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MUSE 356/ Choral Methods

Citation

Article #2-Choral Curriculum as it Affects Performance at the Secondary Level
Ruth H.S. Whitlock
October 1991

Summary

This article focused on the basic elements of secondary choral curriculum, specifically vocal technique, choral technique, audiation/music reading, vocabulary/music fundamentals/basic theory, and style and history. This author of this article explains the importance of having a foundation for teaching music, and expressing to those school systems the importance of keeping music in students' lives. The author stresses that performance and curriculum are interrelated, and that giving attention to one will improve the other one. Relating performance and curriculum to teacher skills and knowledge and the values of these things to the students are also greatly expressed in this article. The sequencing of curriculum and the elements that are highlighted show the exact foundation upon which music classrooms should work and plan lessons. All of these elements should be recognized and perfected for students to become musically literate individuals. This article gave examples from contest in the state of Texas with choirs who received high rankings for their wonderful sound and abilities, as well as sight-reading skills. Seeing how many of the ensembles earn different rankings is interesting because some of them perform in a variety of ways, articulating their obvious strengths and weaknesses. One could clearly see that the author intended to show how important comprehensive musicianship is to students and teachers when performing for contest. Like the author sums up, without an overall foundation and understanding of curriculum, successful performances and music making will not happen.

Discussion

When thinking about applying this into my classroom in the future, by first impression is to make sure that performance is not the center of the curriculum. From what I read and interpreted in this article was that performance couldn't be attainable without curriculum that is focused on developing musically literate students. I, myself, as a teacher need to have the skills and knowledge to teach my students all of the elements and concepts involved in music, and be a musician as well. I plan on using these ideas of the foundation of music curriculum and furthering students musical abilities in my classroom in the future, making sure my students are well prepared starting with the basics and up to the overall essence of making music. The elements explained in this article to succeed in choral curriculum (repertoire, vocal technique, choral technique, audiation/music reading, music vocabulary/fundamentals, style awareness, specified elements of music, expressive elements of music, period history, composers, and performance practices) are clearly expressed and a great tool for all teachers to know.