

Arizona ACDA Summer Conference
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Strategies for Working with the Male Changing Voice in the Choral Setting



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What Is Your PHILOSOPHY?

**If you can walk
You can dance.
If you can talk
You can sing.**

Zimbabwean Proverb

*Where there is great love,
there are always miracles.*

Willa Cather, 1876-1947

American Writer



*We must always change, renew,
rejuvenate ourselves; otherwise
we harden.*

Johann von Goethe, 1749-1832
German Poet and Writer

**Life is change.
Growth is optional.
Choose wisely.**

**Karen Kaiser Clark, b. 1938
American Legislator and Feminist**

A wise man makes more
opportunities than he finds.

Francis Bacon, 1561-1626
English Philosopher

“We are what we
repeatedly do.
EXCELLENCE, then,
is not an act but a habit.”

- Aristotle

I am easily satisfied
With the very best.

Sir Winston Churchill, 1874-1965
British Statesman, Prime Minister

**There is a great man, who
makes every man feel small.
But the real great man is the
man who makes every man
feel great.**

**G.K. Chesterton, 1874-1936
English Novelist & Critic**



People will
forget
what you said ...
they will forget
what you did
but people will
NEVER FORGET
how you made them
FEEL

Maya Angelou

I want everyone to love
music for LIFE,
not just the years they
are in choir.

Everyone doesn't need to major in music (...and shouldn't); however, everyone should be a music supporter and advocate! They should ALL want to sing as adults and support the arts!

Information
is
POWER

Changing Voice Research

- Duncan McKenzie
- Irving Cooper
- Frederick Swanson
- John Cooksey
- Patrick Freer
- Henry Leck

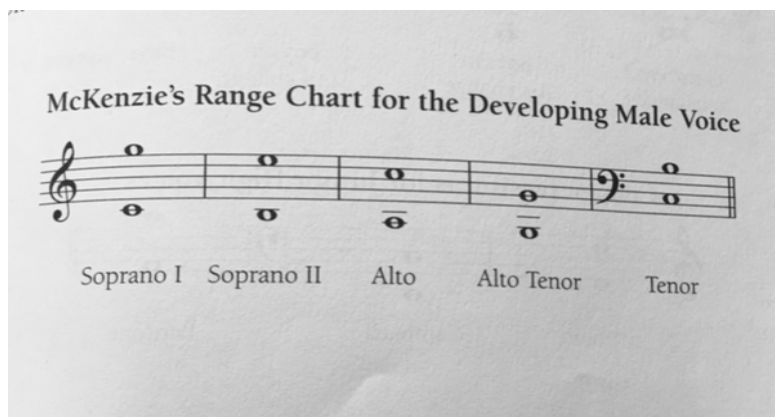
Duncan McKenzie

Training the Boy's Changing Voice

- Progression of vocal change through what he calls the alto-tenor.
- Concept suggests that a soprano I becomes a soprano II, then an alto, then an alto-tenor, then tenor.
- Leading indicator of vocal change is a change in the speaking voice.

Duncan McKenzie

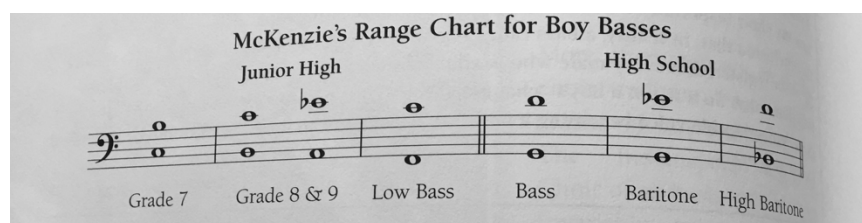
Training the Boy's Changing Voice



* Most educators would disagree with the upper pitches of the alto-tenor, or the tenor.

Duncan McKenzie

Training the Boy's Changing Voice



- Second set of ranges, McKenzie tries to classify bass voices according to grade.
- Boys' voices do not mature at the same age.

Irving Cooper

Teaching Junior High Music

- First to coin the term cambiata. Counterpoint term meaning “changing note”.
- Boys’ and girls’ unchanged voices are quite identical in range.
- First change, second change, finally a fully changed bass voice.
- Junior High Singers should not sing in unison.

Irving Cooper

Teaching Junior High Music

Girls/boys/
unchanged Boys in
1st change Boys in
2nd change Boys changed

Cooper Tessituras for Junior High Voices

Soprano Cambiata Baritone

Frederick Swanson

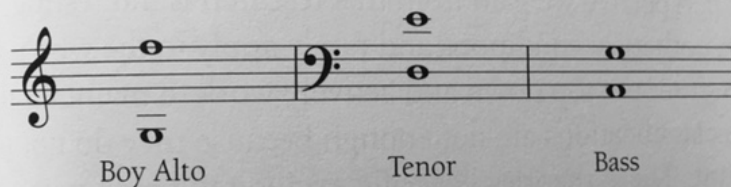
Music Teaching in the Junior High and Middle School
The Male Singing Voice – Ages Eight to Eighteen

- Vocal change relates to puberty
- Great attention to register breaks and recognizes the importance of vocalizing downward
- Recognizes the continued use of falsetto
- Voice classifications include no evidence of falsetto in the range
- Ranges seem to have very low upper limits

Frederick Swanson

Music Teaching in the Junior High and Middle School
The Male Singing Voice – Ages Eight to Eighteen

Swanson Ranges for Junior High Male Voices



John Cooksey

Eclectic Contemporary Theory of Male Adolescent Voice Change

- Leading authority on the boys' changing voice
- Vocal classification to new levels of sophistication
- Once the new voice appears, the high voice is ignored. (All of the charts from all studies)

The Male Changing Voice

- The Male voice change occurs in approximately 5 stages.
- All Normally healthy boys pass through the five stages in a sequence that is 100% predictable (according to research).
- The most reliable indicator of a stage of voice change is the total range of the singing voice (excluding falsetto).
- Voice training cannot alter the stage of change (you can't change physiology). But, voice training does assist boys in singing throughout the change process.

- Patrick Freer

Summary of the Stages of Voice Maturation in the Adolescent Male

Stages of the Boys' Changing Voice (research of John Cooksey)

Quarter notes indicate average tessituras.

A musical staff in G major (one sharp) showing six stages of voice maturation. Stage I (Unchanged) has a range from G4 to G5. Stage II (Midvoice) has a range from G4 to E5. Stage III (Midvoice II) has a range from G4 to C6. Stage IV (Midvoice IIA) has a range from G4 to D6. Stage V (New Baritone) has a range from G3 to G5. Stage VI (Developing Baritone) has a range from G2 to G5. Quarter notes indicate average tessituras.

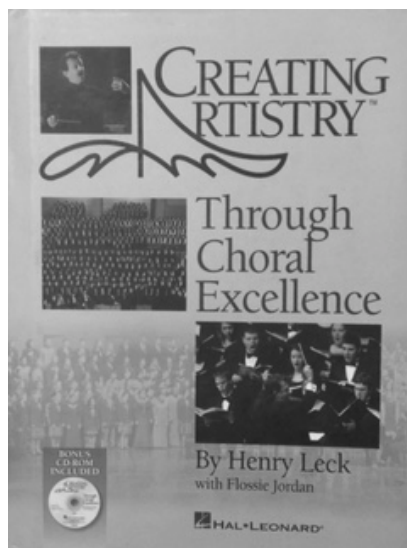
Note: falsetto emerges during Midvoice IIA, indicating the peak of the change process
 * From Patrick Freer's Handout "Working With Boys & Their Changing Voices"

Henry Leck Creating Artistry

Typical Range Classification of Leck Students

A musical staff diagram showing typical range classifications for Bass and Tenor voices. The staff is divided into two sections: Bass Voice and Tenor Voice. Each section is further divided into Lower Range, Upper Range, and Full Range. The diagram uses dots and circles to represent the range boundaries for each classification.

Resources



Henry Leck *Creating Artistry*

- Approach the voice from the top down
- Actively work to maintain that upper singing range
- Prior theories exclude the high voice and perpetuate the myth that once the voice changes the high voice disappears

Henry Leck

Creating Artistry

- Experience has shown that boys who stop singing when their voices begin to change may actually lose the ability to manage their voice in later years.
- Rather than unwittingly pressuring boys to walk out, the ideal is to encourage them by having them sing whatever pitches they are able to sing.
- Important that boys start at the top and carry that down through the break, making a nice transition.

Henry Leck

Creating Artistry

- Identifying Changing Voices
 - The way the voice changes is directly related to the speed and the manner in which the larynx is growing.
 - It all relates to the change in length of the vocal folds (called vocal mutation).
 - Each boy will experience voice change in his own unique manner.

Henry Leck

Creating Artistry

- basses.
- The voices of those who are becoming tenors tend to change with less interruption and less trauma.
- Usually the period of adjustment is much more severe and dramatic for a bass.
- For future basses, it can happen very quickly or take a long time.
- It will take many variations and many adjustments before it “settles in” to a consistent range for either voice type.
- The high voice normally will not disappear once the voice changes.

Henry Leck

Creating Artistry

- A boy’s voice is beginning to change when some lower notes appear and he begins to experience some difficulty in the upper range.

Henry Leck
Creating Artistry

You must know
every boy's voice.

**Rehearsal
Atmosphere**

Rehearsal Management

- Behavior Expectations
- Awareness of physiological vocal changes and acceptance of issues beyond their control
- Respect
- Single Gender Opportunities
 - Sectionals, Special Rehearsals

Matching Pitch

*“If your ship doesn’t
come in,
swim out to it.”*

Anonymous

Matching Pitch

- Sirens/Slides: Frisbee, Baseball, Elevator
- Difficult to fix “pitch problems” without working with Individuals vs. the group
- Boys in a circle; sing “sol mi sol” individually
 - If a singer is not matching pitch, ask him to sing any pitch. You match their pitch. Ask the choir if they sound the same or different. (thumbs up/thumbs down)
 - Have him sing another pitch. Match the pitch again. Then you sing and have him try to match. Use the “vocal slide” to help him move to the pitch.
 - Teach them how to LISTEN!

Assessment – Collecting Information

**LISTENING, AND KNOWING
WHETHER YOU ARE
“ON PITCH OR NOT”
IS HALF THE BATTLE!!!!**

**“You have two ears
and one mouth....**

**You need to listen TWICE
as hard as you sing.”**

Voice Placement for Changing Voices

- Select a short song with a LIMITED range
 - i.e., “Jingle Bells” (or another familiar tune with a range of a 5th or 6th)
- Sing the first line in 3 keys; Mid: F, High: Bb, Low: C
- Have each singer decide which is the most comfortable, and then move to that section. (A,T, or B)
- Encourage them to sing as a solo or with a friend.
- Provide as many “painless” opportunities for singing, so that it becomes second nature to them and not a “big deal” to sing alone.

Self Esteem vs. Voice Placement

Vocal Modeling

- Sing in a light, healthy tone
- Female teacher working with changing voices:
 - If your voice is not in their octave; play games with Timbre.
 - “If it’s high in my voice, it’s high in your voice...If it’s low in my voice, it’s low in your voice.”
 - Find a student that understands – you sing, have the student sing, have the class sing after the student.
 - Bring in a vocal model: another male teacher, high school students from the high school choral program that your school feeds, etc...

Vocal Modeling

Singing in an unhealthy manner is not helpful to anyone! Don’t sing with the Tenors/
Basses on a daily basis if you are a Soprano/
Alto.

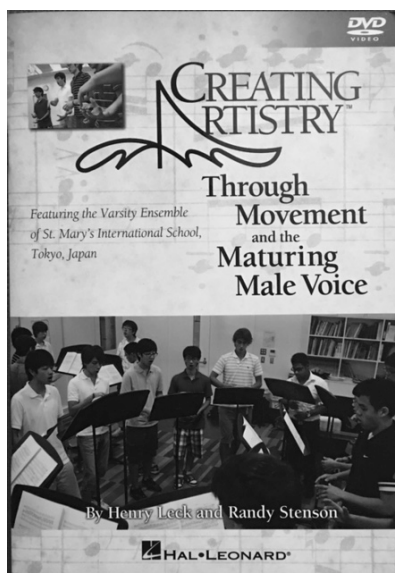
**Don’t SACRIFICE your voice
to help others!**

Warm-Ups

- Vocalises that descend and employ some movement with the body are more helpful, those with a narrow tessitura of a fifth or a third are easier.
- Descending patterns are easier than ascending ones
- Start high above the break and come down across the break
- Vocalises should be fun and employ movement to keep the voice relaxed and avoid strain in the mouth and neck.
- Vocalises that employ a feeling of motion and a feeling of the beat help to solidify musicianship.
- One of the best exercises: Sigh coming down from the top of your voice; lighten up and bring your head voice down as much as possible.

Creating Artistry through Choral Excellence
Henry Leck

Resources



Creating Artistry Through Movement and the Maturing Voice

Henry Leck and Randy Stenson

- Boys are basically physical learners and they are more active. Movement helps them to retain information such as rhythm and musical phrasing.

Rodney Eichenberger

- Movement and gesture indirectly affect most choral sound and its quality.
- Movement and gesture may enhance or negate verbal instruction.
- Combining physical movement and singing in the rehearsal may aid retention and reproducing similar responses in sound for performance.
- Singer motion and use of gesture is invaluable for improved performance.
- Movement and gesture give singers shared ownership in the product.
- Movement draws a singer's attention to musical subtlety.
- Gesture is a means of moving singers out of "auto-pilot."
- Gesture and movement are strongest and exert greater control on sound when hand and arm activity are closer to the "power center."

2a Warm-up #1: Nay-oh nay-oh nee

Stenson

Nay - oh nay - oh nee._____ Nay - oh nay - oh nee..

4 _____
Nay - oh nay - oh nee._____

Starting from near the cheekbone and with either hand, point forward on each beat. Be careful that the first syllable isn't spread.

Circle the lips on the final "nee" pulling upwards and away keeping the lips round.

On the last note, after circling, lift upwards from the lips.

Use the left hand for breath support and fullness of tone color.

Hold the last note and experiment shaping the decrescendo while listening for changes in intensity and tone color. Emphasize a variety of releases at the end of each phrase.

Vocalise 1

Slide on "Ah." Sing up into the head voice. (Swing arms as you descend and work your way up the scale.)

Musical score for Vocalise 1, 4/4 time. The piece consists of three measures in each system. The first system is in G major (one sharp). The second system changes to B minor (two flats). The third system changes to D major (two sharps). The vocal line features a descending eighth-note scale on the first measure of each system, followed by a long note labeled 'a' (Ah) that spans across the second and third measures. The piano accompaniment provides harmonic support with chords and moving lines in both hands.

Vocalise 2

This vocalise descends and involves motion. Sing up in the head voice. Keep your mouth and your neck relaxed. (Move both hands in a circular motion from the elbows going in, up, and out. Then lift hands up on the last "ah.")

Musical score for Vocalise 2, 4/4 time. The piece consists of three measures in each system. The first system is in G major (one sharp). The second system changes to B minor (two flats). The third system changes to D major (two sharps). The vocal line features a descending eighth-note scale on the first measure of each system, followed by a long note labeled 'e e e o e e o a' (ay-o) that spans across the second and third measures. The piano accompaniment provides harmonic support with chords and moving lines in both hands.

Vocalise 3

Sing very lightly and when your lower voice begins to creep in, just sing lightly. When you get to the break, keep it light going across it. (Touch the cheeks with the back of your hands. Keep the body in motion.)

Musical score for Vocalise 3 in 4/4 time. The piece is in B-flat major. The vocal line features a melodic line with lyrics: "e o e o e o e o a (ay-o) a e o e o e o e o a". The piano accompaniment consists of a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand.

Vocalise 4

This is a good one for students to lead. Visualize the sound coming out of the forehead. (Bounce while moving the hands as though you're pulling the sound from your eyebrows and from your eyes. Brighten the eyes.)

Musical score for Vocalise 4 in 4/4 time. The piece is in B-flat major. The vocal line features a melodic line with lyrics: "i i i i i i i i (ee) i i i i i i i i". The piano accompaniment includes a "Step/snap" section with rhythmic notation and the instruction "Left, snap, right, snap,". The piano accompaniment consists of a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand.

Vocalise 5

The singers enjoy this one a lot. Keep it light and come down over the break. (Step: Left, snap, right, snap.)

Zing - ah zing - ah zing - ah zing - ah zah...

Step/snap
Left, snap, right, snap,

Warm-ups

- motions..."
- Use the warm-up time to review concepts and fix incorrect vowel sounds.
- Vowel unification: "Right Shape = Right Sound"
- Use passages from the music; problematic text
- Find a pitch all can sing; move exercises from that pitch.
- Solfege = Great for building tone, intervals, sight-singing
 - Body Solfege
 - Curwen Hand Signs
- Visual recall: you sign pattern; have them sing it in their head; then out loud.

Learning Anchors

Visual
Aural
Kinesthetic

Know Your Vocal Range

- Listen to individuals every few weeks
- Keep an index card that shows their vocal range (Judy Bowers)
- Discuss the importance of knowing your vocal range and what you can physically sing and can't physically sing.
- Make this a FUN activity where they are encouraged to watch their range grow!

Is Developing Their Head Voice Really that Important?

Musical Illiteracy ...It's a CRIME

- Make the skills you are teaching them relevant to the music they are learning.
- Select passages from new music to sight-read.
- Use passages from previously learned music as sight-reading exercises, or aural recall.
- Have singers make the CONNECTION!

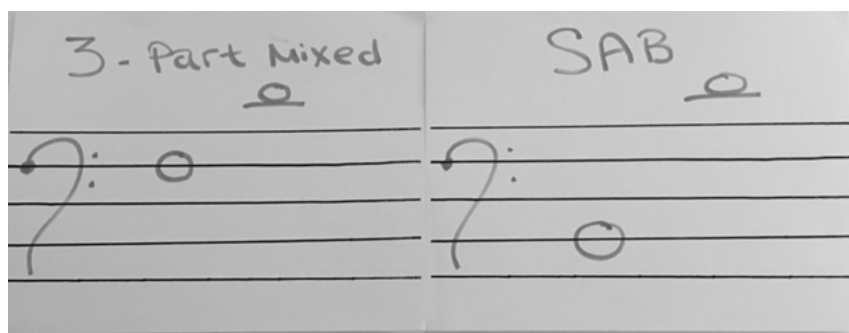
Repertoire Considerations



"MRS. KELLEY HOPES I KEEP THIS COLD 'TIL OUR SPRING CONCERT - I'M THE ONLY BASS IN OUR SCHOOL'S CHORUS."

Repertoire Considerations

- It's all about RANGE
 - SAB vs. 3-Part Mixed



Repertoire Considerations

- Voice Pivoting Approach (Sally Herman)
- Do You have VARIETY in your repertoire selections?
- Text....Is it Appropriate?

Henry Leck

Creating Artistry

- Repertoire
 - Appealing; bring out the natural beauty of the voice; represent a variety of periods and styles; provide viable options for all voice parts.
 - Special challenge to find literature that will interest the whole choir and still include changing voices.
 - SATB vs. SAB
 - SATB vs. Three-part mixed

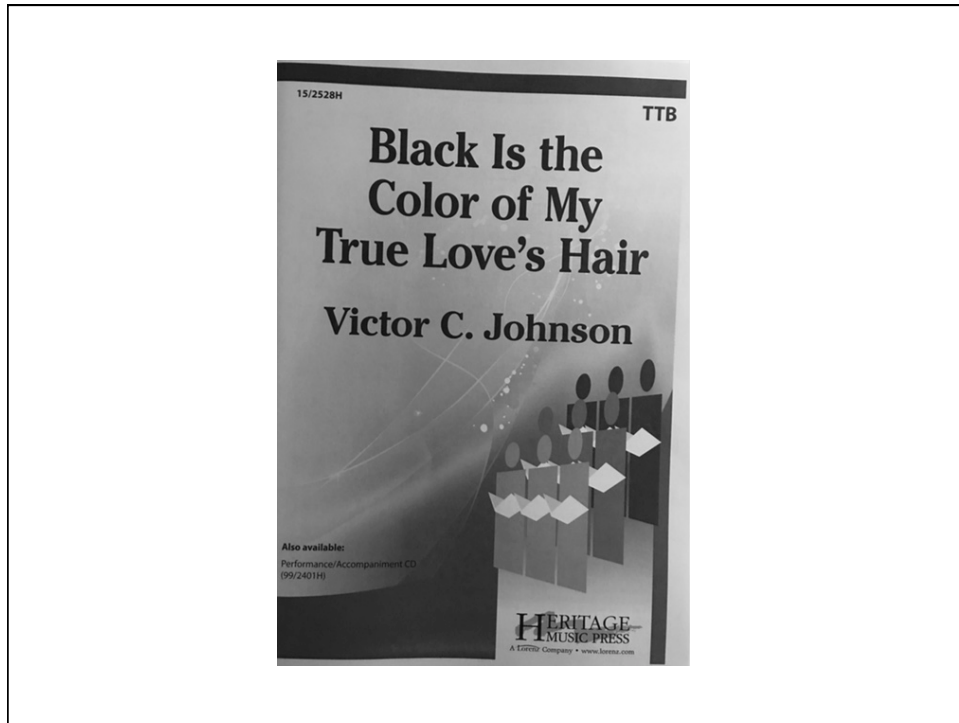
The Art of “De-composing”

Realistic Expectations

- Use Common Sense
- Be Flexible
- Back to the Basics

“Repetition. A class may need to hear a song four to six times before most students are able to sing it accurately. Keep them actively involved in the listening process by adding a new task to each repetition.”

(<http://giml.org/mlt/classroom/> Gordon Institute for Music Learning)



2 Black Is the Color of My True Love's Hair
TTB Chorus and Piano* with optional Cello**

Traditional American Folk Tune
Arranged by Victor C. Johnson

Ranges: Tenor I Tenor II Bass

Cello
Sweetly ♩ = ca. 84
mp

TT
B mp

Black, black, black is the col-or of my true love's

Duration: approx. 2:25
*Also available: Performance/Accompaniment CD (99/2401H).
**Cello part is found on page 8.

11 *mp* Her lips are some-thing won-drous fair, the hair. *mp* 3

10 All pur-est eyes and the dain-iest hands, I love the ground where- *mp*

13 *rit.* a tempo on she stands. *rit.* a tempo *mp* a tempo *mp* a tempo

20222 SHAKE THE PAPAYA DOWN
arr. Dwyer/Waller

Three-Part

Henry Leck
Choral Music

SHAKE THE PAPAYA DOWN
Calypso Song

Arranged by
Ruth E. Dwyer & Judith M. Waller

Three-Part Treble Voices
with Piano Accompaniment

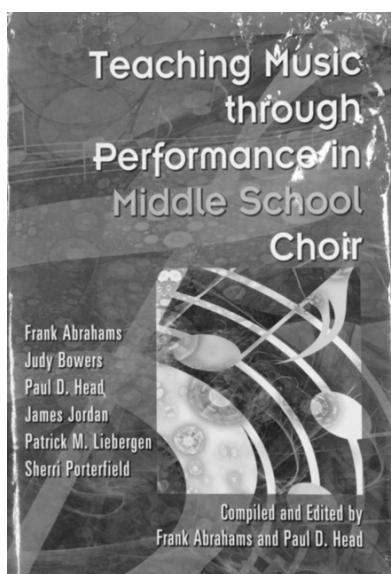
World Jazz
Around the World
Music

Colla Voce

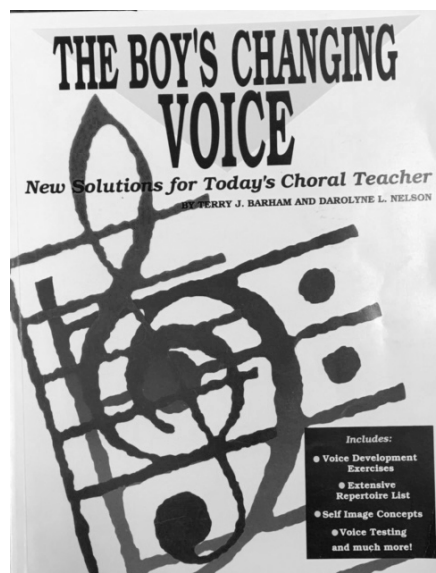
1 37
Sweet, sweet pa - pa - ya Fruit of the Is - land.
II
Shake them down... Shake them down...
III
I love pa - pa - ya yes I do...
37
When all the work's done, Dance on the white sands. If you will help me,
Climb the tall tree, shake them down... Shake them down...
Juic-y pa - pa - ya yes I do... If you will help me.

climb up the tall tree, Shake the pa - pa - ya down.
Shake them down... Shake the pa - pa - ya down.
I'll help you... Shake the pa - pa - ya down.
45 *cresc.* Shake the pa - pa - ya down. *molto ritard.* Shake the pa - pa - ya
cresc. Shake the pa - pa - ya down. Shake the pa - pa - ya
cresc. Shake the pa - pa - ya down. Shake the pa - pa - ya
48 Shake the pa - pa - ya down. Shake the pa - pa - ya
cresc. *molto ritard.*
a tempo
down.
down.
down.
a tempo

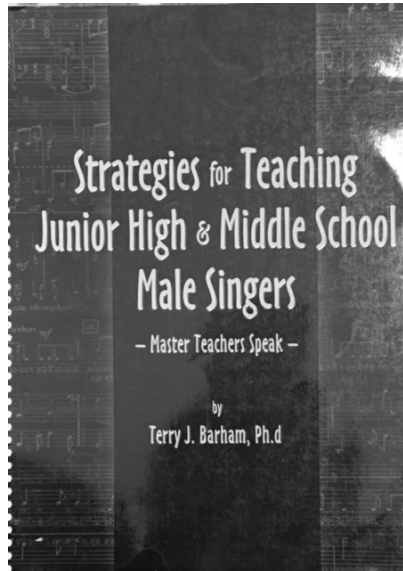
Resources



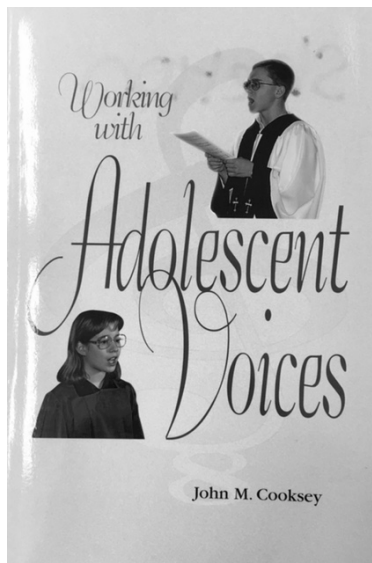
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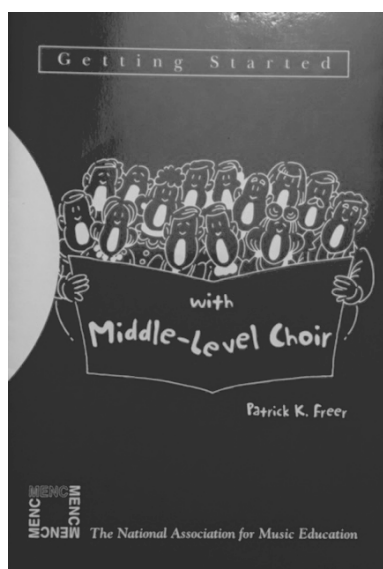
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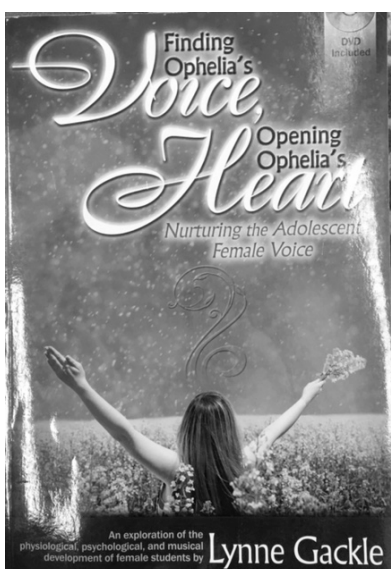
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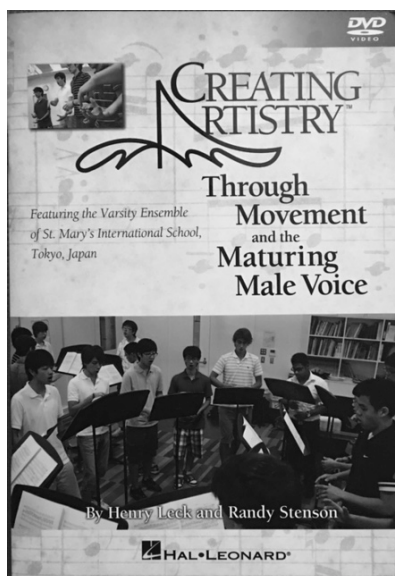
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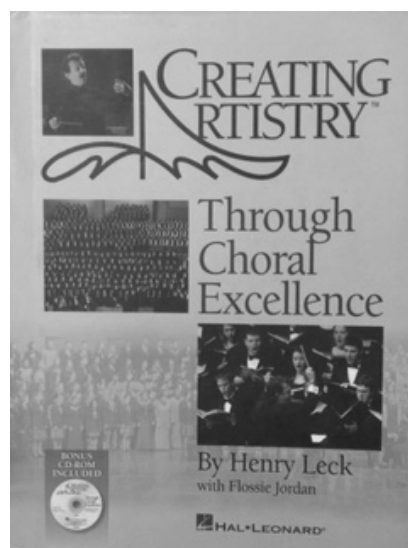
Resources



Resources



Resources



**Expect the BEST from each
Singer at EVERY
REHEARSAL.**

???'S

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