



**Evaluating Self-Confidence in Singers: The Effects of Incorporating Regular Sight-Singing Exercises in the Middle School Choral Rehearsal**

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## ABSTRACT

Evaluating Self-Confidence in Singers: The Effects of Incorporating Regular Sight-Singing Exercises in the Middle School Choral Rehearsal  
(February 2015)

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## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

As rehearsal time becomes more constrained and performance expectations increase, music educators are constantly striving to provide students with the most effective, yet efficient, instruction possible. With specific regard to choral methods, sight-singing is a valuable part of regular instruction that meets both of the aforementioned – effectiveness and efficiency. It is a complex practice that allows singers to synchronously develop a variety of skills in reading music and navigating the intricacies of a choral score (Darrow and Marsh, 2006). From time signatures to key signatures and expressive markings to music notation, practiced sight-singing provides students with the tools needed to learn new music at a faster pace. In addition, sight-singing can prove to be an effective tool for individual assessment in the choral classroom. Evaluation of these skills can help provide direction for instruction, while justifying choral music as a curricular, academic subject with national standards (Demorest, 1998). As educators, the assessments we give also provide our students with positive and constructive feedback (Goss, 2010). This valuable feedback can help our students set goals and motivate them to practice specific skills.

While there are many studies that support the above benefits of sight-singing, one area left to be explored is the impact of sight-singing instruction on students' self-confidence levels. Sight-singing can be a daunting, even overwhelming, task for singers at this particular age level. We want our students to become functional and independent musicians, while being sure that we are not detracting from the paramount reason students step foot into our classrooms – making music. It is our job, as music educators, to evaluate and examine how we can bolster and foster self-confidence in this area. The first step in doing so is to examine how our students perceive their own skills and abilities.

The purpose of this paper is to examine confidence levels in sight-singing in the middle school choral classroom. Through a self-reporting method of data collection, I hope to explore the effects of regular sight-singing practice on students' confidence and success when singing a new excerpt of music. Through empirical research, I seek to evaluate students' confidence levels when sight-singing an excerpt after regular instruction over the course of six weeks. This paper is divided into four distinct chapters. The first chapter serves as an introduction to this study; reviewing purpose, rationale, and expected outcomes. The second chapter provides an introduction to the methods used to implement the study and pedagogy used to deliver the sight-singing instruction over the course of six weeks. The third chapter examines discoveries made through both student and teacher engagement in this particular study. Lastly, in the fourth chapter, I will evaluate the data gathered throughout the completion of the study. I will also examine the indicators of student growth and the overall success of this study.

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## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

As rehearsal time becomes more constrained and performance expectations increase, music educators are constantly striving to provide students with the most effective, yet efficient, instruction possible. With specific regard to choral methods, sight-singing is a valuable part of regular instruction that meets both of the aforementioned – effectiveness and efficiency. It is a complex practice that allows singers to synchronously develop a variety of skills in reading music and navigating the intricacies of a choral score (Darrow and Marsh, 2006). From time signatures to key signatures and expressive markings to music notation, practiced sight-singing provides students with the tools needed to learn new music at a faster pace. In addition, sight-singing can prove to be an effective tool for individual assessment in the choral classroom. Evaluation of these skills can help provide direction for instruction, while justifying choral music as a curricular, academic subject with national standards (Demorest, 1998). As educators, the assessments we give also provide our students with positive and constructive feedback (Goss, 2010). This valuable feedback can help our students set goals and motivate them to practice specific skills.

While there are many studies that support the above benefits of sight-singing, one area left to be explored is the impact of sight-singing instruction on students' self-confidence levels. Sight-singing can be a daunting, even overwhelming, task for singers at this particular age level. We want our students to become functional and independent musicians, while being sure that we are not detracting from the paramount reason students step foot into our classrooms – making music. The purpose of this paper, therefore, is to examine confidence levels in sight-singing in the middle school choral classroom.

Through a self-reporting method of data collection, I hope to explore the effects of regular sight-singing practice on students' confidence and understanding when viewing a new excerpt of music. Results of this study will be based on the participation of the members of the Conestoga Valley Middle School 7<sup>th</sup> grade choir (n=44). Prior to instruction, students will complete a written survey. Results of this survey will display how students rate their confidence levels when sight-singing. The survey will also examine a variety of demographics and previous musical experience. Students will complete a pre-test as well. This pre-test will include theoretical concepts related to the subject matter. Over the course of six weeks, students will participate in sight-singing instruction and exercises, every other day, for a duration of approximately five minutes. At the culmination of six weeks, students will be administered a post-assessment and survey to evaluate skills and confidence in the area of sight-singing. Data analysis from all surveys and assessments will seek to correlate the measure of improvement from Week 1 to Week 6.

Research shows that sight-singing is a vital component of any choral program, especially one of that with young singers. What has been left unexplored is the students' perceptions of their own skills and abilities. Through my study I hope to discover students' self-confidence levels before and after consistent and manageable sight-singing instruction. Provided with the necessary steps and tools, I predict that the majority students will be more confident when sight-singing a musical example. However, our ensemble is comprised of a wide range of musical levels. This leads me to predict that there will be some students who show little to no growth, due to the fact that they may already know some of the beginning facts and concepts presented during this short amount of time. Though I realize the findings of this research are only the first

step in a much larger process, I hope it provides me with an initial better understanding of my singers and how I can help bolster and foster self-confidence in this area.



## **Chapter 2**

### **Importance of the Study**

Choral directors have been charged with teaching their students how to sing at sight or “how to translate musical notation into sound with their voices” (Davenport 90). So important is this goal that the original National Standards for Music Education, created by the former Music Educators National Conference, also clearly set forth these guidelines. Standard #1 charged teachers with engaging our students in “singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music”, while Standard #2 required that we teach students “reading and notating music” (MENC, 1994). While so simply stated and seemingly achievable, there are numerous studies that prove these goals quite lofty, especially in our modern education system. As far back as 1957 a study by K.D. Ernst stated the following:

“There is need for objective research in regard to the methods used in teaching music reading. When 69 percent of the cities report that more than half of their classes are unable to read new songs at grade level, it is a serious indictment of the music reading methods....” (28)

Since this time there have been many studies examining the instruction, methods, materials, and assessment of sight-singing. Each area is closely examined so that we can teach sight-singing with the utmost effectiveness.

### **Instructional Time**

While many directors concur that teaching music reading is important, many disagree on the appropriate amount of rehearsal time that is dedicated to it (Demorest "Sight-Singing in the Secondary Choral Classroom" 3). In Christina Lamb's "Ten Steps to a More Productive Choral Rehearsal", she discusses the temptation to disregard sight-singing as part of the choral rehearsal procedure. Although she says that “sight-singing exercises don't have to take a long time; they just need to be effective and consistent” (2), she gives no specific indicators as to an appropriate

length of time. A study by Hales (1961) shows that, out of 244 participating high school choral directors surveyed, only 37% categorized instruction of music reading as a main objective. In this same study, 20% of directors stated they did not allot any rehearsal time for music reading, mainly due to limited rehearsal time and the demands of performances. Another study yielded similar results. When questioned about instructional time, approximately 57% of high school choral directors from the North Central region of ACDA (American Choral Directors Association) noted that they use approximately 8 minutes of a 50 minute class to teach music reading to their beginning choirs (“A Descriptive Study of the Pitch-Reading Methods and the Amount of time Utilized to Teach Sight-Singing by High School Choral Teachers in the North Central Region of the American Choral Directors Association” 1987).

Contrary to these studies, there are studies that show there are choral directors who dedicate adequate rehearsal time the instruction of sight-singing. One such study by May (1993) found that choral directors spend an average of 11.76 minutes of their rehearsal teaching sight-singing. Of the same 192 educators surveyed, 80% spend 4-5 days per week educating singers how to sing at sight. It is important to note that this study may be biased, as respondents are all Texas educators who are required to participate in sight-reading as part of state contest. Steven Demorest notes the following in his 1998 article “Sight Singing in the Secondary Choral Ensemble: A Review of Research”: “Although time is an important indicator of commitment, it does not necessarily reflect quality” (4).

### Methodologies and Materials

When considering the effectiveness of sight-singing in the choral rehearsal, other factors to be considered are the methods and materials used. Much like the research examined in the previous section of this chapter, studies show there are a wide variety of methods utilized.

A 1993 study by May showed that 82% of surveyed teachers used movable-do system. In another survey by Johnson (1987), directors responded that they used interval, number, and moveable-do systems the most. In Killian and Henry's "A Comparison Of Successful And Unsuccessful Strategies In Individual Sight-Singing Preparation And Performance" (2005), they studied high school singers performing two melodies from notation, both with and without a 30 second practice window. Their findings showed that the sight-singing system used had absolutely no impact on scores. Instead, they found that strategies such as tonicizing the key, utilizing hand signs, and keeping the beat resulted in higher scores. In response to such varied studies, Demorest (1998) concluded it "difficult to ascertain" a teacher's method of sight singing since this term describes a wide array of aspects of their teaching routines and procedures (4)..

### Assessment

Perhaps the most indicative factor in teaching students to sing at sight is assessment. This is the component that allows us to evaluate whether the time, methods, and materials are furthering the knowledge of our students. When it comes to assessment, studies show that the desired forms of assessment are not always feasible ones. After surveying Georgian Middle and High School Choral Directors in 2010, Douglass Goss found that most believed individual assessment was the best way to evaluate a student's sight-singing level. However, his survey also showed that this manner of assessment was actually less common and, instead, written assessments more common. It is my prediction that the majority of choral directors would not find Goss's results surprising. In a 2001 study, Michele Henry clearly summarized the challenges that most choral educators face on a daily basis. She stated the following:

"Individual assessment of vocal sight-singing presents some unique challenges: (a) few opportunities to assess individually within typical rehearsal situations; (b) individual testing can be extremely time consuming; (c) the scoring process can be time consuming,

as well as subjective; and (d) quality tools for individual assessment are not readily available.” (22)

Whether it is one or all of the above factors, accurately *and* effectively assessing students’ ability to sing at sight is perhaps the most complicated component. However, while challenging, it is necessary.

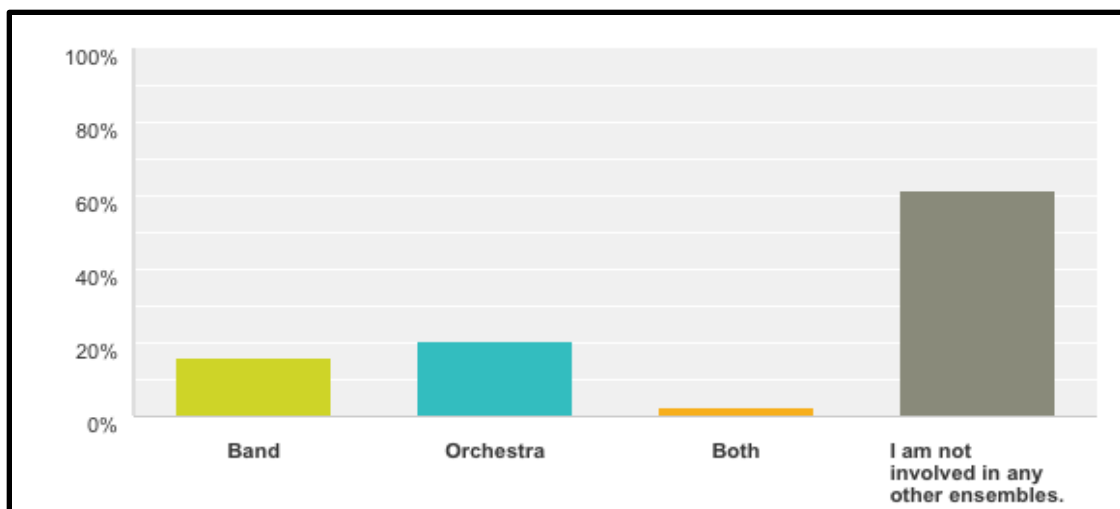
The abovementioned research only skims the surface of research on sight-singing. There are countless studies that further explore the instruction, methods, and assessment. However, prior to designing my project, I noticed there was a significant lack in studies from the students’ perspective on sight-singing. I work with middle school aged students on a daily basis, and have done so for the past seven years. My interactions with them have made me highly aware that they need to feel successful and safe when trying something new. They need to immediately see the value in the skill we are asking them to learn. When asking students to learn a new piece of music, this can be relatively simple. Students know, from experience, what it feels like to perform that piece as the culmination of their hard work. What happens when we give them something more abstract, such as a simple sight-singing exercise? To better understand students and their confidence levels, I hope to study the change over six weeks of simple sight-singing instruction. The results will help me to better understand how my students perceive themselves and their abilities. This understanding will help me to build self-confidence so that my students are successful and motivated makers of music.

### Chapter 3: Six Weeks of Sight-Singing - A Before and After

The study of the effect of sight-singing on students' self-confidence levels was completed with a 7th grade choir comprised of 44 students. Over the course of six weeks, students participated in sight-singing lessons and activities that lasted no more than five minutes. These mini-lessons took place during our scheduled rehearsal time. Prior to instruction, students were asked to complete a survey and pre-test. The survey provided me with basic background information on the student's previous and current musical experience. The pre-test allowed me to better understand what musical concepts students already know and can identify.

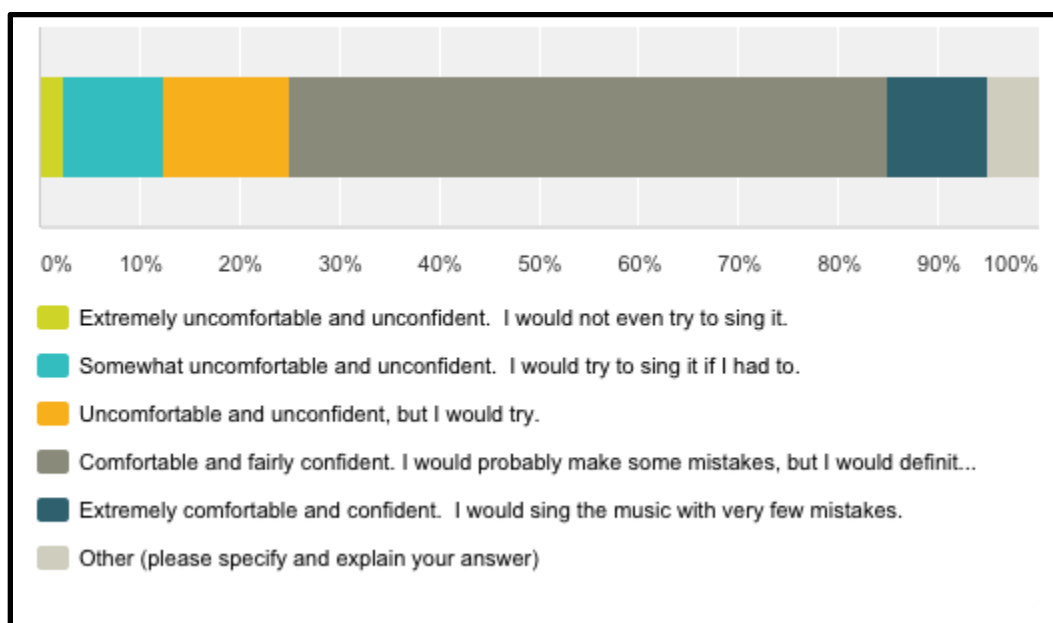
The survey (Appendix A) yielded some interesting initial findings. All students surveyed participated in choir in elementary school. It is important, however, to note that our district is comprised of four different elementary schools with four different choral directors. This can attribute for some of the diversity in knowledge of concepts. Two students also noted that they did not attend elementary school in Conestoga Valley School District. Also factored into the base knowledge that students have are their musical experiences. When asked which, if any, other ensembles students were involved the majority responded that they were not a member of any other school sponsored ensembles.

*Table 1 - Participation in School Ensembles*



Because private vocal and instrumental lessons would have a large impact on previous knowledge, students were also surveyed in this area. 11% responded they are currently taking some form of private lesson and 30% said they had done so in the past. While not necessarily curriculum-based, I thought it also important to see what ensembles students were involved in outside of school. 78% of students responded they were not involved in any other musical activities. Of the 22% that were, most stated they were involved in some form of church or youth choir. Perhaps the most interesting result was when students were asked the following: “If Mrs. Larrick handed you a new piece of choral music that you had never seen before, how comfortable would you feel singing it?”

***Table 2 -Pre-Survey***



57% of students said they would feel “Comfortable and fairly confident. I would probably make some mistakes, but I would definitely try it.” Contrary to this majority, no students stated they would not even try it. Surprisingly, with all other options, students were almost equally divided. These findings were helpful in understanding students’ initial thoughts and preconceptions before I began instruction.

Students were also administered a written Sight-Reading Pre-Test (Appendix B). The purpose of this was to assess students' knowledge of basic theoretical concepts pertinent to sight-reading. Results allowed me to choose the most logical beginning point for our choir. Overall, while the majority of students selected the correct answer, there was still a wide variety of answer choices. This was not a surprise on questions that were perhaps more complicated in nature. Take, for example, Question 6. This question asked students to determine the key signature of the given example. Only 33% of students selected the correct answer. My suspicion is that, with a closer look, I would find these students were also involved in an ensemble or private music instruction. However, other questions led me to see a different trend. Question 3 asked students to identify a quarter note, a concept presented in early elementary curriculum. Surprisingly, 47% of students chose one of the three incorrect answers. The variety of results from this portion of the study were helpful in providing a starting point, but will also serve as a comparison of student progress following the culmination of the study.

Over the course of the next six weeks, I began incorporating simple yet engaging sight-singing activities into our rehearsals. Students meet every other day, which resulted in approximately 15 rehearsals. Each session lasted no longer than five minutes of our forty-four minute rehearsals and often occurred at different times throughout. Lessons were drawn from various resources ranging from highly sequential methods to teacher created resources, based on the needs of my students. When planning, I chose to start with the most basic concepts. In initial rehearsals, students were taught Kodály hand signs and the corresponding major scale. I used simple, yet fun, warm-ups to reinforce use of the hand signs with the appropriate pitch. Once these skills were acquired, we began to incorporate a game called "The Forbidden Pattern". This game is borrowed from the S-Cubed Sight-Singing Program by Dale Duncan of Atlanta,

Georgia. The Forbidden Pattern is a part of his sequential curriculum. It is a fun game that challenges students, while teaching them tonal reference and reinforces the use of Kodály hand signs. Duncan explains his game in a 2014 article published in ChorTeach:

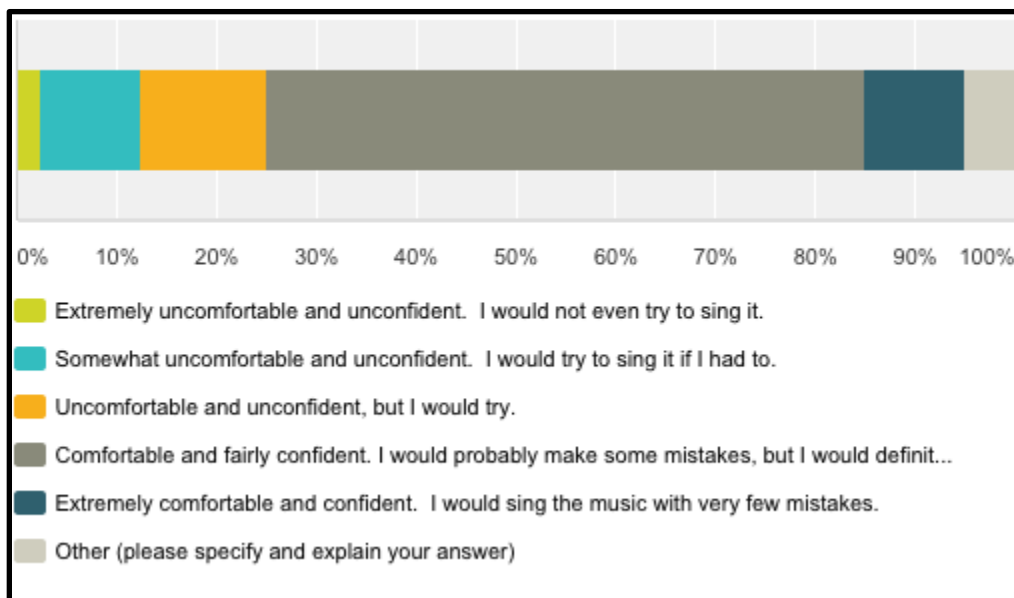
- “Everyone must use the Kodály Hand Signs while they sing.
- I sing and sign a three-note “forbidden pattern” followed by a rest, and they immediately have to sing and sign it back to me. Then I’ll move on and sing different variations of that pattern, which the students have to sing back to me. This repeats over and over again until I finally repeat the “forbidden pattern” of the day.
- Each day, there is a different “forbidden pattern” that the students aren’t allowed to sing.
- If one student sings the forbidden pattern, I get a point. If no one sings the pattern, they get a point.
- Whoever scores three points first wins the game. I keep score daily. I make the score public to all of my classes so they will begin a friendly competition with the other classes in addition to competing with me. (p. 10)”

Each rehearsal, students engaged in this game, using a variety of basic tonal patterns. Students were highly involved in the game while reviewing the basic concepts previously presented, many times without even realizing it. Building on this knowledge, I began to incorporate more traditional sight-singing exercises. We reviewed a simple process I labeled “Three Steps to Successful Sight-Singing”. This process served as a working tool for students to use when looking at a musical excerpt for the first time. In conjunction with this mini-lesson, we reviewed necessary related theoretical concepts. Throughout subsequent rehearsals, students actively practiced using these tools. It became a part of our rehearsal routine, as to use our time most effectively. After tonicizing the key in the exercise with use of hand signs, students were given approximately a minute to practice. Duncan refers to this time as “chaos” in his ChorTeach article, as students are working independently to sing the exercise at hand (p. 10). Each rehearsal we built on these foundations. As students displayed progress, patterns and exercises used for the duration of the five minutes became increasingly more difficult. I aimed for variety to keep students interested and motivated.



At the culmination of six weeks, students participated in both a post-survey and post-assessment. Students were asked the same question as in the original survey: “If Mrs. Larrick handed you a new piece of choral music that you had never seen before, how comfortable would you feel singing it?”. The findings, as pictured below, yielded some interesting comparisons.

***Table 3 - Post-Survey***



In the original survey, no students selected the first option in which they would be “Extremely uncomfortable and unconfident” to the point they would not even attempt to sing it. In the post-survey, 2% of students selected this option. One may attribute this choice to students that have previously learned the majority of their choral music by rote. Participating in these lessons may have made them more aware of the thought and process that goes into sight-reading a piece of music, inhibiting their original confidence levels. The percent of students who selected the second option, “Somewhat uncomfortable and unconfident. I would try to sing it if I had to”, decreased by 1%. From this point, a trend began. Option 2 showed another 1% decrease. Contrary to previous selections, Option 3 showed an increase of 2%. Option 4, which was the most common choice in the pre-survey showed an increase of 3%. Option 5 followed the trend

with an increase of 1%. These higher results show that students are more confident overall since participating in the lessons. I also asked students to rank the change in their own self-confidence. This is perhaps the most indicative result of my study, as it is the assessment of their own self-confidence level. An overwhelming 62.5% of students said they were now more confident and understood more musical concepts that would help them when singing a new piece of music.

The numbers from the written post-test correlated with the increase in self-confidence. While the positive effect on these numbers could be related to the increase in the number of students completing the survey, the significant differences shown in some of the question results lead me to believe otherwise. Questions related to more elementary concepts seemed to show less of an increase. For example, when students were asked to identify whether a musical excerpt was written in treble clef or bass clef there was only a 2% increase in identifying the correct answer. More complex questions, and perhaps questions more relative to the concepts focused on during our sight-reading lessons, resulted in a greater increase. For example, prior to instruction, only 33% of students could correctly identify a given key signature. After instruction, 75% of students could correctly identify the key signature.

***Table 4 - Comparison of Pre and Post-Test Numbers***

<i>Question</i>	<i>Pre-Test</i>	<i>Post-Test</i>	<i>Percentage Increase/Decrease</i>
<i>Question 1: Identifying the number of measures</i>	72%	88%	+16%
<i>Question 2: Identifying quarter notes</i>	53%	60%	+7%
<i>Question 3: Identifying the time signature</i>	69%	95%	+26%
<i>Question 4: Identifying rests</i>	50%	80%	+30%

<i>Question 5: Identifying the correct key signature</i>	33%	75%	+42%
<i>Question 6: Identifying Treble or Bass Clef</i>	78%	80%	+2%
<i>Question 7: Identifying the location of the key signature</i>	72%	78%	+2%

NOTE: 36 students completed the pre-test, while 40 students completed the post-test.

The before and after shots of the numbers yielded from this study are promising to music educators. Not only do the numbers above reflect improvement in concrete, objective understandings and knowledge due to consistent instruction in sight-singing, but they also reflect the positive feelings and confidence levels of our students.

## **Chapter 4: Conclusion**

### **Impacts on the Students and the Educator**

The study discussed in the previous chapters has greatly impacted both the students and myself, as an educator. While students may not formally realize their progress during these short six weeks, their responses reflect their increased confidence levels and understandings. They are now equipped with the tools to pick up a new piece of music and begin evaluating it without any previous instruction. This skill enables them to be independent musicians, which is a goal we have for all students. Students continue to use this new found knowledge on a regular basis. Aside from our mini-lessons and activities, they often have time throughout rehearsal to apply their sight-singing skills on a new piece or passage.

As an educator, this study has greatly changed my own perspective. Prior to my research, I believed that sight-singing instruction was an integral part of any choral education. Undergraduate courses, observations of successful choral rehearsals, and a plethora of prior studies and data all supported this belief. However, like many educators, it was the obstacles that I faced on a daily basis that led me to question whether the time spent on this skill was truly worth it. Completing this research has caused me to view teaching sight-singing in a new light not only because of the data, but because of the increase in the confidence I see in my students. I now realize that it does not have to be a long, arduous component of our rehearsals. It can be short, fun, and challenging, while still being effective. Each rehearsal I plan to incorporate at least five minutes of sight-singing. I continue to explore new techniques and curricula to keep it interesting.

## Complications and Adaptations

While the overall successes of this study were many, it was not completed without various hurdles along the way. The first major challenge encountered was receiving the approval to conduct my research from our school district's administrators. Research of this nature is not unusual within our district. Even with the allotment of ample time, my formal request seemed to get delayed in the approval process. This was frustrating, as many colleagues expressed they received almost instantaneous approval of such research proposals. While I understand these requests are not to be taken lightly, it significantly affected the timeline of my study. In future studies I would account for this time and plan accordingly.

As with any research, another hurdle was that of instructional time. While our lessons were short in length we were often up against stringent time constraints. Altered schedules due to early dismissals, testing, and other factors led to extremely short rehearsals. As concert time neared, this became an issue. Each spare minute was needed to finalize preparations. I, as a director, struggled to give the time needed to complete our mini-lessons and written activities, because I knew the repertoire work that needed to be done. This specific study was difficult because the skill of sight-singing is not what they would be showcasing at a concert, therefore making it complicated when it came down to planning rehearsal time. Time is a constant battle and one I am not sure could be changed for the future. Keeping the big picture in mind and focusing on the positive impacts of the end result would be key for any similar future studies.

Another difficulty that arose was the completion of various activities due to student attendance. It was extremely difficult to catch-up students who missed a lesson or activity due to an absence. This is due to a lack of remedial opportunities, such as sectionals, outside of rehearsal. Use of rehearsal time to remediate would have led to a snowball effect on the amount

of information missed by each student. Proposing students do the work outside of the rehearsal would have led to a lack of completion and, therefore, data. In the future, I would consider posting the mini-lessons online by way of Edmodo or perhaps a Wikispace. A video from the rehearsal itself or even a quick video tutorial would serve as an extremely useful resource. Students who miss a rehearsal would then be responsible for reviewing concepts and ideas on their own time. An additional benefit is that all students would have the ability to review and practice any of the lessons at any time.

#### Extensions of the Research

As previously stated, this study is only the beginning of examining self-confidence in our young singers. It is truly a multi-layered approach. With each layer examined, there is another aspect to consider and research. I would be interested in analyzing the data even more closely to determine which demographic of students noted the biggest increase in confidence and showed the most growth in the pre-test and post-test. My prediction is that it would be the students who are not involved in other ensembles or musical activities. Examining this more closely from the start would allow for greater differentiated instruction throughout the course of the study. It would also be of interest to conduct the study for a longer amount of time, perhaps over an entire year. This time frame would be more realistic compared to the amount of time we instruct our students. It would also be noteworthy to have students perform a simple musical excerpt prior to conducting the study. Using a simple sight-singing rubric I would assess them, while also having them self-assess. Following the same process, I would have them rank their confidence level as well. It would be extremely interesting, and useful, to see if where they perceive themselves musically is in line with a teacher's perception.

As we, music educators, look to the future I hope that we continue to examine this perspective of research. We live in such a data-driven society that we often get lost in the numbers. The approach taken in this research provides a level meeting ground for what the numbers tell us and what our students tell us. Presenting such studies to our school districts make a case for the importance and vitality of our music programs. I strongly believe that with this particular age group we need to be open to their feedback and personal perceptions. While data is important and advantageous, I would argue that the self-assessment of students is equally vital. It can be just as effective in guiding why and how we educate our young musicians.

## Appendix A: General Survey

### 7th Grade Choir General Survey

1. Which elementary school did you attend?
  - a. Brownstown
  - b. Fritz
  - c. Leola
  - d. Smoketown
  - e. I did not attend an elementary school in Conestoga Valley School District.
  
2. Did you participate in elementary school choir?

YES      or      NO

If you answered "Yes", how many years? \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. Circle any other ensembles with which you are involved.
  - a. Band
  - b. Orchestra
  - c. Both
  - d. I am not involved in any other ensembles.
  
4. Are you involved in any choral or vocal activities outside of school? (Examples: church choir, local theatre, etc.)

YES                      or                      NO

If you answered "Yes", please list the activities. \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. Are you currently taking private instrumental or vocal lessons?

YES                      or                      NO
  
6. Have you taken private vocal or instrumental lessons in the past?

YES                      or                      NO



### **Appendix A: Continued**

7. If Mrs. Larrick handed you a new piece of choral music that you had never seen before, how comfortable would you feel singing it?
- a. Extremely uncomfortable and unconfident. I would not even try to sing it.
  - b. Somewhat uncomfortable and unconfident. I would try to sing it if I had to.
  - c. Uncomfortable and unconfident, but I would try.
  - d. Comfortable and fairly confident. I would probably make some mistakes, but I would definitely try it
  - e. Extremely comfortable and confident. I would sing the music with very few mistakes.
  - f. Other (please specify and explain your answer):

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## Appendix B: Sight-Reading Pre-Test

### 7th Grade Choir Sight-Reading Pre-Test

Directions: Use the given picture to answer each question. Answer every question and try your best!



1. How many measures of music do you see in the picture?
  - a. 3
  - b. 2
  - c. 4
  - d. 5
2. Which arrow is pointing to the quarter note?
  - a. 4.
  - b. 6.
  - c. 7.
  - d. 3.
3. Which arrow is pointing to the time signature?
  - a. 1.
  - b. 2.
  - c. 4.
  - d. 8.
4. Which arrow is pointing to the half rest?
  - a. 3.
  - b. 2.
  - c. 5.
  - d. 8.
5. In what key signature is this piece of music?

## Appendix B: Continued

- a. F Major
  - b. C Major
  - c. G Major
  - d. D Major
6. Is this musical excerpt in treble or bass clef?
- a. Treble
  - b. Bass
7. Which arrow is pointing to the key signature?
- a. 8.
  - b. 1.
  - c. 4.
  - d. 3.

## Appendix C: Post-Survey

### 7th Grade Choir Sight-Reading Survey

1. If Mrs. Larrick handed you a new piece of choral music that you had never seen before, how comfortable would you feel singing it?
  - a. Extremely uncomfortable and unconfident. I would not even try to sing it.
  - b. Somewhat uncomfortable and unconfident. I would try to sing it if I had to.
  - c. Uncomfortable and unconfident, but I would try.
  - d. Comfortable and fairly confident. I would probably make some mistakes, but I would definitely try it
  - e. Extremely comfortable and confident. I would sing the music with very few mistakes.
  - f. OTHER: Please explain your answer.

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2. If Mrs. Larrick handed you a sight-reading example, like the one below, how comfortable would you feel singing it?



- a. Extremely uncomfortable and unconfident. I would not even try to sing it.
  - b. Comfortable and fairly confident. I would use the tools we have learned so far (i.e. hand signs, solfege syllables, etc.) to help me do my best.
  - c. Extremely comfortable and confident. I understand the tools we have learned so far and they would help me sing extremely well.
3. Since we started incorporating sight-reading into our rehearsals, how would you say your confidence has changed?
  - a. I am more confident. I understand more musical concepts that would help me when singing a piece of music for the first time.
  - b. My confidence has not changed. I do not feel any different when singing a piece of music for the first time.

## Appendix D: Sight-Reading Post-Test

### Sight-Reading Post-Test

Directions: Use the picture below to answer each question.



1. Which arrow is pointing to the time signature?
  - a. 4.
  - b. 5.
  - c. 2.
  - d. 1.
2. How many rests are in this picture?
  - a. 3
  - b. 0
  - c. 1
  - d. 4
3. How many measures do you see in this picture?
  - a. 5
  - b. 4
  - c. 3
  - d. 6
4. Is this musical excerpt in treble or bass clef?
  - a. bass
  - b. treble
5. What is the key signature of this piece of music?
  - a. G Major
  - b. C Major
  - c. D Major
  - d. F Major
6. Which arrow is pointing to the whole note?
  - a. 3.
  - b. 4.
  - c. 5.
  - d. 2
7. Which arrow is pointing to the key signature?
  - a. 2.
  - b. 1.

## **Appendix D: Continued**

- c. 5.
- d. 3.

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