

Together, We Sing: Goals for Singing Ensembles & Leaders

SINGING TECHNIQUES, ARTISTRY, & MUSICIANSHIP FOR ALL STYLES
SINGER-CENTERED CO-CREATION FOR LEVELS 1-2

ENSEMBLE / STUDENT _____

DIRECTOR _____

LEVEL SCORING _____

Level 1 FOUNDATION	VOCAL TECHNIQUE								MUSICIANSHIP								
	Goals for Resonance & Color				Goals for Body, Breath, & Effort				Artistry								
	RESONANCE & VOWELS	ENSEMBLE SOUND & BALANCE	VOCAL FACILITY & INDEPENDENCE	INTONATION	BREATH MANAGEMENT	DYNAMICS	DICTION	ARTICULATION	RHYTHM & TEMPO: EXPERIENCING & READING	EXPRESSION & ARTISTRY							
	WORKING FOR FLUENCY IN PREVIOUS LEVEL, EST. SCORE: _____	WORKING FOR FLUENCY IN PREVIOUS LEVEL, EST. SCORE: _____	WORKING FOR FLUENCY IN PREVIOUS LEVEL, EST. SCORE: _____	WORKING FOR FLUENCY IN PREVIOUS LEVEL, EST. SCORE: _____	WORKING FOR FLUENCY IN PREVIOUS LEVEL, EST. SCORE: _____	WORKING FOR FLUENCY IN PREVIOUS LEVEL, EST. SCORE: _____	WORKING FOR FLUENCY IN PREVIOUS LEVEL, EST. SCORE: _____	WORKING FOR FLUENCY IN PREVIOUS LEVEL, EST. SCORE: _____	WORKING FOR FLUENCY IN PREVIOUS LEVEL, EST. SCORE: _____	WORKING FOR FLUENCY IN PREVIOUS LEVEL, EST. SCORE: _____							
1.0–1.3 Emerging	• Shaping vowels with space for singing, basic vowel uniformity is introduced.	• Ensemble sound develops through modeling, call and response, and mimicry. • Ensemble sound develops through matching vowels. • Ensemble sound is most easily achieved with [u, o, i]. • Ensemble sound occurs most easily when all singers sing in a unified mechanism (<i>head/chest</i>). • Ensemble sound is often inconsistent even if singers are aware (<i>not uniform register or space, difficult vowels [ε, æ, etc.], singing in a new language</i>).	• Singing range determined by age, gender, vocal quality, and speaking voice, often a 6th to a 10th in all voice parts. • Stepwise and pentatonic melodies and simple intervals sung clearly at a moderate tempo. • Challenging passages can be coached (<i>slower, faster, challenging intervals</i>). • Unison, simple counterpoint introduced and develops clarity (<i>partner songs, canons</i>). • Close parallel harmonies and minor dissonance can be inconsistent.	• Clear intonation in unison singing develops. • Listening skills develop through understanding how vowel uniformity affects pitch. • Singers develop clear melodic intonation with pentatonic and simple melodies. • Intonation issues due to inconsistent vowels, register, or scooping, is common and can be coached.	• Good posture with low, released muscles for breathing is introduced and develops. • Breathing together and energizing the voice are introduced and develop. • Expansive, low breath is reinforced, as clavicular breathing is common. • Singers demonstrate consistent breath effort most often in short, loud passages. • Breathing in appropriate places is introduced (<i>punctuation, ends of words or phrases</i>).	• Singing with contrasting dynamics is introduced and develops. • <i>Forte</i> and <i>piano</i> are introduced and develop, contrasting dynamics between songs or between major sections within a song is introduced. • <i>Crescendo</i> and <i>decrescendo</i> are introduced and develop. • Maintaining ensemble sound in contrasting dynamics is introduced. • Inconsistencies in resonance often occur during changes of dynamic.	• Pronouncing words together is introduced and develops. • Vowel clarity reflects singers' body awareness of LEVEL 1 Resonance & Vowels . • Consonant clarity varies by age, body awareness, or primary language. • Enunciating consonants at onset and offset of phrases at louder dynamics develops. • Internal consonants often lack clarity. • Singing in multiple languages is encouraged.	• Contrasting articulation with text and effort is introduced and develops. • Quick and sustained, heavy and light articulations are introduced. • Clarity of articulation can be inconsistent as a result of text and volume.	• Singing rhythmically together is introduced and develops. • Singers demonstrate physical sense of pulse when coached. • Simple rhythms can be sung accurately, syncopation and challenging rhythms can be coached. • Rhythmic inconsistencies common, precision is affected (<i>by age, body awareness, dynamics, diction, and articulation</i>). • Basic count singing can be introduced.	• Singing with energy, body involvement, and facial expression to convey mood introduced and develops. Expression varies (<i>by age, body awareness, energy, and confidence</i>). • Expressing the mood of a song with general changes of dynamic and articulation as determined by text is introduced and develops. • Form is demonstrated by contrasting formal elements with dynamics and articulation (<i>verses, refrains, and major sections</i>). • Body movements help singers connect physicality to the mood and sound desired.							
	0										0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	1										1	1	1	1	1	1	1
1.4–1.6 At Level	• Body awareness of jaw, lips, tongue, soft palate introduced and develops. • Resonance is most easily developed with vowel sounds [u, o, i]. • Chest and head resonance is introduced (<i>light/heavy mechanism, thick/thin folds</i>). • Singing in head voice is lifted, chest voice is relaxed. • Resonance often inconsistent (<i>vowel formation, inappropriate space, chest voice</i>).	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2								
	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3								
	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4								
1.7–1.9 Ready to Advance	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5								
	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6								
	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7								
	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8								
	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9								
	EMERGING INTO NEXT LEVEL, EST. SCORE: _____	EMERGING INTO NEXT LEVEL, EST. SCORE: _____	EMERGING INTO NEXT LEVEL, EST. SCORE: _____	EMERGING INTO NEXT LEVEL, EST. SCORE: _____	EMERGING INTO NEXT LEVEL, EST. SCORE: _____	EMERGING INTO NEXT LEVEL, EST. SCORE: _____	EMERGING INTO NEXT LEVEL, EST. SCORE: _____	EMERGING INTO NEXT LEVEL, EST. SCORE: _____	EMERGING INTO NEXT LEVEL, EST. SCORE: _____								

Level 2 EXPLORATION	VOCAL TECHNIQUE								MUSICIANSHIP								
	Goals for Resonance & Color				Goals for Body, Breath, & Effort				Artistry								
	RESONANCE & VOWELS	ENSEMBLE SOUND & BALANCE	VOCAL FACILITY & INDEPENDENCE	INTONATION	BREATH MANAGEMENT	DYNAMICS	DICTION	ARTICULATION	RHYTHM & TEMPO: EXPERIENCING & READING	EXPRESSION & ARTISTRY							
	WORKING FOR FLUENCY IN PREVIOUS LEVEL, EST. SCORE: _____	WORKING FOR FLUENCY IN PREVIOUS LEVEL, EST. SCORE: _____	WORKING FOR FLUENCY IN PREVIOUS LEVEL, EST. SCORE: _____	WORKING FOR FLUENCY IN PREVIOUS LEVEL, EST. SCORE: _____	WORKING FOR FLUENCY IN PREVIOUS LEVEL, EST. SCORE: _____	WORKING FOR FLUENCY IN PREVIOUS LEVEL, EST. SCORE: _____	WORKING FOR FLUENCY IN PREVIOUS LEVEL, EST. SCORE: _____	WORKING FOR FLUENCY IN PREVIOUS LEVEL, EST. SCORE: _____	WORKING FOR FLUENCY IN PREVIOUS LEVEL, EST. SCORE: _____	WORKING FOR FLUENCY IN PREVIOUS LEVEL, EST. SCORE: _____							
2.0–2.3 Emerging	• Resonance develops by discovering inner resonating space, relaxed jaw, and shaping mouth. • Resonant space develops (<i>lips, front/back of tongue, tail, dome, lofted, soft palate</i>). • Vowel uniformity is consistent within middle register, expands with age and experience [i, e, a, o, u]. • Treble voices encouraged to sing in head voice (<i>light mechanism, thin folds</i>). As they move through LEVEL 2 into 3 , healthy chest and mix develops. • Mixing into chest voice is introduced (<i>heavy mechanism, thick folds</i>). • Voices in transition (<i>adolescent and gender</i>) sing with a relaxed airflow, light effort, and emphasize head voice as new notes develop. • Singers recognize breathy, pressed, and balanced tone production in head and chest register. • Resonance influenced by text, extremes of dynamic and range.	• Ensemble sound develops through vowel uniformity and matching vowel shape and dialect. • Ensemble sound and balance affected by repertoire style and vocal demands (<i>divisi, register, and tessitura</i>). • Ensemble sound develops through modeling, call-and-response, and mimicry. Students can model for each other. • Ensemble sound demonstrated in slow passages, cadences, and with vowels [i, e, a, o, u]. • Ensemble sound inconsistent in rhythmic or fast-moving sections (<i>text, lack of uniform register, volume, musical elements</i>). • Balance achieved by adjusting numbers of singers on each part or standing arrangements.	• Singing range determined by age, gender, vocal quality, and speaking voice, often a 6th to a 12th, expands with age and experience. • Stepwise melodies, slow to moderately fast tempi, and intervals of 3rds, 4ths, 5ths sung clearly. • Unison, partner songs, and simple counterpoint sung with clarity. • Part independence in passages with close parallel harmonies or minor dissonance develops. • Some compositions in three or four parts possible, determined by personnel, range, or composition style.	• Listening skills develop through listening to self and others. • Intonation consistent in middle voice with LEVEL 2 Resonance & Vowels . Inconsistencies common (<i>challenges of text, diphthongs, range, and dynamics</i>). • Unison, partner songs, simple counterpoint can be sung with clarity of pitch. • Individual tuning issues due to inconsistent register, volume, or scooping, can be coached. • Tuning homophonic passages or close harmonies is inconsistent, can be coached. • Tuning with piano or other instruments introduced and develops.	• Good posture, and low, released muscles for inhalation develops and becomes consistent. • Low, released muscles without downward pressure develops (<i>beginning of a song, major sections or phrases</i>). • Balanced onset is encouraged (<i>easy effort, suspension, relaxed airflow</i>). • Singers recognize and can demonstrate aspirate, glottal, and balanced onsets. • Imbalanced tone may result in breathy <i>p</i> , pressed <i>f</i> , poor intonation, decreased <i>legato</i> , et al. • Ability to sustain longer phrases, breathing in appropriate poetic places develops. • "Stagger breathing" for sustained tones, <i>fermata</i> , is introduced. • Varied effort and airflow for dynamics or style is introduced.	• Varied dynamics from song to song develops, <i>p-f</i> . • <i>Crescendo</i> and <i>decrescendo</i> develop. • Varied dynamics from phrase to phrase is introduced and develops. • Dynamics <i>mp-mf</i> demonstrate LEVEL 2 Resonance & Vowels . • Dynamic extremes may affect resonance and pitch (<i>p breathy, f pressed</i>).	• Clarity of enunciation, projection, and body awareness of articulators introduced and develops. • Vowel clarity reflects LEVEL 2 Resonance & Vowels . • Consonant clarity develops (<i>onset and offset of phrases, louder dynamics</i>). • Diction most successful with modeling, call-and-response, and mimicry. • Consonants before the beat and internal consonants introduced. • Breath plan determined by text and poetry is introduced. • LEVEL 2 Diction concepts applied in multiple languages is encouraged.	• Basic articulation develops (<i>detached/connected, heavy/light, quick/sustained</i>). • Various weights of accents introduced (<i>staccato, marcato</i>). • Legato singing is introduced, often inconsistent as affected by text, dynamic, and developing LEVEL 2 Breath Management . • Articulation affected by text and volume. • Articulation appropriate for (or informed by) non-Western music introduced.	• Rhythmic clarity develops through unified diction. • Inner pulse introduced, body movement reflecting steady pulse is encouraged. • <i>Ritardando</i> and <i>Accelerando</i> are introduced. • Rhythms more complex than eighth note patterns can be coached. • Ensemble sings together but rushing or dragging is common. • Count singing at LEVEL 1 is possible. • Simple poly-rhythms and syncopated styles introduced.	• Creating a unique style for each piece with dynamic, tempo, articulation, and text develops. • Word stress/un-stress is introduced. • General mood of poetry is understood, demonstrated by varied musical elements. • Form demonstrated by contrasting musical elements in each piece is introduced (<i>verses, phrases, sections, emphasis of "climactic moment"</i>). • Singers demonstrate facial expression and/or appropriate body movement, especially when coached.							
	0										0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	1										1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2.4–2.6 At Level	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2								
	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3								
	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4								
2.7–2.9 Ready to Advance	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5								
	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6								
	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7								
	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8								
	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9								
	EMERGING INTO NEXT LEVEL, EST. SCORE: _____	EMERGING INTO NEXT LEVEL, EST. SCORE: _____	EMERGING INTO NEXT LEVEL, EST. SCORE: _____	EMERGING INTO NEXT LEVEL, EST. SCORE: _____	EMERGING INTO NEXT LEVEL, EST. SCORE: _____	EMERGING INTO NEXT LEVEL, EST. SCORE: _____	EMERGING INTO NEXT LEVEL, EST. SCORE: _____	EMERGING INTO NEXT LEVEL, EST. SCORE: _____	EMERGING INTO NEXT LEVEL, EST. SCORE: _____								

FESTIVAL NAME

DATE

SCHOOL

CHOIR NAME

CONDUCTOR

NOTES

SCORING FOR EACH LEVEL

X.0–X.3 / EMERGING

Choir has been introduced to the concept and understands

X.4–X.6 / AT LEVEL

Choir demonstrates regularly

X.7–X.9 / FLUENCY

Choir understands and applies when coached to always demonstrates

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE

- Each descriptor is a learning goal of a particular **LEVEL** of experience.
 - Teachers initially should determine what level of learning goals is appropriate for their ensemble.
 - Singers and Teachers are encouraged to work together to co-create which goals are important for their unique ensemble.
 - All learning goals are designed to apply to all types of ensembles, regardless of singing style or repertoire. However, not all goals may be desired for a particular ensemble.
 - Some descriptors describe “negative traits.” These are included as they are a natural part of development and should not be a criticism, possible causes are provided. Assessment occurs in multiple ways: not all types are necessary for every ensemble.
 - **TYPE 1:** At the beginning of the year, the teacher/leader should look at the various levels of learning goals and determine which set are appropriate for the experience and outcomes desired for their ensemble.
 - **TYPE 2:** As the ensemble works toward certain goals (no more than two or three at a time) the director can determine when it is time to assess the choir.
 - The numbers 0–9 to the side of each set of goals represent the percentage of time the group demonstrates a technique. For ex. 1 would mean the choir repeats the goal 10% of the time. When the technique or goal is present .7–.9, the group is encouraged to move on to other types of goals at that level, or goals in the next level with the same concept.
 - **TYPE 3:** Some ensembles attend adjudications for feedback. Whereas this form can be used for competition, it has been **created to de-emphasize competition**, and rather **focus on growth** of each ensemble in their own way.
- FOR ADJUDICATION:**
- The choir must first self-assess where they feel they are in terms of the development of the **LEVELS** and learning goals.
 - The choir’s self-assessment is then shared with the adjudicator to inform them of what the choir’s focus and goals are.
 - The adjudicator will then listen to reflect on the choir’s assessment, and using the form create suggested pathways for continued learning and growth.
 - A score may or may not be included as to indicate the percentage of time a technique is demonstrated. Scores may be helpful to show that there is no end to the possible growth of a singer and ensemble!