old saying to the effect that it is not good enough for a man to be good; he must be good for something. The something for which a man must be good is capacity to live as a social member so that what he gets from living with others balances what he contributes” (Dewey, 1916, p. 359).

Following what Dewey says, it is my firm belief that music and formal education exist to better ourselves and ultimately help us contribute to society in a meaningful way, and that students are meant to co-exist in learning institutions and learn and grow together. I believe that music belongs to formal education as it is a holistic, academic subject that is just as relevant as any other subject taught in our educational institutions. In this document I will discuss the purpose of formal education and how it directly relates to pragmatism and the integral part music education plays in a pragmatic teaching environment.

Why formal education

My reasoning for formal education is twofold: one, students will reap the most from education when it is a social experience as we learn from the world and others. Second, formal education is necessary to equip students with the tools necessary to function successfully in society. In other words, by natural design, humans are meant to co-exist with and learn from each other in meaningful ways. This is optimized when highly qualified teachers create an ideal learning space for their pupils. Teaching music in public schools is a prime example of this and creates the perfect opportunity to teach students to collaborate and work together towards a common goal.

My teaching philosophy falls closely in line with John Dewey, whose ideas urged that learning is a social experience that cannot be replicated outside of organized institutions. Ideally,

these institutions house highly qualified teachers creating learning environments that are intentionally designed for social relationships. Dewey also taught that all learning involves encounters with “difference” and “otherness” we learn from the world and others (Dewey, 1916).

Furthermore, well known Author Jay Kloppenberg talks about the value of carefully constructed learning environments when he says “...the most valuable learning does not come directly, from teaching facts, techniques, and procedures, but instead of indirectly, from a carefully constructed environment that coaxes students toward inquiry” (Kloppenber, 2017, p. 398). The premise of my teaching philosophy is that students learn best when they can collaborate with others. For optimal learning to take place, students must be able to collaborate with peers and highly qualified teachers, both of which are key ingredients of formal education. In addition, formal education should teach individuals to function within the functions of a democratic culture. Jay Kloppenber explains: “All individuals must be enabled to develop the skills and, more importantly, the habits and dispositions necessary to be productive and equal members of a democratic culture—socially, politically, creatively, and morally, as well as economically” (Kloppenber, 2017, p. 397).

Why/what is music education

My premise of why music education matters is deeply rooted in a thousand musical experiences that have influenced, shaped and enriched my life from childhood to now. What then of individuals who don’t have the same background as me? It is my firm belief that despite someone’s educational background, socioeconomic status, aptitude test results or personal preferences, music is meant for everyone to experience and learn from. Music philosopher Bennett Reimer teaches that “Music should be taught, then, because it is a form of conceptual cognition that affords a humanizing self-knowledge of feeling as a pervasive quality of mental

life” (Daughtery, 1996, p. 30). This self-knowledge or intelligence, Reimer argues, is educable and can be developed only through music. In other words, musical experiences in a formal education setting with highly qualified teachers, afford students an irreplaceable, humanizing experience that cannot be taught in any other way.

When taught by highly qualified teachers, music connects students to the world around them. Music education includes mathematics, history, problem solving and critical thinking. For example, students learn note values and fractions that can be applied to mathematical equations outside the classroom. When students learn to read notes, they will learn to perform with an ensemble beyond the classroom. When students learn about patriotic songs like our National Anthem and others, they are learning the history of the nation to which they belong.

As I teach music every day, I am guided by the fact that music is an elective in my school, and I am not promised any of these students. For that reason, I teach by two philosophies. My first one is that I will retain students better if I give them tools to become independent musicians. Students experience a far greater deal of personal satisfaction from reading music than being taught by rote. My second one is that students must enjoy my class or they won’t stay. Enjoyment from a class in school comes from many different sources, dependent on the students’ background, preferences and ability level. It is my job to find this out and create these experiences for my students.

Pragmatism

If we follow a pragmatic system in our music classes, teachers must constantly ask themselves questions like these: How can I make music fit into the everyday lives of my students? Maybe students become so enthralled with their guitar class, they purchase one of their own and play it at home every day and start a community band. Maybe they play taps at the local

Memorial Day ceremonies, maybe they learn sacred songs for contest and sing them at their church. In other words, how can we teach our students to solve real life problems through music? We begin the year with a unit on patriotic music as we prepare students to perform in the school district's annual Veterans Day program. I begin the unit by asking students the following questions: how does singing bring people together? Why is music an important part of community identity and culture? How can singing strengthen relationships within a school or community? What role does shared musical experience play in building unity? When students answer questions like these, they learn that learning isn't simply learning to play an instrument or regurgitate musical facts, instead they learn that music connects us to those around us in many ways.

In addition, we must also consider the ways music naturally fits into the communities and cultures in which we reside and consider the practical ways in which students can learn from music. We do this as we consider our community's socioeconomic status, traditions, values and cultures. I would also add that teachers can and should adjust their curriculum over the years as the needs of students evolve. Author John Hattie said "...the biggest effects on student learning occur when teachers become learners of their own teaching, and when students become their own teachers" (Hattie, 2008, p. 22).

Dewey believed that education should prepare individuals to live rich, fulfilling lives. Another pioneer in education, Julia Crane, believed that "the highest form of joy resulted from successful achievement on the part of the student" (Claudson, 1969, p. 400). My two objectives in any music class are one, teach my students how to use their instrument (whether voice or otherwise) and two, how to read music. For that reason, systems like sight reading exercises and

solfege are a daily part of my class instruction. As part of my teaching philosophy, students will be easier to retain in my program if they are given tools to become independent musicians.

In conclusion, consider the following quote by Julia Crane. “We believe that music has a power to reach the emotions which other branches of study do not possess, and that it is therefore not only a desirable factor in education but an absolutely necessary element for fully rounded development” (Claudson, 1969, p. 402). I join with other music teachers across the world when I boldly declare the need for music in our schools and consider myself lucky to be one of these messengers of the precious gift of music.

How My Philosophy Informs My Teaching

The lesson I present is reflective of my teaching philosophy because I am teaching my students how to read music, and the first part of my teaching philosophy is that I will retain students better if I give them tools to become independent musicians. Students experience a far greater deal of personal satisfaction from reading music than being taught by rote.

Chapter 2--Lesson Plan(s)

My masters project focuses on increasing student engagement in sight reading and helping male students match pitch. Below I will describe the lessons I incorporated into my curriculum and how they helped me reach the two goals of my project.

I already had an effective sight-reading curriculum in place which included an exercise called 'chaos' where students are given a sight singing exercise and asked to sing the exercise simultaneously with the rest of the class for one minute. While they sang the exercise, they were supposed to count themselves in on the starting pitch, show hand signs and accent the down beat of every measure. In my experience, the chaos portion of our sight-reading curriculum was not successful. Students lost interest and motivation to sing. They would stop singing before the minute was over, fail to show hand signs and display an overall feeling of apathy toward the exercise. To increase student engagement, the students and I created a mnemonic for them to remember the steps for singing chaos. The mnemonic is chappi (C-Count yourself in on the starting note, H-hand signs, A-accent, P-project, P-persistence, I-intonation). I also created a class competition to spark student interest. Students were placed in teams and given team names. Once students silently signed and sang the exercise, I chose a student to spin a wheel that I kept on the board.

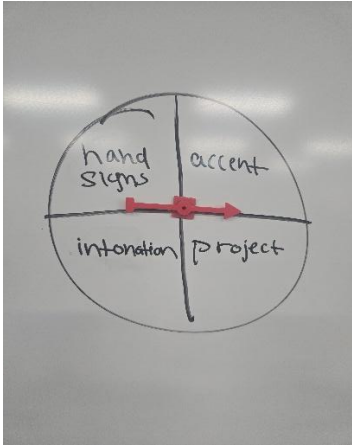


Figure 2.1 ‘Spin the Wheel’

The wheel had four components of chaos that I chose for the day. I chose from the following: Count yourself in, show hand signs, accent, persistence, project and intonation. Each group simultaneously did chaos for one minute, and I gave points based on the component that the wheel landed on. Every member of the group had to be doing that component to receive the point. I immediately noticed significant results when I started the competition between teams. Students showed improvement in every aspect of ‘chappi.’ We also discussed a list of possible prizes that the winning team would get, students voted on the prize and the winning team enjoyed root beer floats the last week of school. I learned through my research and my class competitions that students are motivated by competitions and timed activities.

Because of the increased student engagement, most students gained mastery on counting themselves in on the starting pitch of a sight-reading exercise, using solfege hand signs, accenting the down beat of every measure and maintaining tonality and vocal independence while others were singing different parts. My instructional strategies included inquiry-based teaching, collaborative learning, differentiated instruction, teacher assessments, interactive instructional strategies like think-pair-share and plenty of teacher modeling. Inquiry based teaching because questions were asked throughout the sight reading process about where ‘do’

was, which sharp or flat was last in the key signature, what note the exercise started on, what note it ended on, questions about the time signature and questions about whether or not there were patterns in the exercise. Collaborative learning because students worked in teams each day to determine the starting pitch of their exercise and perform the sight reading together. Students also participated in class competitions in those teams to see which team could get all their members to participate in the sight-reading component of the day. Differentiated instruction because I used teacher assessments each day to determine what level students were at and tailored sight-reading exercises to that level. Interactive instructional strategies because after asking the class a question about our sight-reading exercise, students were asked to share their answer with a neighbor. Performance based assessments were employed as I observed student accuracy on hand signs, rhythms and pitch matching. Written assessments were also given to determine student ability to correctly identify intervals and solfege.

In the future, I will continue trying new ways to create competitions between the groups. One student suggested having ‘class cash’ where students are awarded fake money that they can purchase things with from a class store. Next year I will place students in teams earlier on in the year and do some team building exercises within those teams. Daily journaling and contemplation taught me how important it is to step back from our instructional practices and evaluate where students are. Journaling also helped me determine what was working and what was not. I learned that students do not care about music unless there is first and foremost, a safe environment for them to learn in and a trusting, safe relationship between teacher and student. Curriculum must be given in an engaging way that will retain students.

Helping Students Match Pitch

In my research, I learned that students must feel safe (Oakes, 2018, p. 116). My first goal was to create an environment where students felt safe to experiment with their voices and navigate through voice changes, and ultimately to help every male student in my choir to successfully match pitch, even if just for a few isolated pitches. As the year progressed and I was able to achieve that, I changed my goals and tried to get students to match pitch for a longer duration and was able to have success with several of the students. Students learned a variety of vocal exploration techniques that helped them achieve all the ranges of their voice and they learned the basic concepts of the physiology of the male voice. The instructional strategies I used were collaborative learning, differentiated instruction, teacher assessments and interactive instructional strategies. I used collaborative learning because we always worked in groups where male students could model for each other and give feedback. This kind of group work also helped create a trusting, safe learning environment. I used differentiated instruction because I used performance-based assessments to determine what kinds of repertoire/vocal exercises would be best suited for my students. I used teacher assessments like performance-based assessments and informal assessments where I observed whether students could match pitch. There were often in-formal and students did not know they were being assessed. I used interactive instructional strategies because we did think-pair-share where I would ask questions about lessons and have students share with a neighbor. Other examples of interactive teaching strategies I used were call and response activities, rhythm circles and interactive sight-singing games. Moving forward, it will be important that I set aside a day or two every week to assist the boys in my class. I learned that all my male students were able to match pitch but needed some one-on-one time without their peers watching. My next step will be helping boys match pitch on

a more long-term basis. For example, there was a 7th grade boy struggling to match pitch all year long. He struggled more than any other student in my school. I learned from Don Brinegar that students struggle to match pitch not because they are tone deaf but because they are unable to differentiate between all the tones they are hearing (Munce, 2021). Brinegar indicates that these students are hearing overtones instead of just one pitch. After hearing Brinegar on Chris Munce's podcast on 'rainbow ears, I started having my student echo back to me short tonal patterns, but I used a breathy tone to eliminate those muted overtones that he apparently was hearing. This yielded great success for us, but as soon as he went back to singing whole class repertoire, he sang the wrong notes. I will continue to try different seating arrangements, experimenting with softer singing students on either sides of him, also singing in breathy tones. Brinegar indicated that students struggling to match pitch should not be placed by loud singers.

Lesson Plan 1

Sight singing

Grade 6th grade choir

Date January 6, 2026

Duration 50 minutes

Objective: Give students tools needed to successfully sight sing independently

State standards addressed: FPA 8.1.M.3 Students perform independently and with others a varied repertoire of music, demonstrating correct posture, playing position, breath control, dynamics, intonation, range and tone quality (Wyoming Department of Education, 2013)

Materials and resources/helpful contexts: white erase board and marker, wheel, TV with exercise projected

Introduction: written warm up, forbidden pattern

procedures:

- 10:33: Students enter the room, take a note card and pencil and complete the written warm up projected onto the TV
- 10:40 Students and teacher play each other in forbidden pattern. This is a game where the teacher sings several tonal patterns using solfege, and the students repeat it back, unless it is the 'forbidden pattern' which is indicated at the beginning of the game. If the students sing the pattern, the teacher gets a point. If the teacher sings the pattern, the students get the point. First team to 3 points wins.
- Students and teacher participate in rhythm exercises
- 10:50 Teacher displays the sight singing exercise of the day. The note that stands alone in the first measure is 'do.'
- Students silently sign the exercise
- Students silently sing the exercise
- Students get into their teams
- A student comes to the front of the room and spins the wheel. The wheel can land on any of these 6 items: count yourself in on the starting pitch, hand signs, accent, project, persistence or intonation.
- Teacher sets the timer, and for 1 minute, students sing the exercise simultaneously in their groups.
- Whenever each member of a group demonstrates the sight singing element of the day, they get a point

- Points are tallied and whichever team has the most points at the end of the year wins and gets root beer floats at the end of the year
- Students sing the exercise as a class
- 11:05 repertoire

2014 Music National Standards

Students demonstrate musicianship through individual practice, rehearsal and revision

(FPA8.1.M.1)

Students develop musical literacy through reading, sight reading and notating music

(FPA 8.1.M.5)

Prior Knowledge/Skills

Students knew the signs for solfege and where on their body they should be placed, proper singing posture, the definition of intonation how it relates to singing, where whole steps/half steps are located in the major scale (between mi and fa and ti and do), the difference between line and space notes, the meaning of ledger lines, how to draw a staff, how to sing ascending and descending solfege using a major scale, Kodály rhythm language for a quarter note, half note, whole note, dotted half note, eighth notes, dotted quarter note, eighth note, quarter rest, whole rest, half rest, basic time signatures, what it means to accent when reading music, how to count themselves in correctly before singing a sight reading exercise, intervals, the meaning of ties and slurs, basic intervals and an introduction to key signatures (last flat=fa, last sharp=ti).

Rehearsal Objective

Every time students complete a sight-reading exercise, they are improving their overall literacy skills because they are practicing solfege, hand signs, intervals, Kodaly rhythm language,

time signatures and accents. The objective of my lesson designs was to increase student engagement during chaos. Because of the extensions I've made of 'chaos', students are counting themselves in, singing out, showing hand signs and accenting, which are the 4 main things students were not demonstrating previously. When I made this into a class competition, I could instantly tell the difference.

Assessment of the Rehearsal

At the end of the year, I had a sight singing assessment. I told the students a day beforehand and showed them the rubric. I told them they could perform the exercise alone or with one other student. Through this assessment, I learned that success greatly depended on the student they were singing with. I told some students they would be better off singing alone. Here is the rubric that was used.

TEACHER PERFORMANCE RUBRIC

Criteria	4 — Exceeds Expectations	3 — Meets Expectations	2 — Approaching Expectations	1 — Beginning	Score
Pitch Accuracy	Accurate pitches throughout	Minor pitch errors	Several pitch inconsistencies	Frequent inaccurate pitches	_____
Rhythm Accuracy	Steady and accurate rhythm	Minor rhythm errors	Inconsistent rhythm	Unable to maintain beat	_____
Solfege/Note Reading	Confident and independent	Mostly accurate	Some confusion evident	Limited understanding	_____
Tone Quality & Technique	Healthy tone and posture	Mostly appropriate technique	Inconsistent tone/support	Weak or unsupported tone	_____
Musical Independence	Fully independent performance	Minimal prompting needed	Frequent hesitation	Unable to continue independently	_____
TOTAL SCORE					
_____ / 20					

Figure 2.2 Assessment sheet for sight singing

Lesson Plan 2

Helping students match pitch

Grade 6th grade choir

Date April 7th, 2026

Duration 50 minutes

Objective: Give students tools needed to successfully match pitch

State standards addressed: FPA 8.1.M.3 Students perform independently and with others a varied repertoire of music, demonstrating correct posture, playing position, breath control, dynamics, intonation, range and tone quality (Wyoming Department of Education, 2013)

Materials and resources/helpful contexts: a male falsetto, a recorder or flute, a teacher able to model sirens and other face to face demonstrations including positive acknowledgement of the student's condition

Introduction: written warm up, forbidden pattern

procedures:

- Face the child, create eye contact and smile
- Using a high breathy tone, sing the first line of Mary Had a Little Lamb
- Lip sync the same line and have the student watch
- Ask the student if they can hear either their voice or my voice when I lip sync
- have them sing it in a high voice, like mickey mouse
- If they match, have them move down using sirens
- From here, have them echo you singing the same line on repeat, but adding more resonance each time

Wyoming Music Standards Addressed

FPA 8.1.M.3 Students perform independently and with others a varied repertoire of music, demonstrating correct posture, playing position, breath control, dynamics, intonation, range and tone quality

Prior Knowledge/Skills

Students knew the signs for solfege and where on their body they should be placed, proper singing posture, the definition of intonation how it relates to singing, where whole steps/half steps are located in the major scale (between mi and fa and ti and do), the difference between line and space notes, the meaning of ledger lines, how to draw a staff, how to sing ascending and descending solfege using a major scale, Kodály rhythm language for a quarter

note, half note, whole note, dotted half note, eighth notes, dotted quarter note, eighth note, quarter rest, whole rest, half rest, basic time signatures, what it means to accent when reading music, how to count themselves in correctly before singing a sight reading exercise, intervals, the meaning of ties and slurs, basic intervals and an introduction to key signatures (last flat=fa, last sharp=ti).

Lesson Objective(s)

The intent of this lesson is to model singing in a high, breathy voice, thus eliminating those overtones that some students tend to hear. Once students can match pitch this way, the teacher and student will gradually eliminate those breathy tones and reach full resonance.

Assessment of the Lesson

Through a performance-based assessment, the teacher will be able to discern whether the student has matched pitch.

Chapter 3--Reflections

Growth mindset

Choosing an area of my teaching to develop and spending five months improving on that skillset has helped me understand that there is no reason for teachers to get ‘stuck’ teaching something a certain way without trying other ways. Teachers struggle with a fixed mindset as much as students. I learned during my project and time at Kansas State University that students are motivated by timed activities and class competitions, so I turned chaos into a game, but most importantly, I started journaling about chaos and trying new things each time. As a result, it had a ripple effect on my other classes. I started paying better attention to levels of students’ engagement and asking them what would motivate them to complete a certain task. The answer is not always a reward, oftentimes it is making something into a game or a competition or just involving them more. As a result of my success with chaos, I was able to increase student engagement in other classes.

I learned that every teaching strategy I use can be improved upon. I should constantly be reflecting on the success and failures of my lessons. I learned the value of journaling. Journaling gives me a resource to look back on so I can remember what worked and what did not.

What works in your community

I learned that some kids are not going to want to sing and it is ok. In determining my schedule for next year, I called 3 band teachers in my region and one of them said it is important to find something that fits the community you work in. Choral music doesn’t hold much weight in the community I work in and for that reason, I am going to focus more on band next year; however, there are many correlations between good singing and band so I will continue in my

efforts of ‘marrying the two’, but putting a primary focus on band. I attended a workshop for music teachers in small schools, and they talked a lot about being creative in your school, thinking outside the box and staying focused on solutions, which is what I intend to do.

Male changing voice

Boys fail to match pitch for many reasons. The top 4 reasons I discovered were: apathy, insecurity, rainbow ears, and frozen vocal cords.

Apathy

Many of the young men I worked with were lazy in their voices. When I would take them away from the group and isolate a small section of a song or even a couple notes, they were able to match pitch with ease, but when they went back to the group, they went to their old ways. This has challenged me to discover ways to have them experience success in larger groups. It has also challenged me to find more songs that might appeal more to the male population.

Insecurity

Singing is a very vulnerable activity for adolescent students, and it is crucial to create a safe space for these students, which I think I did, but they are still very sensitive and boys especially don’t want to sing in front of their peers. “In the secondary school, when the voice change occurs, boys are said to be under intense pressure to conform to narrow conceptions of masculinity which often excludes singing.” (Swain, 2003, p. 302). I wish I could say I was able to successfully make an impact on the culture and climate of singing in this community and how it is perceived, but I do not think I have achieved that yet. I feel confident that I will have a successful secondary program when the elementary students I currently teach reach middle school and high school. I have a great rapport with the elementary students and their parents.

Families have seen my concerts and are excited about the music program and what this could look like for their students.

Rainbow ears

Music educator and author Donald Brinegar indicates that the reason some adolescent males struggle to match pitch is because they are hearing overtones instead of the fundamental pitch, so it is helpful to do call and response with these boys in a whisper, thus eliminating those overtones. I tried this with all my male middle school students and experienced great success with all of them. Unfortunately, when he went back to singing with the ensemble, these individuals went back to their old ways. My next challenge is to help students transfer this success when singing with the entire ensemble.

Frozen vocal cords

My first year teaching at Riverside Middle/High School, I worked with a male high school senior once a week one on one and we worked on matching pitch. My first step was to help him sing A above middle C (A4). Once he was able to successfully sing that note, we would go down by half steps, in hopes of helping him sing the notes from our repertoire. Somewhere around middle C, his pitch would drop down about an octave. He was unable to access those notes, which unfortunately were the notes I needed him to sing for our repertoire. Don Brinegar calls these frozen vocal cords, and this can be resolved to some degree by putting a breathy sound before the syllable or note.

I learned through this project that it's important to be careful where students are sitting in a class, especially male students struggling to match pitch. For example, a student struggling to match pitch shouldn't be placed next to a strong singer, who is producing a lot of ring in their

voice. The struggling student will struggle even more to discriminate between those overtones and hear/sing the actual note.

In conclusion, my time at Kansas state gave me a million little nuggets of teacher help, not necessarily related to each other, but that helped my overall effectiveness as a teacher. In example, learning how to give clearer conducting cues, better overall understanding of vocal pedagogy, anatomy and physiology, access to a wealth of articles on how to help the male singer through the voice change and exposure to a variety of instructional practices.

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