Motivational Techniques Aimed at Musicianship

Indiana Choral Directors Association 2024

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1. What can we do as music educators and conductors to motivate our singers?
    a. How can we use our choir time/music time to equip singers with not just music skills, but also life skills that will engage them to grow as an individual AND as an ensemble?
2. Creating Meaningful Experiences that spark INCLUSION
    a. Begin each rehearsal with an upbeat and positive attitude… "Tell me SOMETHING good"
    b. Joke of the Day
    c. M&M (Music Mentors)
    d. Retreats
    e. **Don't just sing as a choir - create moments where bonding with each other is possible!**
        i. Social Activities – inside AND outside of choir
        ii. Games
    f. Selecting Repertoire
    g. Share something about yourself that makes your students WANT to know you
3. Helping each student overcome self-esteem and image issues
    a. "A good self-esteem leads to good choices and good choices leads to a good self-esteem"- Dr. Julian Ackerley
    b. Create a safe environment
    c. Be vulnerable – mistakes are okay
    d. Show them you are approachable and trustworthy
4. Start building the TEAM name
    a. Why does choir matter?
    b. What do YOU bring to the choir?
    c. Activities
        i. Commercials about Choir
        ii. People Machine
        iii. Build a Web
5. Bring relevance to the music they are singing and the impact they will make on parents and community
    a. Historical and cultural importance
    b. Composer/Musical Technique
    c. Musical Goals
    d. Planned activities based on repertoire
    e. How will it impact the community and world?

END each rehearsal with SOMETHING worth coming back for!

Extended Learning Opportunities of Suggested Repertoire

Hope is a Waking Dream - Greg Gilpin - ICC 2007 (SATB), ICC 2008 (3 Part Mixed), ICC 1029 (SA)

- Create Meaningful Experiences
    - Ask singers to do one act of kindness (or more!) for someone they know. Follow up and ask how it impacted them and the person they helped. Discuss how this song talks about loving others and finding good in the world.

Together We Sing – Leeann Starkey – ICC 2011 - SAB and ICC 1039 – SA

- Building the TEAM name:
    - Read through the text of the song. Give singers a post-it note and have them write down an idea of how they can make a difference (in little or big ways) in their community, choir, or the world. Read through the ideas together and use them as inspiration for the song.

La Belle Louisianne - Sarah K. May - ICC1003 - SSAA

- Relevance & Impact
    - Play songs of various cultures for your singers - see if they can identify which part of the world they come from
    - Ask singers about their personal heritage - where does their family come from? Do they speak another language? Why is it important to learn about other cultures?

Hope Is a Waking Dream

SATB and Piano

also available: SA and Piano (ICC1029) *and* 3-part Mixed and Piano (ICC2008)

Text inspired by the words of
Aristotle (384 BC–322 BC)

Greg Gilpin



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Written for the Southwest Indiana Choral Festival, October 2023

Together We Sing

SA with Descant, Piano, and Optional C Instrument
also available: SAB with Descant, Piano, and Optional C Instrument (ICC2011)



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* optional



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*lower note used only if higher note is out of singer range

** Use "Ah" as desired rather than text



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La Belle Louisianne

SSAA and Piano

J. Monque'D
arranged by **Sarah K. May**



Note from the arranger:

This song was written by James Monque'D, a musician who was a professional jazz artist in New Orleans since he was 13. He recorded three albums, played the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival, and was inducted into the Blues Hall of Fame in 1999. His recording of this song, available on streaming platforms, is an excellent example of style and pronunciation for performers.

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* fay doh doh ** duh (də) *** shair ****Loo-zee-ann (matches recording pronunciation)

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Preview Copy

* sho-koh-koh



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* bel-luh (bel-lə)



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* shay-shay



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