

THE SIGHT-SINGER

A Practical Sight-Singing Course

for Unison or Two-Part Treble Voices

Volume I

by AUDREY SNYDER

- Specially designed for upper elementary school and middle school although effective in any treble choir setting*
- Promotes quick comprehension and solid sight-singing results in only a few minutes per rehearsal
- Assumes no prior music reading experience on the part of students
- Concepts are carefully organized and introduced logically and sequentially
- Over 200 musically interesting unison and two-part treble exercises included, sequentially introduced, some with text
- Minimum of preparation time needed
- Options are included to promote high motivation and success for all singers

*ALSO AVAILABLE:
Two-Part Mixed/Three-Part Mixed voicing
for middle school level and above

ART: TIM GOSS
COVER DESIGN: LISA GREENE

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FROM THE AUTHOR

I believe in sight-singing. My belief originates from my students who have been among my greatest teachers. In them I have seen the joy of music literacy expressed in positive self-esteem, confidence, satisfaction and the true sense of accomplishment that comes from learning a wonderful skill that will last a lifetime. At its basic essence, the skill of reading music allows singers on their own to reproduce very efficiently music which someone else has previously written. Simply put, it is a tool which we all may use to enrich our lives through music.

Beyond the individual advantages, the benefits for the choral director are significant. Teachers know that, although rote learning works, it certainly has its limitations. The skill of sight-singing dissolves those limitations and opens doors to music which students would not otherwise have the opportunity to experience. Students who sight-sing enjoy accepting the challenge and responsibility of learning new music efficiently and well. Less time is then spent on memorizing parts note for note and more time is spent on making music.

This course has been designed to train student singers to read and sing music on sight. My goal has been to provide a solidly structured, simple and flexible method which not only teaches students to sight-sing, but is fun at the same time. Toward this end, individual concepts are introduced sequentially and students are given ample opportunity to practice them. I have attempted to provide exercises which are musically varied and interesting. The optional accompaniment cassette further provides wide variety in musical style, interpretation and instrumentation. It is very valuable as a motivator. This is a hands-on, practical course which largely focuses on doing. It is not intended to be a music theory course. Formal terminology and complex concepts are kept to a minimum at the outset. For those teachers who wish to use them, many options have been provided to assist students' internalization of concepts, to provide enrichment and to increase students' motivation.

In its fullest aspect, music is to be both individually enjoyed and shared with others. It is my hope that this course will be of assistance to you in helping your students develop a lifetime participation in and love of music.



Audrey Snyder

PRODUCTS AVAILABLE

for Unison/Two-Part Treble Voices, Volume I

Teacher Edition (SVB00103) contains 1 set of Key Cards



Student Edition (SVB00103S)

Accompaniment Cassettes (SVB00103T)  

for Two-Part Mixed/Three-Part Mixed Voices, Volume I



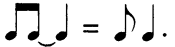
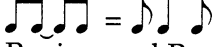


Teacher Edition (SVB00102) contains 1 set of Key Cards

Student Edition (SVB00102S)

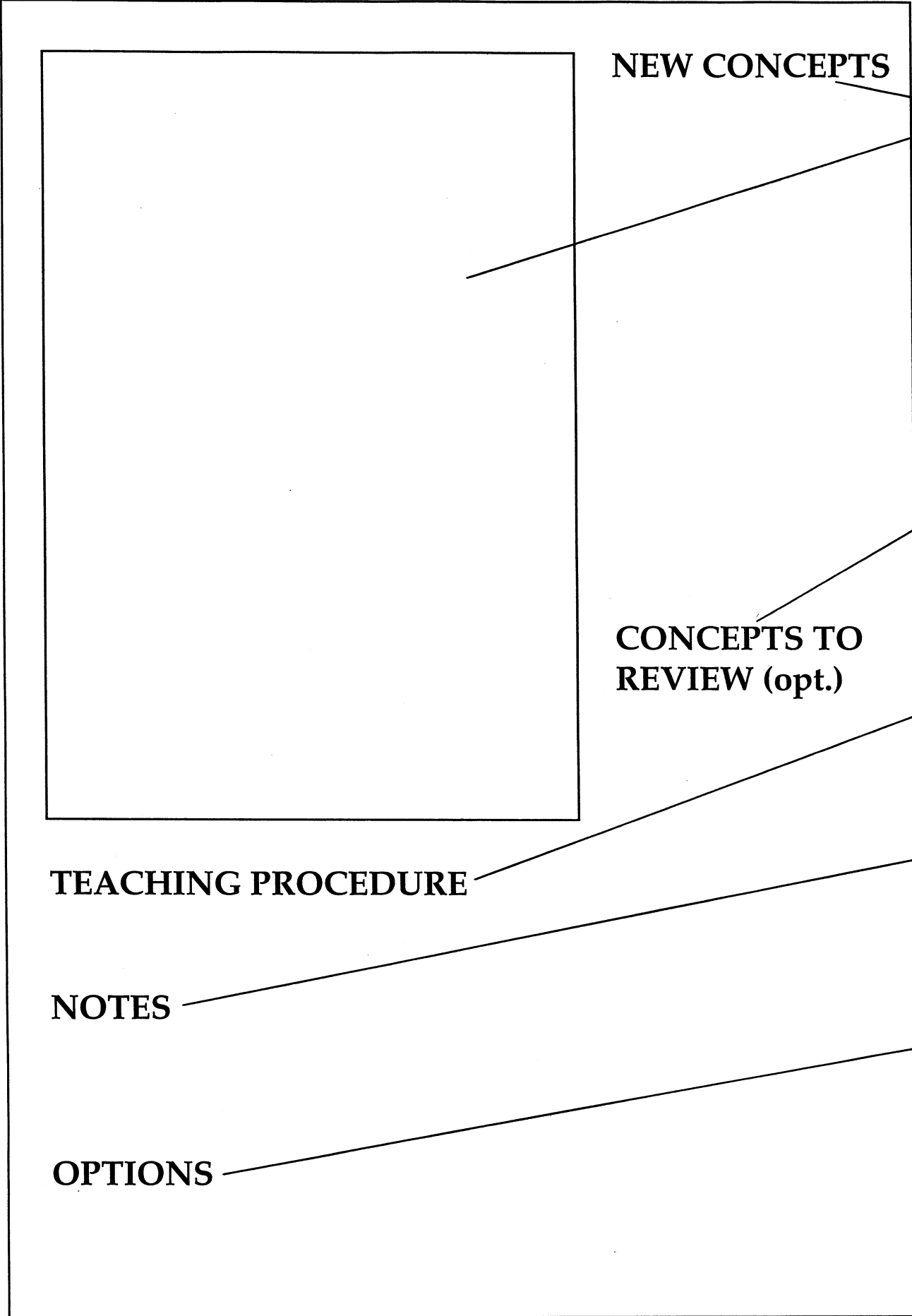
Accompaniment Cassettes (SVB00102T)  

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TEACHER EDITION OUTLINED



• PAGE FROM STUDENT EDITION

• NEW CONCEPTS

Included here are all of the new concepts, listed sequentially, which are introduced on the specific Student Edition page.

• CONCEPTS TO REVIEW

Concepts which may optionally require isolated review are included here: 1) Those concepts which have been most recently introduced, 2) Those concepts which have not been included for several pages of exercises, and/or 3) Those concepts which are inherently more difficult to master and therefore require more review and practice. Isolate and review these concepts as needed.

• TEACHING PROCEDURE


Included here is the method by which the teacher may systematically introduce the new concepts and assist students in the process of learning to sight-sing.

• NOTES

Further explanations or examples are included here as they apply to the new concept or teaching procedure.

• OPTIONS

Optional teaching ideas and activities are included here for the purpose of 1) further enhancing students' grasp of concepts, 2) embellishment of concepts, and/or 3) sight-singing motivation. Options are also included on pages 48 and 49.

The tempos used on the Accompaniment Cassette  are included here. It is often best if students are able to sight-sing the given exercise *a cappella* at approximately the same tempo as listed for the exercise before the cassette is used.

KEYS TO SUCCESS

- *Foster a positive classroom atmosphere. Be positive and enthusiastic!*
- *Commit a regular block of time for sight-singing during the class period or rehearsal and do it every time the group meets.* It is not necessary to commit lots of valuable time each day to sight-singing. Somewhere between five and ten minutes per class period is all that is needed for steady, forward progress. The key is to be consistent. *Do sight-singing at every class period or rehearsal.* Sight-singing is often best done at or near the beginning of each class period when concentration is at its highest point. Some teachers tell their students, "We will spend no more than seven minutes on this today, provided that I have your undivided attention and honest, focused effort. Let's see how much we can accomplish!" Other teachers prefer to set an easily attainable goal and work to complete it regardless of the time spent. In this instance, it is important to be somewhat flexible. The overall goal is not the number of exercises completed in one day, but rather, steady, forward progress, excellent sight-singing and positive musical experiences.
- Obtain a Student Edition for each individual student if at all possible. Sight-singing requires serious concentration.
- Praise students when they do well. Focus on the positive. Be alert to student successes, however small, and be sincerely complimentary. Praise may be either individually directed or group directed. Most younger children enjoy individual praise, but many older students do not wish to be singled out. They will, however, respond very positively to praise that is directed to the whole group to which they belong.
- As often as possible, cross reference with students the concepts learned in this course with the other music and choral literature the students are learning.
- Read ahead in the course. Be prepared to introduce concepts briefly, succinctly and well. Isolate potential sight-singing challenges to review with students prior to sight-singing the exercise.
- Adapt the course to fit each teaching situation, choosing from the variety of options provided.
- Don't try to accomplish too much at one time. Sight-singing is not an easy skill to master; it will not be learned in one day. *Steady forward progress is the goal.*

- Encourage students to keep going when a mistake is made. Don't stop. Direct them to keep their eyes moving forward with the tempo and attempt to resume sight-singing to the end of the exercise.
- Encourage students to sight-sing each exercise as a group on their own, *a cappella*. At first, it may be necessary to sing the first few notes with them. However, it is important to stop singing with the students as soon as possible.
- Be alert to posture, breath support, intonation and tone quality.
- Encourage students to strive to sing each exercise correctly the *first* time.
- Move among the students in the class if possible when exercises are being sung to assess and help individual students.
- Encourage students to listen, *Listen, LISTEN!*
- Encourage students to read mentally the exercise and imagine what it will sound like *before* they sight-sing the exercise.
- Encourage students to sing out. Create a positive, helpful classroom atmosphere where mistakes are okay. Allow no one to laugh at another person's honest mistake. Encourage students to regard mistakes not as problems, but as challenges.
- When mistakes occur, allow students the opportunity to correct them on their own and repeat the exercise. If mistakes still occur, assist the students by isolating the mistakes, correcting them and then repeating the exercise. Foster a positive atmosphere where students become accustomed to helping each other readily. Encourage them to focus on mental preparation and concentration to minimize mistakes.
- Although entirely optional, use of the Accompaniment Cassette is highly motivational for students.
- Periodically review and practice previously learned exercises in the course.

NEW CONCEPTS

2

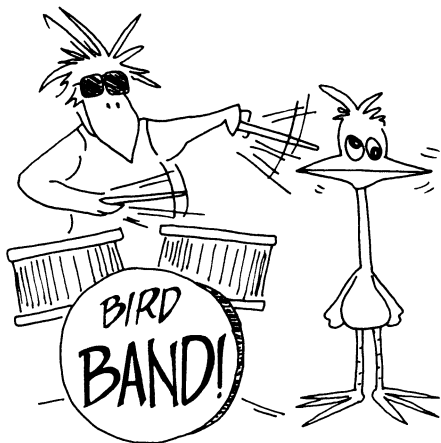
THE BEAT AND THE RHYTHM

In music the *beat* is the pulse which underlies the music that is heard. In most music it is important to keep the beat very steady.

Rhythm may move either *with* the beat, *faster* than the beat or *slower* than the beat.

♪ say "ta"

♪ say "ta-a"



Play the beat and speak these rhythms:

1. $\frac{4}{4}$ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ | ♪ - a ♪ - a ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ | ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ ||

ta ta ta ta | ta - a ta - a ta

2. $\frac{4}{4}$ ♪ ♪ ♪ | ♪ ♪ ♪ | ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ | ♪ ♪ ♪ ||

The speed with which the beat moves is called the *tempo*. Do these next exercises first at a slow tempo and then at a faster tempo.

Play the beat and speak these rhythms:

3. $\frac{4}{4}$ ♪ | ♪ ♪ ♪ | ♪ ♪ ♪ | ♪ ♪ ♪ | ♪ ♪ ♪ ||

4. $\frac{4}{4}$ ♪ ♪ ♪ ♪ | ♪ ♪ ♪ | ♪ ♪ ♪ | ♪ ♪ ♪ ||

Beat

Rhythm



Tempo

TEACHING PROCEDURE

With students, read and then briefly explain and demonstrate beat and rhythm (see notes).

Introduce ♪ and ♪ . Briefly aurally demonstrate these in relationship to the steady beat.

Exercises 1 and 2

Sequence (see notes*):

- Teacher establishes a slow, steady beat
- Students play the beat (see notes**)
- Students play the beat and speak the rhythm syllables in rhythm (repeat as necessary)
- (opt.) When perfected *a cappella*, then perform with accompaniment cassette

With students, read about and then briefly demonstrate several tempo variations.

Exercises 3 and 4

Sequence*:

- Teacher establishes a slow, steady beat
- Students play the beat**
- Students play the beat and speak the rhythm syllables in rhythm (repeat as necessary)
- Repeat at a faster tempo
- (opt.) When perfected *a cappella*, then perform with accompaniment cassette

NOTES

Throughout this course, introduce concepts as *quickly and succinctly* as possible.

The syllable "ta" (and related syllables) are used in this course to introduce rhythm reading. Since this is a sequential learning course, teachers who prefer to use other syllables or systems may do so simply by substituting their preference on the pages where new rhythms are introduced.

The teacher may aurally demonstrate playing the steady beat by making a steady sound such as snapping fingers, tapping a toe, patting a hard surface or lightly tapping a pencil on a music stand. Direct students to join in, each patting a hand on his or her lap. Keep the beat steady. The teacher (and students) continue to play the beat while the teacher verbally improvises a rhythm over it and directs the students to echo. Without stopping the beat, speak and echo several rhythmic examples. *Introduce the concept well, but be as brief as possible.* The emphasis of this course is placed on student sight-singing rather than on explaining sight-singing.

* It is important for students to develop good sight-singing habits at the outset. Follow this general sequence for rhythm reading throughout the course. At this time do not skip steps in the sequence. Later, when students' habits have been firmly established and they are self-confident rhythm readers, skips in the sequence may be made.

** The beat is the basic underlying element from which music comes and is the constant with which all rhythm interacts. It is so basic that it needs to become integral to each individual singer's sight-singing experience. *In this course it is highly recommended that each student play the beat during each sight-singing exercise* so that the beat is physically felt. In the beginning, direct each student to play the beat. Instruct students to pat a hand on their lap or tap their thigh with their hand so that the steady beat is both felt and heard. Later in the course, when playing the beat becomes routine, students may lightly tap their lap or thigh with hand or a finger so that the beat is physically felt even if it is not heard.

OPTIONS

Exercises 1-4 may be combined

Vary the dynamics and tempos

Use the Accompaniment Cassette :

For efficiency, before the rehearsal begins, set the Accompaniment Cassette tape in position at the beginning of the exercise(s) to be learned during that rehearsal. If several different groups are using this course, it may be best to use a separate Accompaniment Cassette for each, labeled with the name of the group so that at the end of the rehearsal, the tape will automatically be in position for the exercise(s) at the next rehearsal.

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| ■ Exercise 1 (♩ = ca. 72) | Exercise 3 (♩ = ca. 70) |
| Exercise 2 (♩ = ca. 76) | Exercise 4 (♩ = ca. 76) |