

Week 3 Reading Assignment

1. Design your middle school choral curriculum in table format, divided by hypothetical ensembles or grade levels, and National Standards and Achievement Standards to be encountered through the choral experience, as seen in Table 5.2. You may eliminate or add to the skills, concepts and content areas provided, as long as you defend your reasons. Use the format of Table 5.1 on p.74. (BT 5-1 p.76)

	Beginning Choir	Intermediate Choir	Advanced Choir
August	Standards 1,5	Standards 1,3,5	Standards 1,4,5
September	Standards 1,5,6,7	Standards 1,3,5	Standards 1,2,4,5
October	Standards 1,5,6,7	Standards 1,3,5,6,7	Standards 1,2,4,5
November	Standards 1,5,6,7	Standards, 1,3,5,6,7	Standards 1,5,8,9
December	Standards 1,5,8	Standards 1,5,6	Standards 1,5,8,9
January	Standards 1,5,6,8,9	Standards 1,5,8,9	Standards 1,5,6,7,8,9
February	Standards 1,5,6,7,8,9	Standards 1,4,5	Standards 1,5,6,7,8,9
March	Standards 1,5,6,7	Standards 1,4,5	Standards 1,5,6,7,8,9
April	Standards 1,5,6,7	Standards 1,5,6,7	Standards 1,3,5,6
May	Standards 1,5,6,7	Standards 1,5,6,7	Standards 1,3,5,6
All Year:	Singing/Reading	Singing/Reading	Singing/Reading
Fall Semester:	History/Language	Composition	Gospel/Instruments
Fall Semester:	Listening/Analyzing	Listening/Analyzing	Improvisation
Spring Semester:	Cultural Connections	Classical History	Vocal Jazz History
Spring Semester:	World Music	Classical Rep	Classical Rep
Post-Concerts:	Evaluation	Evaluation	Evaluation

3. Compare and contrast the following choral curriculum guides: Buchanan & Mehaffey (2005), Demorest (2001) and MENC (1991). (BT 9-3 p.138)

Buchanan & Mehaffey mention the typical nine standards of music education, but also delve into achievement standards and opportunity-to-learn standards. These achievement standards include the analysis and recognition of different elements within a work of music. They require the ability to perceive what musical events take place and to be able to investigate how they give beauty to a musical piece. The opportunity-to-learn standards are very practical guidelines that allow the learning environment to be more effective for the students. Some of these include requiring a set amount of time, a diverse repertoire, and a good building for the

class. It also requires that there be at least one performing organization other than band, orchestra, and chorus, such as mariachi groups and jazz ensembles.

Demorest appeals to the importance of incorporating sight singing into the choral rehearsal, and repeatedly mentions that there is no set best way to do this. The book encourages the usage of systems for identifying pitch through hand signs, solfege, and shape notes. It also encourages identifying rhythms through counting and rhythm syllables. Within the actual rehearsal, Demorest states that teachers should find repertoire that is not too difficult for students to read, and to even challenge students to use well known folk melodies for solfege exercises. Assessment can be done individually or in small groups, in person or through digital recordings.

The MENC book mentions the importance of having a core choir group, and to make sure that all other extra curricular groups evolve out of the core group. The concepts that listed in the book are to be heard and understood through the actual vocal and choral music. The understanding of the concepts should be learned through performance of the repertoire. MENC gives an extensive list of basic skills, separating them into tone, rhythm, harmony, tonality, texture, form, and melody. Looking at the chart, most concepts are only introduced in grades four through six, and then starting with grades six through nine, the concepts become reinforced along with some newer ones. In grades nine through twelve, the process repeats, as more concepts are introduced and older ones are reinforced. The basic concepts are taught first, and then the more complex ones are added.

After reading through the different books, MENC seems to provide the most extensive list of concepts, breaking them down into the different age groups. Buchanan & Mehaffey give some very practical and helpful standards that give students a better learning environment and a better singing experience. Demorest did not have much to say about the general curriculum, but focused in on the importance of pushing students to sight sing, as it provides students with a helpful skill that can also develop them as musicians.