PREPARING FOR LARGE ENSEMBLE ASSESSMENT:

A Whole New World

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Saturday, November 18, 2023

Co-sponsored by LA ACDA and LMEA

AGENDA

01 Objective

02 BIRKS - Score Study Period

03 Elements of the Sight Reading Instruction Period

04 Quick Hints for Times of Trouble

05 Essential Concepts

06 Resources | Examples

ACCESS TO THIS PRESENTATION

01

SESSION OBJECTIVE:

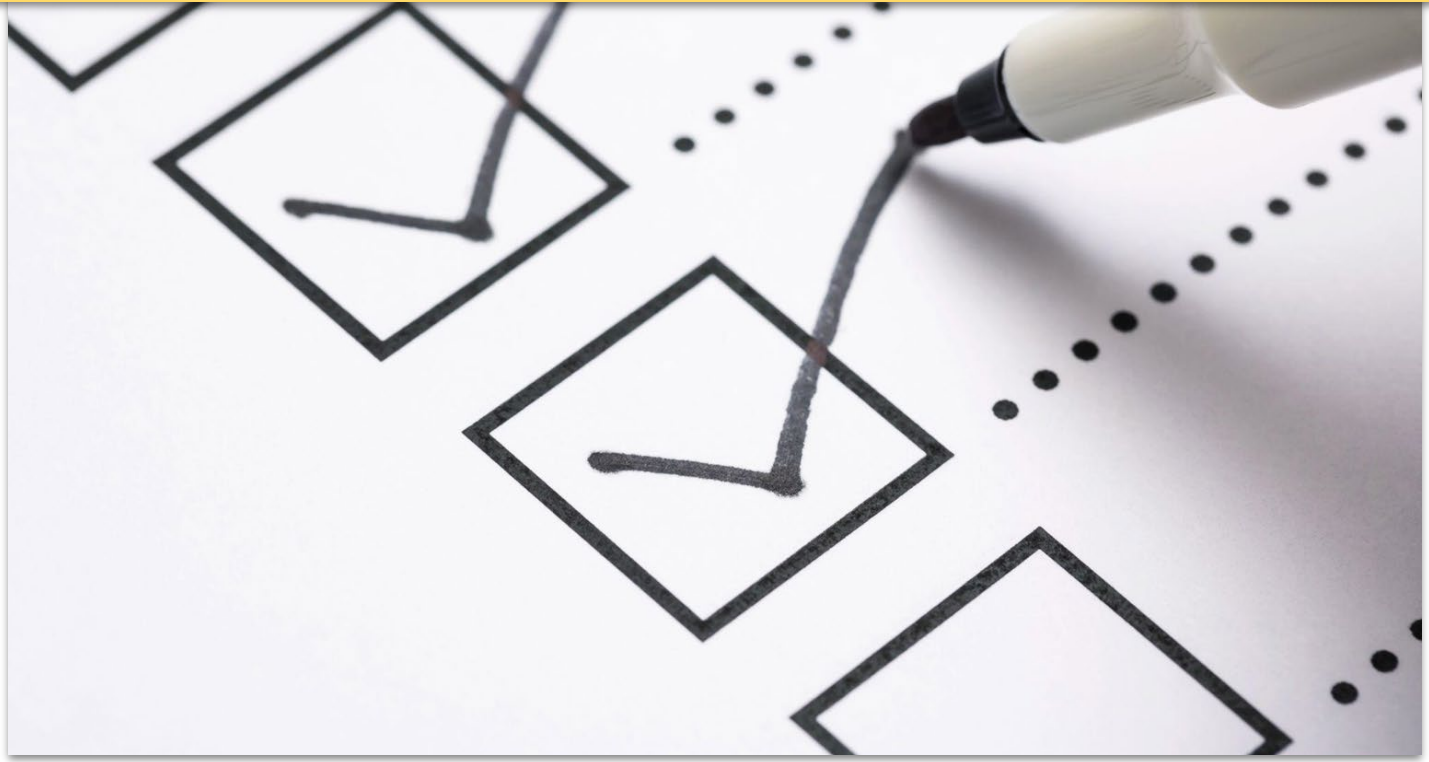
You will leave our session today with an action plan, techniques, and materials in order to successfully teach sight reading in your classroom.

BIRKS - SCORE STUDY PERIOD

BREATH
INHALE
RHYTHM
KEY
SLOW

1. What is the time signature/meter?
2. What beat do you start on?
3. What is the key signature?
4. What is “DO” and where is “DO”?
5. Choose a SLOW tempo

ELEMENTS OF THE SIGHT READING INSTRUCTION PERIOD



03

ONE PLAN OF ATTACK

1. Bring your written plan of attack into the sight reading room!
2. After you are given the chord - sing the scale on solfege syllables
3. Sing DO-MI-SOL-DO-SOL-MI-DO
4. Perform the rhythm **OUT LOUD** while singing "DO" on every pitch. Keep "DO" in your mind at all times.
5. Make sure to make note of any challenging rhythms.
6. What solfege syllable does each voice part start on?
7. Speak the solfege **IN RHYTHM**.
8. Sing any challenging pitch combinations of intervals in the exercise. For example: DO-LA or DO-FA. NEW PROCEDURES. *"The students may sing the music, count, clap, tap rhythms, and/or chant using solfege syllables, numbers, or words during the instruction period. Students may also sing the scale and/or arpeggio of the key."*
9. Speak the solfege syllables and audiate the pitches in rhythm with proper dynamics and articulations.
10. Sing through the exercise and make note of any trouble spots.

ANOTHER PLAN OF ATTACK

Large Ensemble Assessment - Sight Reading Process - High School	
Former Guidelines	New Guidelines
1. Identify time signature, key, and starting solfege. Quickly discuss phrasing.	1. Identify time signature, key, and starting solfege. Discuss dynamics.
2. Give students 45 seconds to 1 minute to audiate rhythm/dynamics/solfege with hand signs. This can also be done out loud in sections.	
3. In head voice, **slowly** speak the solfege together. Assess and correct errors/improvements.	
4. Receive the tonic chord and have students sing the scale up to the highest soprano or tenor pitch (whichever is highest) and lowest alto or bass pitch (whichever is lower). Then have students sing the arpeggio (Do-Mi-So-DO-So-Mi-Do-so-Do)	
5. Give students 45 seconds to 1 minute to audiate through the exercise. Ask for eye contact when they are done. Audiate together in time.	5. Give students 45 seconds to 1 minute to audiate through the exercise. Ask for eye contact when they are done.
6. At the 6 minute mark, stop the clock and **slowly** sing the exercise once with the piano.	6. Students **slowly** sing through the exercise in sections. Ensemble **slowly** sings the exercise together.
7. Resume the clock. Assess any errors. Use audiation to help students with difficult intervals.	7. Assess errors. Sing difficult/missed intervals/rhythms. Sing any 4 measures twice with piano (last resort).
8. As needed, audiate through the exercise until students are confident.	8. As needed, sing through the exercise and make necessary improvements until students feel confident.
9. When the ensemble feels confident and ready, sing for final assessment.	

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS: PART 1

Options you can add with new rules and guidelines:

- After audiating, have students sing. This can be done in sections, all together. The clock will not stop.
- Fix errors. Instead of audiating tricky intervals, students can SING them!
- Piano may play up to 4 measures with students singing two times during instruction. Use this as a last resort.
- To audiate or not? YES!! “We can sing, why should we audiate?” Student independence.
- Sing through as many times as needed.
- You can request the tonic chord 5 times. Only request it if necessary.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS: PART 2

Other considerations:

- Let the students demonstrate as much knowledge as possible. Speak as little as possible.
- Have a game plan…let your ensemble decide what works best for them. Autonomy!
- Make sure students audiate or sing after singing the scale/arpeggio. (I didn't do that my first year)
- Use your process (or parts of your process) when teaching repertoire to build their skills. (This is why we teach sight reading)
- Conducting - let your conducting guide and assist them.
- Let the students decide if they need to make more corrections or when they are ready to sing for their final assessment.

QUICK HINTS FOR TIMES OF TROUBLE

04

1. If you feel like you can't succeed… perform only rhythm OR pitches.

1. Go SLOW!

1. Remember find all of the "DOs" and sing them whenever they appear even if you miss other pitches.

1. Perform and **KEEP GOING! DO NOT STOP!**

ESSENTIAL CONCEPTS

05

SKILLS TO TEACH FOR SUCCESS

1. Rhythm
2. Key Signatures
3. Meter
4. Use a system: solfege or numbers
5. Kodály Hand Signs - kinesthetic movement makes learning stick
6. Isolate rhythm from pitch
7. Musical symbols and their meaning - focus efforts on the criteria listed in the Louisiana Vocal Sight Reading Criteria for Large Ensemble document

Schedule time for sight reading practice EVERY DAY!

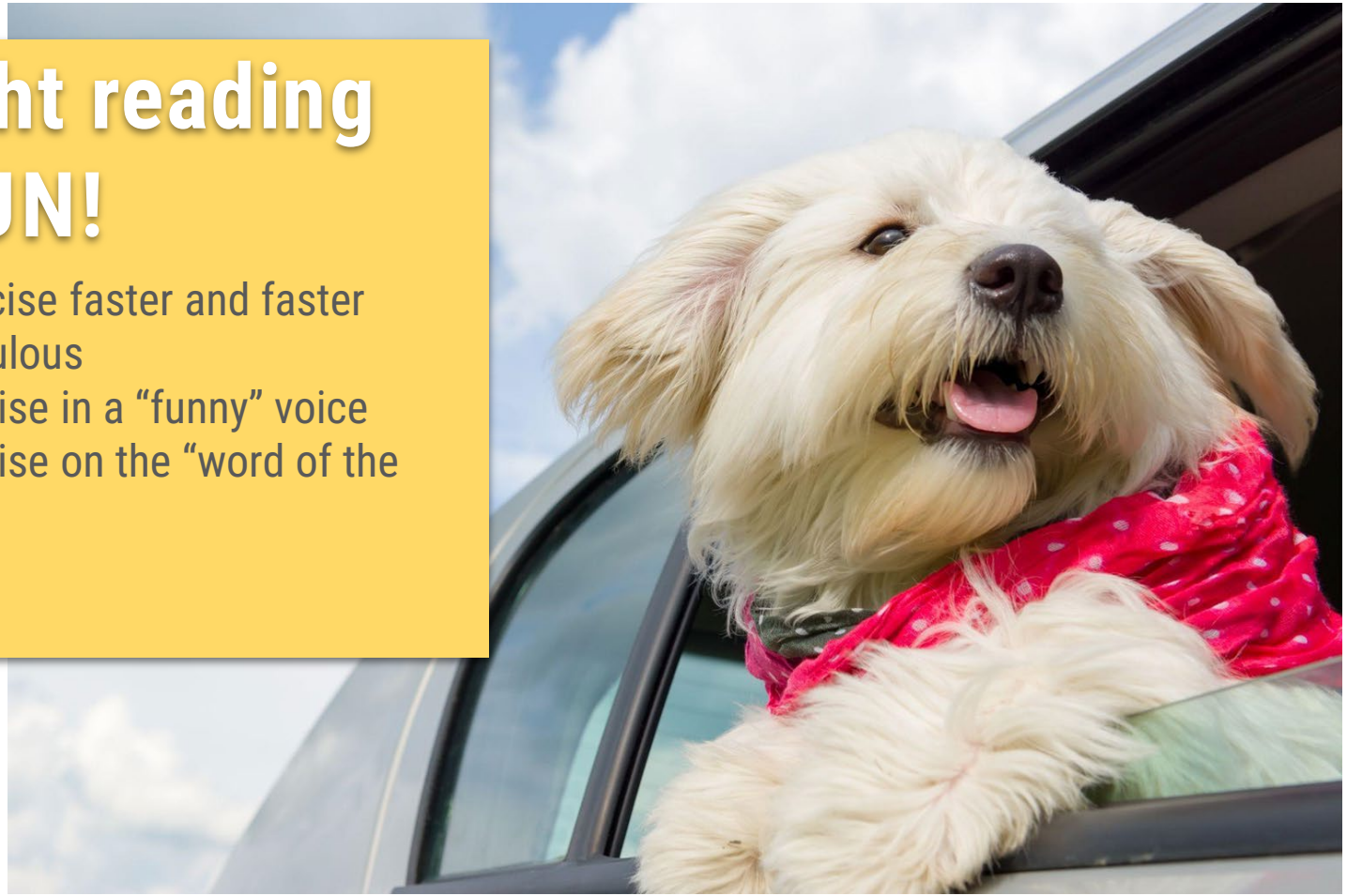
Start at the beginning of the school year using exercises or repertoire.

EVERYDAY PRACTICE

- Rhythm Bell Ringers
- Daily Sight Reading Challenge
- Previous LMEA Examples (one-two months before assessment)
  - Sight Reading Factory - LMEA criteria
- All-State Sight Reading Practice

Make sight reading FUN!

- Take the exercise faster and faster until it is ridiculous
- Sing the exercise in a “funny” voice
- Sing the exercise on the “word of the day”
- Incentivize



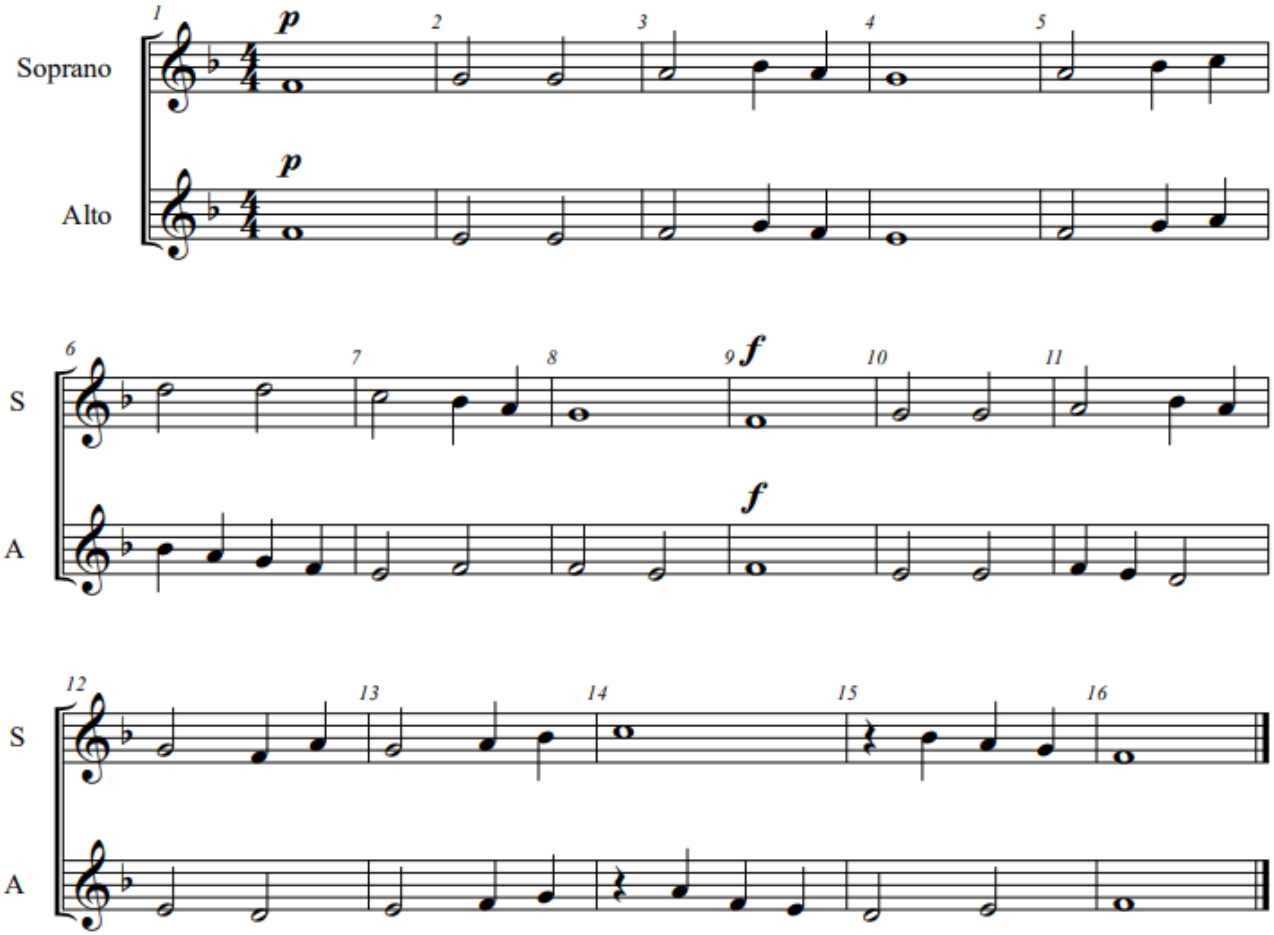
RESOURCES

1. Sight Reading Success
2. Rhythm Workshop
3. Florida Music Educators Association All State Sight Reading Prep
4. MSVMA District Festival Sight Reading Packet
5. Other Sight Reading Resources
6. Have suggestions? Fill out this form

EXAMPLES

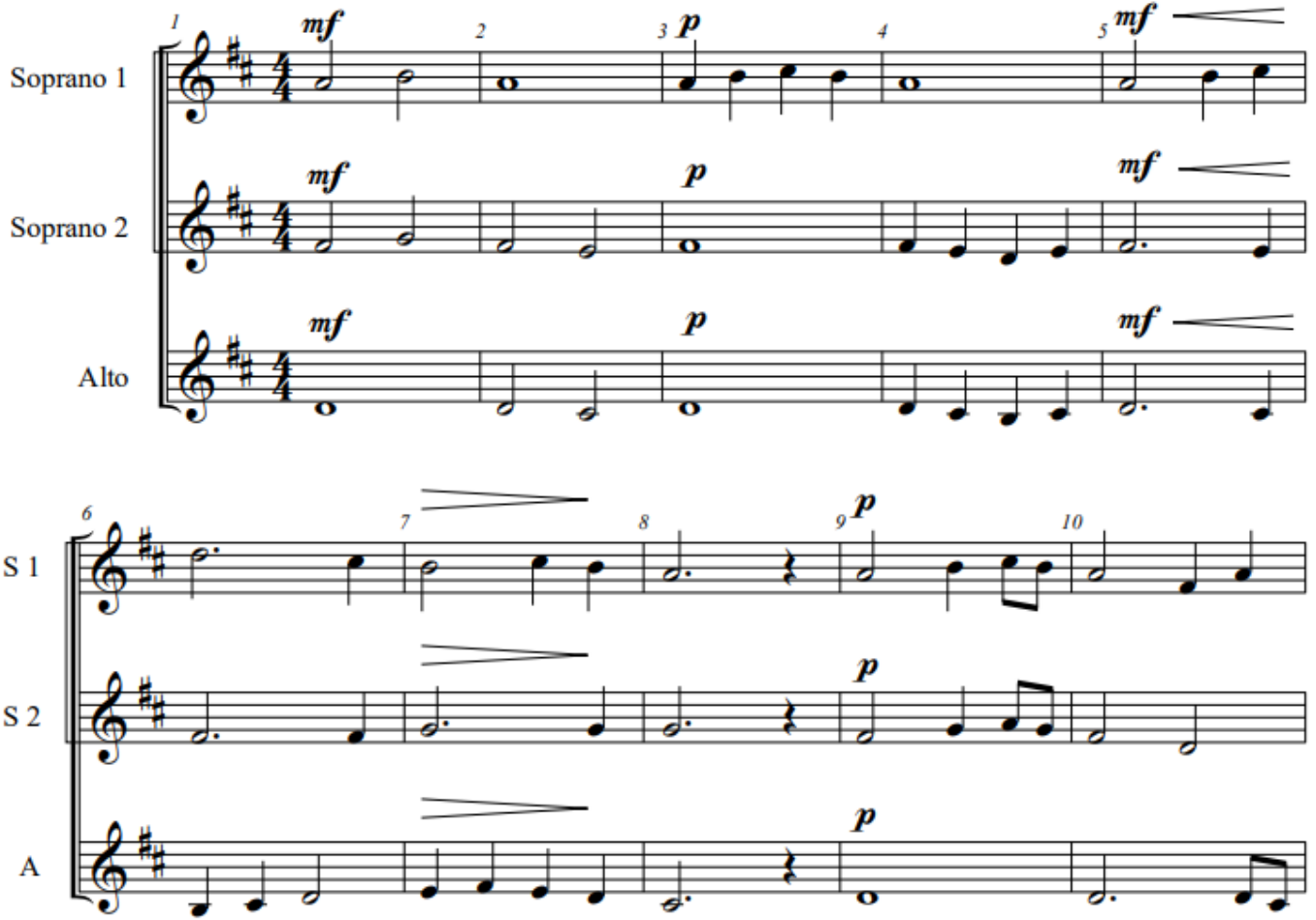
Middle School Level 3A

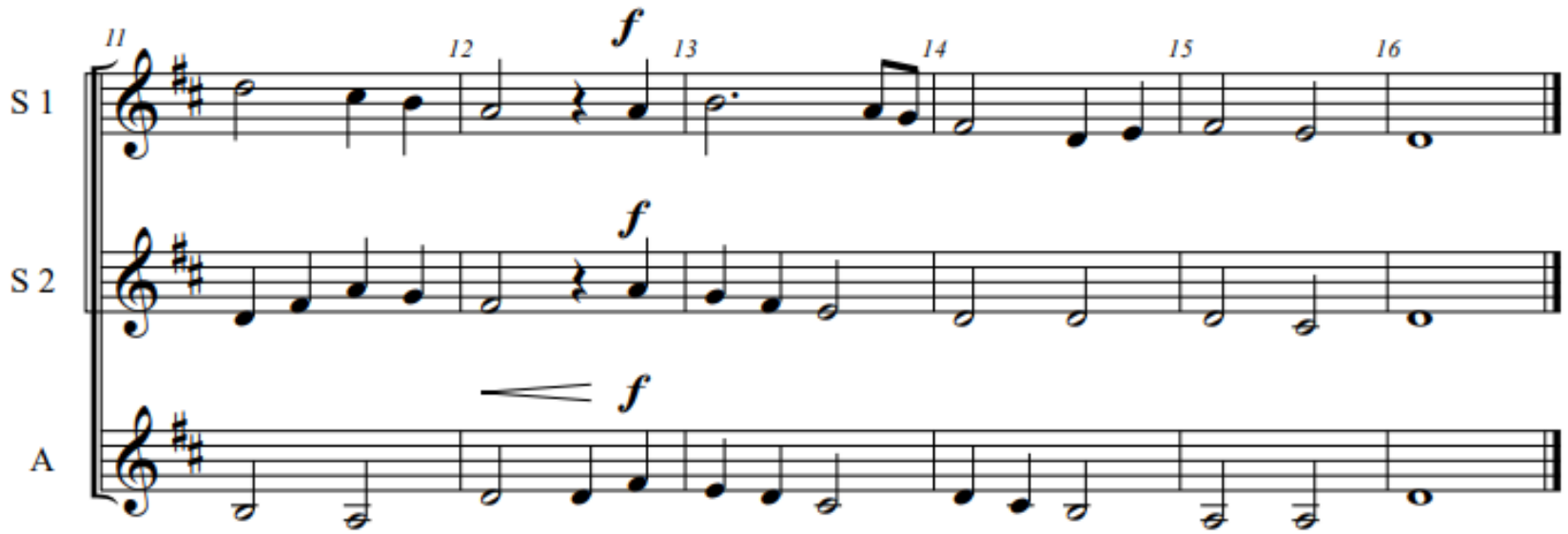
2-part Example



High School Level 3

SSA Example

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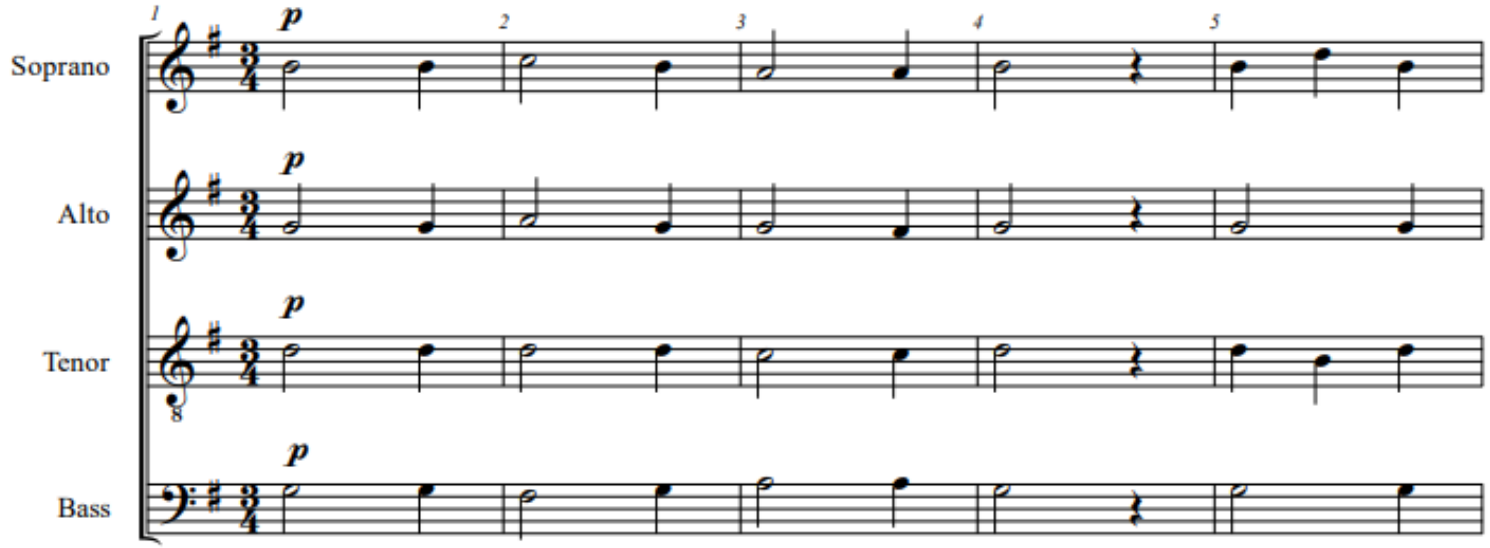
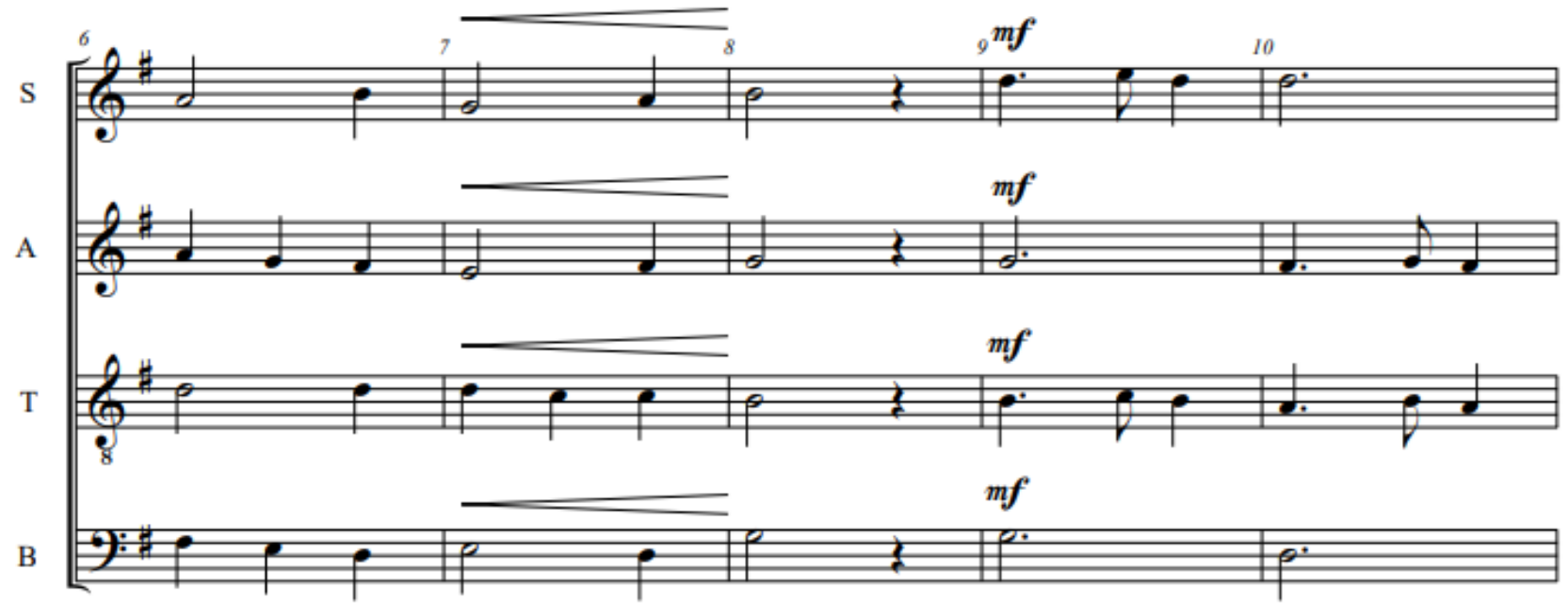
High School Level 3

SATB Example

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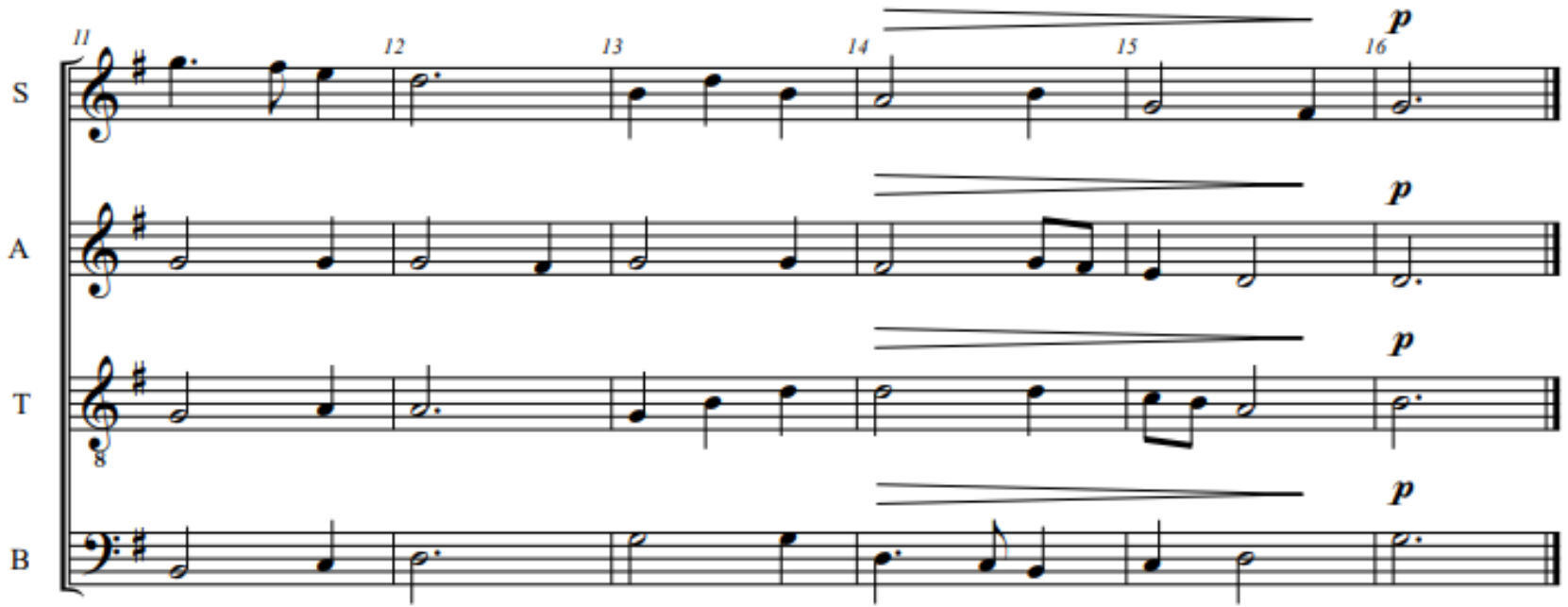
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Contact us for Questions:

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