

Rehearsal Block Lesson Plan – Text Analysis and its Influence on Musical Decisions

Date: 2/7/23		Location: Robert Morgan Educational Center	
Class: Varsity (Advanced SATB Choir)	Period: 5	Target Grade/Age Group: Advanced 10 th -12 th Grade	
Piece: Even When he is Silent – Kim Andre Arnesen			
<u>Main objectives or concepts:</u> SWBAT discuss the history of the Holocaust and its relation to the “I Believe” text. SWBAT interpret poetry both literally, and in the context of their own lives, and verbally articulate these interpretations. SWBAT verbally compare and contrast different translations of the same poem, commenting on how meaning and interpretation might shift from one to the next. SWBAT discuss and analyze how one’s interpretation(s) of a poem can influence their musical decisions during performance. SWBAT vocally apply and demonstrate their understanding of the context, history, and affect of the piece and its poetry during active music making. SWBAT articulate in writing what they learned regarding the history of the “I Believe” text, and how they might have used this to influence their musical decisions.			
<u>State Standards addressed:</u> <u>MU.912.O.3.1:</u> Analyze expressive elements in a musical work and describe how the choices and manipulations of the elements support, for the listener, the implied meaning of the composer/performer. <u>MU.912.O.3.2:</u> Interpret and perform expressive elements indicated by the musical score and/or conductor. <u>MU.912.H.1.1:</u> Investigate and discuss how a culture’s traditions are reflected through its music. <u>MU.912.H.2.1:</u> Evaluate the social impact of music on specific historical periods.			
Musical Engagements: <div style="display: flex; flex-wrap: wrap;"> <div style="width: 50%;"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> sing (performing) <input type="checkbox"/> play (performing) <input type="checkbox"/> compose/arrange (creating) <input type="checkbox"/> improvise (creating) <input type="checkbox"/> songwriting (creating) <input type="checkbox"/> other_____ </div> <div style="width: 50%;"> <input type="checkbox"/> move/dance (responding) <input type="checkbox"/> listen creatively (responding) <input type="checkbox"/> listen directive (responding) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> analyze/evaluate (responding) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> connect to history/culture/politics (connecting) <input type="checkbox"/> other_____ </div> </div>			

Goal #1

Complete? ☐

Section: Entire Piece (Text)		Location:	Issue: Text analysis and history
Time ~15min	<p>Strategy:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher will begin by asking what students know about the text of Arnesen's "Even When He is Silent" <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Details of discussion may influence how much time is taken to explore the text's backstory After discussion, teacher will write/display the text on the board, and will ask a student to recite it for the class with proper emotional expression. Teacher will prompt students to think about what each line of text might mean, both literally, and in the context of their individual experiences <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Students are free to share individual experiences relevant to the text of the piece if they so choose After initial discussion regarding meaning, teacher will discuss the details of the history of this text, including general background information about the Holocaust, and specific origins of the text <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Holocaust was the, "systematic, state-sponsored persecution and murder" of European Jewish people facilitated by the Nazi Party of Germany during World War II (1933-1945) Jewish people were stripped of their homes, belongings, and livelihoods, and forced to endure work/concentration camps. These concentration camps were the mediums through which 6 million Jewish people, along with countless peoples from other minority groups (Romani people, people considered to be Homosexual, people of color) were killed <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher mentions visit to Dachau this past summer (2022); Anecdote about choir singing there Teacher will articulate that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> This text has always been associated with the holocaust, and that originally, this text was thought to have been found inscribed on a wall in one of these concentration camps. Recently, a new, more accurate primary source document has been discovered; an article in a Swiss newspaper detailing an underground bomb shelter used by the Catholic community to hide Jewish people from the Gestapo (German Secret Police) in which this poetry was discovered Teacher will describe that the article provides us with a new, more accurate/literal translation to contrast the poetic translation that Arnesen sets to text, and will display this new text: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> "I believe in the Sun, though it be dark; I believe in God, though he be silent; I believe in neighborly love (Nächstenliebe), though it be unable to reveal itself." Teacher will prompt students to consider how, if at all, this new translation affects their feelings about/interpretations of the text, or how it now relates to their individual lived experiences; students will be selected to share their new observations Teacher will speak to the ways that being informed on the history and lore behind a text/work of art, and being informed about the thematic content of a piece of music, can revolutionize the way we perform a piece of music Teacher will prompt students to think about their newfound understanding of the piece and its history as the embark on the next bit of rehearsal with this piece; how can they apply it to improve their performance? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Considerations: important words and the music occurring as they are spoken; emotions evoked by melodic/harmonic/textural/dynamic compositional choices and their relation to textual interpretation; use of phrasing to communicate sighing, crying, soaring, warmth, etc. 		

Goal #2

Complete? ☐

Section: Section by Section	Location:	Issue: Associating emotional affect with music in performance
Time ~20min	Strategy: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher will lead students through the piece section by section. At the end of each section, after rehearsing whatever issues need to be rehearsed, teacher will ask students to provide one or two emotional affects/adjectives which encompass the section of music. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Section 1: mm. 1 – 17: hopeful; archaic; significant Section 2: mm. 18 – 28: Growing intensity; sureness; bright Section 3: mm. 29 – 44: Wondrous, confident Section 4: mm. 45 – end: Tranquil, resolved, hopeful, reflective, accepting Students will vote (loosely) to select one or two adjectives to represent each section Students will write each selected adjective(s) in their scores at the beginning of each section Teacher will run piece again, asking students to consider how they might infuse the emotions they decided to associate with each section into their performance At the end of class, students will be asked to write down 2 takeaways from the lesson, be it musical, historical, topical/contextual, metacognitive, or otherwise 	

Assessment Techniques

- ☒ performance task
- ☐ recording
- ☐ self/peer assessment
- ☐ test/quiz
- ☐ journal
- ☐ portfolio
- ☐ essay/report
- ☒ Class Discussion and Reflection

Materials/Room Set Up

Typical tiered chair SATB formation

Student Accommodations/Differentiation

Due to the serious and somber nature of this lesson content, students for whom this subject matter is a sensitive/personal matter or is generally upsetting need not feel obligated to share their thoughts at any time. Students who are upset by this subject matter may do as they wish to emotionally regulate and feel ok, whether this be take a second before joining singing again, leaving the room, etc.

Reflections on and Extension Ideas

I felt as if this lesson was incredibly effective! The conversations we had regarding the history of the holocaust, the text of the piece, and how students could relate each of these to current events that were relevant to them and their lived experiences, seemed to resonate quite deeply with the majority of students. My cooperating educator was a great help in assisting me to guide the conversation in a way that did not isolate any one population group in the class (i.e., students could speak on the political issues that affected them and could relate it to their interpretation of the text, but no one political agenda was affirmed or prioritized by any educator in the room). Many students were able to make connections to issues of local and federal government decisions in recent history which affected them directly, and even related these to the quotes I included in my presentation, which emphasized the concept of neighborly love, of caring for those in your community. I felt as if the level of focus and intention in rehearsing this song increased ten-fold after engaging in this vital conversation!

I did struggle a bit just with navigating this conversation as it might relate to the array of divisive concept laws that have been passed in the state of Florida as of late; for example, as I embarked on the lesson, I realized that I had not made sure that it was ok to say the word “homosexual” in an

instructional context. I worried that a student who took issue with this would get my cooperating educator into trouble in some way. After the lesson, him and I took some time to discuss the implications of this, and went into detail regarding how we can continue to have these incredibly necessary conversations in class without veering into dangerous territory in regards to the recent legislation that has passed.