



# PREPARING FOR LARGE ENSEMBLE ASSESSMENT:

*A Whole New World*

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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



A man with a beard and glasses, wearing a dark suit, is shown in profile, looking to the left with his hand on his chin in a thoughtful pose. Behind his head, a complex system of interlocking gears is visible, rendered in a sketchy, hand-drawn style. The background is a textured, light gray surface.

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

**B**REATH

**I**NHALE

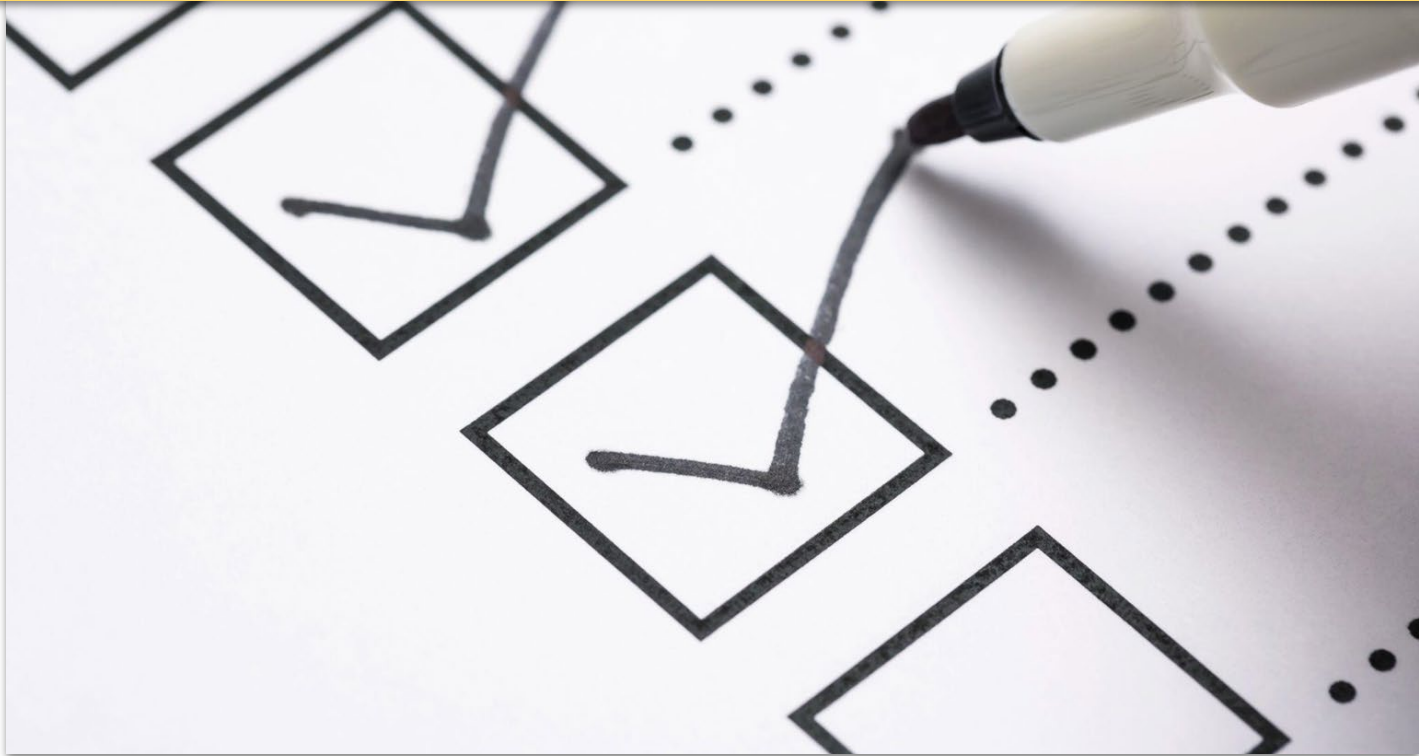
**R**HYTHM

**K**EY

**S**LOW

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. <b>Discuss dynamics.</b>
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, <b>slowly</b> 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. <b>Audiate together in time.</b>	5. Give students 45 seconds to 1 minute to audiate through the exercise. Ask for eye contact when they are done.
6. <b>At the 6 minute mark, stop the clock</b> and <b>slowly</b> sing the exercise once with the piano.	6. Students <b>slowly</b> sing through the exercise in sections. Ensemble <b>slowly</b> sings the exercise together.
7. Resume the clock. Assess any errors. <b>Use audiation</b> to help students with difficult intervals.	7. Assess errors. <b>Sing difficult/missed intervals/rhythms. Sing any 4 measures twice with piano (last resort).</b>
8. As needed, audiate through the exercise until students are confident.	8. As needed, <b>sing</b> 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.

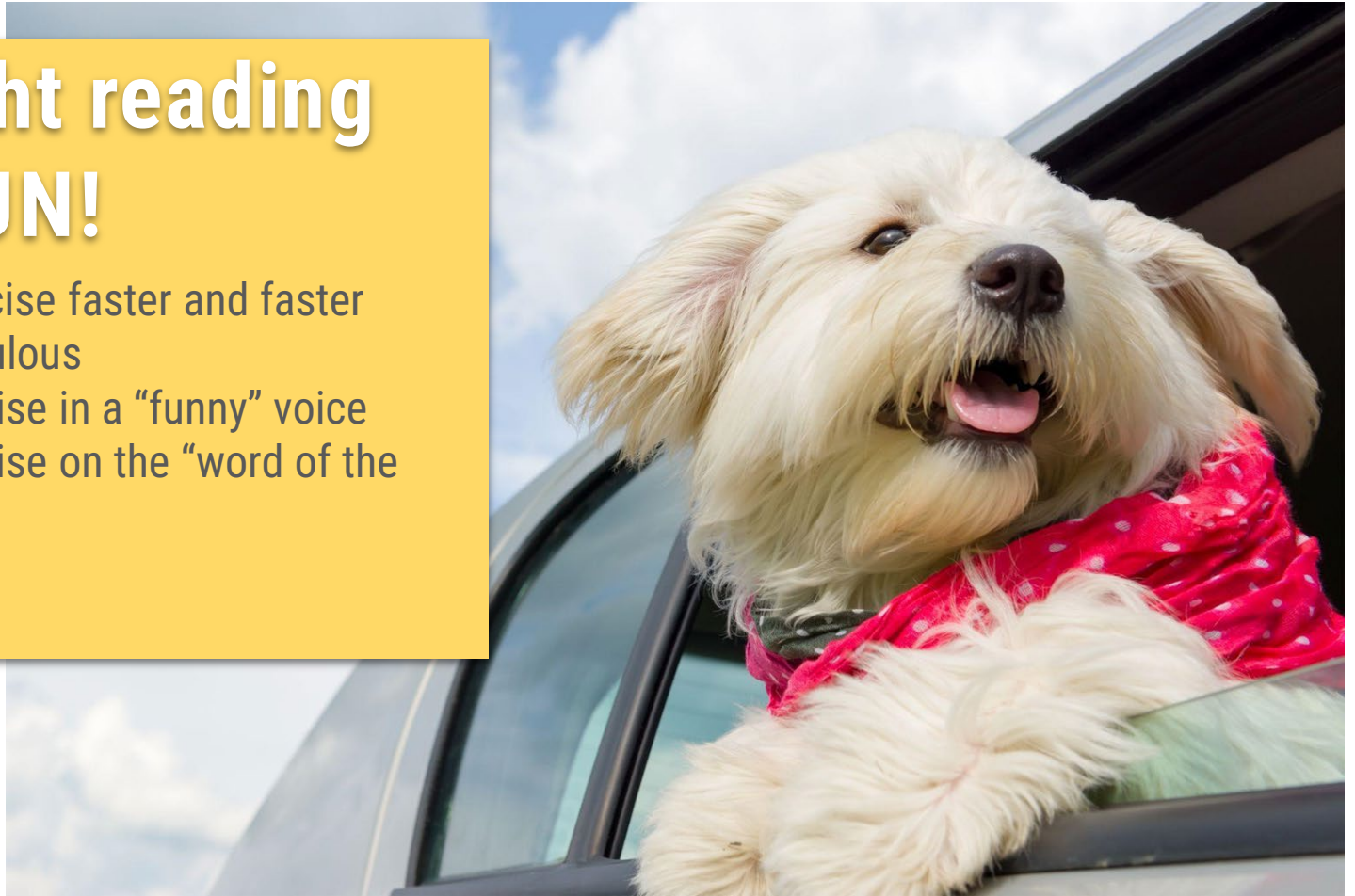


# EVERYDAY PRACTICE

- 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



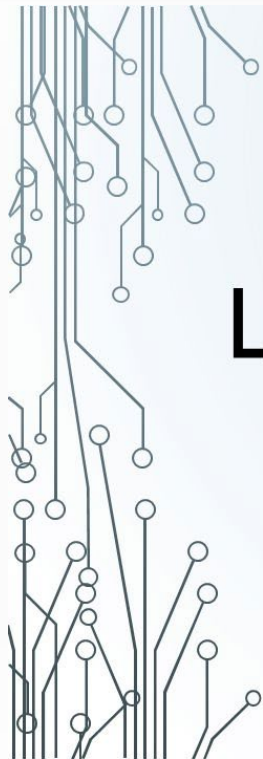
# RESOURCES

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

**LETS GIVE IT A TRY**



# Middle School Level 3A

## 2-part Example

Soprano

Alto

Measures 1-5 of a 2-part musical example. The Soprano part begins with a whole note G4 (measure 1), followed by quarter notes A4 (measure 2), B4 (measure 3), C5 (measure 4), and B4 (measure 5). The Alto part begins with a whole note F4 (measure 1), followed by quarter notes G4 (measure 2), A4 (measure 3), B4 (measure 4), and C5 (measure 5). Both parts are in 4/4 time with a key signature of one flat (Bb). Dynamics include piano (*p*) at the start of each line.

S

A

Measures 6-11 of the musical score. The Soprano part (S) continues with quarter notes D5 (measure 6), E5 (measure 7), F5 (measure 8), and G5 (measure 9), followed by a whole note F5 (measure 10) and a quarter note E5 (measure 11). The Alto part (A) continues with quarter notes D4 (measure 6), E4 (measure 7), F4 (measure 8), and G4 (measure 9), followed by a whole note F4 (measure 10) and a quarter note E4 (measure 11). Dynamics include forte (*f*) at the start of measure 9 for both parts.

S

A

Measures 12-16 of the musical score. The Soprano part (S) continues with quarter notes A4 (measure 12), B4 (measure 13), C5 (measure 14), and B4 (measure 15), followed by a whole note A4 (measure 16). The Alto part (A) continues with quarter notes G4 (measure 12), F4 (measure 13), E4 (measure 14), and D4 (measure 15), followed by a whole note C4 (measure 16). The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of measure 16.

# High School Level 3

## SSA Example

Measures 1-5 of the SSA example. The score is for Soprano 1, Soprano 2, and Alto. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The dynamics are marked *mf* (mezzo-forte) and *p* (piano). The Soprano 1 part has a crescendo from measure 1 to 5. The Soprano 2 and Alto parts have a crescendo from measure 1 to 3, then a piano (*p*) section in measure 4, and a crescendo back to *mf* in measure 5.

Soprano 1

Soprano 2

Alto

Measures 6-10 of the SSA example. The score is for Soprano 1 (S 1), Soprano 2 (S 2), and Alto (A). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The dynamics are marked *p* (piano). The Soprano 1 part has a crescendo from measure 6 to 8, then a piano (*p*) section in measure 9, and a crescendo back to *mf* in measure 10. The Soprano 2 and Alto parts have a crescendo from measure 6 to 8, then a piano (*p*) section in measure 9, and a crescendo back to *mf* in measure 10.

S 1

S 2

A

11

S 1

12

*f*

13

14

15

16

S 2

*f*

A

*f*

Detailed description: This musical score is for three voices: Soprano 1 (S 1), Soprano 2 (S 2), and Alto (A). The key signature is D major (two sharps). The score covers measures 11 through 16. Soprano 1 begins in measure 11 with a half note D5, followed by E5 and F#5 in measure 12, then a quarter rest in measure 13. In measure 14, it starts with a half note G5, followed by F#5, E5, and D5 in measures 15 and 16. Soprano 2 enters in measure 11 with a half note D5, followed by E5 and F#5 in measure 12, then a quarter rest in measure 13. In measure 14, it starts with a half note G5, followed by F#5, E5, and D5 in measures 15 and 16. The Alto part begins in measure 11 with a half note D4, followed by E4 and F#4 in measure 12, then a quarter rest in measure 13. In measure 14, it starts with a half note G4, followed by F#4, E4, and D4 in measures 15 and 16. Dynamics include a forte (*f*) marking for S 1 in measure 13 and for S 2 in measure 14. A crescendo hairpin and a forte (*f*) marking are present for the Alto part in measure 13.

# High School Level 3

## SATB Example

A musical score for SATB (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) in 3/4 time, key of D major. The score consists of four staves, each with a vocal line. The Soprano staff starts with a first ending bracket over measures 1-5. The Alto, Tenor, and Bass staves follow the same melodic line. The music is marked *p* (piano). The Soprano staff has a first ending bracket over measures 1-5. The Alto, Tenor, and Bass staves follow the same melodic line. The music is marked *p* (piano).

**Soprano**

**Alto**

**Tenor**

**Bass**

6 7 8 9 *mf* 10

S

A

T

8

B

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

This musical score is for four voices: Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The Soprano part begins at measure 6 with a half note G4, followed by a half note A4 in measure 7, and a half note B4 in measure 8. In measure 9, there is a whole rest, and in measure 10, a half note C5. The Alto part begins at measure 6 with a half note G4, followed by a half note A4 in measure 7, and a half note B4 in measure 8. In measure 9, there is a whole rest, and in measure 10, a half note C5. The Tenor part begins at measure 6 with a half note G3, followed by a half note A3 in measure 7, and a half note B3 in measure 8. In measure 9, there is a whole rest, and in measure 10, a half note C4. The Bass part begins at measure 6 with a half note G2, followed by a half note A2 in measure 7, and a half note B2 in measure 8. In measure 9, there is a whole rest, and in measure 10, a half note C3. Dynamics include *mf* (mezzo-forte) for the Soprano, Alto, and Tenor parts in measures 9 and 10. Crescendos are marked with a wedge symbol above the staff for measures 7 and 8 of each part.

11 12 13 14 15 16 *p*

S

A

T 8 *p*

B *p*

Detailed description: This musical score is for four voices: Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B). The music is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. Measures 11 through 16 are shown. The Soprano part begins in measure 11 with a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5 in measures 12-14, and ends with a half note G4 in measure 16. The Alto part begins in measure 14 with a half note G3, followed by quarter notes A3, B3, and C4 in measures 15-16, ending with a half note G3. The Tenor part begins in measure 11 with a half note G3, followed by quarter notes A3, B3, and C4 in measures 12-14, and ends with a half note G3 in measure 16. The Bass part begins in measure 11 with a half note G2, followed by quarter notes A2, B2, and C3 in measures 12-14, and ends with a half note G2 in measure 16. All parts conclude with a piano (*p*) dynamic marking in measure 16. A rehearsal mark '8' is placed below the Tenor staff at the beginning of measure 11.

# ACCESS TO THIS PRESENTATION



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