



MS Honor Choir Virtual Learning

Phrasing

April 17, 2020



Lesson: April 17, 2020

Objective/Learning Target:

What is phrasing in music, and how does it make a performance more musical?

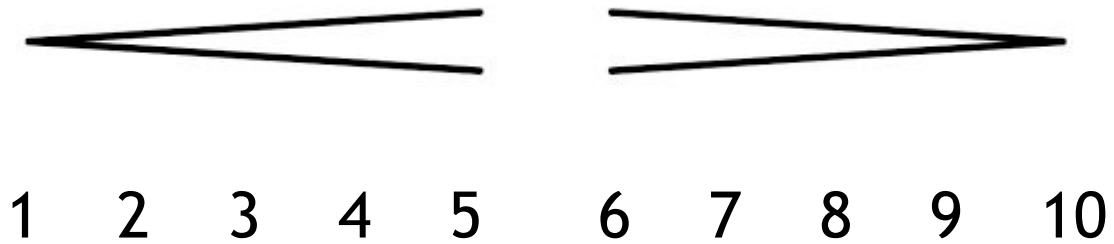


Warm-Up Activity:

- **Speak or sing one note for a count of ten.**
- **Then, do it again, but this time, get gradually louder as you count 1-5 then get gradually quieter as you count 6-10.**
- **Finally, do it a third time, and this time start loud but start getting quieter until you reach 5, then start getting louder from 6-10.**

This is what that looks like in music:

Earlier this week we learned about dynamics. This is what your first example would have looked like using crescendo and decrescendo markings:





Now, let's talk about what this has to do with phrasing

Trying speaking the following sentence out loud:

“I think we should eat ice cream for dinner tonight.”

When you say that phrase out loud, do you say each word the same way? Does any particular word get more emphasis?

When we speak, we naturally emphasize important words in our sentences

When you said the sentence, you probably stressed the words “ice cream” the most. The natural inflection of your voice builds to the subject of the sentence (ice cream) and then backs away.

- To make our music more natural sounding, we want to do the same thing while we sing.



Let's try it ourselves!

Sing the first phrase of “Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star”. As you sing, crescendo to the word “star”, then start to decrescendo until the word “are.”

It should look something like this:

“Twinkle, twinkle little star, how I wonder what you are”





Now, try it over the whole song

With each phrase, try getting louder for the first half, then softer for the second:

“Twinkle, twinkle little star, how I wonder what you are?
Up above the world so high, like a diamond in the sky;
Twinkle, twinkle little star, how I wonder what you are?”



Follow-up activity:

Now that you understand how musicians sing with phrasing, let's see if you can hear it being done by a professional choir.

Click on the link and listen to the choir sing, and as you listen, draw a line with a pencil. When they are getting louder, draw your line on an incline. When they are getting quieter, draw your line on a decline. Start a new line when you hear a new phrase!

[Cantique de Jean Racine, performed by the Choir of King's College, Cambridge](#)



Extension activity for added challenge!

Now, take a song you sang earlier in the school year. If you don't have the music anymore, write out the words on some paper. Whether looking at sheet music or the lyrics, plan out and write down the phrasing you are going to execute as you sing the song. Then, sing through the whole song with your phrasing choices, and hear how it sounds!