

A MIDDLE SCHOOL CHORAL METHODOLOGY AND CURRICULUM PAIRING

By

Eunice Marie Noguerras-Negrón

A MASTER'S THESIS PRESENTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
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ABSTRACT

Studies show that middle school choral education is beneficial to its participants, yet there is a lack of resources such as curriculums or methodologies to better equip students and teachers. This thesis will explore the possibility of the future development of a middle school choral music methodology that follows similar structures to that of widely accepted music methodologies such as Orff Schulwerk, Dalcroze Eurhythmics, and Kodaly Concepts. This research is intended to aid middle school choral music educators who are seeking to improve the quality and intentionality of their instruction.

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Most importantly, I would like to thank my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for His salvation and for allowing me the honor to develop this thesis. *Soli Deo Gloria.*

“For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.”
Romans 11:36

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Choral America stated in their research, *The Chorus Impact Study*, that “choral singing is an enormous aspect of American culture, with more than 54 million people singing in the United States today.”¹ Chorus America conducted an impact study on choirs throughout America and how they influenced their participants. Their conclusions outline the benefits of choirs and the positive impact it has on participants of all ages. One of the conclusions derived in the study was the impact of music education and how music education ushered students into choral participation. Their study claims that “76% of choral singers say their first singing experience was in elementary, middle, or high school.”² Music is a powerful platform to influence and positively impact students for the rest of their lives, particularly in middle school, adolescent students.

During middle school, students undergo a pivotal stage in their development, puberty making middle school an often awkward and challenging time for students, not only physically, but mentally, socially, and emotionally. While school systems seek to educate students, music education has a unique influence on students’ academic growth and development. The nature of music and its innate impact on many students’ emotional, mental, and physical growth is evident. Even more so, this study studies outline the staggering impact chorus participation has on the wellbeing of student academic excellence³ and social and emotional development.⁴

¹ “The Chorus Impact Study: Singing for a Lifetime,” Grunwald Associates LLC and Chorus America, Last Modified 2019, https://www.chorusamerica.org/sites/default/files/resources/ChorusImpactStudy_SingingforaLifetime.pdf

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

Within music education, there are a variety of resources that provide teachers with tools and materials to meet student needs. One of the ways is through music elementary and adult methodologies, which are widely accepted and commonly used in schools. Music methodologies are teaching concepts and strategies that have been developed by music educators to meet deficits within music education. Ultimately, music methodologies seek to train students to become well-rounded musicians through appealing to their developmental processes. Widely accepted and practiced methodologies include but are not limited to: Orff Schulwerk, Kodály, Suzuki, Music Learning Theory, Conversational Solfege, and Dalcroze Eurhythmics. While these methodologies are useful tools for elementary music educators, they may not cater to middle school singers due to their developmental processes. Middle school level choral teachers do not typically use curricula.⁵ Although there are a few middle school choral method books available, there is no methodology that seeks to structure, develop, and build the middle school program for the benefit of teachers, students, and school communities.

Background

For an individual to become certified to teach choral music in public schools, usually a four or five-year degree in music education is required. During this time, choral music education students become more proficient through applied voice lessons and choral ensembles, as well as music education classes. At the time of this writing, music education students are usually also required to take the Music Content Knowledge Praxis Exam before student teaching. Yet even after music education students complete the required tasks, they might still struggle with questions concerning their teaching and information preparation. Additionally, there are no

⁵ Keitha Lucas Hamann, "Influence on the Curriculum Choices of Middle School Choir Teachers," *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education* 26, no. 1 (November 2007), 65-66. <https://doi.org/10.1177/87551233070260010107>.

middle school choral methodologies that are widely accepted and applied in the music classroom. Despite the empirically proven efficacy of methodologies,⁶ no valid methodologies for the middle school choral level have been explored and created. This method seeks to equip choral music educators with the best strategies to teach choral music education in a way that effectively aids the student. A middle school choral music methodology would help teachers because they would get specific education outside of the college classroom. Teachers would be provided with specific guidelines, suggestions, and proven research to aid their classroom experience and foster student growth.

Statement of Problem

Once they have completed their few years of training and exams, they automatically become qualified as an educator. Yet, these accomplishments do not guarantee the success of the participant as an educator. Even more so, a prospective music educator could feel ill equipped despite their college training and experience. This thesis aims to explore and develop a method that will equip choral middle school choral music educators to be excellent from the beginning of their teaching careers. The suggested methodology will streamline the best strategies to teach choral music education in a way that best aids the student entirely, efficiently, and accessibly.

Additionally, there are lesser-known choral methodologies which are accepted and applied in the music classroom. Studies outline the efficacy of methodologies, yet the lack remains of such music methodologies that are developed and intended to be implemented in the middle school level.

⁶ Natalie Sarazan, *Music and the Child*, (Brockenport, NY: Suny Press, 2013), 3.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study is to aid inexperienced choral music educators who are looking to improve their program through an innovative, rudimentary, middle school vocal pedagogy methodology. There are many resources that assist students, such as sight-reading method books. Yet, music educators need a resource that addresses music educator needs in vocal pedagogy, educates them beyond their collegiate experience and expands their practical knowledge, trains them on specific topics for middle school chorus, and provides guidance on activities in a curriculum to teach students. Thus, the goal of this thesis is to address teachers' instructional needs by providing a curricular roadmap for middle school students in an effective, excellent, and enriching way. Additionally, this research proposes a curriculum pairing in conjunction with the proposed methodology, as it gives teachers autonomy over their classroom while providing them with structure. The curriculum pairing would adhere to the methodology and seek to provide daily suggestions, warm-ups, and teaching topics for music educators. However, the curriculum pairing would also allow flexibility for the educator to modify their lessons to best suit the needs of their students.

The middle school choral methodology will present three main categories: Vocal Pedagogy, Social and Emotional Learning, and Performance. An innovative methodology is imperative to presenting an undiluted rudimentary vocal pedagogy that seeks to exercise the voice and not transform the voice. Thus, a delicate balance must be considered; vocal pedagogy for developing prepubescent and pubescent voices is vital for the long-term success of singers, as

their voices are at a vulnerable state, and yet, without exercising the voice, it will not develop to its full potential.⁷

The methodology features undiluted rudimentary vocal pedagogy that seeks to exercise the voice, such as presenting techniques and warm-ups, and not transform the voice, which is most commonly seen in collegiate vocal education. For instance, when a teacher has students imitate vocal models in their singing, their goal is likely transformative, meaning the students will change their sound to match that of the model, as opposed to giving students tools with which to exercise their voices, such as warm-ups. The second part of the methodology seeks to include Social and Emotional Learning as part of the curriculum to encourage student wellbeing. Lastly, Vocal Pedagogy and Social and Emotional Learning would be applied through performance, which is a praxial and experiential tool to further develop students' skills. Performance and collaboration with peers through performance can promote a lifelong appreciation and love for music.

Ultimately, this methodology will address the need for rudimentary undiluted vocal pedagogy criteria that aims to strengthen rather than transform the voice, the importance and need of SEL in the middle school chorus classroom, and the need of performance for application and growth of students and teachers.

Significance of the Study

Research proves the benefit of choral music education, specifically middle school choral education,⁸ yet there is a great deficit in the resources to better equip educators and develop

⁷ Karen Brunssen, *The Evolving Singing Voice: Changes Across the Lifespan*, (San Diego, CA: Plural Publishing, Incorporated, 2018), Access July 13, 2021. ProQuest Ebook Central. 110.

⁸ "The Chorus Impact Study: How Children, Adults, and Communities Benefits from Choruses," Chorus America, Last Modified 2009, https://www.chorusamerica.org/sites/default/files/resources/ImpactStudy09_Report.pdf

students. With a well-designed middle school methodology, struggling middle school choral educators can be equipped to teach their students proper and excellent vocal health and hygiene, promote resilience and wellbeing, while fostering their individual development and love for music. A methodology for middle school chorus could bridge the gap between inexperienced educators and students, while aiding in reducing the deficit of choral resources.

Research Questions and Sub-Questions

The essential question addressed in this thesis is:

Should a methodology be developed to not only meet students' needs, but teachers' needs as well?

Sub questions addressed in this research include:

- 1) What would be the importance of vocal pedagogy in the methodology?
- 2) What would be the importance of SEL in a methodology?
- 3) What would be the importance of performance in the methodology?

Hypothesis

If a middle school choral methodology is created to meet middle school student developmental needs and serves as an educational tool for choral teachers, then choral programs would be better equipped to succeed, thrive, and promote the development of new choral programs.

Definitions of Terms

Music Methodologies: Music methodologies are teaching concepts that are created to meet deficits within music education and train students to become well-rounded musicians. Music methodologies seek to teach students based on their current developmental stage.

Music Method Books: Method books are resource books for students that teach specific skills, it can be self-paced, and does not always require the guidance of teachers.

Social and Emotional Learning: Social and emotional learning is an area of study that teaches wellness and coping skills to students and adults, in order to develop healthy and happy people, that have the skills necessary to overcome challenges and persevere.

Vocal Pedagogy: The study of the science behind the voice and singing, and best practices for teaching voice.

Undiluted Rudimentary Vocal Pedagogy: This thesis develops the concept of vocal pedagogy teaching that presents beginner level concepts that are understandable for teachers and adolescent students without diluting the presented materials.

Junior High: An intermediate school developed in the early 1900s, typically consisting of seventh to ninth grade⁹

Middle School: Developed after junior high in order to better suit the needs of adolescent students, typically consisting of sixth to eighth grade.¹⁰

Phonation: to produce vocal sounds and especially speech¹¹

Resonance: the intensification and enriching of a musical tone by supplementary vibration¹²

⁹ Jon Wiles and Joseph Bondi, *The Essential Music School*, (Columbus, OH: Merrill, 1981) 13.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ *Merriam Webster Dictionary*, s.v. "Phonation," Accessed July 13, 2021, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/phonation>.

¹² *Merriam Webster Dictionary*, s.v. "Resonance," Accessed July 13, 2021, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/resonance>.

Enunciation: to make a definite or systematic statement of¹³

Pronounce: to employ the organs of speech to produce¹⁴

Articulation: the act of giving utterance or expression¹⁵

Keywords: Methodology, Curriculum pairing, Music education, Choral education, Middle school chorus, Social and Emotional Learning.

¹³ *Merriam Webster Dictionary*, s.v. “Enunciation,” Accessed July 13, 2021, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/enunciation>.

¹⁴ *Merriam Webster Dictionary*, s.v. “Pronounce,” Accessed July 13, 2021, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/pronounce>.

¹⁵ *Merriam Webster Dictionary*, s.v. “Articulation,” Accessed July 13, 2021, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/articulation>.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

A review of music methodologies and vocal pedagogy resources is necessary to examine the extent of any deficits for middle school music education. This Literature Review seeks to outline common methodologies, method books, as well as show that there is a void in choral music education resources, and an even bigger deficit in middle school choral music educational resources and research. There are few comprehensive curricula, pacing guidelines, or resources available to teach and assist middle school choirs or their instructors, but there are elementary methodologies from which information can be drawn.

Music Methodologies

The Gordon Institute of Learning states that “a method is the order in which sequential objectives are introduced in a curriculum to accomplish a comprehensive objective, a goal. A good method tells us what to teach, when to teach it (the best sequencing of instruction), and why to teach it. A good technique tells us how to teach.”¹⁶ Music methodologies are common learning tools that aid teachers when instructing students. Music methodology key parameters are centered around outlining goals and provide the what, when, and how to structure teaching materials.¹⁷ Another expert postulates that “music instructional methods are pedagogies and approaches used in teaching music, based on theories of teaching and learning that have been developed through research. Each particular method has its own identifiable philosophy and unique instructional process. In addition, some methods utilize specialized materials or

¹⁶ The Gordon Institute for Music Learning, *About Dr. Edwin Gordon*, (Chicago: GIA Publications), Last Modified 2021, Accessed May 24, 2021, <https://giml.org/gordon/>

¹⁷ Ibid.

instruments,”¹⁸ several of which have proven pivotal to professional application of elementary methodologies in a middle school setting.

Music Method Books

Because music method books are designed to help train students learn a specific instrument, examining what method books are available show that there is actually little available that is beneficial to the vocal student, aside from sight-singing. Music method books train students to learn a specific instrument. While there are some books for vocal music, such as sight-singing books, music method books are primarily geared towards instrumental students. Each book, while exhibiting some variation, has a specific structure it follows.¹⁹ There are a vast variety of method books that can be used in a classroom band setting, which gives students specific exercises to help them learn the basics of the instruments, its care, and sight-reading.

Within the various method book categories, the beginner method book takes readers through a step-by-step process, from rudimentary skills to beginner level skills. *Alfred’s Basic Adult All-In-One Course: Level I*²⁰ piano method book is a good example of a beginner-level method book. Comparatively, advanced method books would be like *Rubank’s Advanced Method Books*.²¹ The mentioned method books do not introduce the reader to basic skills but provide advance and technically challenging exercises that will develop their skills further. There

¹⁸ Lisa J. Lehmburg, “Music Instructional Methods,” *Encyclopedia of the Sciences of Learning*, (Boston, MA: Springer, 2012), https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4419-1428-6_1674.

¹⁹ See Appendix A

²⁰ Willard A. Palmer, Morton Manus, and Amanda Vick Lethco, *Alfred’s Basic All-In-One Course: Level I*, (New York: Alfred Music Publishing Co., 1994).

²¹ Himie Voxman and William Gower, *Rubank Advanced Method – Clarinet Vol. 1*, (Chicago, IL: Rubank Publications, 1994).

are also vocal method books, such as the *Essential Sight-Singing: Volume I*²² by Emily Crocker and John Leavitt.

Overall, method books focus on teaching basics or specific skills to students. They are often used as a teaching element, and are paired with additional items, such as standard band or chorus repertoire. Method books are intended to guide students and further their musical skills not only in their primary instrument, but music reading as well. Although methods books are utilized by teachers, they can also be student led and used without the guide of a teacher.

Essential Sight-Singing: Volume 1

Essential Sight-Singing²³ by Emily Crocker and John Leavitt focuses on training choral students to sight read. The first chapter explains basic music theory, which proves necessary for the next part: learning to sight-read. The sight-reading section begins by presenting basic rhythms, followed by sight-reading rhythm exercises. Next, the student learns pitch building exercises, which introduces them to basic note reading before moving on to sight-reading exercises. The chapters following further develop pitch building and sight-reading.

Essential Sight-Singing: Volume 1 chapter topics are as follows in order: pitch, scale & key of C, whole and half steps, sharps and flats-key of G, accidentals and key signature-rests, melodic intervals-harmonic intervals, tonic chords, key of F major, eighth notes and rests, and changing meters. Thus, the Essential Sight-Singing: Volume 1 book presents the basics needed for effective sight-reading in a choral setting. Each chapter progresses from rudimentary skills to beginner competencies, which renders the method book useful to teach upper middle school-high school choirs seeking to develop their sight singing skills.

²² Emily Crocker and John Leavitt, *Essential Sight-Singing: Mixed Voices*, (Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard Corporation, 2005).

²³ Ibid.

Alfred's Basic Adult All-In-One Course: Level I

The Alfred's Basic Adult All-In-One Course: Level I piano²⁴ method book teaches students how to play piano. The first section of the book is entitled *Introduction to Playing*, and this 20-paged section is filled with rudimentary lessons, such as exercises to care of pianists' hands, breathing exercises, how to sit properly, how to position hands, and basic skills of piano and reading music. The next section, *The Grand Staff*, introduces student to the concept of a grand staff and playing with both hands. The subsequent sections continue building upon prior skills and difficulties. Next, the student will explore the *Introduction to Chords, Middle C Position, Expanding the five-finger position, Scales & Chords—The Key of C Major, The Key of G Major, The Key of F Major, The Key of A Minor, and The Key of D Minor* sections. The final section of the book is entitled *Review*, and it provides ten pieces for the students to play, allows them to put the book's lessons into practice.

Alfred's Adult All-In-One Course: Level I method book is very useful for young to adult learners because it features lessons, theory, and technic pages throughout each of its sections. Additionally, to further develop student learning, Alfred developed Level II and III in the *Adult All-In-One Course*. Because of its success, Alfred's Adult All-In-One Course: Level I method book has been used widely by piano teachers, especially in adult group piano classes, where students can work on their own page. Lastly, Alfred's Adult All-In-One Course: Level I allows for collaboration through accompaniment sections, which are sporadically available throughout the book.

²⁴ Willard A. Palmer, Morton Manus, and Amanda Vick Lethco, *Alfred's Basic All-In-One Course: Level I*, (New York: Alfred Music Publishing Co., 1994).

Rubank Advanced Method Book

The Rubank Method books²⁵ were developed by Himie Voxman and William Gower, and they have three levels: elementary, intermediate, and advanced methods.²⁶ The advanced methods books are designed to be used in consecutive order and are divided by instruments and in two volumes. The clarinet method book first volume studies the keys of C, F, G, Bb, D major, and A, D, E, G, and B minor. The second volume studies the keys of Eb, A, Ab, E, Db, Bb major and C, F#, F, and C# minor. Depending on the instrument and concert pitch, the keys and order vary within the method books may vary. The book is divided into 30 units and explores six skills: scales and arpeggios, melodic interpretations, articulation, finger exercises, ornaments, and solos. Each unit increases in difficulty and skill.

Rubank's work can be used in a classroom, self-paced, or homework setting. The Rubank Method Books challenge students in necessary skills for the level of their study. Additionally, the Rubank Method Books provides alternative clarinet fingering for students for challenging leaps over the breaks, trill exercises with alternative fingerings for difficult breaks, musical ornamentation exercises, grace notes exercise, turn exercises, and various solos to aid in developing the student's skills.

Music Method Book vs. Music Methodologies

Although educators can use a method book in conjunction to a music methodology, method books and methodologies are not the same concept. While music method books are for the student, music methodologies are teaching concepts for instructors. In simple terms, a music method book is like a student textbook, while a music methodology is a teaching strategy and

²⁵ Himie Voxman and William Gower, *Rubank Advanced Method – Clarinet Vol. 1*, (Chicago, IL: Rubank Publications, 1994).

²⁶ Ibid.

philosophy. For example, *Orff Schulwerk* and *Rubank's Advanced Methods* are very different: Orff Schulwerk is a teaching model that seeks to achieve optimal learning through child play, and it aims for students to become confident, life-long musicians and creative problem solvers.²⁷ Conversely, the *Rubank Method Book* seeks to develop specific skills which will aid the student in their development as an instrumentalist and musician. Since this research addresses the educator on how to best prepare their students, in the following pages, this researcher will propose a methodology, as opposed to a method book.

Compilation of Vocal Pedagogy Resources

There are several studies, articles, and dissertations that outline the origin of middle school and the sort of challenges middle school educators have encountered. *The Essential Middle School* by Jon Wiles and Joseph Bondi²⁸ summarizes the origin of middle school and its development. Moreover, the dissertation, *Strategic Organization and Reading Comprehension Deficits in Middle School Children* by Mark Keeler²⁹ outlines the deficit in literacy within middle school children. The article, *Meriwether County Board of Education Votes to Merge Two Middle Schools into High Schools* by Ben Wright³⁰ emphasizes the struggle regarding the lack of financial support and budgets in middle school.

²⁷ American Orff-Schulwerk Association, "What is Orff-Schulwerk?" Accessed March 1, 2021, <https://aosa.org/about/what-is-orff-schulwerk/>

²⁸ Jon Wiles and Joseph Bondi, *The Essential Middle School*, (Columbus, Ohio: Merrill, 1981), 3.

²⁹ Mark H. Keeler, "Strategic Organization and Reading Comprehension Deficits in Middle School Children," (1995), <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fdissertations-theses%2Fstrategic-organization-reading-comprehension%2Fdocview%2F58332740%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

³⁰ Ben Wright, "Meriwether County Board of Education Votes to Merge Two Middle Schools into High Schools." *Ledger - Enquirer*, Jan 17, 2014, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fnewspapers%2Fmeriwether-county-board-education-votes-merge-two%2Fdocview%2F1478017340%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

Vocal pedagogy is an area of study that is very important and imperative to proper and healthy vocal development. Richard Miller, a renowned vocal pedagogue, has many resources outlining vocal pedagogy, among which are the books, *On the Art of Singing*,³¹ *Solution for Singers: Tools for Performers and Teachers*,³² and *English, French, German and Italian Techniques of Singing: A Study in National Tonal Preferences, and How They Relate to Functional Efficiency*.³³ Each book offers a different emphasis on vocal pedagogy as a study. *On the Art of Singing* focuses on vocal pedagogy and the approach to singing. *Solution for Singers* provides singers with solutions and best practices for performing and singing. The book *English, French, German and Italian Techniques of Singing: A Study in National Tonal Preferences, and How They Relate to Functional Efficiency* outlines different schools of thoughts regarding vocal pedagogy by highlighting breathing practices, phonation, posture, support, among other key features. Thus, this methodology will borrow primarily from the Italian school of thought and some of the French school of thought.

There are many vocal pedagogy resources that are applicable to middle school chorus and aid in providing guidance for choral educators. Resources include the book *Changing Bodies, Changing Voices: A Brief Survey of the Literature and Methods of Working with Adolescent Changing Voices* by David Friddle,³⁴ which provides educators with a unique perspective on how

³¹ Richard Miller, *On the Art of Singing*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1996).

³² Richard Miller, *Solution for Singers: Tools for Performers and Teachers*, (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2004).

³³ Richard Miller, *English, French, German, and Italian Techniques of Singing: A Study in National Tonal Preferences and How They Relate to Functional Efficiency*, (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1977).

³⁴ David Friddle, "Changing Bodies, Changing Voices: A Brief Survey of the Literature and Methods of Working with Adolescent Changing Voices," *Choral Journal* 46, no. 6 (12, 2005): 32,43, 46-47, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fscholarly-journals%2Fchanging-bodies-voices-brief-survey-literature%2Fdocview%2F1033412%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

to teach adolescent singers properly and empathetically. Another useful resource is the book *Voice Building for Chorus* by William Ehmann and Frauke Haasemann,³⁵ which features daily tasks for choral voice development exercises, as well as warm-up exercises, aimed to help choirs develop different musical style eras. Ehmann and Haasemann's book further addresses difficulties with certain works, as to prepare singers to better face them. Moreover, *The Adolescent Voice: A Study*³⁶ highlights common adolescent singing standards often helpful to young singers; despite this resource being somewhat outdated, it still has accurate and useful claims, such as proper posture and breath.

Additional vocal pedagogy resources include. *The Science of the Singing Voice* by Johan Sundberg,³⁷ which is a resource that addresses the organs used for singing as the “voice organ,” strategies for breathing effectively, proper articulation, and certain vocal disorders with proposed solutions. Sundberg's work addresses how to apply learned pedagogy skills in choirs. Furthermore, *The Structures and Movement of Breathing: A Primer for Choirs and Choruses* by Barbara Conable³⁸ has specific topics meant to instruct teachers and is intended to be placed inside of choristers' folders as a reference for technique and choral vocal pedagogy. Conable's handbook also includes a guide for address problems with students and provides questions to ask students in order to remind them how to properly sing. Additional topics addressed in Conable's book include the structures and movement of breathing, anatomical structures such as mouth,

³⁵ Wilhelm Ehmann, and Frauke Haasemann, *Voice Building for Choirs Revised Edition*, (Chapel Hill, N.C: Hinshaw Music, 1982).

³⁶ Helen Steen Huls, *The Adolescent Voice, A Study*, 1st Ed. (New York, NY: Vantage Press, 1957).

³⁷ Johan Sundburg, *The Science of the Singing Voice*, (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 1987).

³⁸ Barbara Conable, and Timothy H. Phelps. *The Structures and Movement of Breathing: A Primer for Choirs and Choruses* (Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, 2000).

tongue, nasal passages, larynx, diaphragm, abdomen, and other vital organ structures that help form proper singing.

Among resources proper vocal pedagogy and choral practices resource available to educators, there are resources which aim to debunk myths and commonly accepted standards or strategies which have proven harmful to a student's vocal development. For instance, *Voice Pedagogy - Dispelling Vocal Myths. Part 1-5* by Dierdre Michael³⁹ addresses common misconceptions, like "sing using your diaphragm!" In her articles, Dr. Michael explains to the reader why and how some accepted choral standards are myths, and how they can negatively impact the student.⁴⁰ Once she debunks the myths, she gives a replacement for the myth or an explanation on how to address the situation properly.

Compilation of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Resources

Social and Emotional Learning is a relatively new concept in education, yet there are many educational and psychological resources that provide SEL history, guidance, and effective practices. Since SEL seeks to facilitate individual development, SEL makes use of many psychological data and empirically tested information. For instance, *The Stages of Life Personalities and Patterns in Human Emotional Development* by Hugh Crago⁴¹ gives an insight into human development from birth to death. The book summarizes research discoveries which explain complications of human personality and human issues.

³⁹ Deirdre Michael, "Dispelling Vocal Myths. Part 1: "Sing from Your Diaphragm!" Journal of Singing 66, no. 5 (May, 2010): 547-51, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fscholarly-journals%2Fdispelling-vocal-myths-part-1-sing-your-diaphragm%2Fdocview%2F229034976%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Hugh Crago, *The Stages of Life: Personalities and Patterns in Human Emotional Development*, (London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2016), Accessed April 11, 2021. ProQuest Ebook Central.

It also discusses topics including how personality develops in response to both genetic and social influences, the differences of individuals, and how certain problems tend to develop at various phases of life, from young childhood to mid-life and old age.

Other SEL resources are websites that provide articles, statistics, and studies that aid in understanding and applying SEL. These resources include studies and articles by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The CDC has an entire section entitled Violence Prevention⁴² which addresses ACE scores, SEL, and coping strategies. Violence Prevention also provides “fast facts” and other statistics that can help individuals better understand the challenges they may encounter when they have a high ACE score, and how SEL can help prevent further deterioration and harmful behavior patterns when individuals with high ACE scores engage in SEL.⁴³

Further online SEL sources include Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL),⁴⁴ which aims to disseminate SEL and increase its presence in classrooms. Further, *Evaluating the Effectiveness of Positive Life Changes Social-Emotional Learning Curriculum*,⁴⁵ emphasizes the benefits of SEL in a school curriculum. Additionally, the article

⁴² The Center for Disease Control and Prevention, “Violence Prevention,” Accessed March 30, 2021. <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/index.html>

⁴³ CDC Healthy Schools, “Social and Emotional Climate,” Accessed March 30, 2021, <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/sec.htm>

⁴⁴ The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), “About Casel,” Accessed March 30, 2021, <https://casel.org/about-2/>

⁴⁵ Julie Lavonne Young, "Evaluating the Effectiveness of 0RW1S34RfeSDcfkexd09rT2Positive Life Changes 1RW1S34RfeSDcfkexd09rT2 Social-Emotional Learning Curriculum," Order No. 3635242, University of Minnesota, 2014. In PROQUESTMS ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fdissertations-theses%2Fevaluating-effectiveness-i-positive-life-changes%2Fdocview%2F1614208764%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

entitled, *Teacher Shortage Fact Sheets* by the National Council on Teacher Quality⁴⁶ reveals teacher accounts on what classrooms look like when they lack SEL.

There are SEL resources that are specific to the music classroom. As mentioned in *General Music Learning Is Also Social and Emotional Learning*, an article by Edward Varner⁴⁷ which seeks to emphasize the importance of SEL while simultaneously addressing that music learning and participation is, in fact, SEL. *Music Education and Social Emotional Learning: The Heart of Teaching Music* by Scott Edgar⁴⁸ is a textbook that emphasizes different SEL components and how music education uses SEL in lessons. The article *Anticipation is the Key to Understanding Music and the Effects of Music on Emotion* by Peter Vuust⁴⁹ emphasizes the effect music has on emotions. Additionally, the article *Benefits of Choral Singing for Social and Mental Wellbeing: Qualitative Findings from a Cross-National Survey of Choir Members*⁵⁰ surveys choir participants and the relation of their wellbeing because of their choir participation.

Lastly, there are music SEL resources that primarily focus on teacher SEL and wellbeing. Articles like *Music Teacher Burnout: A Discussion in Terms of Professional Status and the*

⁴⁶ National Council on Teacher Quality, "Facts to Know about Teacher Shortages," *Resources Journalists*, November 2018, https://www.nctq.org/dmsView/Teacher_Shortage_Fact_Sheet

⁴⁷ Edward, Varner, "General Music Learning Is Also Social and Emotional Learning." *General music today*, 33, no. 2 (2020).

⁴⁸ Scott Edgar, *Music Education and Social Emotional Learning: The Heart of Teaching Music*, (Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, 2020), Accessed April 12, 2021, ProQuest Ebook Central/

⁴⁹ Peter Vuust and Chris D. Frith, "Anticipation is the Key to Understanding Music and the Effects of Music on Emotion." *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 31, no. 5 (10, 2008): 599-600, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fscholarly-journals%2Fanticipation-is-key-understanding-music-effects%2Fdocview%2F212199849%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

⁵⁰ L. Livesey, I. Morrison, S. Clift, and P. Camic, "Benefits of choral singing for social and mental wellbeing: qualitative findings from a cross-national survey of choir members", *Journal of Public Mental Health*, Vol. 11 No. 1, pp. 10-26, 2012, <https://doi.org/10.1108/17465721211207275>

Value of School Music Education by Özlem and Gökhan Öztürk⁵¹ outlines how teacher wellbeing also needs to be accounted for in the education system. Burnout in music education is a very common occurrence; if teacher needs were met, and they too engage in SEL, they are least likely to burn out as easily.⁵²

Compilation of Choral Performance Resources

Not many resources outline the psychological benefits of performing in choir, although there are many resources that emphasize the holistic benefits of choir participation, as seen in the study conducted by Chorus America, *The Chorus Impact Study*.⁵³ Chorus America's study provides a surplus of statistics that outline the outstanding positive impact choir has on individual wellbeing and fulfillment.⁵⁴ Other articles like *Choral Concert Captures Spirit Benefit Performance for Inner-City Children Makes Beautiful Music*,⁵⁵ which provide specific examples of how choir performances benefited a group of students and their community. Additionally, textbooks such as *Teaching Music through Performance in Choir*⁵⁶ address the importance of teaching choirs through a performance lens.

⁵¹ Özlem and Gökhan Öztürk, "Music Teacher Burnout: A Discussion in terms of Professional Status and the Value of School Music Education," 2020, *International Journal of Progressive Education* 16 (5):370-389, doi:10.29329/ijpe.2020.277.23

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ "The Chorus Impact Study: Singing for a Lifetime," Grunwald Associates LLC and Chorus America, Last Modified 2019, https://www.chorusamerica.org/sites/default/files/resources/ChorusImpactStudy_SingingforaLifetime.pdf

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ J.R.S. Owczarski, "Choral Concert Captures Spirit Benefit Performance for Inner-City Children Makes Beautiful Music," *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, Nov 30, 1995, 5, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fnewspapers%2Fchoral-concert-captures-spirit-benefit%2Fdocview%2F260325760%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

⁵⁶ Heather Buchanan, Matthew Mehaffey, Frank Abrahams, Anton Armstrong, Joseph Flummerfelt, Graeme Morton, and Weston Noble, *Teaching Music Through Performance in Choir*, (Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, 2005), 10.

Recapitulation

Despite the existence of many resources which cater to varying demographics, teachers lack resources that not only address middle school choral student proper vocal technique, SEL in the classroom, and performance practices, but also seek to provide effective vocal strategies. There are no viable middle school choral methodologies. The proposed solution is to develop a methodology that will fill the void and provide clear guidance for middle school teachers and students. Research suggests that music methodologies are effective for teaching music, especially since it caters to children developmental stage.⁵⁷ Therefore, a middle school choral methodology could provide teachers with a myriad of effective and empirically tested resources which could boost teacher confidence and may increase student vocal, emotional, social, and behavioral success.

⁵⁷ Ryan Fisher and Paige Rose, "Effects of Age, Experience, and Instruction on Elementary Music Teacher Movement Self-Efficacy: A Pilot Study," Texas Music Education Research (2011): 1-14, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fscholarly-journals%2Feffects-age-experience-instruction-on-elementary%2Fdocview%2F1826532064%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter will address the research design of this thesis which includes study limitations, methodology beginning stages, and exterior factors like COVID-19.

Research Approach

This research will focus on providing evidence for the need of a well-developed middle school choral methodology, mainly through the compilation of an extensive literature review. This research uses a historical research design. Additionally, this research's findings were obtained through the Jerry Falwell Library and online databases, such as ProQuest, Sage Journals, and JSTOR.

Research Findings

Due to the nature of this thesis, most of the research findings were based on historical data and published scholarly source material. Many studies have been conducted on topics relevant to this thesis, such as adolescent voices, vocal pedagogy, benefits of performance, benefits of choir, SEL in music education, and others. Further, many studies supported and outlined the need for official guidance within middle school choirs and the benefits of vocal pedagogy, SEL, and performance.

Data Collection

For this thesis' development, data was collected through various resources, including textbooks, primary resources, e-book, databases, and journal articles. Overall, middle school choirs have the potential to impact students. This research focuses on an extensive compilation of mixed sources, such as articles, books, and methodologies, in an attempt to develop an

effective literature review which will serve as evidence that a middle school choral methodology is needed.

CHAPTER IV: RESEARCH FINDINGS

Origins of Middle School

The concept of middle school is a relatively new one. American education used to function in an 8-4 model; elementary school was from first to eighth grade, and high school ranged from ninth to twelfth grade.⁵⁸ In the early 1900s, advocacy for high school level course and for upper elementary levels began, and with it, the need to cater to prepubescent and pubescent adolescents arose. Thus, the junior high concept was born. Starting at grade seven to nine, junior high school functions as a part of the high school, but as lower grade levels. Yet, junior high school was under constant critique due to its great deficiencies like teacher shortages, poor classroom structures, and consequent tax increases.⁵⁹ As a result, in the 1960s, the middle school concept gained popularity. While there are several factors that contributed to middle school's development, authors Wiles and Bondi delineate in *The Essential Middle School*, that the main reason for the development of the middle school was a "band wagon" effect.⁶⁰ When the book was written in the 1980s, the authors noted that to date, junior high schools had been transitioned as middle school ranging from sixth grade to eighth grade.

Overall, it was obvious to the public that middle schools were needed for transitioning students. Yet, the middle school curriculum has not been fully developed and still lacks many of

⁵⁸ Jon Wiles and Joseph Bondi, *The Essential Middle School*, (Columbus, Ohio: Merrill, 1981), 3.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 4-5.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

its original deficits. For instance, middle schools throughout America have reading deficiencies,⁶¹ financial/budget deficiencies,⁶² among various curriculum deficiencies.

Importance of Music Education

Music Education can be dated as far back as the Jewish and the Old Testament.⁶³ Yet, it did not become fully established until the Ancient Greeks, as Plato was among the first philosophers to prominently introduce the idea of music education and the importance of education in music.⁶⁴ In his writings in *Republic II*, Plato stated that education in music was imperative for its touch on people's souls and its ability to impart grace.⁶⁵ Plato further specified that the omission of music education would cause distaste in people's lives.⁶⁶

Philosophers and educators throughout history have outlined the importance of music education and the impact it has on people's lives, especially children's lives. For instance, Edwin Gordon states:

[M]usic is unique to humans. Like the other arts, music is as basic as language to human development and existence. Through music a child gains insights into herself, into others, and into life itself. Perhaps most important, she is better able to develop and sustain her imagination. Without music, life would be bleak. Because a day does not pass without a child's hearing or participating in some music, it is to a child's advantage to understand music as thoroughly as she can. As a result, as she becomes older, she will learn to

⁶¹ Mark H. Keeler, "Strategic Organization and Reading Comprehension Deficits in Middle School Children," (1995), <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fdissertations-theses%2Fstrategic-organization-reading-comprehension%2Fdocview%2F58332740%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

⁶² Ben Wright, "Meriwether County Board of Education Votes to Merge Two Middle Schools into High Schools." *Ledger - Enquirer*, Jan 17, 2014, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fnewspapers%2Fmeriwether-county-board-education-votes-merge-two%2Fdocview%2F1478017340%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

⁶³ Michael L. Mark and Charles L. Gary, *A History of American Music Education*, 3rd ed, (Lanham MD: Rowman & Littlefield Education, 2007), 13-14.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ *Ibid*

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 13.

appreciate, to listen to, and to partake in music that she herself believes to be good. Because of such cultural awareness, her life will have more meaning for her.⁶⁷

Studies show that music education can improve people's aesthetic processes and cognitive functions that relate to math and reading.⁶⁸ Additionally, music has its own intrinsic value. Music aids in motivation, and it helping students discover who they are and their personal preferences and dislikes. Patricia Campbell, in the *Music Educators Journal*, wrote an article entitled *What Music Really Means to Children*.⁶⁹ Throughout the journal article, Campbell quotes conversations she had with children regarding music and the impact it has on their lives. One of the children Campbell interviewed was an eleven-year-old girl who stated, "I wouldn't want to be without it...It's not like food; you wouldn't starve without music. But it makes my life worth more."⁷⁰ The article articulates the impact music has on young children, which, in turn, influences their academic achievement and wellbeing.

Deficit in Chorus Programs

One of the major deficits within middle school education is in choir and their lack of uniformity and curriculum.⁷¹ Music education provides an outlet for students to grow and develop in their wellbeing through the means of music. Choral music education is vastly

⁶⁷ The Gordon Institute for Music Learning, *About Dr. Edwin Gordon*, (Chicago: GIA Publications), Last Modified 2021, Accessed May 24, 2021, <https://giml.org/gordon/>

⁶⁸ Daryl Boss, "The Importance of Music Education in the Public Schools," (M.A. Thesis, State University of New York Empire State College, 2008), <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fdissertations-theses%2Fimportance-music-education-publicschools%2Fdocview%2F304823828%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

⁶⁹ Patricia Shehan Campbell, "What Music Really Means to Children" *Music Educators Journal* 86, no. 5 (2000): 32-36. Accessed February 19, 2021. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3399634>.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Keitha Lucas Hamann, "Influence on the Curriculum Choices of Middle School Choir Teachers," *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education* 26, no. 1 (November 2007), 64-74. <https://doi.org/10.1177/87551233070260010107>.

beneficial to students, as observed by an article written by Chorus America, which stated that, “children who sing in choruses have academic success and valuable life skills.”⁷² Additionally, Chorus America found that many educators recommend for their students join school choirs because they see the academic benefit and improvement between students who are in choir and those who are not.

While there is statistical evidence that supports the choir benefits for school age children, choir programs are often eliminated. Based on their study, *The Chorus Impact Study*, Chorus America stated, “more than one in four educators say there is no choir program in their schools and one in five parents say there are no choir opportunities for their children in their communities.”⁷³ To this point, educators and parents said many children showed great interest in choir but did not have the means to join a choir.

The Deficit in Middle School Choral Methodologies

Many music methodologies cater to children, as is the case with the Kodály, Orff-Schulwerk, Suzuki, Music Learning Theory methodologies. There are other methodologies, such as Dalcroze Eurhythmics, that are meant to educate a wide range of ages. Overall, methodologies seek to meet student specific needs according to the stage in their development. Moreover, methodologies introduce innovative ways to educate teachers so they can appeal to students and aid in their musical development according to their physiological and mental development. Yet, there are no renowned middle school methodologies, specifically choral middle school ones. Additionally, there are very limited physical, financial, and educational

⁷² “The Chorus Impact Study: Singing for a Lifetime,” Grunwald Associates LLC and Chorus America, Last Modified 2019, https://www.chorusamerica.org/sites/default/files/resources/ChorusImpactStudy_SingingforaLifetime.pdf

⁷³ Ibid.

resources for middle school choir. Conversely, there is a surplus of band music education resources, such as method books like *Essential Elements*, online resources that survey instruments and provide a flipped classroom learning environment like the program *Music Professor* in collaboration with the website *Music for All*, and self-paced practice tools such as *Smart Music*.

While there are wonderful and useful resources for band, there are not as many resources for choir, especially at the middle school level. Some method books for choir are typically focus sight-reading, as is the case with *Sight Reading Factory*. Moreover, another book intended for choral educators is *Teaching Music Through Performance in Choir*.⁷⁴ While there are many benefits within both books, information is divided into five volumes consisting of 500+ each. While insightful resources, due its length, they are impractical for the working choral educator.

Additionally, since there is a lack of resources in middle school level education, choral educators do not have aid to develop.⁷⁵ While there are many middle school choral directors who are confident in their teaching process, the opposite is true of other educators, as most are influenced by “personal preference and choice.”⁷⁶ Whether it is due to lack of studies, challenging circumstances within the school, or misbehavior with students, some directors do not have the means to appeal to student needs.⁷⁷ Thus, resources could be developed which

⁷⁴ Heather Buchanan, Matthew Mehaffey, Frank Abrahams, Anton Armstrong, Joseph Flummerfelt, Graeme Morton, and Weston Noble, *Teaching Music Through Performance in Choir*, (Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, 2005), 10.

⁷⁵ Keitha Lucas Hamann, “Influence on the Curriculum Choices of Middle School Choir Teachers,” *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education* 26, no. 1 (November 2007), 64–74. <https://doi.org/10.1177/87551233070260010107>.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

readily assist the middle school choral director—resources that are undiluted, yet concise that they can be referenced by the educator to grow their choral educator skills.⁷⁸

Also, research suggests that students join middle school choir and transition out of middle school choir without learning the basics of their voice, proper vocal hygiene, social and emotional development, or confidence in their singing.⁷⁹ Often, choral programs teach only to get ready for a concert.⁸⁰ Many professionals argue against the concepts of “teaching for the test,” and thus, school systems are trying to move away from the idea of standardized testing and more toward project based learning and experiential learning processes that test students through the act of doing.⁸¹ Yet, in choir, educators still hold the model of “teaching for the test,” where the “test” is effectively translated to “concert.”⁸² Students are not developing as young and learning about their voice, creating, or experiment. Rather, students are learning to fulfill requirements for a concert.

Orff Schulwerk

Orff-Schulwerk is a widely accepted and celebrated music methodology, specifically, for elementary-age students. According to the American Orff Schulwerk Association (AOSA), the Orff Schulwerk methodology is successful because it allows children

⁷⁸ Keitha Lucas Hamann, “Influence on the Curriculum Choices of Middle School Choir Teachers,” *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education* 26, no. 1 (November 2007), 64–74. <https://doi.org/10.1177/87551233070260010107>.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸¹ Alfie Kohn, “Debunking the Case for National Standards.” *Education Digest: Essential Readings Condensed for Quick Review* 75, no. 8 (04, 2010): 4-7, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fscholarly-journals%2Fdebunking-case-national-standards%2Fdocview%2F742875555%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

⁸² Keitha Lucas Hamann, “Influence on the Curriculum Choices of Middle School Choir Teacher.”

to begin learning music by playing, which is "what they do instinctively."⁸³ Orff's methodology is speculated to have been inspired by Orff's experience after listening to a drum introduction in a song.⁸⁴ In his records, Orff wrote that drums induced dancing, which meant that he could teach rhythms through the actions of moving and dancing. That was the origin play to learn.⁸⁵

Orff Schulwerk seeks to develop the skills of students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and aesthetically through critical thinking and problem solving, group activities, artistry, and exploration of "good" music.⁸⁶ In the Orff Schulwerk methodology, activities are established through preliminary play, where students are guided in spontaneous exploration.⁸⁷ Preliminary play is followed by imitation, exploration, and improvisation, all of which are processes guided by the educator.

In his methodology, Orff Schulwerk uses specific teaching strategies vital to music, such as performance, listening, analysis, and creating, most of which are higher order thinking skills. Orff's methodology skills are applied through movement, song, listening, instruments, and speech activities.⁸⁸ Further, Orff makes it to teach all concepts presented from a rudimentary base, to advance concepts. Bridgette Warner in *Orff Schulwerk Applications for the Classroom* outlines the Orff teaching process in Figure 1, which specifies how Orff-Schulwerk divides

⁸³ American Orff-Schulwerk Association, "What is Orff-Schulwerk?" Accessed March 1, 2021. <https://aosa.org/about/what-is-orff-schulwerk/>

⁸⁴ Carl Orff and Margaret Murray, *The Schulwerk*, (New York, NY: Schott Music Corp., 1978), 17-22.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

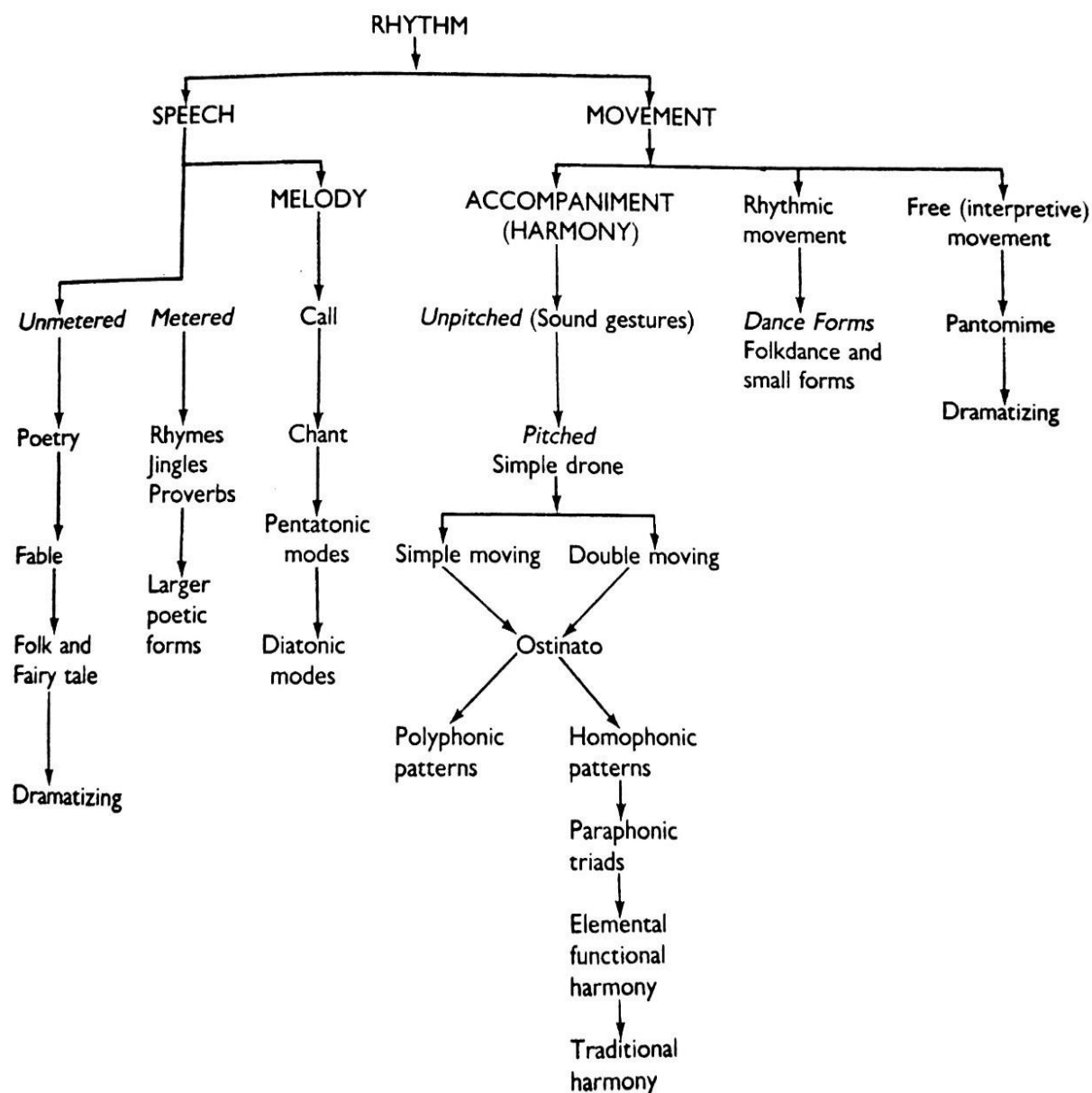
⁸⁶ American Orff-Schulwerk Association, "What is Orff-Schulwerk?" Accessed March 1, 2021.

⁸⁷ Carl Orff and Margaret Murray, *The Schulwerk*, 17-22.

⁸⁸ American Orff-Schulwerk Association, "What is Orff-Schulwerk?" Accessed March 1, 2021.

musical concepts. For instance, Warner specifies that Orff Schulwerk often begins by teaching rhythms, which is the concept students are most familiar with, due to its presence in speaking.⁸⁹

Figure 1, Warner, Orff Schulwerk: Applications for the Classroom, Page 9 (Prentice Hall)⁹⁰



⁸⁹ Carl Orff and Margaret Murray, *The Schulwerk*, (New York, NY: Schott Music Corp., 1978), 17-22.

⁹⁰ Brigitte Warner, *Orff Schulwerk: Applications for the Classroom*, (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1991), 9.

The Orff methodology encourages teachers to use speech as the vehicle to teach students rhythms. Rhythm speech as teaching instrument is commonly presented in the form of nursery rhymes, phrases, or songs. Once the students learn and master phrases, rhythms are notated and translated to body percussion. Once body percussion is mastered, students transfer the rhythm into unpitched percussion. Further, using speech and rhymes as a teaching tool allots for the explorations of meters and textures.

The use of speech can expand past the presented example, and it is helpful when exploring vocable charts, or given letters in a graphic where students sing what they see. Vocabable charts aid in developing students' improvisational skills, as they allow for variability under the set parameters; meaning, the sounds students create will vary. An example of a vocabable chart can be seen in Figure 2.

exploration, literacy, and improvisation. A teacher can address movements as physical responses to music when students are working together, often by guiding them to keep a steady beat together.

Despite Orff's varied focus on tactics and methods, Orff believed any child could be successful in music if they mastered rhythm through speech and movement. Therefore, according to Orff, since what comes most naturally to children is rhythm, playing, and speech, it can be used to develop their musical skills.⁹²

The Kodály Concepts

In contrast to Orff, Zoltán Kodály (1882-1967) developed a music teaching method based on sequences.⁹³ Further, Kodály's focus was on a child's development, rather than the use of subject-logic. Subject-logic is progressive teaching which focuses on rhythms students will likely learn first, such as whole notes, half notes, and finally, quarter notes.⁹⁴ Subject-logic is also present in melody teaching in that educators are encouraged to teach students diatonic scales when first learning melodies. Kodály discovered that subject-logic approaches did not aid students because many times, their capabilities advanced enough to understand presented concepts. Exempli gratia, many young students cannot sing diatonically, as they can only sing a few notes out of the scale. Because of the complexity of subject-logic tactics in teaching children, Kodály developed the "child developmental" approach.⁹⁵

⁹² American Orff-Schulwerk Association, "What is Orff-Schulwerk?" Accessed March 1, 2021. <https://aosa.org/about/what-is-orff-schulwerk/>

⁹³ The Kodaly Institute of Music, "What is the Kodaly Concept?" Accessed March 2, 2021. <https://kodallymusicinstitute.org/about-kodaly-music-institute>

⁹⁴ László Eöszé, *Zoltan Kodaly; His Life and Work*, (Boston, MA: Crescendo Pub. Co., 1962), 10.

⁹⁵ The Kodaly Institute of Music, "What is the Kodaly Concept?" Accessed March 2, 2021.

Since the Kodály Method's goal is to teach children music in accordance with their physiological developments, the sequence in which the child is taught must be arranged to match up with their developments. Thus, the Kodály method introduced musical concepts in a way that was contrary to other teaching methods of the time, since it sought to introduce musical concepts that the child can relate to. For example, Kodály insisted that rhythm be taught instead of using longer notes, such as the whole note. Ergo, Kodály first introduces to students to quarter notes, which are easier for children to understand because they can relate the note to walking, a concept also useful because it works concordantly with their developments. Regarding teaching melody instead of an entire diatonic scale, Kodály suggested only teaching children what is most recognizable to them, which is “so,” “mi,” and “la” in solfege or the 5th, 3th, and 6th scale degree of a diatonic scale.⁹⁶

There are specific tools that the Kodály method encourages, such as solfege, also known as the movable-do system, which was first developed by Guido d'Arezzo.⁹⁷ In addition to the standard solfege, Kodály developed a mnemonic system for counting rhythms which were like solfege. For instance, if learning a quarter note, students use “ta,” and for the eighth notes, students use “ti.”⁹⁸ Furthermore, the Kodály Concept also focuses on folk music, as Kodály believed that when teaching music, there should be three sources: authentic folk music, authentic children's games, and nursery songs, and music written by recognized composers.⁹⁹ Kodály claimed that authentic folk music and nursery songs were more suitable for children because he

⁹⁶ László Eöszé, *Zoltan Kodaly; His Life and Work*, (Boston, MA: Crescendo Pub. Co., 1962), 16.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

considered them to be “living music,” or music not fabricated.¹⁰⁰ Lastly, He claimed that folk music was simpler and appealed to student’s natural speech patterns.¹⁰¹

Overall, the Kodály Concept focuses on experience-based learning, as opposed to subject-logic learning.¹⁰² Moreover, the Kodály method first teaches students to love music and use their most natural instrument, their voice. They aim to develop complete musicians. Using singing, folk music, experiential-learning, and other skills aids in developing the complete musicians. Additionally, this concept focuses on teaching sight-singing skills, dictation, ear training, prat-hearing, harmony, developing melody, among other skills necessary to musicians.¹⁰³ The Kodály concept approach is best summarized in Kodály’s writings: “Music must not be approached from its intellectual, rational side, nor should it be conveyed to the child as a system of algebraic symbols, or as a secret writing of a language with which he has no connection. The way should be paved for direct intuition.”¹⁰⁴

Suzuki Method

Shinichi Suzuki believed that every child could learn music and be masterful at it if they followed an effective process.¹⁰⁵ Suzuki developed his method after facing challenges when he went to study in Germany. Since he did not speak the language, he greatly struggled to understand his teachers and their instruction. Through language struggles and after extensive

¹⁰⁰ László Eöszse, *Zoltan Kodaly; His Life and Work*, (Boston, MA: Crescendo Pub. Co., 1962), 11-18.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Organization of American Kodály Educators, “The Kodaly Concept,” Accessed March 5, 2021, <https://www.oake.org/about-us/the-kodaly-concept/>

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Shin’ichi Suzuki, *The Suzuki Concept: An Introduction to a Successful Method for Early Music Education*, ed. Elizabeth Mills and Therese Cecile Murphy, (Berkeley, CA: Diablo Press, 1973), 3-7.

research, Suzuki drew the conclusion that children are capable of great learning potential at an early age.¹⁰⁶ Thus, Suzuki began developing a violin method for young children that used their learning potential as a basis for skill development. Suzuki presented the idea that talent was not innate but cultivated. Additionally, Suzuki emphasized the importance of parental involvement in the development of children's skills. Suzuki proposed that if parents are not exposing children to music, attending their private lessons, and helping students practice at home, then their skills will not develop to their fullest potential.¹⁰⁷

Due to his lingual challenges in his education process, Dr. Suzuki developed a method called the mother-tongue approach.¹⁰⁸ He used the same principles one would use to teach or learn a language to music—Suzuki approached teaching music as one would teach a language. According to Suzuki, the most important part of his method was for “[children] to be helped to develop an ear for music”¹⁰⁹ and “from the very beginning, every step must, by all means, be thoroughly mastered.”¹¹⁰ Just as an English teacher would work with her students diligently to teach mastery to her students regarding language and speaking in complete sentences, according to Suzuki, so should a music teacher aim to teach mastery to his or her students and ensure that they are meet those expectations every step of the way.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁶ Shin'ichi Suzuki, *The Suzuki Concept: An Introduction to a Successful Method for Early Music Education*, ed. Elizabeth Mills and Therese Cecile Murphy, (Berkeley, CA: Diablo Press, 1973), 3-7.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Organization of American Kodály Educators, “The Kodaly Concept,” Accessed March 5, 2021, <https://www.oake.org/about-us/the-kodaly-concept/>

¹⁰⁹ Shin'ichi Suzuki, *The Suzuki Concept: An Introduction to a Successful Method for Early Music Education*, 12.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

Five Conditions for Genius Education

Suzuki described his method for the education genius.¹¹² He believed that with proper instruction and the guidance of parents, students could develop outstanding abilities. For parents to develop outstanding education abilities, Suzuki outlined five points that parents must follow. First, the parent is to educate the child as early as possible.¹¹³ Parents can educate children through listening to “good” music or classical music and having parental guidance. The second step would be to give the child as much musical training as possible.¹¹⁴ The Suzuki method is unique because students begin playing instruments at a very young age, and their parents become their home instructors. Parents are the ones who guide students and shape them in addition to their private lesson teachers. The third step is to create as favorable of an environment as possible.¹¹⁵ Suzuki utilizes much of Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs in this method.

Part of his method is establishing a safe and nurturing environment which is conducive to the child’s development and growth, not only musically, but physically and emotionally. If the child is well cared for, nurtured, and guided, then he will be successful. The fourth step is to have as good teachers as possible.¹¹⁶ While there are many teachers that can teach music and are certified in Suzuki, parents need to ensure that their child’s teacher is excellent and will guide their student to success. As Suzuki claims, “the talent of every child can be developed,”¹¹⁷ which

¹¹² Shin’ichi Suzuki, *The Suzuki Concept: An Introduction to a Successful Method for Early Music Education*, ed. Elizabeth Mills and Therese Cecile Murphy, (Berkeley, CA: Diablo Press, 1973), 9.

¹¹³ Ibid., 15.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 9.

is why the teacher must be excellent and invested in their students' learning process. The final step is for the student to adopt as good an education method as possible, or in this case, the Suzuki method. Thus, Dr. Suzuki researched and developed a method that would meet the needs of students and allow them to develop into masters of their instrument, and to ensure the development of "genius," the mentioned steps must be taken.

Dalcroze Eurhythmics

Dalcroze eurhythmics is a music method developed by Emile Jaques-Dalcroze, which focused on introducing kinesthetic movement into music at a time when movement and music were not considered fundamental pairings. Dalcroze became inspired to develop his method while he was a collegiate professor of harmony, solfege, and composition. During his time teaching, Dalcroze noted that instrumentalists and vocalists were taught notes and rhythms in their classes without being taught to listen or hear the notes, which left to an incomplete development of students. Through observing his students and devising exercises to develop his students' inner ear, Dalcroze concluded that movement was a vital part of human nature and must be used in order to develop musicians fully.¹¹⁸ Through those experiences, Dalcroze developed the concept of eurhythmics, or the study of music through movements. Additionally, Dalcroze developed eurhythmics as the spontaneous response to music through movement and as a whole-body experience.¹¹⁹ Thus, the Dalcroze method seeks to teach music using eurhythmics, improvisation, and ear-training.¹²⁰

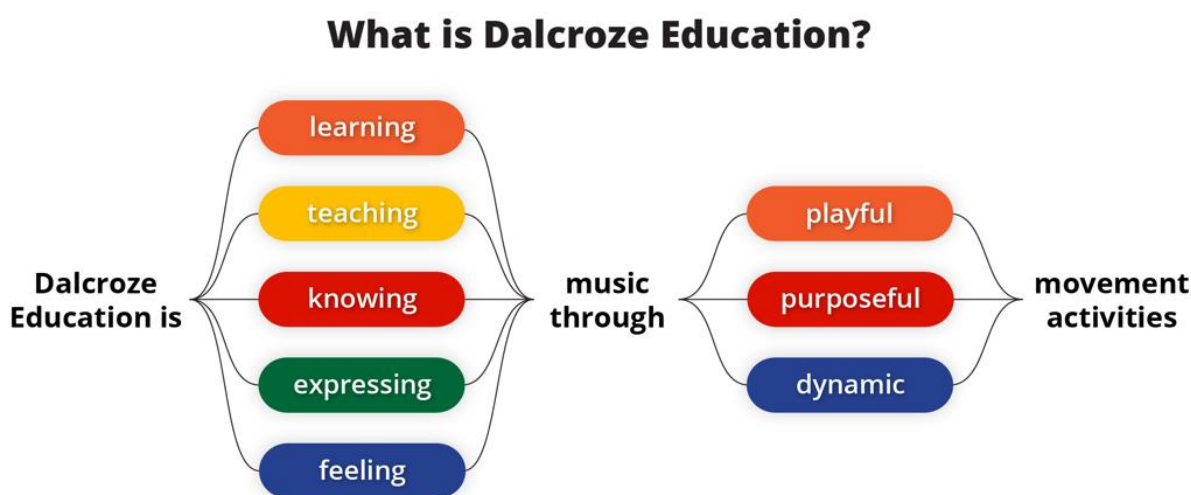
¹¹⁸ Virginia Hoge Mead, *Dalcroze Eurhythmics in Today's Music Classroom*, (New York, NY: Schott, 1994), 1-3.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 5.

¹²⁰ Dalcroze Society of America, "What is Dalcroze?" Accessed March 7, 2021. <https://dalcrozeusa.org/about-dalcroze/what-is-dalcroze/>

The Dalcroze Society of America provided a chart, figure 3, in their website that concisely describes Dalcroze Education. The chart outlines that Dalcroze Education is a method in which one can learn, teach, know, express, or feel music through playful, purposeful, and dynamic movement activities. In his approach, Dalcroze places great emphasis on movement and kinesthetic approaches to learning. Additionally, the Dalcroze method does not seek to only influence young children, as it is meant for everyone, as it can be taught to people of all ages and even in different areas of studies. Further, the Dalcroze method is inclusive in that as teachers instruct, they too are learning new and innovative ways to move and develop their skills.

Figure 3, What is Dalcroze Education? (Dalcroze Society of America)¹²¹



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Dalcroze eurhythmics is an empirical method which often benefits those who experience learning through it. The method aids in deepening students, musical understanding, and body

¹²¹ Dalcroze Society of America, "What is Dalcroze?" Accessed March 7, 2021.
<https://dalcrozeusa.org/about-dalcroze/what-is-dalcroze/>

awareness. The Dalcroze method promotes the musical development of students, movement in dancers, and cognition of seniors, all of which are through movement activities.¹²² Further, the Dalcroze method allows for freedom of development among teachers and students, as it is a method intended to be fluid and constantly changing. Moreover, the Dalcroze method seeks to develop teacher educating abilities, while simultaneously inspiring students to deepen their music skills through movement activities.¹²³

Conversational Solfege

Conversational Solfege is a music methodology highly influence by the Kodály method and developed by Dr. John Feierabend. It is comprised of 12 steps and divided into four categories: Readiness, Conversational Solfege, Reading, and Writing. The first category is readiness, and the first step is *Rote*, where students learn songs and rhymes through rote. In this step, students can learn rhythms and tonal patterns through a neutral syllable.¹²⁴

In step two, rhythm syllables and tonal syllables are introduced. Most of step 2's activities are still done through *Rote*, and in it, the teacher will present either spoken or sung syllables and have the student repeat. The third step is called *Decode (Familiar)*, and it is a way to evaluate students and their understanding of rhythm and tonal patterns. The teacher will speak or sing rhythmic patterns the class has already learned without using the assigned syllables, as opposed to a neutral vowel. Next, the student must repeat the rhythm correctly, either tonally or

¹²² Dalcroze Society of America, "What is Dalcroze?" Accessed March 7, 2021. <https://dalcrozeusa.org/about-dalcroze/what-is-dalcroze/>

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ John Feierabend, *Conversational Solfege Level 2 Teacher's Manual*, (Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, 2020), Accessed March 15, 2021, ProQuest EBook Central, 10.

as a syllable. In this step, students must recall what they have learned, decode the correct syllable, and demonstrate what they have learned by singing the proper syllables.¹²⁵

The fourth step is *Decode (Unfamiliar)*. Similarly to the third step, this stage evaluates student understanding of rhythm and their use of correct syllables for rhythms. In this step, the teacher sings or speaks an unfamiliar pattern with neutral syllables or songs that the students have not already learned. Next, students repeat this pattern, while using the correct syllables. Meaning, the student will have to decode the unfamiliar pattern and infer the correct syllables for the pattern. The fifth step is *Create*, which is the final step within the category of conversational solfege. This stage allows for students to develop their own musical thoughts by creating their own original rhythm or tonal patterns using the established rhythm and tonal syllables that they have learned within this category.¹²⁶

The next category is reading,¹²⁷ and the sixth step is *Rote*, it is the first step within this category. During this step, students are introduced to notation symbols. The teacher will read the notated patterns, and students will repeat the pattern while looking at the symbols. The following two steps, step seven and eight, follow the same pattern from the previous category; *Decode (Familiar)* and *Decode (Unfamiliar)*. In step seven, the teacher will provide a rhythmic and/or tonal pattern for the student to decode and visually recall. The following step, then allows for students to decode an unfamiliar pattern, which would be the first introduction to sight-reading.

The final category in the Conversational Solfege method is writing. Like the previous categories, in step nine: *Rote*, students learn to write musical notation by copying examples. Next

¹²⁵ John Feierabend, *Conversational Solfege Level 2 Teacher's Manual*, (Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, 2020), Accessed March 15, 2021, ProQuest EBook Central, 12.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 11.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

is step ten, *Decode (Familiar)*, which uses both conversation and writing decoding skills. The teacher will speak or sing a familiar pattern. Then the student will picture each pattern and notate it. The students will be using rhythm and solfege syllables, so that they can masterfully decode what they are hearing. Step 11 is *Decoding (Unfamiliar)*. In the *Decoding (Unfamiliar)*, the teacher will speak, sing, or play an unfamiliar pattern for the students, and they will use their conversational speaking and singing syllables to decode the pattern. Since the conversational solfege method uses high order thinking, the final step for this category and the method, step twelve, encourages the student to *Create*. Thus, students will create a pattern through their inner hearing, writing and decoding it through notation; compose.¹²⁸

Overall, conversational solfege seeks to use scaffolding through the student's inner ear development through rote, syllables, and solfege, so that they may become masterful in music. In addition to the twelve steps, Feierabend offers additional considerations. For instance, Feierabend suggests for teachers to sing for their classes, but not with their classes, so that students can develop their inner ear fully. Further, Feierabend promotes individual stage mastery, assuring that every student has developed fully in every stage before moving on to the next stage. Conversational solfege is incredibly important to the development of a middle school chorus methodology because it demonstrates and uses musical scaffolding through which students may further develop their skills, in addition to the chance to sharpen stages of musical development.

Gordon's Music Learning Theory

Edwin Gordon developed the music learning theory, and in it, he proposed new ideas to American music education. From his research, Dr. Gordon concluded that the most important

¹²⁸ John Feierabend, *Conversational Solfege Level 2 Teacher's Manual*, (Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, 2020), Accessed March 15, 2021, ProQuest EBook Central, 10.

time for anyone to learn music is during what he categorizes as the critical period, or birth to eighteen months.¹²⁹ Thus, Gordon developed a method that would teach infants how to develop their musical vocabulary. Gordon claimed that many musicians were taught inadequately, and thus, they are constantly compensating for their lack of musical vocabulary in their careers. Ergo, if caregivers taught music to infants adequately during their critical period, they successfully develop an excellent musical vocabulary.¹³⁰

Gordon outlined the way to develop a musical vocabulary in his learning theory. In the music learning theory, Gordon begins by specifying that music is a language learned like any other. Like other languages, music is comprised of five vocabularies that function sequentially: listening, speaking, thinking, reading, and writing. While listening is the most important out of the five vocabularies, it is often overlooked and, thus, underdeveloped among musicians.¹³¹ In order to develop an infant's listening and music vocabulary, caregivers must expose them to as many tonalities and modes, as possible.

Caregivers should sing to their children using a repetitious melody by utilizing varying modes without words. Further, caregivers should only sing to children while using labial syllables as expressively as possible. Additionally, caregivers should use free flowing movements to emphasize the space factor, which is further explored in rhythm. The person singing to the child should also vary between duple, triple, and compound meters. Since the caregiver is singing to an infant or young child, they will not participate in the listening. Rather,

¹²⁹ Edwin Gordon, *Music Learning Theory for Newborn and Young Children*, (Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, 2013), Accessed March 20, 2021, ProQuest Ebook Central.

¹³⁰ Edwin Gordon, "Edwin E. Gordon Music Learning Theory Overview Part 1," GIML Publications, January 21, 2011, YouTube video, 8:23, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XRUCZp9uYOM>.

¹³¹ Ibid.

the goal is for the child to be exposed to listening. Eventually, the child should develop musical babble, which signifies they are trying to imitate the labial syllables of the melodies which they are hearing.¹³²

Next, educators build upon the Music Learning Theory and expands the child's listening vocabulary. Once a child begins babbling, they will soon begin speaking, which will be led by their teacher or parent. After speaking and singing, the child will begin to develop thinking, reading, and perhaps writing, which Gordon considered the least important of the speaking vocabularies—if a child can write music, but cannot audiate, listen, or does not have a developed listening vocabulary, then the writing is meaningless.¹³³

Music is a praxial art form, and it must be addressed through actions. For instance, if a musician cannot listen, or does not have a developed ear, they cannot speak or think it, although she can write it or read it. When children are learning a language in school, for instance, high school Spanish, they can read it and maybe write it, but often, they have not listened to enough of it to have a developed vocabulary which allows them to be fluent. Similarly, while learning music, if students are not exposed to actual music, they will not be able to develop as well-rounded musicians, which is why Dr. Gordon developed his theory and methodology. Dr. Gordon's methods are useful to the development of a middle school chorus methodology in that, when working with middle school students, educators can seek to work with the student's accumulated knowledge of music and boost that for further music education pursuit.

¹³² Edwin Gordon, "Edwin E. Gordon Music Learning Theory Overview Part 1," GIML Publications, January 21, 2011, YouTube video, 8:23, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XRUCZp9uYOM>.

¹³³ Ibid.

Proposed Solution: A New Methodology

Empirical data shows great benefits to choir, especially in middle school, when students are transitioning in their development. Yet, there are a limited number of resources to meet the needs of middle school chorus educators and students. The proposed solution is to develop a middle school choral methodology, similarly to that of Orff-Schulwerk, or the Kodály Method. This methodology would seek to provide choral instruction in such a way that it meets the developmental need of the adolescent middle school. The proposed methodology would be divided into three main portions: Vocal Pedagogy, Social and Emotional Learning, and Performance. Students will be exposed to the content through vocal pedagogical basics and Social and Emotional Learning through active and experiential learning, both of which will be applied and improve through performances. The methodology's goal is to develop the middle school vocal musician, so that when they transition out of middle school, students know basic vocal anatomy, vocal techniques, developed emotional characteristics, and self-assurance in their abilities socially, emotionally, and vocally/musically.

Proposed Choral Music Methodology Branches

Application

Upon accounting for resources and deficits within middle school choirs, this thesis' proposed solution is creating a middle school choral methodology divided into three subcategories: Vocal Pedagogy, Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), and Performance. The presented categories would be effective when teaching middle school choir participants because they would allow students to understand voice mechanics so they may sing properly, beautifully, and healthily. Further, SEL skills will come into play if the choir student is not emotionally and socially developed, as it would limit their capacity to learn and apply the learned skills. Lastly,

the category of performance is imperative for the development of the student because through performance, the student will be able to apply, test, and refine their learned vocal pedagogy and SEL skills.

Vocal Pedagogy

The Anatomy of the Voice

Understanding the anatomy of the voice and its composition is pivotal to vocal pedagogy.¹³⁴ Understanding the anatomy behind singing allows for singers to properly engage necessary muscles in order to better their singing.¹³⁵ Singing causes many muscles and systems to be engaged. When singing, there are three distinct systems utilized: the breathing apparatus, the vocal folds (which are commonly referred to as the vocal cords), and the vocal tract.¹³⁶ The breathing apparatus is primarily comprised of the lungs, or a spongy organ in the shape of a sack, protected by the rib cage. Within the lungs, there are small cavities connect to tubes called bronchi. The bronchi connect to the trachea, which ends with the vocal folds.¹³⁷

Following are the vocal folds, or two small muscles covered by a mucous membrane. The space within the vocal folds is the glottis. When a human breathes, the vocal folds are open, and the glottis becomes larger. When phonating, the folds come together to create a vibration, and as the air passes through the vocal folds, sound is produced through a process known as the

¹³⁴ Johan Sundburg, *The Science of the Singing Voice*, (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 1987), 8.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

“Bernoulli effect.”¹³⁸ The Bernoulli effect occurs when a column of air pressure moves up towards the vocal folds, while they are in a closed position. Next, while the vocal folds stay in a closed position, the air begins to move up towards the glottis, while vibrating the bottom layers of the vocal folds. After this step, the column of air continues to move upward, except, the folds begin to open and close, allowing for vibrations to occur. The continual subglottic pressure that occurs due to the constant air flow creates the Bernoulli effect, which resembles a wave within the vocal folds.¹³⁹

The vocal folds begin behind the thyroid cartilage and run behind it to the arytenoid cartilage. The arytenoid cartilages have the very important job of bringing vocal folds together, which is called adduction. Adduction also helps in voicing consonants and vowels.¹⁴⁰ Slightly above the vocal folds are a similar pair of folds covered a mucous membrane called the ventricular folds, or the false vocal folds.¹⁴¹ The vocal folds exist within a small tube called the larynx, which is only one to two centimeters wide. The pharynx is the bottom part of the larynx, which is wider and longer. There are many other organs which allow for vocal mechanisms to function, such as the tongue, which originates in the hyoid bone and is made up of several muscles. Additionally, the nasopharynx, or space behind one’s nose which allows for resonance.¹⁴²

¹³⁸ The Voice Foundation, “Understanding How Voice is Produced,” Accessed March 25, 2021, <https://voicefoundation.org/health-science/voice-disorders/anatomy-physiology-of-voice-production/understanding-voice-production/>

¹³⁹ Johan Sundburg, *The Science of the Singing Voice*, (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 1987), 8.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Ibid.

Vocal Pedagogy Schools of Thought

In his book, *English, French, German and Italian Techniques of Singing: a Study in National Tonal Preferences and How They Relate to Functional Efficiency*, Richard Miller outlines vocal pedagogy standards according to different schools of thought.¹⁴³ While each school of thought has unique benefits, this research will be adhering primarily to the Italian school of thought, which teaches concepts such as appoggio. Appoggio derives from the Italian word appoggiare, which means “to lean.”¹⁴⁴ Popularly, appoggio aids singers in breath support, management, and musical expression.¹⁴⁵ Additionally, this study will also adhere to concepts from the French school of thought, which promote a natural approach to vocal pedagogy, essentially finding what is most natural for the voice to do.

Phonation and Enunciation

The training and addressing of phonation and enunciation are vital portions of vocal pedagogy and choral rehearsals. The article, *The Use of the International Phonetic Alphabet in the Choral Rehearsal* by Duane Karna addresses the unique benefits of using the international phonetic alphabet in choir rehearsals. The international phonetic alphabet is a great resource in providing parameters and guides that show students how to pronounce often mispronounced words, even in their native tongue. Karna’s article suggests it is a vital part of choral training,

¹⁴³ Richard Miller, *English, French, German, and Italian Techniques of Singing: A Study in National Tonal Preferences and How They Relate to Functional Efficiency*, (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1977), 20.

¹⁴⁴ *The Concise Cambridge Italian Dictionary*, s.v. “Appoggiare,” (London: Penguin Books, 1975), 92.

¹⁴⁵ Michael Fuchs, “A Conductor’s Guide to the Incorporation of Bel Canto Methodology in the Choral Rehearsal,” (D.M.A. Dissertation, University of Cincinnati, 2014), <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fdissertations-theses%2Fconductors-guide-incorporation-i-bel-canto%2Fdocview%2F1545895237%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

although educators do not often use it.¹⁴⁶ The anatomy of the voice, various vocal pedagogy schools of thought, and phonation and enunciation all serve as important facets to vocal education, which should be carefully considered when developing a middle school choral methodology.

Social and Emotional Learning

In addition to Vocal Pedagogy, Social and Emotional Learning should be cautiously considered in the creation of the middle school choral methodology. Social and Emotional Learning is a relatively new movement in education. Research shows that music functions as a catalyst for Social-Emotional Learning.¹⁴⁷ Some research even suggests that music is Social and Emotional Learning, since it appeals to students' emotional and social development and growth.¹⁴⁸ Katie Carlisle, in her article, "A Study of Teacher Formative Influence and Student Experience of Social-Emotional Learning Climate in Secondary School Music Setting,"¹⁴⁹ addresses the importance a music teacher has on the impact of a student's Social and Emotional Learning.

¹⁴⁶ Duane R. Karna, *The Use of the International Phonetic Alphabet in the Choral Rehearsal*, (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2012), 5.

¹⁴⁷ "The Center for Arts Education and Social and Emotional Learning (ArtsEdSEL) Launched to Facilitate Arts Education Enriched by SEL: Harnessing nearly Two Decades of Collective Impact Work, the Center for Arts Education and Social and Emotional Learning Builds Capacity to Facilitate Arts Education Enriched by SEL." PR Newswire, Mar 24, 2021. , <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fwire-feeds%2Fcenter-arts-education-social-emotional-learning%2Fdocview%2F2504244197%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

¹⁴⁸ Edward Verner, "General Music Learning Is Also Social and Emotional Learning," *General music today*, 33, no. 2 (2020): 74–78.

¹⁴⁹ Katie Carlisle, "A Study of Teacher Formative Influence upon and Student Experience of Social-Emotional Learning Climate in Secondary School Music Settings," *British Journal of Music Education* 30, no. 2 (07, 2013): 223-43, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fscholarly-journals%2Fstudy-teacher-formative-influence-upon-student%2Fdocview%2F1549111219%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

As per Carlisle's article, teachers should introduce Social and Emotional Learning opportunities to the classroom through various activities and learning practices. Ergo, it is important for educators to not only apply social-emotional learning practices in their instruction, but also in the learning environment¹⁵⁰ Furthermore, studies address the importance music education has on the social, emotional, artistic capacities, and cognitive development of people.¹⁵¹ Studies also suggest music be used as a tool for youth development, including Social and Emotional Learning, by seeking ways to address cultural factors.¹⁵²

General Social and Emotional Learning

While Social and Emotional Learning is suited greatly for music education, it is a concept many educational realms are adopting. There are studies that support the need for Social and Emotional Learning and claim that it will help students positively transform the status of America.¹⁵³ The book, *Social and Emotional Learning in the Classroom, Second Edition: Promoting Mental Health and Academic Success*¹⁵⁴ claims that without a system where student emotional and mental wellbeing are addressed within a school setting like social-emotional learning, cumulative problems can arise, including academic failure, drop out, joblessness,

¹⁵⁰ Katie Carlisle, "A Study of Teacher Formative Influence upon and Student Experience of Social-Emotional Learning Climate in Secondary School Music Settings," *British Journal of Music Education* 30, no. 2 (07, 2013): 223-43, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fscholarly-journals%2Fstudy-teacher-formative-influence-upon-student%2Fdocview%2F1549111219%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

¹⁵¹ Brian Kaufmann and Lawrence Scripp, *Music Learning as Youth Development*, (New York, NY: Routledge, 2019), <https://doi-org.ezproxy.liberty.edu/10.4324/9780429436956>.

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ Barbara A. Gueldner, et al., *Social and Emotional Learning in the Classroom*, 2nd Ed. (Guilford Publications, 2020), ProQuest Ebook Central, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/liberty/detail.action?docID=6306451>.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

poverty, and other major life consequences.¹⁵⁵ Research suggests that students that struggle with Social and Emotional Learning can also struggle with performance, an aspect that has proven to be important in student's musical development.¹⁵⁶

Performance

Performance is a vital part of one's musical development, as it offers a unique opportunity for students to develop and musicians to practice and apply learned skills.¹⁵⁷ There are many ways performance can be incorporated into the classroom outside of the standard use in chorus. For instance, Darla Crispin and Bob Gilmore, in their book *Artistic Experimentation in Music: An Anthology*,¹⁵⁸ explores the use of experimentation in music. In Bloom Taxonomy, higher order thinking includes "create" as its top tier, which can be redefined as "perform." In performance, students are given the opportunity to create and experiment with their musical interpretation. Performance in choir does not need to be isolated to semester based events yet should be incorporated frequently in a chorus classroom.

Benefits of Choral Participation and Performance

¹⁵⁵ Barbara A. Gueldner, et al., *Social and Emotional Learning in the Classroom*, 2nd Ed. (Guilford Publications, 2020), ProQuest Ebook Central, <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/liberty/detail.action?docID=6306451>.

¹⁵⁶ Scott Edgar, *Music Education and Social Emotional Learning: The Heart of Teaching Music*, (Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, 2020), Accessed April 12, 2021, ProQuest Ebook Central, 113.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 113.

¹⁵⁸ Darla Crispin and Bob Gilmore, *Artistic Experimentation in Music: An Anthology*, (Leuven, Belgium: Leuven University Press, 2014), Accessed June 24, 2021, doi: 10.2307/j.ctt14jxsmx.

There is much scientific evidence that supports the benefit of choirs.¹⁵⁹ Yet, there are additional benefits as outline by the testimonial of John Rutter, who is a highly acclaimed choral conductor:

Everyone tells me who has sung in a choir that they feel better for doing it. That whatever the cares of the day, if they maybe meet after a long day's school or work, that somehow you leave your troubles at the door. And when you're sitting there, making music for a couple of house at the end of the day, that is the only thing that matters at that moment. And you walk away refreshers. You walk away renewed. And that's a value that goes just beyond the music itself.¹⁶⁰

Much of the benefit in participating in choir and performing with a group of singers is the Social and Emotional Learning benefits, it allows for one to cope through singing making music.¹⁶¹

In addition to the SEL benefits of singing in choir, experts postulate that the multifaceted benefits of chorus and chorus performance in youth are evident. For instance, parents with children currently singing in choruses report their children to get significantly better grades in comparison to children who have never been a part of Chorus. Further data reveals that 54% of parents with children in choruses report their child gets "all or mostly As"¹⁶² in language arts, 47% of parents of choristers say their child gets "all or mostly As"¹⁶³ in mathematics, evidencing better academic performance's existence in a positive relationship with vocal performance.

¹⁵⁹ "The Chorus Impact Study: Singing for a Lifetime," Grunwald Associates LLC and Chorus America, Last Modified 2019, https://www.chorusamerica.org/sites/default/files/resources/ChorusImpactStudy_SingingforaLifetime.pdf

¹⁶⁰ John Rutter, "John Rutter: The Importance of Choir," J.W. Pepper, March 31, 2015, YouTube video, 3:27, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pm-Pm1FYZ-U>.

¹⁶¹ Scott Edgar, *Music Education and Social Emotional Learning: The Heart of Teaching Music*, (Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, 2020), Accessed April 12, 2021, ProQuest Ebook Central/, 113.

¹⁶² "The Chorus Impact Study: Singing for a Lifetime," Grunwald Associates LLC and Chorus America, Last Modified 2019.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

Additionally, parents with children in choruses report significantly better grades overall, as well.¹⁶⁴

In addition to academic performance, research has demonstrated that chorus helps youth creativity increase. For example, 90% of parents whose children are in choir say their children are “very creative,”¹⁶⁵ only while 72% of parents of children who do not sing in choruses express that their children are creative. Beyond creativity, research shows that choir helps children develop a “strong sense of self-worth and self-esteem,”¹⁶⁶ as evidenced by 86% of choir parents’ testimony—evidence that exists in contrast with 63% of kids who are not in choir, who might struggle with self-worth and self-esteem. Furthermore, 71% of chorister parents detail their child has become more self-confident since joining a choir.¹⁶⁷

Another benefit of choir exists in children’s reported increase of memory, as reported by 82% of chorister parents.¹⁶⁸ Research also shows that chorus increases children’s self-motivation and focus, as described by 74% of choir parents who say their child “usually practices the activities he/she is involved in without being told”¹⁶⁹ and 67% of chorus children’s parents reporting their child has become more focused. Data shows that children who participate in chorus’ dedication is reflected in other activities, as 71% of chorister parents say their child has become better at practicing for other activities since joining a chorus, and 70% say their child’s

¹⁶⁴ “The Chorus Impact Study: Singing for a Lifetime,” Grunwald Associates LLC and Chorus America, Last Modified 2019, https://www.chorusamerica.org/sites/default/files/resources/ChorusImpactStudy_SingingforaLifetime.pdf

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

self-discipline has improved since joining a vocal ensemble. Conversely, 54% of non-choir children report their children exhibit signs of self-motivation. In addition to self-motivation, parents of children who are in choir report that 43% of their children “usually watch 1 hour or less of television a day,”¹⁷⁰ while only 29% of non-choir children watch little television.¹⁷¹

An additional important aspect of chorus’ effect on youth is its effect on their academic efficacy, and their overall professionalism. For instance, research shows that 64% of chorister parents say their child has become better at problem solving. Moreover, 63% of parents report their child completes chores and assignments promptly and completely, especially in comparison to when they were not in a chorus program. Lastly, 61% of parents of students in choir say their child has become more punctual, or likely to be on time for events.¹⁷²

The benefits of choir extend past parental perception, as professionals have observed teachers report their remarks on the benefit of chorus. Exempli grata, 94% of teachers believe that singing in a choir can enhance a child’s self-confidence. Furthermore, in agreement with parent opinion, 93% of teachers say choir participation can enhance a child’s memory skills. In the classroom, 90% of teachers report choral singing can enhance student creativity. Furthermore, 90% of experts say that singing in a choir can instill efficient and effective practice habits observable in the classroom, a statistic further confirmed by 81% of educators reporting they believe choruses can help students make better connections between disciplines. Moreover, 88% of experts postulate that singing in a choir can improve a child’s overall academic

¹⁷⁰ “The Chorus Impact Study: Singing for a Lifetime,” Grunwald Associates LLC and Chorus America, Last Modified 2019, https://www.chorusamerica.org/sites/default/files/resources/ChorusImpactStudy_SingingforaLifetime.pdf

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Ibid.

performance, with 86% of researchers agreeing that choral singing can improve a child's language skills, and 63% of professionals confirming that singing in a choir can improve a child's abilities in math.¹⁷³

Research also shows that for youth, being in choir can assist them in developing important functional skills applicable to their development as efficient members of society. For instance, 87% of chorister parents say their child's desire to help around the house has increased since their joining of a choral ensemble. Conversely, 64% of parents of children who have never been in a choir report that their child's willingness to help has increased since their choral experience in their education. In the classroom, 83% of teachers say their student participates a lot in class discussions, whereas only 57% of parents of children who don't sing in choruses express the same about their child. In addition, 84% of parents say their child is a strong contributor to group activities, while only 52% of parents of children who don't sing report the same about their child.¹⁷⁴

As explored before, being in chorus can inspire children to develop their interpersonal relationships, which is reflected by 77% of parents whose children are in a chorus who say that since their child joined, he/she works better in groups and/or is a better "team player."¹⁷⁵ The interpersonal development that choruses foster is also a pivotal reason as to why 77% of chorister parents express their child is happiest in groups. Contrastingly, only 49% of parents of children who do not sing in choirs report that their children are happy in groups. Amazingly,

¹⁷³ "The Chorus Impact Study: Singing for a Lifetime," Grunwald Associates LLC and Chorus America, Last Modified 2019, https://www.chorusamerica.org/sites/default/files/resources/ChorusImpactStudy_SingingforaLifetime.pdf

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

parents report that even if their children are no longer in chorus, chorus' positive effect on their children is continuously evident.¹⁷⁶

Another important chorus effect on children is how it encourages them to improve their social skills. For instance, 86% of parents whose children sing in a choir say their child has a lot of friends, while only 63% of parents of children whose child has never participated in chorus claim the same. Also, 78% of choir parents say their child spends a lot of time with friends, whereas only 48% of parents of children who do not sing in a chorus report the same. Further, 67% of choral singers' parents say their child invites a lot of friends over to their house, but only 38% of children who do not sing do.¹⁷⁷

Chorus' positive impact on children's social skills is further emphasized by 92% of teachers reporting that participation in choirs can make students more social or socially skilled. Another important aspect of social skills development chorus can foster exists in the expression of emotions, as 83% of teachers agree participation in choirs can lead to students expressing a wider range of emotions. In conjunction to the previous point, data shows that 74% of teachers agree that participation in choir can help students learn to better manage their emotions. Additionally, research shows that children who participate in chorus are more likely to be better listeners than children who do not. Further evidence of choristers being better listeners exists in that 79% of choir parents say their child's teachers consider them to be good listeners, in comparison to 60% of children who do not participate in chorus. Lastly, 76% of choir parents

¹⁷⁶ "The Chorus Impact Study: Singing for a Lifetime," Grunwald Associates LLC and Chorus America, Last Modified 2019, https://www.chorusamerica.org/sites/default/files/resources/ChorusImpactStudy_SingingforaLifetime.pdf

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

find their children to be good listeners, while only 54% of parents of non-singing children report their children are good listeners.¹⁷⁸

Finally, the benefits of chorus in children can be seen in the sort of motivation it is for them to remain in school. For instance, 90% of educators believe choral singing can keep some students engaged in school who might otherwise be lost, which is particularly true of educators (94%) who describe the ethnicity of their schools as diverse. Moreover, 78% of educators believe that choral singers are more active participants in their schools in general, and educators from schools where choral participation is high are particularly likely to agree with this assessment (89%). In addition, 76% of teachers believe singing in a choir can make students more likely to attend other classes, and, again, educators who come from schools where substantial numbers of students sing in choirs are particularly likely (88%) to say this. Lastly, 67% of teachers believe choral participation can make students more likely to volunteer in their communities, and 82% of teachers in schools with high chorus participation confirm the claim to be true.¹⁷⁹ The statistics listed illustrate the importance of choral music education, especially for prepubescent and pubescent students, and should be taken into account when creating a middle school chorus methodology.

Undiluted Rudimentary Vocal Pedagogy

Vocal Pedagogy is a necessary part of any portion of vocal education, especially choral music education. Vocal pedagogy seeks to show proper posture, breathing, vocal, and breath support, in addition to enunciation and pronunciation, proper resonance, among other

¹⁷⁸ “The Chorus Impact Study: Singing for a Lifetime,” Grunwald Associates LLC and Chorus America, Last Modified 2019, https://www.chorusamerica.org/sites/default/files/resources/ChorusImpactStudy_SingingforaLifetime.pdf

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

valuable skills. In choir, students should learn how their voice functions so they can care for it properly. Additionally, teaching students proper vocal pedagogy will help them become better singers. When one is in chorus, one must sing properly while listening to others. That is why proper vocal pedagogy training within the classroom is necessary, so that students learn to sing properly and healthily.¹⁸⁰

Music educators experience great deficit in middle school education, and vocal educators experience the greatest form of resource lack. Further, in the middle school chorus classroom, vocal myths and obscure concepts are presented and taught to students. Moreover, students should be taught according to their developmental stages, which includes their level of cognitive understanding.¹⁸¹ Additionally, students should be taught proper and healthy singing and proper vocal hygiene, which is why the proposed methodology would heavily focus on vocal pedagogy. That is why this study will look to develop Undiluted Rudimentary Vocal Pedagogy Standards that seek to exercise the voice, not transform the voice.

Undiluted rudimentary vocal pedagogy standards would seek to train students to understand singing mechanics, such as inner anatomical functions they use to sing. They will be taught five major concepts that cater to their development in middle school, which include: posture, breath, abdominal use, articulation, enunciation, and pronunciation.¹⁸² Additionally, the

¹⁸⁰ Diana Lindsey Vetter, "Recommendations for Vocal Pedagogy Curriculum Based on a Survey of Singers' Knowledge and Research in Vocal Hygiene." Order No. 10153871, University of Kentucky, 2016. In PROQUESTMS ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fdissertations-theses%2Frecommendations-vocal-pedagogy-curriculum-based%2Fdocview%2F1819204439%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

¹⁸¹ Katie Jansen and Sarah M. Kiefer. "Understanding Brain Development: Investing in Young Adolescents' Cognitive and Social-Emotional Development." *Middle School Journal*, vol. 51, no. 4, 2020, pp. 18-25. ProQuest, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fscholarly-journals%2Funderstanding-brain-development-investing-young%2Fdocview%2F2488220138%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>, doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00940771.2020.1787749>.

¹⁸² Richard Miller, *On the Art of Singing*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1996), 35.

proposed methodology will review vocal hygiene concepts, as well as proper speaking based on what they have learned. The end goal is for students to understand healthy singing based on proper vocal pedagogy and be equipped to continue vocal training in the future.¹⁸³

Debunking Myths

Many myths and misconceptions will arise when teaching vocal pedagogy. For example, “sing from your diaphragm!”¹⁸⁴ As mentioned before, while the diaphragm is an invaluable part of singing, there is no physical way one can sing by controlling an involuntary muscle.¹⁸⁵ There is nothing one can do to use the diaphragm muscle for support.¹⁸⁶ Instead, what educators ought to teach is vocal support through abdomen control: singers must engage their lower abdomen, known as the hypogastric, to support the sound and use the upper part of their abdomen, the epigastric, to control articulation and dynamics.¹⁸⁷ One releases the abdomen during inhalation, which allows for the diaphragm to naturally function, which is what causes one’s abdominal region to expand as the lungs fill with air. Yet, it must be noted that one does not feel the diaphragm during this process; if anything, the singer feels surrounding muscles.¹⁸⁸ Then, before

¹⁸³ Diana Lindsey Vetter, "Recommendations for Vocal Pedagogy Curriculum Based on a Survey of Singers' Knowledge and Research in Vocal Hygiene." Order No. 10153871, University of Kentucky, 2016. In PROQUESTMS ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fdissertations-theses%2Frecommendations-vocal-pedagogy-curriculum-based%2Fdocview%2F1819204439%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

¹⁸⁴ Deirdre Michael, "Dispelling Vocal Myths. Part 1: "Sing from Your Diaphragm!" Journal of Singing 66, no. 5 (May, 2010): 547-51, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fscholarly-journals%2Fdispelling-vocal-myths-part-1-sing-your-diaphragm%2Fdocview%2F229034976%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

¹⁸⁵ Richard Miller, *On the Art of Singing*, (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1996), 35.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ Deirdre Michael, "Dispelling Vocal Myths. Part 1: "Sing from Your Diaphragm!" Journal of Singing 66, no. 5 (May, 2010): 547-51.

one begins to sing or phonate, one must lightly engage their abdominal wall. If a singer does not complete abdominal engagement, their sound will not be supported properly.¹⁸⁹ Thus, singers follow three steps to breathing: inhalation, engage (usually takes less than a second), and sing/exhalation.

In line with the concept of the breathing mechanism, a major myth that is often adopted into vocal pedagogy is that “you need to support more” in order to improve your tone.¹⁹⁰ Unfortunately, providing vague statements to students can typically cause them to over support, expel more air out of their lungs by tightening their abdominal muscles, and resist air pressure with their vocal folds, which leads to a dangerous, voice compromising technique.¹⁹¹ The solution proposed by Deidre Michael, co-director of the Lions Voice Clinic, is to educate singers in their vocal mechanism, rather than providing elusive terms and imagery.

The proposed methodology would cover other misconceptions and remedy them through vocal mechanics and healthy singing education. For instance, another misconception that will be addressed is that of vocal folds being chords,¹⁹² which explains that vocal folds are indeed folds/muscles that vibrate to produce a sound using the Bernoulli effect,¹⁹³ rather than a chord which must be plucked or hammered to produce a vibration. Additionally, other misconceptions

¹⁸⁹ Deirdre Michael, "Dispelling Vocal Myths. Part 1: "Sing from Your Diaphragm!" *Journal of Singing* 66, no. 5 (May, 2010): 547-51, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fscholarly-journals%2Fdispelling-vocal-myths-part-1-sing-your-diaphragm%2Fdocview%2F229034976%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Ibid.

¹⁹² Ibid.

¹⁹³ The Voice Foundation, “Understanding How Voice is Produced,” Accessed March 25, 2021, <https://voicefoundation.org/health-science/voice-disorders/anatomy-physiology-of-voice-production/understanding-voice-production/>

such as an overarched back or curved back, phonation and breathiness for the middle school singer concepts, and lastly, point out improper vocal exercises which could change voice due to its developmental process.

The Adolescent Voice

During middle school, students go through vital developmental phases, and experts postulate that said changes are perhaps the most important developmental ones in a human's life after infancy.¹⁹⁴ During middle school, children are usually in the prepubescent or pubescent stage, transitioning to teens. Prepubescence/pubescence is a pivotal part of the student's physical, emotional, and mental development. As a result, teachers should foster student vocal training in a healthy manner, while stimulating their minds so that they continue to learn. Further, teachers should nurture students during what could be considered an "awkward" time in their development. David Friddle, in his *Changing Bodies, Changing Voices: A Brief Survey of the Literature and Methods of Working with Adolescent Changing Voices*,¹⁹⁵ states that since "every adult has personally experienced the travails of puberty, our students are better served when we are patient with their awkwardness, supportive of their sensitive natures, and empathetic with myriad ups and downs that are an inevitable part of emotional and physiological maturation."¹⁹⁶

The adolescent voice is unique in that every individual develops differently. For example, some students, particularly females, develop rapidly and notice little to no change in voice. Yet,

¹⁹⁴ Hugh Crago, *The Stages of Life: Personalities and Patterns in Human Emotional Development*, (London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2016), Accessed April 11, 2021. ProQuest Ebook Central.

¹⁹⁵ David Friddle, "Changing Bodies, Changing Voices: A Brief Survey of the Literature and Methods of Working with Adolescent Changing Voices," *Choral Journal* 46, no. 6 (12, 2005): 32,43, 46-47, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fscholarly-journals%2Fchanging-bodies-voices-brief-survey-literature%2Fdocview%2F1033412%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

some females can experience what is known as a mutational chink,¹⁹⁷ which is where they are unable to fully close their vocal folds due to their current developmental stage. Additionally, studies show that when boys are transitioning in their voice, they should continue singing with the aid of their voice teachers/choral directors, who can monitor if they are misusing or overusing their voice.¹⁹⁸

Taking the previous information into consideration, this methodology will seek to adhere to the Italian and French pedagogical schools of thought, while referencing widely accepted adolescent teaching practices, such as the Voice Pivoting Approach,¹⁹⁹ and studies such as *The Adolescent Voice: A Study* written by Helen Huls.²⁰⁰ Overall, this methodology will seek to promote what is natural to students through various exercises, by teaching proper techniques, in order to foster lasting vocal health present all the way through adulthood.

Social and Emotional Learning

Social and Emotional Learning is a relatively new concept in education that has gained recognition and popularity within the last 30 years in America.²⁰¹ According to *The Collaborative*

¹⁹⁷ David Friddle, "Changing Bodies, Changing Voices: A Brief Survey of the Literature and Methods of Working with Adolescent Changing Voices," *Choral Journal* 46, no. 6 (12, 2005): 32,43, 46-47, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fscholarly-journals%2Fchanging-bodies-voices-brief-survey-literature%2Fdocview%2F1033412%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

¹⁹⁸ Helen Steen Huls, *The Adolescent Voice, A Study*, 1st Ed. (New York, NY: Vantage Press, 1957), 9.

¹⁹⁹ David Friddle, "Changing Bodies, Changing Voices: A Brief Survey of the Literature and Methods of Working with Adolescent Changing Voices," 32,43, 46-47.

²⁰⁰ Helen Steen Huls, *The Adolescent Voice, A Study*, 9.

²⁰¹ Julie Lavonne Young, "Evaluating the Effectiveness of 0RW1S34RfeSDcfkexd09rT2Positive Life Changes 1RW1S34RfeSDcfkexd09rT2 Social-Emotional Learning Curriculum," Order No. 3635242, University of Minnesota, 2014. In PROQUESTMS ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fdissertations-theses%2Fevaluating-effectiveness-i-positive-life-changes%2Fdocview%2F1614208764%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL),²⁰² Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is an essential component of schooling and personal development. Through SEL, children and adults learn to develop “healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions.”²⁰³ The ultimate goal of SEL is for children and adults to know themselves and others, make responsible decisions, knowing how to behave positively, and care for others.²⁰⁴ Social and Emotional Learning can be applied in any aspect of education, including music classrooms, which are perhaps the best environment for Social and Emotional Learning.²⁰⁵ Some studies go as far as to suggest that music education is Social and Emotional Learning.²⁰⁶

There are three tiers of Social and Emotional Learning within a classroom, the largest of which is comprised of 80% of students who seem to function well and do not demonstrate features of learning or social-behavior difficulties. The second tier is comprised of 15% of students who seem to exhibit signs of social-behavior difficulties and will likely have targeted interventions. The final tier is only made up of 5% of students who will typically receive mental

²⁰² The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), “About Casel,” Accessed March 30, 2021, <https://casel.org/about-2/>

²⁰³ Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), “What is Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)?” Accessed March 30, 2021, <https://casel.org/>

²⁰⁴ Scott Edgar, *Music Education and Social Emotional Learning: The Heart of Teaching Music*, (Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, 2020), Accessed April 12, 2021, ProQuest Ebook Central, 16.

²⁰⁵ Katie Carlisle, "A Study of Teacher Formative Influence upon and Student Experience of Social-Emotional Learning Climate in Secondary School Music Settings," *British Journal of Music Education* 30, no. 2 (07, 2013): 223-43, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fscholarly-journals%2Fstudy-teacher-formative-influence-upon-student%2Fdocview%2F1549111219%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

²⁰⁶ Edward, Varner, “General Music Learning Is Also Social and Emotional Learning.” *General music today*, 33, no. 2 (2020): 76.

healthcare and require individualized intervention. Yet, Social and Emotional Learning is meant for every student, even if some need specific intervention.²⁰⁷ Each student group can still receive SEL within their classrooms, especially in music.²⁰⁸ Educators must note that SEL is not a counseling service, but rather, a teaching tool; educators are not trained mental health professionals, and they must maintain professional safety within their SEL teachings.²⁰⁹ Thus, it is imperative for educators to direct students to licensed school counselors when necessary and as needed.

The Origin of SEL

The exact origin of SEL cannot strictly be tracked because SEL is a concept that can be seen throughout history in religion and faith. For example, one of the main goals in SEL is to teach individuals to behave well and make good and positive decisions.²¹⁰ The concept of healthy decision-making can be noted in history as early as biblical moral teachings. For instance, in the fifth chapter of the book of Matthew, Jesus outlines the “beatitudes,” which, in the Christian faith, are used as reminders of what is blessed and right, such as being meek, merciful, and pure in heart.²¹¹ SEL promotes similar ideas, although it varies in approach.

²⁰⁷ Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), “What is Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)?” Accessed March 30, 2021, <https://casel.org>

²⁰⁸ Scott Edgar, *Music Education and Social Emotional Learning: The Heart of Teaching Music*, (Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, 2020), Accessed April 12, 2021, ProQuest Ebook Central, 14-15.

²⁰⁹ Ibid., 16.

²¹⁰ CDC Healthy Schools, “Social and Emotional Climate,” Accessed March 30, 2021, <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/sec.htm>

²¹¹ Matthew 5:1-12 (NASB)

While Social and Emotional Learning is seen throughout history, it was heavily popularized in 1994, due to a Fetzer Institute summit.²¹² After, the summit CASEL was formed, and their goal was to establish evidence-based Social and Emotional Learning as a vital component of education.²¹³ CASEL's primary goals are to:

(1) advance the science of Social and Emotional Learning, (2) translate this scientific knowledge into effective school practices, (3) disseminate information about scientifically sound Social and Emotional Learning education strategies and practices, (4) enhance training so that educators effectively implement high-quality Social and Emotional Learning programs and (5) collaborate and network with scientists, educators, advocates, policymakers, and interested citizens to increase coordination of social emotional efforts.²¹⁴

CASEL began the SEL movement in American education, which has become an internationally accepted standard.

The Importance of SEL

Developing children are vulnerable and moldable, which is why teachers can have a positive lasting impact on students.²¹⁵ Concurrently, teachers can also negatively affect students during their prepubescent/pubescent stages. Unfortunately, most students experience negative

²¹² April Gayle Douglass, "Inservice and Preservice Teacher Knowledge and Perceptions of Social Emotional Learning and its Impact on Reading and overall Academic Attainment." Order No. 3486087, Texas A&M University, 2011. In PROQUESTMS ProQuest Central; ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global; Social Science Premium Collection, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fdissertations-theses%2Finservice-preservice-teacher-knowledge%2Fdocview%2F909001907%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

²¹³ Ibid.

²¹⁴ Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), "What is Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)?" Accessed May 10, 2021, <https://casel.org/>

²¹⁵ Ibid.

instances, mostly in their home lives.²¹⁶ The CDC measures negative events through a system named the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE). The ACE assessment addresses child trauma through a Likert scale. Through their data collection, the CDC found a direct correlation between negative childhood experiences and at-risk/negative adulthood behaviors. Statistically, the higher the individual's ACE score, the higher their probability of adopting at-risk behaviors.²¹⁷ As a result, the CDC developed strategies that educators can implement as preventative or counteractive measures to ACE predictions. One of the main ways one can prevent predicted ACE results is through Social and Emotional Learning.²¹⁸ Educators can actively work towards aiding, redirecting, and motivating students that, statistically, are destined to turmoil, so that they rise above their circumstance and become successful members of society.

SEL in Music Education

Research suggests that music can function as an oasis for students, especially middle school aged students those who endure grueling life circumstances.²¹⁹ Further, studies show that music has a direct effect on adolescent brains and emotions²²⁰ and thus, can negatively or positively affect the listener, which is why middle school choral teachers can use music to

²¹⁶ CDC Healthy Schools, "Social and Emotional Climate," Accessed March 30, 2021, <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/sec.htm>

²¹⁷ CDC Violence Prevention, "Violence Prevention ACES," Accessed May 15, 2021, https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/about.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fviolenceprevention%2Facestudy%2Fabout.html

²¹⁸ Ibid.

²¹⁹ Scott Edgar, *Music Education and Social Emotional Learning: The Heart of Teaching Music*, (Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, 2020), Accessed April 12, 2021, ProQuest Ebook Central.

²²⁰ Peter Vuust and Chris D. Frith, "Anticipation is the Key to Understanding Music and the Effects of Music on Emotion." *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 31, no. 5 (10, 2008): 599-600, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fscholarly-journals%2Fanticipation-is-key-understanding-music-effects%2Fdocview%2F12199849%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

positively influence their students. As an example, in a classroom setting, teachers can choose a repertoire that appeals to students, while aiding them in their Social and Emotional Learning.

In the book, *Music Education and Social Emotional Learning: The Heart of Teaching Music*,²²¹ Scott Edgar highlights ten functions of music for children's lives; said functions highlight how children interact with music and how it benefits their lives. The ten music functions in children are as follows:

1. Emotional expressions: the releasing of emotions and the expression of feelings.
2. Aesthetic enjoyment: the use of music for deep emotional and intellectual enjoyment, for experiencing artistic and nonverbal expressions of life's beauty.
3. Entertainment: the use of music as a diversion and amusement.
4. Communication: the conveying of feelings and emotions that are understood by people within a particular culture.
5. Symbolic representation: the expression of symbols exists in the texts of songs and in the cultural meaning of musical sounds.
6. Physical response: the use of music for dancing and other physical activity.
7. Enforcement of conformity to social norms: the use of music to provide instructions or warnings.
8. Validation of social institutions services and state occasions.
9. Contribution to continuity of cultural values: music as an expression of cultural values.

²²¹ Scott Edgar, *Music Education and Social Emotional Learning: The Heart of Teaching Music*, (Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, 2020), Accessed April 12, 2021, ProQuest Ebook Central, 71.

10. Contribution to the integration of society: the use of music to bring people together.²²²

Thus, Edgar's book suggests that Social and Emotional Learning is a vital part of music education. Which highlights potential SEL benefits in the development of a middle school choral methodology.

SEL can be incorporated in middle school choral methodology through educator-planned activities. Fortunately, education and participation innately promote Social and Emotional Learning, similarly to music. Music education's natural promotion of SEL is outlined by Scott Edgar in his book, *Music Education and Social Emotional Learning: The Heart of Teaching Music*. In his writings,²²³ Edgar provides examples of how SEL is achieved in music when students experience specific challenges:

A student is practicing independently and is struggling to correctly perform a passage. The student feels frustrated and believes he will never get it. Self-awareness is achieved if the student is aware of this feeling, articulates it, and realizes this feeling is leading to negative, unrealistic thoughts.²²⁴

Additionally, numerous everyday testimonies exist that reiterate the concept of SEL in music education. While educators teach and promote SEL, music provides ample opportunities for students to develop socially and emotionally.

As Edgar outlines in his literature, students in music must learn to overcome social and emotional challenges, or it will affect the outcome of their performance. Thus, through music education and SEL, teachers can help guide middle school students in socioemotional

²²² Scott Edgar, *Music Education and Social Emotional Learning: The Heart of Teaching Music*, (Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, 2020), Accessed April 12, 2021, ProQuest Ebook Central, 71.

²²³ Ibid.

²²⁴ Ibid.

development. Educators should, therefore, seek to intentionally incorporate SEL in their middle school choral lessons, while outlining “goal-setting, delaying immediate gratification, and self-motivation,” as observed in both music education and SEL principles.²²⁵

SEL in Choral Education

While SEL is gaining popularity and importance in education and music education, there is a limited number of strategies for implementing SEL in a choral setting. Further, a gap exists between music education SEL practices and middle school music education. While the concept of SEL is still under development in middle school choral settings, many studies outline the benefits of choral singing in middle school, further delineating the major benefits of choral singing and participation.

Choral singing is beneficial to participants because it provides a sense of community, unity, and cooperation. Choirs allow for students to make meaningful connections with other participants, which fosters further social development. Additionally, the action of ensemble singing promotes fulfillment of vocal teamwork and social connection.²²⁶ Regarding emotional benefits, research shows that choral singing brought forth joy and happiness to its participants, improved their moods, and brought a sense of wellbeing; these observations were most apparent with at-risk or marginalized singers.²²⁷

²²⁵ Scott Edgar, *Music Education and Social Emotional Learning: The Heart of Teaching Music*, (Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, 2020), Accessed April 12, 2021, ProQuest Ebook Central, 71.

²²⁶ Maureen Jaymin Baird, "Perceived Benefits of Choral Singing: Social, Intellectual, and Emotional Aspects of Group Singing." Order No. MR51363, McGill University (Canada), 2008. In PROQUESTMS ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, 15, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fdissertations-theses%2Fperceived-benefits-choral-singing-social%2Fdocview%2F304348746%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>

²²⁷ Ibid., 17-18.

SEL for the Music Educators

This section will reflect on generalized music educator experiences and thought processes; some of the opinions discussed do not suggest overall teacher experience. Generally, music educators seek to build relationships with their students and provide them with holistic educational experiences by incorporating philosophies like Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Bloom's taxonomy, or Dave's taxonomy in their teaching philosophies. Further, music educators seek to build their programs, promote love for music, and foster student emotional, musical, academic, and social development.

Due to the nature of singing, choral music educators particularly focus on creating deep relationships with their students, which could result in extensive fatigue. Typically, singing requires vulnerability and often brings the participant's emotions to the surface, which need to be addressed to promote musical development and foster SEL. Since music educators, particularly choral music educators, also function as musicians, mentors, parental figures, and life coaches, they can experience burnout, which is a common occurrence.²²⁸

In addition to promoting SEL to students, it could benefit music educators to practice SEL in their personal lives.²²⁹ For educators, SEL can look like faith and religion, professional assistance, extracurricular activities, or similar concepts, depending on the person. Given the national shortage of educators²³⁰ and the high turnover rate in education, SEL for teachers

²²⁸ Özlem and Gökhan Öztürk, "Music Teacher Burnout: A Discussion in terms of Professional Status and the Value of School Music Education," 2020, *International Journal of Progressive Education* 16 (5):370-389, doi:10.29329/ijpe.2020.277.23

²²⁹ Association of California School Administrators, "Teacher Turnover: What You Need to Know," Accessed May 14, 2021, <https://content.acsa.org/articles/teacher-turnover-what-you-need-to-know>

²³⁰ National Council on Teacher Quality, "Facts to Know about Teacher Shortages," *Resources Journalists*, November 2018, https://www.nctq.org/dmsView/Teacher_Shortage_Fact_Sheet

should be promoted within education, especially for music educators.²³¹ Thus, the promotion of SEL could cause educator satisfaction to improve, which would have a direct effect on teaching experience and practices.²³²

Useful SEL Practices in Music

SEL can be implemented in a music classroom in many useful ways. Evidence shows that SEL naturally takes place when students are singing, striving to learn a piece, and positively collaborating with their peers. Yet, SEL can be implemented more directly through activities, teacher-student conversations, and mini-lessons.

Additionally, SEL can be used to correct behavior or encourage students to modify their behavior. For example, if a student is experiencing anxiety, their teacher can lead them through specific SEL exercises to encourage them to positively cope with their circumstances. Also, activities such as student check-ins, reflection of a piece's lyrics, and performance reflections, can be used to inspire SEL in the middle school chorus classroom. SEL serves as an important connection between the student and the music, one which can further be observed through the student's choral performance.

Performance

While there are some studies which argue that performance should be removed from music classes,²³³ the fact remains that performance is a vital part of choir. Because of the growth opportunities present in performance, this proposed methodology supports it. Still,

²³¹ Association of California School Administrators, "Teacher Turnover: What You Need to Know," Accessed May 14, 2021, <https://content.acsa.org/articles/teacher-turnover-what-you-need-to-know>

²³² Hanna Melnick and Lorea Martinez, "Preparing Teachers to Support Social and Emotional Learning: A Case Study of San Jose State University and Lakewood Elementary School," (Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute, 2019), <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/social-and-emotional-learning-case-study-san-jose-state-report>

²³³ David Williams, "The Elephant in the Room." *Music Educators Journal* 98, no. 1 (2011): 51-57, Accessed June 3, 2021, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23012641>.

performances should not be isolated to grand concerts at the end of the semester. Rather, they should be implemented throughout the school year in the classroom, school, and community. Further, performance needs to be restructured to implement vocal pedagogy practices and SEL. Research shows that performing is a wonderful tool which allows students to practice concepts learned in the classroom.

Choral Performance

Research and literature both highlight the importance and benefit of choral performance and its impact on participants. For instance, the article, *Choral Concert Captures Spirit Benefit Performance for Inner-City Children Makes Beautiful Music* discusses a group of inner city students who experienced immediate benefits because of choral activities.²³⁴ Choral performance is unique in that the instrument used to perform exists within each participant, which promotes a distinctive sense of unity and accomplishment.²³⁵

The Benefits of Choral Performance

Overall, when students perform and participate in a choir, they experience neurological, physical, emotional, mental, and social benefits.²³⁶ For instance, studies show that choir participants exhibit lower levels of negative feelings and higher levels of positive

²³⁴ J.R.S. Owczarski, "Choral Concert Captures Spirit Benefit Performance for Inner-City Children Makes Beautiful Music," Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, Nov 30, 1995, 5, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fnewspapers%2Fchoral-concert-captures-spirit-benefit%2Fdocview%2F260325760%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

²³⁵ Ibid.

²³⁶ Ibid.

feelings.²³⁷ Additionally, choir members experience better immune systems and decreased cortisol levels.²³⁸

Application of Vocal Pedagogy and SEL within Performance

Choral performances provide a unique opportunity for students to apply learned vocal pedagogy and SEL skills. Vocal pedagogy teaches students how to properly sing and exercise the voice. In the proposed methodology, students will be taught proper breathing, abdominal support, posture, tongue placement, and pronunciation. Within performance, students will be able to apply proper vocal pedagogy skills and refine them. The student, therefore, will be able to apply knowledge and identify when their technique is incomplete or incorrect.

Additionally, performance will allow for the testing and developing of SEL. SEL teaches students how to better cope with their emotions, circumstances, and how to overcome adverse situations.²³⁹ Specifically, in the context of performance, music serves as a catalyst for SEL. When performing, students may experience adverse emotions, such as nervousness, anxiety, inflated view of self, second guessing, or self-doubt. As a response to potential student performance distress, educators have a chance to teach performance coping skills applicable to any adversity students might experience in the future. Additionally, SEL can help students counter negative perceptions of the self and others after performances, and instead, inspire sobriety of thought. While reflection on one's performance is both beneficial and necessary, one

²³⁷ Adam Lonsdale, and Evelyn R. Day, "Are the Psychological Benefits of Choral Singing Unique to Choirs? A Comparison of Six Activity Groups." *Psychology of Music*, (July 2020), <https://doi.org/10.1177/0305735620940019>.

²³⁸ Ibid.

²³⁹ Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), "What is Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)?" Accessed May 10, 2021, <https://casel.org/>

must still have a positive outlook when evaluating oneself and others—SEL can help students strike a healthy criticism balance.

For example, students will be encouraged to think of what could be improved after a performance, instead of dwelling on what went “badly.” When observing performances through the lenses of “good” or “bad,” students might be reducing their performing experience to shallow, barren terms. Yet, if educators teach students how to effectively evaluate their performances through a positive scope, students might have more room to grow. Students could be encouraged to ask themselves, “What went well? What could be improved? What was our best? What could have received more effort? What is something one of your classmates did really well? What is something the choir as a whole succeeded in? What is something the choir as a whole could work to improve in the future?” The presented thoughts and reflections could help students soberly view their performance as a positive team effort—a mindset that will inspire growth instead of stagnation.

Summary

Overall, the proposed middle school choral methodology would seek to address specific deficits within middle school choral music education, such as the lack of uniformity in curriculum. The methodology would be comprised of three distinct branches: Vocal Pedagogy, SEL, and Performance. The Vocal Pedagogy branch would aim to give the necessary tools for the middle school choral educator to train their students to sing healthy and develop proper techniques for vocal longevity. The SEL branch would be incorporated by featuring intentional emotion-learning lessons through which the student can learn to connect to the music. The Performance branch is where both the Vocal Pedagogy and SEL branches are applied.

Ultimately, the methodology would aim to promote middle school choral excellence and fulfillment within the entirety of the program for both the student and educator.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

Overall, this thesis outlines the need for a change within middle school choral programs. Currently, many music educators are working and conducting research to improve their middle school choir programs. For instance, Keitha Hamman and Emily Haskins are music educators actively working to provide their students with effective resources to aid them in their future. Despite middle school music educators' wonderful efforts, the lack of funding and support for vocal programs remains factual.²⁴⁰ Thus, the proposed methodology seeks to provide a new and unique lens to teaching middle school choirs. Further, the proposed methodology seeks to provide support and guidance for middle school choral teachers and aid in further strengthening their programs.

The proposed solution to the lack of curriculum in the choral middle school classrooms is a middle school choral methodology. This methodology would aim to guide struggling teachers in the choral setting. While there are resources that are currently being developed for middle school, the proposed methodology would seek to meet teacher needs, especially if they feel unequipped or unprepared. In order to respect educator teaching styles, the proposed methodology would be designed for the educator to modify and use as needed by compiling effective suggestions and pacing guides to help guide teachers, and ultimately giving them the freedom to modify the methodology and make it their own.

²⁴⁰ Keitha Lucas Hamann, "Influence on the Curriculum Choices of Middle School Choir Teachers," *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education* 26, no. 1 (November 2007), 64–74. <https://doi.org/10.1177/87551233070260010107>.

The Development of Methodology

The methodology would adopt a flexible approach when presenting the information gathered. Since many music educators experience burnout and have limited time and resources, an informal approach and presentation of resources will likely better aid working teachers in their development. Additionally, many young teachers could consider scholarly approaches to be too dense for them to internalize. Thus, the adoption of a conversational tone could motivate them to better understand and apply the material presented.

Overall, the methodology would need to be structured as a guide for teachers to become more successful within their fields. Additionally, the methodology would seek to promote student development and growth within their chorus class. Resources developed for instructors would include the completed methodology, an abridged version of the methodology, a curriculum pairing, a troubleshooting handbook, model and reference videos, and access to a website with various resources, articles, collaboration among members, and visual models. The completed methodology book will include compiled research defending the importance and need for the method. Further, the completed methodology would provide best practices and suggestions for teachers.

The vocal pedagogy section is the culmination of the development of the rudimentary undiluted vocal pedagogy. This section would not only emphasize the importance of vocal pedagogy within a middle school chorus, but it would seek to address other equally important topics like how to work with and teach adolescents, how to treat their voice, the importance of exercising the voice, but not transforming it, the use of International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) in the classroom, and anatomical structures of the body and their uses. This section will also address proper posture, breathing, vocal folds' functions, steps to breathing, phonation and

enunciation, and group singing and blending. The mentioned information, when successfully applied, can lead a choir to success. Further, educators who heed the information presented within the methodology can quickly familiarize themselves with important topics, which will aid in their expertise.

The SEL section would provide the research behind the importance of SEL and demonstrate how music and participation in music making is SEL. Despite being a relatively new topic in education, SEL seeks holistic student development, especially in a music setting. The unique vulnerability singers experience makes choral education a perfect encourager of SEL in student life. Choral settings often feature heavy correlations with collaboration, focus, vulnerability, love, and passion, all of which might lead the student to emotions they might not fully comprehend. Therefore, many students may have a greater need for guidance and encouragement when involved in choirs. Additionally, middle school students already face various challenges in the fields of peer relations, home life, self-esteem, and puberty. Ergo, in a time of changes and uncertainty, middle school students could use choir as an oasis— a place where they can develop socially and emotionally, in addition to musically.

The performance section would seek to promote performance both within the choral classroom, and without. Performance within choirs is often limited to two concerts per year: one during Christmas and an additional concert during springtime, towards the end of the year. If the choir is well developed, they will compete in some sort of musical assessment or festival. Conversely, in middle school, sports teams will play games anywhere from seven to fifteen times, in addition to their scheduled practice. Thus, for middle school choirs to experience the same amount of activity as student athletes do, they should be expected to have as many performances as athletes have games. Performances promote the program's growth in addition to


benefiting students through a myriad of ways. When performing, students will be able to apply vocal pedagogy skills and SEL skills. Thus, it is imperative that choral educators provide ample opportunity for students to perform and impact the community.

In addition to the three main categories, the methodology would seek to provide helpful classroom management strategies, teaching strategies, and provide a list of helpful resources that teachers can access to meet specific needs and deficits within their teaching. Overall, the methodology will encourage teachers and aid in their SEL, as well as motivate them to develop as singers and performers. Excellence in teaching chorus requires teachers to be exceptional in their craft as singers and as teachers. This methodology would seek to provide the necessary supports for experienced and inexperienced teachers alike.


Curriculum Pairing

The second resource in the proposed methodology is the curriculum pairing, which will serve as a guide for teachers and provide suggestions for them to structure their lessons and activities. The curriculum pairing will consist of a pacing guide, lesson pairings, and strategies. The curriculum pairing would be split up into weeks and their consequent topics. The curriculum pairing would include suggestions of discussion topics, warm-ups, exercises, and references of topics in other resources for a more in-depth explanation. Although the curriculum pairing would be set up as a pacing guide, teachers will have the option to pick and choose topics, modify, and cater to their students' specific needs. Figure 4 outlines a sample page from the curriculum pairing.

Figure 4 - Curriculum Pairing Sample – Eunice Noguerras



Welcome to Week #4: Breathing!



Dear exemplary chorus teacher,

You are in the thick of it!
Has the honeymoon stage faded yet?
If it has, don't worry or fear! We are going to work together. Remember, you are not alone, you are capable, and every day you are becoming a better and stronger educator, and every day your students are growing. If you feel you have failed, do not let it keep you down!
Fail forward!

This week I want for you to reflect on your why. Why are you a middle school chorus teacher? Why did you pick up this book? Why are you trying to become a better choral director? Think about your whys and write them down. Often when we are most tired and distressed, we need that strong reminder and assurance of our why.

Here an example of how powerful our "whys" can be. While I was working on my thesis, I encountered a strong roadblock and burnout. For weeks I could not write, I could not think of what else to do, and frankly, I froze. Yet, what made me shake off that state of staleness?
You.
Yes, you!
Because my dear exemplary teacher, you are my why, and your students are my why!
We have so much that we can grow on to be excellent music makers and be better fulfilled with our lives.

So this week, this about our why. Write it down. Let it fuel your perseverance and love for your students. I believe in you! As always, if you need any additional supports, reach out to our support page.

You've got this!

Class discussion: What is the importance of breathing?


Some answers to look for:

- It vibrates our vocal folds; allows us to sing
- It is the foundation of singing
- It is how a singer supports their sound


Intro to breathing lesson:

Anatomy:


- Lungs - elastic sacs that get filled with air



- Mouth/Nose- what we use to inhale and exhale
- Diaphragm- involuntary muscle that expands when we inhale



- Abdomen- How we support our breath and singing



Notice:

There are three steps to a breath!
(Methodology book, pg. 133)

Step 1: Inhale through the mouth
Step 2: Lightly engage/tuck in the abdomen
Step 3: Exhale

Make sure to try this a few times yourself before your students attempt this sort of breathing.

Please remind and emphasize to your students that lightly engage is very slight, it should feel as if they could continue tucking in a lot, but they are not.
For more guidance go to page 27 of the Trouble Shooting Handbook.

Exercise:

1. First, have your students demonstrate they understand. You can assess their understanding by asking them for thumbs up if they feel comfortable moving on or if they need further explanation.
2. Once students are comfortable moving on, have them all stand.
3. Have them breathe in for 4 counts, engage and hold their abdomen for 4 counts, then hiss out for 4 counts.
4. Increase the hold and hiss in increments of two without increasing breathe-in counts.
5. Once students feel comfortable with the **3-step breath**, transition the "hiss" to an "Ah" vowel.

The Adolescent Singer's Troubleshooting Handbook

The third resource is a handbook with troubleshooting advice which addresses common singing problems. The act of troubleshooting is the process of identifying a problem and resolving said problem. One of the challenges in teaching choir is that each student is different and exhibits different obstacles when singing. The troubleshooting handbook will not be able to address every single problem a middle school choral educator will face when trying to address singing challenges, but it will attempt to provide guidance for general challenges and common struggles found among students. Additionally, the troubleshooting handbook would provide online links to videos on the website that outline the problem being addressed.

Models and Reference Videos

The fourth resource is a part of the website that would be developed in conjunction with the methodology. The website resource will feature a set of models and reference videos in alignment with the methodology, curriculum pairing, and troubleshooting handbook, and it would provide visual aids, 3D models, and demonstration videos for students and teachers. There will be a student category where students can explore vocal pedagogy, SEL, and performance topics. Additionally, there will be two categories for teachers: one that aims to teach educators best practice topics. The second category would be instructional aids for the teachers, which can be used in class in addition to student-led resources and videos.

Additional Resources

Additional resources will include guides and examples to set up a Google Classroom, Canvas page, Edmodo, and other teaching platforms commonly used. This resource would provide examples of assignments, Canvas buttons or setup, and topics of similar nature. Additionally, it would aim to help veteran teachers learn new technologies, while simultaneously

providing inspiration and guidance for newer teachers who are attempting to set up their teaching platform.

Summary

Most of the discussed plans are tentative, and thus, are primarily aimed for future studies. Nonetheless, the methodology's overarching aim is to help meet the needs of teachers so that they can, in turn, meet student needs. Further, the proposed methodology's aim is to aid the teacher towards excellence in their craft as choir participants. Ultimately students and teachers could better enjoy their choir participation. Lastly, both the student and teacher would be able to develop socially, emotionally, and musically.

Limitations

The most glaring limitation of this thesis is that it serves as an introduction to the methodology to be completed in the future. Thus, the methodology will remain incomplete until it can be tested, readdressed, and distributed. Additionally, the targeted demographic for the methodology is limited; the number of middle school choir teachers who categorize themselves as lacking in confidence or inexperienced is scarce.²⁴¹ Additionally, at the time of this writing, Covid-19 caused schools to close, and new regulations impacted school systems. Also, many districts were physically closed to students, and the districts that were opened only allotted a limited number of students in the classrooms. As a result, schools resorted to using cohorts, block scheduling, or A/B days so that student presence could be scattered as per COVID-19 regulations. Ergo, because of COVID-19 regulations, this research could not be quantitative in nature.

²⁴¹ Keitha Lucas Hamann, "Influence on the Curriculum Choices of Middle School Choir Teachers," *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education* 26, no. 1 (November 2007), 64–74. <https://doi.org/10.1177/87551233070260010107>.

Considerations for Future Study

This research is an introduction to a proposed solution that will require quantitative, qualitative, and research finding data. Further, this thesis seeks to outline the deficit and need for the proposed methodology and features a qualitative method approach. The research is conducted, and its benefits must be address and further delineated. Future research will present the completed methodology and all accompanying resources within it. Next, quantitative studies would need to be conducted on this methodology and observation of new educators teaching middle school chorus to find new choir teachers from similar college experiences and school demographics.

The quantitative study's goal would be to observe measurable differences between both selected teachers and their students. Depending on the results, the methodology would be revised or modified as needed. Participants would be carefully chosen through screening; concepts like community demographics, similar teacher educations, and similar student challenges would be carefully matched, as to ensure a fair comparison between candidates.

In this study, students, parents, and the teacher will be informed that they will be in a research project. They must first sign a consent form and agree to participate in the research. Additionally, teachers and students will not be given much guidance or feedback since the methodology is intended to be self-sufficient and meet the needs of students and teachers. The only interaction the examiner will have with the participant is through their observations and questionnaires/exams that will be given. Upon the conclusion of the studies, parents, students, and the teachers will receive a copy of the collected data.

Overall, this research outlines the deficit in curricula and methodologies in middle school choral music education. This study suggests and outlines the development of a middle school

choral music methodology to better establish uniformity and a high level of musicianship in middle school choral students. The proposed methodology would seek to establish similar parameters to that of already established music methodologies, such as catering to the student's developmental needs for them to better understand and learn the material presented. Lastly, the proposed middle school choral methodology would be refined and implemented over time as more research is compiled and is tested through quantitative studies.

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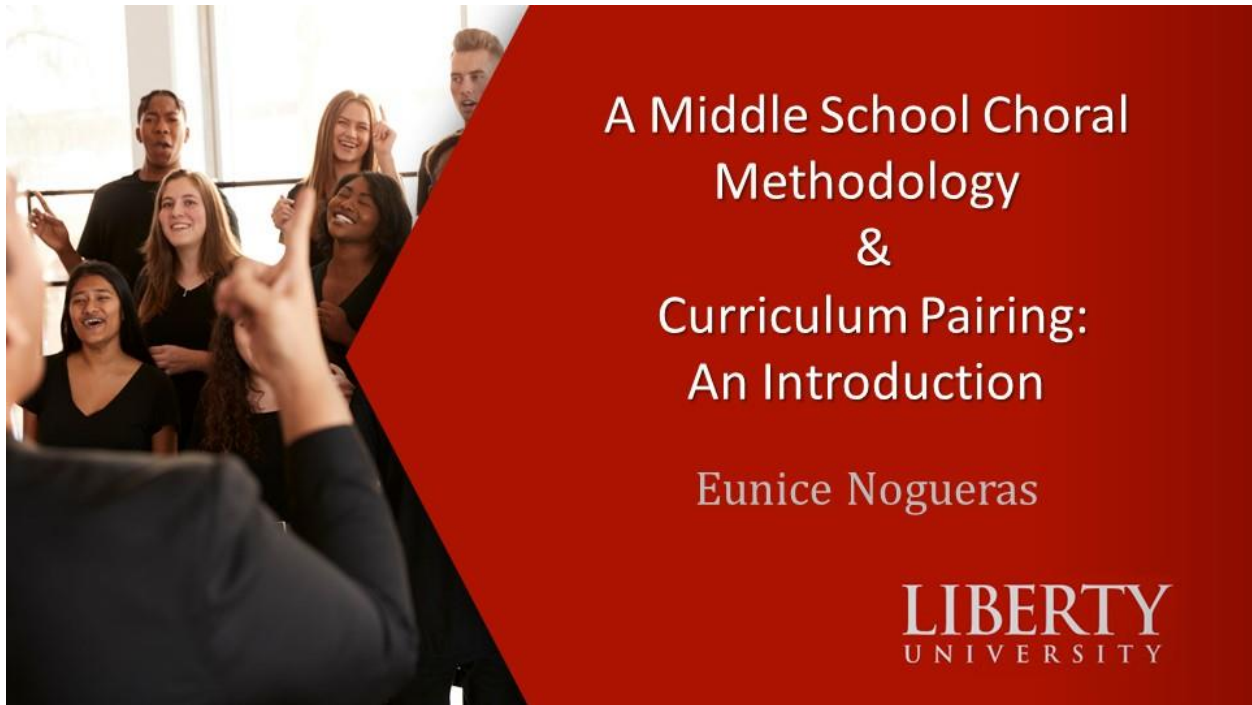
APPENDIX A- SAMPLE OF MUSIC METHOD BOOK ²⁴²

Title of Book
Author
Copyright
Publisher
Volume in a series
Other Bibliographical Information
Technology Supplements
References to supplementary material that would coincide with primary book
Pages of Introductory material before playing
Number of staves in book (includes duets, not piano accompaniment)
Average staves/page
Technique
Technique Range
First Notes Introduced
Half hole is introduced
First octave key is introduced
Second octave key is introduced

²⁴² William Aikens, "A Beginner Method Book for Oboists: A Proposal," Order No. 3665912, Arizona State University, 2014. In PROQUESTMS ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fdissertations-theses%2Fbeginner-method-book-oboists-proposal%2Fdocview%2F1640907887%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

First Complete Scale
Major scales consolidated in one place
Arpeggios consolidated in one place
First use of the chromatic scale or exercise
Introduction of Key Signatures
Tonalities introduced
Other modes introduced
Major Scales
Minor Scales
Alternate fingerings
Melodic Material
Number of staves devoted to technical studies (i.e. scales, arpeggios, non-melodic exercises, rhythms, quizzes, etc.)
Total staves of melodic material
Total staves of untitled melodies
Number of staves of solos with printed accompaniment
Number of staves of duets, trios, small ensemble
Number of staves in divisi or in octaves
Rhythm
Introduction of Time signature
First instance of time signature other than 4/4, 3/4, 2/4
First instance/number of staves of cut time
First instance/number of staves of compound meter

First instance/number of staves of dotted quarter-eighth notes (simple duple meters)
First instance/number of staves including triplets
Introduction/number of staves including sixteenth notes
Introduction/number of staves of dotted eighth-sixteenth notes
Intro/number of staves of syncopation
Number of staves with rhythmic notation exercises (no pitches)
Additional rhythmic information
Other Information
<p>Articulations introduced:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slurs • Accents • Staccato • Tenuto
First use of dynamics
First use of tempo markings (in Italian)
Fingering chart Music theory?
What is included Instructions on basic instrument care
Instructions on instrument assembly/storage
Instructions on reed care/prep and storage

APPENDIX B- LIBERTY UNIVERSITY RESEARCH WEEK 2021**Middle School Choral Methodology Presentation²⁴³**

A Middle School Choral Methodology & Curriculum Pairing: An Introduction

Eunice Nogueras

LIBERTY
UNIVERSITY

Statement of Problem

- There are many accepted music methodologies catered towards children
- There are limited music methodologies that are created for and cater to middle school, specifically middle school chorus
- Teachers do not have resources that help them teach within a methodology

²⁴³ Liberty University Research Week 2021 Presentation

Research Question

- How could a choral music methodology be created to not only meet students' needs, but teachers' needs as well?



The Middle School Choral Methodology

- Vocal Pedagogy
- Social-Emotional Learning
- Performance



Literature Review

- Methodologies
- Method Books
- Various other topics

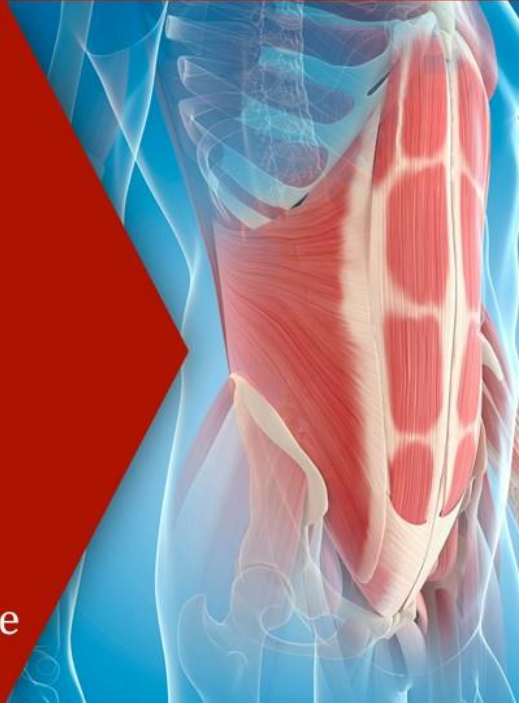


Importance of Vocal Pedagogy

- Necessary part of vocal development and the success of the choir as a whole
- It might take more time out of your standard rehearsal process, but the students will be set up for long term success, instead of “quick fixes”
- Lifelong use and love of music

Debunking Vocal Pedagogy Myths

- Common myths
- Accepted standards for desired outcome
- Difficulty in the study of vocal pedagogy
- Proposed solution: Undiluted Rudimentary Vocal Pedagogy Standards that seek to exercise the voice not transform the voice



Methodology: Vocal Pedagogy

- What comes naturally to students
- The Learning Pyramid Model
- Correct and Incorrect Examples
- Experimentation through games, activities and projects



Methodology: Social Emotional Learning

- Hot Topic in Education
- Incorporate in every lesson
- Strategies besides fixed coping skills
- Specialized attention as needed
- Developing well rounded citizen



Methodology: Performance

- Vocal Pedagogy and Social Emotional Learning applied through Performance
- Choral, academic, and individual performance
- Encouragement and constructive criticism by teacher and peers
- Performance of both students and teachers



Curriculum Pairing

- Provides suggested:
 - Warm-ups
 - Activities
 - Discussion Topics
 - Visual Models
 - “Troubleshooting”



Future Research

- This methodology and curriculum pairing will have progressive editions, as more information is gathered
- Once COVID-19 restrictions are lifted and schools return to normal, the methodology developed will be tested in local schools.
- Once tested, then modified as needed, it will be published and a website will be developed with videos that will help teachers and students.

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