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Plans and Suggestions for Teaching Dale Peterson's

"The Season to Sing" CGA-600

by Betty Bedsole

This delightful Christmas anthem contains a familiar carol and also offers something new and exciting by alternating measures in 6/8 and 3/4 in the A section which is repeated throughout and serves as a unifying factor. While the anthem is primarily in unison, it breaks into two parts in the B section, the last statement of the A theme and the coda. It *could* also be performed effectively in unison.

The form of the piece is A B A (transition) C A D A' which can be illustrated for the singers with shapes or letters or both.

A - The A section begins with a four measure introduction that contains the first two and last two measures of the melody that follows.

There is repetition within the A section (which is only eight measures long). Ms. 9 and 10 are the same as measures 5 and 6. The rhythm is the same in ms. 7-8 and 11-12 but the pitches are different.

B - The B section is also eight measures long. Rhythm, melody and harmony of ms. 13, 14 and the first half of ms. 15 are repeated in measure 17, 18 and the first half of ms. 19. The ending of the two phrases is slightly different and the text of the two phrases is completely different.

A - The A section (measures 5-12) is repeated textually and musically.

Transition - ms. 28-32 - accompaniment only.

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C - The C section (ms. 33-53) is the third stanza of the familiar Christmas carol, "Angels We Have Heard on High" which most children will know.

A - The A section including the 4 measure introduction is repeated. (ms. 53-64).

D - The D section is in unison at times and divides into two parts in three places. The rhythm is substantially the same as section A.

A' - The final section is a return to the A section with the addition of a descant and coda. The coda is in two parts.

Week 1 Begin with ms. 41 through 44 and use this melodic fragment as a warm up, singing the phrase on "loo." Since it begins on C above middle C the children will naturally sing in their head voices. Before choir, ask the accompanist to be ready to modulate upward by half-steps when you do this exercise. Have a pre-arranged signal so the accompanist knows when to reverse direction and begin modulating downward. Do not do this exercise lower than it is written for many children will begin to sing in chest voice on the lower pitches. As you are working on ascending patterns change direction while the sound is still beautiful (before the voices begin to sound strained).

Go back to ms. 33. Ask the children to open their music and sing the entire section (ms. 33 to 53) on "loo"

with accompaniment. Then sing that section with the words and accompaniment. Ms. 33 - 36 should be one phrase. There should be no breath after "see." Make a "lift" after the word "knee" in ms. 38.

Teach the A section by putting a scale ladder on the chalkboard or make one from poster board. Have the children sing the tones from the bottom to the top of the scale ladder. If they know the hand signs have them sing and sign the pitches. If they do not know the hand signs this is a great time to teach them. (See page 17 in the August LETTERS for an illustration of hand signs.)

Point to the pitches in the A section and have the children sing each pitch as you point to it. Have them sing the correct rhythm.


D R M F M R R S M


D R M F M D R


D R M F M R R S M


F M R D R T D

Do this several times until they sing the melody with ease, using a good head tone.

Give each child a copy of the worksheet on the back of this page. Place a transparency on which you have written the melody of the A section of "The Season to Sing" on an overhead projector. Write a D for Do under the first pitch. Let the children take turns telling you the name of the next pitches using tone syllables. Then ask the children to write the name of the tone syllable under the note. Do the first four measures together in this manner. Ask the children to fill in the names of the tone syllables of the next four measures on their own. Encourage them to write the pitch names at home.

Have the children open their music and sing the A section with accompaniment.

Week 2 Use the warm-up suggested for Week 1. Review parts C and A that the children learned in the preceding rehearsal. Divide the choir into two groups to practice the sections that are in two parts (Section B, ms. 13-20; section D, ms. 65-72; section A', ms. 73-80; and the coda, ms. 81-84). After 15 to 20 minutes in groups, bring the choir back together and rehearse the two-part sections together. (Many choirs will not be ready to add the accompaniment.)

Week 3 Use the solfege ladder from Week 1 to warm up. Work on the two part sections, being sure that pitches are in tune. Be sure the children know when they should be singing in unison. Work on places where children are having difficulty, especially where they are singing different pitches. Add accompaniment when you feel the children are ready. Go to the beginning and have the children sing the song all the way through. Pay special attention to their enunciation and make corrections as necessary.

Week 4 Begin the rehearsal by using as a warm up the parts of the anthem that are secure. In many cases this will be sections A and C. Then work on places where they are having difficulty. Most of the anthem should be memorized by now. Work on parts not yet memorized.

Consider using this piece for combined choirs by having younger choirs join in each time the A section is sung. The adult choir and congregation could join in on the C section (stanza 3 of "Angels We Have Heard on High"). If you use combined choirs, have the adult choir join the children at measure 73 and sing with them to the end of the anthem.

Chorister's Page

The Season to Sing

Write in the tone syllables for each of the pitches in the first parts of the anthem "The Season to Sing."

Your choir leader will lead the choir in completing the first phrase. Can you fill in the tones for the second phrase? Notice that it begins like the first phrase, but then it is different. First, copy the tones for the pitches that are the same. Then decide what the names of the other tones are. Your director will help you if you need help.

The musical score consists of four staves of music in G major, 4/4 time. The first staff starts at measure 4 with a whole rest, followed by a half note G4, quarter notes A4, B4, and C5, and a half note B4. A dynamic marking of *mf* is above the first measure of this phrase. Below the staff are two blank lines for 'Tone Syllable' and 'Pitch Name'. The second staff starts at measure 6 with a half note G4, quarter notes A4, B4, and C5, and a half note B4. Below the staff are two blank lines. The third staff starts at measure 8 with a half note G4, quarter notes A4, B4, and C5, and a half note B4. Below the staff are two blank lines. The fourth staff starts at measure 11 with a half note G4, quarter notes A4, B4, and C5, and a half note B4. Below the staff are two blank lines. A 'divisi' marking is present at the end of the fourth staff.

You may want to write the letter name under the tone syllable for each pitch. If there is not time to do this in choir, take your worksheet home and finish it there. Show your worksheet to your parents and sing for them the part of the anthem that you have written.

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