2015

Honors Project

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Overview

For my honors project, I had the pleasure of teaching, performing, and conducting two pieces of music (one for each scheduled choir concert) with two different small groups within Parkland’s Chamber Choir.
For the Longest Time

For our first concert, our repertoire consisted of songs starting from the 1940s and going until the 1990s.

The piece I was in charge of was For The Longest Time, written and performed by Billy Joel.
Rehearsals

I led rehearsals twice a week outside of class with our small group, consisting of 6 people.

I made lesson plans for each rehearsal, planning what I wanted to accomplish in order to make progress.
Lesson Plan

Objective: understand staggered entrances (rhythm).

1. Warm ups
   a. Maj. triad followed by descending scale. (dó-mi, do-sol, do-do, ti, la, sol, etc.)
   b. Ee – eh – ah – oh – oo (Sol until "oo", then descend to Do)
   c. Staggered entrances on major triad. Work on staying on top of the pitch.

2. Measure 25
   a. Everyone sing all three notes in each chord to better understand the full texture and sound of the chord that is supposed to be created.
   b. Start again at 25. Two measures at a time; roll each chord (everyone on their own part). Make sure vowels really match and we are on top of the pitch before moving on to next chord.
   c. At tempo, start again going until measure 31.

3. Measure 32
   a. At measure 32, fix the chord on beats 3 and 4. Including tenor, have each part hold each chords in m. 32.
   b. Hold each chord in measure 32. Out of tempo.
   c. Go back a measure and sing through m 32 at tempo.
   d. Go back further to m28, singing through 32.

4. Sing from measure 25 through 32.

5. Sing from beginning.
   a. Make sure Kyle knows to watch me for beginning tempo.
Lesson Plan (cont.)

I would meet with my instructor, Miranda Rowland after every few rehearsals and discuss progress of the group and ways I could improve. She reviewed my lesson plans, gave me instruction on how to improve them, and helped me apply them to our rehearsal.
Lesson Plan (cont.)

After a few meetings with my instructor, my lesson plans improved and in turn my rehearsals became more productive.

September 11, 2015
The Longest Time

Objective: Learn up to measure 13 without help from the piano.

Materials needed: music, pencil. One person on piano. From left to right, arranged Sopranos, Altos, Guys.

1. Warm ups:
   a. Do - re - mi - fa - sol. Sol - fa - mi - re - do. (etc)
   c. Nee- yoo. (descending)
2. Sight read through the whole song.
3. Go back and listen to Kirby Shaw recording of the song, following along.
4. From the beginning with everyone except for Tenor (have tenor hum his part) at a slower tempo.
   a. Go over Sop and Baritone together without alto. Have alto hum part, then add text when baritone and soprano are solid together.
   b. Continue through the next 2 pages.
5. Especially pay attention to the page turn (from pg 1 – 2)
   a. Have everyone hold downbeat of measure 5 to make sure notes are accurate.
   b. ^^^ if necessary, do this a couple times.
6. Count 8th notes on pages 3 and 4. Make sure everyone is feeling the same 8th note beat.
7. Once we get to measure 13, go back and sing all the way through until 13 twice. (Take the repeat)
   a. First time spot pitches if needed.
   b. Second time with no help.
8. If needed go back to fix small problems.
   a. Mainly soprano/alto part on top of page two. (measure 6).
Performance Time

Parkland Chamber Singer’s first fall concert was October 3, 2015 held in the Harold and Jean Miner Theater.

For this piece, I made the decision to perform as part of the group instead of standing in front of them to conduct this piece because I felt it fit the character of the piece.

The following slide will show our final performance.
For The Longest Time
O Holy Night

For our second concert, our repertoire consisted of traditional Christmas carols as well as other pieces that fit the theme of our upcoming Christmas concert.

This time around, I chose to teach O Holy Night to a group of three ladies.
Lesson Plan

As with the first piece, I made lesson plans for every rehearsal, which were held twice a week outside of class.

This time, my instructor gave examples of lesson plans that she had made in the past to give me an idea of an effective layout. I used these to improve my plans.
Instructor’s Lesson Plan

Name: Miranda Rowland  Date: October 11, 2012
Grade: 6th Grade Choir  Title: Soda Pop Cans, score marking, & small group

Musical Focus: Composers to emphasize:
- Playing instruments
- Sight singing
- Memory

Materials/Choral setup:
- Soda Pop Cans (new song, not the item; see handout)
- Highlights:
  - Desserts, sleeper coaters, breathing exercises

Objectives:
- Ability to sing and describe rondo form
- Understanding of key differences between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside

Learning Goal:
- I, II, III, IV
- Why What How If

Preparation:
- In previous classes, students have been working with Dessert Evee. This lesson will be an assessment of whether not we do, in fact, know Dessert Evee. Students have also been learning how to deal with holding an entire score, Soda Cans will be used as a sequel to subsequent small group activities.

Sequence:
- First half 20 minutes:
  1. Warm up
  2. Easter with me (in F major, sing do, sol, fa, mi, fa, sol, do, la, sol, fa mi)
  3. Rondell after me (in F major, sing do, sol, fa, mi, fa, sol, do, la, sol, fa, mi)
  4. Rondell after me (in F major, sing do, sol, fa, mi, fa, sol, do, la, sol, fa, mi)
  5. Easter after me (in D major, sing do, sol, fa, mi, fa, sol, do, la, sol, fa, mi)
  6. Take a look in your folders and take out Soda Pop Cans
  7. How many sections are there? What is a section?
  8. Sing through while holding music, follow along, name the place that I stop singing, listen, measure
  9. Sing through part I
  10. Take our highlights: highlight the parts where parts 2 & 4 are singing the same things; highlight in another color where they are different
  11. After you are finished, you can begin to write in the staging to part I.

Second half 20–25 minutes:
- Notice the letter in the top right corner of Soda Pop Cans; those letters represent the group that you will be in for a few minutes
- Discuss rondeau form: ARCADABABA; our A section will always be Dessert Evee.
- Make students aware of the signal to stop what they are doing.
- Each group will be equipped with instruction cards.
- Before we move to our groups, a volunteer from each section, BCDE, will read the instructions for their group.
- When we move to our groups, students will need to understand what they are doing.
- Group B: Cabasse, Dessert, Dimbale, Capter, cut off one note.
- Group C: Bocca, latches, Giocchiniy; in down stage right.
- Group D: Body percussion on up stage right.
- Group E: Found sounds (don Juan stage left).
- We will only have time to create two or three times.

Closing Activity: consolidation of lesson

Notes/Extension:
- Classroom management will be key to ensure smooth transitions from one activity to the next.
- Make sure the students are aware of the signal for when to pay attention and when to explore their instruments.
Rehearsal videos

For this piece, I decided to conduct this group instead of performing the piece along side them.

Because of my lack of experience in conducting, my instructor allowed class time to help my improve my techniques.

The following slide shows a video of one of my first rehearsals with my instructor.
Rehearsal Video 1
Rehearsals (cont.)

After this rehearsal, we had a few more similar to the one in the video. This helped me to have better control of my hands in general when conducting and gave me better techniques to use.
Performance Time (part 2)

Parkland Chamber Singer’s second concert was held on December 12, 2015 at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Urbana, IL.

As mentioned earlier, I conducted this piece instead of performing with them.

The following slide will show the final performance.
O Holy Night
Conclusion

- Overall, this project was very beneficial to me.
- Through the first song, I learned better planning skills, how to apply those plans, and how to use problem solving methods to improve the overall sound of the piece.
- Through the second song, I was able to continue practicing what I had already learned in the way of teaching the piece, and I learned new conducting techniques.
- Overall, the skills I gained through this project will help my grow on my path to becoming a music educator and I look forward to learning more next semester.