



Women's Glee

Choral Music Genres

May 21, 2020



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Objective/Learning Target:

The student will learn the elements of different genres of choral music.



Warm Up

On a separate piece of paper, answer the following:

1. Name all the genres of music that you know about
2. Name all the genres of CHORAL music that you know about
3. If you could pick one genre of music that you know about from your everyday life to transfer to choral music, which one would you pick and why?



Different Genres

Just like your radio, choral music is packed full of genres. You probably think of them as time periods, but there are different types of music from every time period. When you think of genre, what is the first thing you think of? You should think of categories that different types of music fall under. The ones that we are talking about today are Sacred, Secular, Folk, Multicultural/World Music, and Novelty.



Sacred Music

The beginning of our trip through choral music genres starts with sacred music. This is music that was made to glorify God/Religion. In previous lessons, we talked about how the churches were the only places that someone could learn and develop the skills necessary to sing. These pieces that fall under these genres were created to sing in the acoustics of the cathedrals. There were no intervals that were allowed at the time to intentionally sound dissonant with no resolution like we have now. In the early periods of music history, minor intervals and especially the Tri-tone were treated as the “Devil’s Interval”. The resolutions from minor to a major chord were treated as “God overcoming evil”. There are still sacred works made today using the same style of composition. Here is an example of Sacred Music:

<https://youtu.be/prhNnot2Uc8>



Secular Music

Eventually composers expanded their works out of the church and wanted to make music that had variations on topics that were not religious. These were known as Secular. These pieces were written and sung in the vernacular (the common informal speech). They also started to incorporate instruments that were not commonly used in the church like drums, harps, etc. They were chosen because of how easy it was to transport instruments like that. This category of choral music is very broad. Here is an example of secular music: <https://youtu.be/U2cqblTDR8w>



Folk Music

Folk songs originated in popular culture during the emergence of secular music. Folk songs were passed down from generation to generation and were originally not notated. A lot of songs like this have no source of who wrote it and when because they were passed through oral tradition. Folk music was more than just about the music. There were many dances and customs that went with these songs. In a way, folk music encapsulates the culture of the area or region. Here is an example: <https://youtu.be/UY3XxnRtu48>



Multicultural/World Music

Multicultural/World music could easily be misconstrued as folk music. Part of America being a home for many cultures allows for many types of music to be introduced in where we live. This type of music normally has harmonies and languages that people who speak solely English may not understand. This music provides a window into a cultural world that you wouldn't normally be able to see through. To some, this music provides a look into their own culture and can give them a sense of belonging. Multicultural music is to be kept as authentic to the culture as possible. Here are a few examples of world music: https://youtu.be/LlQEPiRpe_0 <https://youtu.be/cSr9qFShe9E>



Novelty Choral Music

A novelty song is a comical or nonsensical song, performed principally for its comical effect. We all enjoy a good laugh and a novelty song is always a great way to lighten the mood. These songs could be written about topics ranging from fruitcake to farm animals, to Facebook. Here are a couple songs that fit this category: <https://youtu.be/U4TgYB5MECg>
<https://youtu.be/6s6yynpHw6Q>



Individual Practice

Now here is your challenge. Think of your choir. You need to pick 1 song of every genre for your choir. Make a list and label the songs and send it to your director. Use the elements that you have learned in this lesson. Here is a website to help you pick music:

<https://www.jwpepper.com/sheet-music/school-choir-music.jsp>

For additional practice, plan 2 songs from each genre!