

“echolocation” to find her way around a room through the sound of her feet.

⁵ Laura Leane, “The Lotus and the King: Imagery, Gesture, and Meaning in a Hindustani rāg” [to be published in *Ethnomusicology Forum* 2009/2]

⁵ Tone Bianca Dahl, *The Choir: Singing, Leading, Communicating*. Cantando Musikkforlag, 2008, p. 56.



Life has taught me so many lessons; it's hard to decide which one is of the greatest value, but one of the most important is this: Nobody will believe in you unless you believe in yourself.

—Liberace (pianist)

Part Singing in Middle School— It Can Done!

by

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Do you have trouble getting your middle school singers to sing in parts? In my experience, some years seem to produce good listeners or more mature music students. In other years, the students have had little singing experience before coming into my class. Finding music for the more mature singer is a snap. My music library is full of SA and SSA literature. So, what should I do with the beginners? I believe they need to feel successful even more than the experienced singers.

Most of my beginners have similar problems. They cannot sing a major scale, and they seem to be unsure about anything new. Time is well spent on singing scales regularly with all of your students, especially the inexperienced ones.

As you continue this exercise on a regular basis throughout the year, your singers will be able to sing scales in a “round” in which each new group begins when the previous group gets to the third degree of the scale. I divide my choir into as many as four groups using this technique.

Initially, however, even singing in two parts will be difficult and out of tune. But you must persist and offer lots of encouragement!

The sight reading method called *Let's Get Started!* by Jerome Gries, published by Masterworks Press, has various levels to address your singers' wide-ranging abilities. For ease of use, the books are printed in a reproducible format. *Two-Part Treble, Volume 1* is an excellent beginning point for scale-deprived singers. The examples are based on scale-wise passages and can be sung in unison or in two parts.

One of the most successful and enjoyable ways to part-sing with beginners—and also with older students—is to utilize canons. If you are lucky enough to have Orff instruments in your classroom, use them! The instruments can provide new and exciting timbres for student growth and also create a great atmosphere for singing canons and rounds. Instruments can also help keep singers on pitch.

Resources

150 Rounds for Singing and Teaching, Bolkovac and Johnson, Boosey and Hawkes. Includes an alphabetic index with separate listings of rounds in various categories.

The King's Singers Book of Rounds and Canons, Hal Leonard. Includes rounds such as *Christmas Is Coming*; *Dona Nobis Pacem*; *Hava Na Shira*; *Jubilate Deo*; *Non Nobis Domine*; *Sumer Is Icumen In*; *the Tallis Canon*; *Billings' When Jesus Wept*

Look Before You Leap, Gilpatrick, Alfred Publishing. This collection is written by a certified Orff instructor and includes reproducible songs and activities. Though the music is composed for elementary students, it works beautifully with sixth- and seventh-grade singers.

Old and New Rounds and Canons, Wilson, Shawnee Press. Includes 56 rounds and 34 canons. Background and performing information is included.

