

# Teaching Sight Singing in the Choral Rehearsal



## Building Choral Excellence: Teaching Sight-Singing in the Choral Rehearsal by Steven M. Demorest

★★★★☆ 4 out of 5

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Screen Reader	: Supported
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## : The Importance of Sight Singing

Sight singing, the ability to read and perform unfamiliar musical notation accurately and expressively, is a fundamental skill for choral singers.

Proficiency in sight singing enhances musical literacy, improves vocal accuracy, and fosters confidence in performing new repertoire.

Incorporating sight singing exercises into choral rehearsals can significantly benefit students' overall musical development.

## Techniques to Enhance Sight Singing

### 1. Gradual Exposure:

Begin with simple melodies that gradually increase in difficulty. This allows students to build a foundation and develop confidence.

## **2. Sight-Reading Warm-ups:**

Dedicate a few minutes at the start of rehearsal to short sight-reading exercises. This primes the vocal apparatus and prepares students for more challenging repertoire.

## **3. Rhythm Drills:**

Focus on rhythmic accuracy using exercises that isolate specific rhythmic patterns or combine multiple rhythms.

## **4. Interval Recognition:**

Practice identifying intervals through solfege or fixed-do techniques. This helps students understand the relationship between notes and their sound.

## **5. Phrase and Articulation:**

Pay attention to musical phrasing, dynamics, and articulation. Encourage students to sing with expression and to vary their vocal dynamics based on score markings.

## **Strategies for Successful Sight Singing in Rehearsals**

### **1. Set Realistic Goals:**

Avoid overwhelming students with overly complex music. Start with manageable exercises and gradually increase difficulty as they progress.

### **2. Provide Clear Instructions:**

Before each sight-reading exercise, clearly explain the rhythm, key, and any specific instructions. This ensures everyone is on the same page.

### **3. Encourage Student Participation:**

Give students opportunities to take the lead in reading the music. This builds confidence and encourages active engagement.

#### **4. Use Technology:**

Utilize digital apps or websites that provide interactive sight-reading exercises and allow for instant feedback.

#### **5. Track Progress:**

Regularly assess students' progress through informal or formal evaluations. This provides valuable feedback and helps identify areas for improvement.

### **Resources for Sight Singing Instruction**

#### **1. Sight-Singing Textbooks:**

Comprehensive textbooks provide a structured approach to learning sight-singing techniques, including *Sight-Singing Complete* by Edward Pearsall and James O. Froseth, and *The Art of Sight-Reading* by Georg Philipp Telemann.

#### **2. Choral Method Books:**

Many choral method books include exercises and tips for sight singing. Consider using resources like *Hal Leonard Essential Elements for Choir* or *Oxford Choral Dynamics*.

#### **3. Online Resources:**

Numerous websites offer interactive sight-singing exercises and learning materials. Explore sites like [SightSinging.org](http://SightSinging.org), [Noteflight Learn](http://Noteflight Learn), and [Musictheory.net](http://Musictheory.net).

## 4. Ear Training Apps:

Mobile applications such as Perfect Ear and EarMaster provide exercises for developing aural skills, which complement sight singing.

Incorporating sight singing into choral rehearsals is essential for enhancing vocal accuracy, musical literacy, and overall musical development. By employing effective techniques, implementing successful strategies, and utilizing available resources, choral directors can create a positive and supportive learning environment where students can thrive as sight singers.



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