

Objective: At the end of this presentation, I would like to have a list of pros and cons to implementing a Sight-Reading component at the State Solo and Ensemble Festivals, starting in 2017. This could be implemented in region festivals sooner.

Secondary Objective: I would like teachers to have an experience understanding, in real time, what that assessment would/could/should look like. A "lab choir" has volunteered to go through a mock assessment of their Music Literacy (Sight Reading).

Secondary Objective: I would like the UMEA Membership (Choral, specifically) to consider briefly the roles and mission of UMEA and the roles and mission of ACDA, and to be exposed to the idea(s) of why both are necessary.

- I. When I became certified as a choral and vocal music teacher, I was "recruited" to join UMEA. I attended the conference (and became a member at the same time). I was inspired, uplifted, strengthened and more aware of the depth of what I had committed to. I did not get any recruiting in the university. At the time, I did not know that ACDA even existed. Several years into my teaching, I would occasionally hear about this organization (ACDA) but never understood who or what it was.

Over time, I began to ask the question, "Should I join ACDA?" My school would pay for the "professional development" I received through membership and participation in UMEA, but I couldn't justify (to my administration) that they should pay for both; nor was I convinced that I should pay for membership in both.

After being invited to participate as a member of the UMEA State Choral Committee, and particularly after being appointed, then elected, as the Choral VP, I found out more about ACDA, but did not join. Then the National ACDA convention was held in Salt Lake City. For various reasons I did not choose to attend (mistake one); however, it seemed that ACDA-Utah now had momentum and purpose. They organized an ACDA-Utah convention (in September) and - let's be honest - they are all over FaceBook. So again I ask myself, why ACDA? And is it worth it to do both?

My experiences with these questions have led me to consider many things - a lot of which benefit us on the UMEA side of things. Let me share what I have

learned. Remember that this comes from me and my informal research – it is not intended as a statement of beliefs or the official position of either organization.

- a. ACDA–Utah is about professional development. I see the focus being on the building of me as a choir director and as a chorister. I see value being placed on high quality performances and workshops presented by those who know the craft of directing a chorus. While choristers will improve, ACDA is about who I am and what I do. ACDA will provide support to me as a choral director and musician.
- b. UMEA is about professional development. I see the focus being on the building of me as a professional educator. I also see the support from UMEA to build students. While directors improve through the experiences, this is about things that will help me as a teacher of music. UMEA will provide support to me as a classroom teacher, and also as a director.
- c. I liked it best as we were discussing this again last night and a committee member said, “I see it like a Venn diagram. Each has their primary purpose and the methods and purposes overlap, too.” So each has a role and complement each other in ways that make both necessary.

II. Out of that discussion of UMEA and ACDA came the questions, “What SHOULD UMEA do more of? As we look at the 8 sessions of this UMEA Conference scheduled or under the direction of UMEA Choral, there are topics that need some coverage. We obviously can’t do everything each year, but what COULD we do that will a) help teachers (at all levels) and b) help provide support as directors and musicians. Items that might get coverage in the UMEA conference (and consequently NOT get specific coverage at an ACDA conference) might include 1) Assessment in the Choral Music Classroom, together with CSIP’s, PLC’s, SLO’s etc. etc. We know that the teacher evaluation tool has changed, so what can we do to support the music teacher in this area? 2) Concert Management including reinforcing sound (using microphones) and recording your ensembles. 3) Curriculum development and addressing specific needs of students through choral music scope and sequence. 4) Effectively managing rehearsals. Using time and technology wisely. And last, 5) Music Literacy.

III. Music Literacy. Literacy is a buzzword in education. What if we could show that we were improving the literacy of students as it relates to our discipline and overall in their educational setting? The Case for Literacy:

- a. When considering "literacy," we often assume that we are considering knowledge of communication through the written word. However, the reading and writing of music are also *communication* skills that fall within the notion of "literacy." Music is a kind of language (some even term it the "Universal Language") with its own logic and syntax. A pedagogy has evolved to teach the skills of reading and writing music with its own methodology and developmental scope and sequence.
- b. While music reading and writing skills are quite different from language reading and writing skills, the early development of musical literacy can also be a powerful tool in developing language literacy. Studies have shown that the study of music increases academic achievement on a number of different fronts, including language writing skills. This seems to support the idea that the development of music and language literacy in our students may mutually reinforce each other. Perhaps the differences between the skills of reading and writing music and language are not as great as they appear at first glance.
- c. Literacy is about the *fluent use of a language*. "I speak the lingo. I read the lingo. I write the lingo. I understand the language." We use language to communicate information and ideas.
- d. Music is, demonstrably, a language. It is in fact an extremely sophisticated language. It has its own "grammar" and a logic dictated by the harmonic patterns of various frequencies (itches) sounded simultaneously and in series. We react to these patterns with marked physical and emotional responses. *It communicates and in fact encodes and replicates harmonic events in time*. Sounds, as we have known from at least the time of Pythagoras, have structure and mathematical relationships to each other. Almost all of us have experienced an intensely emotional response at one time or another to the harmonic structure of music. I think it is important to represent music through reading and writing in order to have a better understanding of that structure and, ultimately, in order to have a better understanding of ourselves. (these four bullet points accessed on February 5, 2016, from <http://www.musickit.com/resources/forumart.html>)

IV. Implementing a Sight-Singing Component as a part of the State Solo and Ensemble Festivals (for chamber choirs).

- a. Procedure: Some of you may have had the experience of having an adjudicated Sight-Singing experience (usually outside of the state of Utah). However, there is precedent for this IN the state of Utah.
  - i. Jazz bands have an adjudicated sight-reading session in many region festivals and at the state festival.

- ii. Orchestras have an adjudicated sight-reading session in many region festivals and at the state festival.
- b. Once implemented in the State Solo and Ensemble Festivals, many regions might choose (or be encouraged) to implement these same or similar procedures at region festivals (ultimate goal?)
- c. Overview: Students leave the stage after their performance and are taken to another room. The students line up (determined ahead of time) according to how they would like to complete the exercise (i.e. men in front, SATB sections, mixed, etc.) and enter the room as such. The director chooses the level of music that they would like to have their students sight-sing and are given a piece of music. While the adjudicator/clinician discusses the value of sight-reading and sight-singing with the students, the teacher looks over the piece of music and makes mental note of instruction that might be given (approximately 5 minutes). The piece is then distributed to the students. The teacher may take up to 5 minutes to “talk through” the piece (including tricky rhythms, things to watch for, etc.). Students may not sing during this time. The director chooses the sound to be sung (solfeggio, numbers, or neutral syllable [tah], words if given in the piece, etc.) and the students are given the I, IV, and V chords and their starting pitch. The director determines the tempo and keeps a steady tempo without saying anything (unless things begin to go awry). Fluency is assessed – ideally a choir would not stop, but if needed to they could have a second attempt that would lower the overall score.
- d. Choirs would be assessed according to a scoring sheet (rubric) and the score would NOT be used as a part of their overall posted scores for their performance at the festival.

V. Let’s watch it in action.

VI. What are your thoughts?

# PROPOSED UTAH FESTIVAL

## MUSIC LITERACY: SIGHT-READING

### ADJUDICATION FORM (DRAFT)

SCHOOL \_\_\_\_\_

MUSICAL SELECTION \_\_\_\_\_

<b>TECHNICAL ACCURACY</b>		COMMENTS		
Correct Intervals			COMMENTS	
Feeling of Tonality				
Note Values				
Rhythmic Figures				
Balance				
Tone Quality				
Intonation				
<b>INTERPRETATION</b>		COMMENTS		
Tempo			COMMENTS	
Phrasing				
Style				
<b>MUSICAL EFFECT</b>		COMMENTS		
Fluency			COMMENTS	
Confidence – Sections				
Confidence – Ensemble				
<b>DEPORTMENT</b>		COMMENTS		
Conduct			COMMENTS	
Attitude				
Attention to Adjudicator				
Response to Director				
<b>RATING</b>		COMMENTS		

Green Valley High School  
Invitational Chamber Festival  
Sight-Reading Component

The Chamber/Madrigal groups will continue with a sight-reading component at festival this year. It will occur after your clinic with one of the judges. The procedure will be as follows:

- 1) The director will be handed a packet as he/she enters the room with their students.
- 2) Please have students stand in the position you would like them to sight-read. You may then hand the music out to the students facing down.
- 3) Students are not to turn over their music until instructed by the director.
- 4) The judge will talk to the students about sight-reading skills for two (2) minutes while the director studies his/her score.
- 5) At the end of the two (2) minutes, the director will ask the students to turn their score over. At this point, the director will have 2 minutes to talk through the music with the students or you may have your students work in sections for the 2 minutes. Students will not be permitted to ask questions.
  - a) Directors may not sing pitches.
  - b) Directors may cover things like meter, key signatures, etc.
- 6) At the end of the 2 minutes, the choir may sing the scale and the director will play I – IV – V – I of the key followed by the first measure or to the first chord that is sung together.
- 7) The director will then give the starting pitches and count off one full measure. The music may be sung on the printed words, solfege, numbers, or a neutral syllable – this is up to the director. The director may call out measure numbers only if things are falling apart. They may not call out measures otherwise.
- 8) At the end of the sight-reading, the teacher will collect all music and put it back in the packet. The packet should be returned to the judge or the runner in that room.

TIPS & INFORMATION

\*\*Practice this procedure in your classroom so the students are familiar with it.

\*\*The score is not averaged with your performance score.

\*\*This year will be major keys only with minimal steps and skips

# FESTIVAL SIGHTREADING PROCEDURES

## GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

There will be no audience in the sight-reading room. After the group is seated the adjudicator will explain the sight-reading procedures and attendants will distribute the music.

**There will be no piano accompaniment at any time during the sight-reading.** All practices and performances will be sung a cappella. The piano/keyboard will be used ONLY by the adjudicator to establish tonality and to give beginning pitches.

## RHYTHMIC READING INSTRUCTIONS

### **Study Period**

The chorus will be given one minute to study the rhythmic example **silently**.

### **First Performance, Non-Adjudicated**

At the cue of the adjudicator, the chorus will perform the rhythmic example. The adjudicator will set and maintain the tempo. It will be the choir director's decision as to the method of rhythmic presentation (clap, say, or sing syllables).

### **Second Performance, Adjudicated**

The chorus will then perform the example for adjudication, with the adjudicator setting and maintaining the tempo.

## MELODIC READING INSTRUCTIONS

### **Study Period**

The director will be given five minutes to study the melodic example with his/her group; the director may elect to use less time. During these five minutes, the director will instruct the students as he/she would like, within the following guidelines:

*There is to be no vocalizing (singing or humming) of the melodic example, by the director or choir, during the five minute study period. However, the director may choose to have students read silently through the example without vocalizing. To facilitate this internal reading, at the director's request, the adjudicator will play the scale and tonic chord of the melodic sight reading example followed by the beginning pitch for each section. The establishing of tonality and giving beginning pitches will occur only once during the study period.*

*During the study period the director may indicate key or time signatures. The director may also point out certain difficult passages and talk about them, however, the director may not LEAD the chorus through the example by any vocalization (singing or humming) or by using Curwen hand signs. The choir may practice the rhythms aloud.*

### **First Performance, Non-Adjudicated**

At the end of the study period, tonality will be reestablished by the adjudicator and each section will be given their beginning pitch. Students will be allowed to hum their beginning pitch before starting to sing. During this performance the director will conduct the choir and may tap, snap, or clap a steady pulse, but may NOT sing, speak, tap, snap, or clap exact rhythms for the choir. At the conclusion of the first performance the director is allowed one minute to discuss problem areas with the choir, however, there is to be no vocalizing (singing or humming). At this time ONLY the director may use Curwen hand signs as a problem solving tool.

### **Second Performance, Adjudicated**

Following the first performance and director's comments, tonality will be reestablished and each section will be given their beginning pitch. This second reading should be continuous. At the conclusion of the second reading, the choir will remain seated until all of the music has been handed in and counted. The judge may choose to waive the second reading if the choir is successful on their first reading attempt.

# CHORAL FESTIVAL SIGHTREADING ADJUDICATION FORM

Name of Ensemble \_\_\_\_\_

RATING
--------

School \_\_\_\_\_ Grade Level \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Singers \_\_\_\_\_

Sightreading Level (circle one) 1 2 3 4 5 6      Voicing of Sightreading \_\_\_\_\_

## RHYTHMIC SIGHTREADING

		1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	SCORE
I	RHYTHM	Less than 40% accuracy	40-74% accuracy	75-89% accuracy	90-100% accuracy	
		1	2	3	4	SCORE
II	TEMPO	No consistent tempo; No evidence of musical phrasing	Tempo somewhat unsteady; Phrasing is halted or interrupted	Tempo generally steady with some minor discrepancies; Phrasing slightly irregular	Consistent tempo; Phrasing is musical throughout	

## MELODIC/HARMONIC SIGHTREADING

		1-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	SCORE
I	PITCH	Less than 40% accuracy overall	40-74% accuracy overall	75-89% accuracy overall; or 90-100% accuracy in some parts with several errors in one or more parts	90-100% accuracy in all parts	
		1	2	3	4	SCORE
II	RHYTHM AND TEMPO	Less than 40% accuracy overall  No consistent tempo; No evidence of musical phrasing	40-74% accuracy overall  Tempo somewhat unsteady; Phrasing is halted or interrupted	75-89% accuracy overall  Tempo generally steady with some minor discrepancies; Phrasing slightly irregular	90-100% accuracy in all parts  Consistent tempo; Phrasing is musical throughout	
		1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	SCORE
III	INTONATION  AND/OR  VERTICAL HARMONY	Intonation not satisfactory  Vertical harmonic relationship is missing in most parts	Intonation somewhat satisfactory  Vertical harmonic relationship is not clear; errors in several parts	Some parts in tune throughout with several intonation errors in one or more parts; or slight intonation problems overall  Vertical harmonic relationship lines up; sense of tonality in some parts	Intonation excellent throughout  Vertical harmonic relationship lines up; strong sense of tonality in all parts	

## SIGHTREADING PREPARATION PROCESS

		1	2	3	4	SCORE
I	ENSEMBLE WORK (USE OF TIME)	Less than 40% of the students on task 100% of the time	40-74% of the students on task 100% of the time	75-89% of the students on task 100% of the time	90-100% of the students on task 100% of the time	

**TOTAL SCORE**

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TOTAL SCORE	6-23	24-27	28-31	32-35	36-40
RATING	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Superior

COMMENTS \_\_\_\_\_

JUDGE'S NAME (please print) \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_



## **Festival Sightreading:** **Available Levels and Voicings**

Here are the sightreading options that are available for each choir. Directors will need to choose their level and voicing during online festival registration.

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6
Unison Treble	SA	SSA on 3 staves	SSA on 3 staves	SSA on 3 staves	SSA on 3 staves
Unison Bass	TB	SSA on 2 staves	SSA on 2 staves	SSA on 2 staves	SSA on 2 staves
	ST	TTB on 3 staves	TTB on 3 staves	TTB on 3 staves	TTB on 3 staves
	S Bar	TTB on 2 staves	TTB on 2 staves	TTB on 2 staves	TTB on 2 staves
	SB	SAT on 3 staves	SAT on 3 staves	SAB on 3 staves	SAB on 3 staves
	SAB on 3 staves	SAT on 2 staves	SAT on 2 staves	SAB on 2 staves	SAB on 2 staves
	SAB on 2 staves	SAB on 3 staves	SAB on 3 staves	SATB on 4 staves	SATB on 4 staves
	SATB on 4 staves	SAB on 2 staves	SAB on 2 staves	SATB on 2 staves	SATB on 2 staves
	SATB on 2 staves	SATB on 4 staves	SATB on 4 staves		
		SATB on 2 staves	SATB on 2 staves		

# Festival Ranges

## High School

### SSA Ensembles



### Male Ranges



### SATB Ensembles



## **Middle School Festival Sightreading: Available Levels and Voicings**

Here are the sightreading options that are available for each middle school choir. Directors will need to choose their level and voicing during online festival registration.

<b><i>Level 1</i></b>	<b><i>Level 2</i></b>	<b><i>Level 3</i></b>	<b><i>Level 4</i></b>
Unison Treble Clef	Unison Treble Clef	SA	SSA on 2 staves
Unison Bass Clef	Unison Bass Clef	CB	SSA on 3 staves
		SC	TTB on 2 staves
		S Bar	TTB on 3 staves
		SB	SAC on 2 staves
			SAC on 3 staves
			SAB on 2 staves
			SAB on 3 staves
			SATB on 2 staves
			SATB on 4 staves

# Festival Ranges

## Middle School

### Levels I & II S/A



### Levels III S/A, S/C, S/B



### Levels IV SAB



### Levels IV SATB



A musical score for SATB choir, consisting of four staves (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and 26 numbered measures. The score is written in common time (C) and features a variety of rhythmic patterns and melodic lines for each voice part. The Soprano part begins with a melodic line in measure 2, while the Alto, Tenor, and Bass parts provide harmonic support with rhythmic accompaniment. The piece concludes with a final cadence in measure 26.

# SATB

# 1.1

# Baroque

## Chorus

Nicholas Palmer

The musical score is arranged in four systems, each containing four staves for Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B). The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and the time signature is common time (C). Measure numbers 1 through 16 are indicated above the staves. The score features a variety of note values including quarter, eighth, and sixteenth notes, as well as rests and ties. The Soprano part has a melodic line with some grace notes. The Alto part provides harmonic support with sustained notes and moving lines. The Tenor and Bass parts have more rhythmic and harmonic roles, often using longer note values and rests.

SATB

1.1

Classical

Minuet

Hank Beebe

The musical score is arranged in four systems, each with four staves (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 3/4. The score consists of 32 measures. The first system covers measures 1-8, the second system covers measures 9-16, the third system covers measures 17-24, and the fourth system covers measures 25-32. The piece concludes with a *rit.* (ritardando) marking in measure 31, which is repeated in the Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass parts.

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Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), Bass (B) vocal parts with piano accompaniment. The score is in 4/4 time with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The music is divided into four systems, each containing four staves. Measure numbers 1 through 16 are indicated above the vocal staves. Dynamics include *mf* (measures 1-8), *mp* (measures 9-12), and *mf* (measures 13-16). A sharp sign is present in measure 3 of the Alto part.



# 371

## Bach Chorales

in order of sight-reading complexity



### 1. Aus meines Herzens Grunde

Johann Sebastian Bach

# SAB

# 1.1

# Renaissance

Edward DeNardis

The musical score is arranged in four systems, each containing three staves for Soprano (S), Alto (A), and Bass (B). The music is in common time (C) and features a variety of rhythmic patterns and melodic lines. Measure numbers 2 through 26 are indicated above the staves. The score concludes with a double bar line at the end of measure 26.

Edward DeNardis

The image displays a musical score for three voices: Soprano (S), Soprano (S), and Alto (A). The score is written in common time (C) and consists of 24 measures. The first system covers measures 1 through 6, the second system covers measures 7 through 12, the third system covers measures 13 through 18, and the fourth system covers measures 19 through 24. The Soprano parts feature melodic lines with various rhythmic values, while the Alto part provides a harmonic accompaniment. The score concludes with a double bar line at the end of measure 24.

The musical score is arranged in four systems, each containing three staves for Tenor 1 (T), Tenor 2 (T), and Bass (B). The music is in common time (C) and features a variety of rhythmic patterns and melodic lines. Measure numbers 1 through 24 are indicated above the staves. The notation includes eighth and sixteenth notes, rests, and dynamic markings such as *mf* and *f*. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of measure 24.

The musical score is arranged in four systems, each containing three staves. The top staff is for Tenor (T), the middle for Bass (B), and the bottom for Bass (B). The music is in common time (C) and features a mix of eighth and sixteenth notes, often beamed together. Measure numbers 1 through 24 are indicated above the top staff. The score concludes with a double bar line at the end of measure 24.