AN INVESTIGATION OF MUSICAL STYLES AND APPLICATIONS IN SELECT HIGH SCHOOL CHORAL MUSIC

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER

I. Introduction and Statement of Purpose ..................................................... 1

II. The Conductor as a Teacher ................................................................. 5

III. Interviews with High School Choral Directors ................................... 8

IV. Style Periods and Characteristics ....................................................... 22

V. Style Study Pieces ................................................................................ 27

VI. Summary and Conclusions ................................................................. 43

REFERENCES ............................................................................................ 46

APPENDIX

A. Interview Questions .............................................................................. 49

B. Sorted SATB Choral Contest List According to Level of Difficulty
   Classification and Style Period ............................................................. 51
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Chapter I

Introduction and Statement of Purpose

Students graduating with baccalaureate degrees in choral music education must have knowledge of music repertoire that is suitable for all levels of instruction, pedagogical techniques that are applicable to the repertoire, and performance knowledge of the musical styles represented in the selections. The purpose of this research was to study the current standard high school-level SATB (soprano-alto-tenor-bass) choral repertoire found on the Ohio Music Education Association (OMEA) Large Group Adjudicated Events Required Music List for 2011-2012, and to identify the characteristics of musical style periods expressed by composers in selected pieces. In addition, the study includes interviews with successful choral music educators regarding their experiences applying knowledge of style periods to choral literature, and how to teach appropriate style performance techniques in the classroom. My ultimate goal was to better prepare myself for becoming a high school choral director. As a result, I have familiarized myself with style-appropriate literature for various difficulty levels and have gained a better understanding of how score study can aid me in being a better choral teacher and conductor. In addition, this study has provided me with a knowledge base for choosing repertoire wisely in order to improve the musical skills of ensembles, and develop the musicianship skills of students. Kenneth Miller states that,

“There are times when we will find it advantageous to entertain as well as to educate an audience, but there are also times when music should be
introduced for its educational value alone. In a sense, any music a person particularly enjoys is entertainment to that person, and the music may also have valid educational worth” (1979, p. 8).

The major purpose of teaching music in a classroom setting is for the educational value it has for the students. Whether music is chosen as a means of entertainment or not, good repertoire choices always must be based on educational value. However, music chosen based on its educational value alone can become entertaining once we have learned to perform it well.

In 1994, the National Standards for Music Education were developed. These nine standards include a broad variety of objectives that form the basis for music education curricula in American schools. The goals and objectives of the national standards are to be reflected in what is taught in all areas of music education. Knowledge gained through this research provides direction for the application of the national standards in choral teaching methods. The National Standards for Music Education 1, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 were selected for the purpose of this study. While all standards are to be addressed in the classroom, standards 2, 3, and 4 will not be addressed. Standard 2 discusses playing instruments as an individual or group. Although it is possible to add instruments to the piece, I will only deal with choral characteristics. Standard 3 and 4 references improvisation, arranging, and composing music as a class. These activities will not be addressed in this thesis.

Following is a description of the selected standards as stated on the MENC (The National Association for Music Education) website (www.menc.org):
Standard 1: “Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.”

By knowing the repertoire, a choral conductor can successfully choose varied music that will include diverse style periods. By singing varied repertoire, students experience many musical styles and develop musical knowledge as well as musical skills.

Standard 5: “Reading and notating music.” It is important that all students learn to read and notate music as they progress through high school. Using this knowledge, they will be able to apply it to future music opportunities.

Standard 6: “Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.” This standard is necessary to help students learn to think critically about the repertoire. This also will help the student associate previously learned material with application to new songs. A choral teacher can present multiple recordings sung by different ensembles. Following the listening process, the students will then be able to describe the music they heard and analyze the characteristics. Through this analysis, the students will become better performers.

Standard 7: “Evaluating music and music performances.” Having learned style period characteristics, the students will be able to evaluate their own performances in addition to performances of others.

Standard 8: “Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts.” (See below)

Standard 9: “Understanding music in relation to history and culture.”

These two standards are really closely related to each other. The choral conductor
can present a variety of teaching strategies that will promote a foundational understanding of the music’s cultural roots, historical background and relationships to other art forms. Music enhances learning in other disciplines because it is a reflection of historical events, current trends, spiritual beliefs, customs, and traditions from a global perspective. Music education also stimulates different areas of the brain and is proven to effect overall cognitive capacity.
Chapter II

The Conductor as a Teacher

A conductor is to be a leader and a teacher, trained in effective rehearsal and performance skills. Knowledge of the repertoire, the compositional techniques of composers, and knowledge of stylistic characteristics are necessary to perform music well. In this regard, the teacher must properly interpret the music. This involves thorough score study to identify instructional needs and teaching challenges in the music. Jan LaRue (1970), author of “Guidelines for Style Analysis”, gives three dimensions (small, medium, and large) to look for while studying a piece. The large dimension consists of looking at where the piece comes from, whether it is from a larger work, or if it stands by itself. If it comes from a larger work, the conductor has to know how the individual piece fits into the work. The large dimension covers the piece as a whole rather than the individual characteristics within the piece. The middle dimension focuses on the individual characteristics of the piece. This covers the form of the piece, the relationships between each section in the piece, and “the formation of musical ideas” (LaRue, p. 8). The middle dimension “should illuminate the handling of ideas within the parts of a piece” (LaRue, p. 8). The small dimension should focus on individual chords, rhythmic patterns, and patterns found in the music. It is important to not just be focused on this dimension because the piece as a whole could be lost. The conductor should be looking for these individual characteristics and how they apply to the larger dimensions to shape
the music. These, when understood, can be brought out for their full musical value and can be seen in other parts of the music.

The general characteristics of each style period are sometimes a reflection of what is going on within the culture in the standpoint of social interaction, political influence, socioeconomic issues, and religion. According to Lewis Gordon (1977), author of *Choral Director’s Complete Handbook*, stylistic accuracy avoids boredom in the classroom and the music comes more to life when it is authentically performed. Hylton (1995) states, “Every piece of choral music is a product of environment and historical period in which it was created. It should be your objective to help students perform choral music in as authentic a manner as possible” (p. 159). Discussing these topics in the classroom can lead to a greater understanding of the piece. This knowledge will facilitate musical interpretation of the piece by both the conductor and the performers. Knowledge will also help students grow as musicians with the ability to interpret the music. The conductor should organize time efficiently in that rehearsal time is not lost in these discussions. It should rather be implemented in different teaching ways that will enhance the rehearsal time and its effectiveness.

Applying the same style characteristics to every choral piece will not provide musical development, nor will it promote musical maturity. Choosing a variety of literature will provide more interest for the students, maintain their attention and entertain the audiences who attend their concerts. When students can make decisions in the music that reflect the style period and are able to transfer this knowledge to new music, they grow as musicians.
There are some problems that might be encountered with making correct style choices. For example, Renaissance music has no musical interpretation markings by the composer. Often an editor or arranger will insert such markings. A conductor has to make reasonable decisions based on the parameters of knowledge that he has gleaned from his personal research. He must apply this knowledge in order to make good choices of editions of choral literature. Furthermore, the conductor must understand style requirements of the music in order to properly teach his students. Early music at times incorporated musical instruments. Performing with authentic instruments can be beneficial for the choir in regard to true performance and can lead to discussions in the classrooms about these instruments and their effect on the music. However, choirs may not have access to these instruments. The conductor should still perform these works as stylistically possible rather than questioning the use of instruments or modern substitutes for the correct traditional forms of these instruments.

The next challenge for conductors is to learn ways to teach singers how to perform in the appropriate style for the music. Knowing pedagogical techniques and how to implement them in the choir are two different steps and both need to be achieved for a stylistic performance.
Chapter III

Interviews with High School Choral Directors

Having researched writings concerned with how the conductor serves in the role of the teacher, I established interview appointments with three successful area school choral directors/teachers. The purpose of these interviews was to gain their knowledge of the process of teaching. I asked questions regarding my research and questions regarding the teaching process that will benefit me as a new teacher as well as how prepared they felt to conduct and rehearse a choir after completing their undergraduate degrees. For these interviews, I established a list of introductory questions that guided the interview. The list of questions is in Appendix A (found on p. 65).

Christopher Venesile, Ph.D. – Adjunct Assistant Professor at Kent State University

“I was a French horn major at Ohio State University, president of my high school choir, and played piano in my jazz band. When I began my undergrad, I thought I would be a high school band conductor like my dad. As I started through undergrad, I began to look at all it would take to be an undergrad instrument major and I decided it was not for me. At the same time, I had been singing in choirs. My first teaching experience was teaching a middle school choir, and it was that moment that I realized that this was what I was supposed to do. I felt passion there. I was lucky to have a wonderful instrumental conductor that influenced me a lot, and now I consider myself a hybrid of both instrument and choral.”
Was stylistic accuracy focused on in your undergraduate training to become a conductor and teacher?

“When I was an undergraduate, we were introduced to all styles and we had a good grounding in each of the style periods. We did a lot of listening, reading, and writing about the characteristics of each style period and what made them distinct. It did not start sinking in until after I was an undergraduate and became a practicing conductor and realized that it was up to me to make stylistic decisions. It was something that was emphasized.”

In developing your choral program, how do you go about teaching stylistic accuracy?

Could you give some examples?

“One of the things we always talked about is high school musicians when they make the jump from middle school to high school. It is everyone’s responsibility to understand the music as much as possible. It is a different culture. We try to immerse ourselves in the culture to truly understand it. That even means ethics. I always want to know why the piece of music is written as such and the aesthetic reasons behind the music. I try to incorporate all of the arts and themes unifying the stylistic features in the music, drama, and sculpture and then center it on the music. This is how they find something relevant in the music. They become invested. Our jobs become easier because they have the answers. It is easy to talk about why counterpoint is an important feature and suspensions in the works of composers when they understand the background information. Everyone would have understood how suspensions would have been communicated during that
style period. The same knowledge applies here. The best learning route for students is when you lay it out for students comprehensively rather than a sheet with bullet points.”

When in the process of rehearsing a piece, do you focus on the stylistic accuracy?

“The answer I would like to give is always from the very beginning, but it depends on the level of skill of the musicians. If I have a plan and present it well, than I need to know if they are buying the concept. If they are buying the concept, then I know I am free at anytime to explain the expression in the music.”

Could you give me a few examples of pedagogical techniques that you would use for a different style periods?

“I always talk to the singers about all of technical skills that are important for individual and choral singing such as creating space, high forward focus, vowels, and minimized vibratos so those frequencies do not intrude on one another to hear the integrity of the line. For example, Handel’s Messiah, we should switch to a pedagogical focus on melismatic runs and taking exercises and tailoring them for the literature. “

In the years that you have taught for adjudicated events, do you feel that there has been more or less emphasis on stylistic accuracy?

“Style is important developmentally. One of the things listened for is how they execute and how they do with it with whatever style they represent. If the judges do not agree with the style, they will let you know. I do not feel that there has been more emphasis. Even with my very first year of going to contest, it was
there. It has been a unifying feature. When I plan a piece, I deal with that piece stylistically just as much as everything else, because I know it is important.”

Have you ever encountered a piece from the choral contest list that had poor editing marks that did not fit the style period?

“I probably just did not choose it. I have to be a buyer, and if I don’t buy it, then my students will not buy it. If I encounter a bad edition, then I find another one or choose something else. If I saw a bad and unattractive edit, I would not use it.”

During the Baroque period, ornamentation was not written in the music. How do you go about applying it? Do you use what the editor gives or use your own research?

“I have done both. I have been fortunate to have good teachers that have had historical accuracy. I will be attracted to an edition that has the correct edition and is easy for students to understand and for me to teach. I save all my past notes so whenever I come up with a piece of music I will grab it and use it. This requires time and patience, and sometimes, we do not have a lot of either. That is why all chorus directors have a place where they take their experiences and file it away.”

With ornamentation being unwritten is it harder or easier to teach?

“It’s both. Some things are easy to teach. All kids are raised by learning imitation. It is important to be able to model an example. We are fortunate to have digital recordings. Kids will respond to anything if you have a plan and you focus on it and use multilevel multimedia. Kids today can do anything. They can be excited about ornamentation or when I put on a jazz cd and talk about placement of jazz
chords. They get excited about technique if they see the benefit. If I am selling, then I know they are buying.”

If you are rehearsing a romantic piece, how do you get the mature sound intended for an adult chorus without harming the younger voice?

“I think that I was much more intense after getting that sound years ago. But I do not worry about it much anymore. I go after expressive qualities. You are not going to get young kids to sound like adults. You are wasting your time. I think that a student ensemble can give thrilling performances. They are not going to sound like professionals but that is not the goal, and people who listen to that will understand it. It is still possible to get expressive qualities. There is a lot to do to make it stylistically accurate. The only way to harm their voices is if you do something unnatural to their voices. For example, if you do a spiritual, it can be exciting but it could be vocally damaging if they are screaming like a true gospel choir. They might not be a gospel choir but they pay homage to the style period.”

Do you incorporate atonal music in your program?

“I definitely would not do atonal music. It was cool to do those things in the 80’s, but I would never attempt it. As an intellectual, I can understand, but I also understand how it is not a steady part of American music. I think that when I take a look at what I want high school students to learn, I do not think atonal music is one of them.”

(C. Venesile, personal communication, October 23, 2011)
Beth Polen – Perry High School

Background

“I went to Otterbein College as a music theatre major which helps with me as entertainer and programming music. I then went on to receive my Bachelors degree in music education at Mount Union. After teaching for some years, I went to Youngstown State University where I got my Masters in music.”

Was stylistic accuracy focused on in your undergraduate training to become a conductor and teacher?

“I took choral conducting when I was an undergraduate, but I was an instrumental major. However, yes, it was emphasized. Absolutely. It was also something that I was learning in my applied lessons and the ensembles that I was in.”

Did you feel prepared? If you did not feel prepared, how did you prepare yourself on the job?

“I absolutely did not feel prepared. To prepare myself further, I went to grad school. I felt very ill prepared because I did not have a strong background in choral literature, because I was an instrumental major. I relied on pieces that I knew or styles that I knew well. I started teaching in a small school. Doing a Latin piece with them for example, would have been a huge undertaking for them. Those first years taught me so much. I learned a lot from my students and my students learned from me. I also learned by watching other people, asking
questions, going to OMEA conferences, and being with other conductors and finding out what they do.”

In developing your choral program, how do you go about teaching stylistic accuracy? Could you give some examples?

“If there is a piece that we are doing that is in an unfamiliar style, we will do warm-ups that will reinforce that style period. We also will practice tone quality, lack of vibrato (depending on the style period), timbre, or color that would be appropriate for that song. I will let my students know what the history of the piece was and the performance practices of that era.”

When in the process of rehearsing a piece, do you focus on the stylistic accuracy?

“If I can, immediately. I would rather start this way than trying to fix something stylistic later. You do not want them to start treating a Baroque piece like a pop song. So, if you can immediately start focusing on the stylistic quality of the piece, a lot of mistakes can be avoided.”

When do you start talking about different style periods when presenting a piece to your choir?

“I hope to focus on the style period immediately when I pass it out. I do not always make a big deal about it. Sometimes my introduction is, ‘Here is the music and here is something the composer might have done.’ Later, we can look at individual characteristics in the phrases that are not done in that contemporary
singing or these characteristics would not be done in the Baroque period, but are done in the Romantic period.”

In the years that you have taught for adjudicated events, do you feel that there has been more or less emphasis on stylistic accuracy?

“I think that stylistic accuracy is certainly rewarded for being a part of the performance. A choir can not go in without stylistic accuracy because it is part of the performance package.”

Have you ever encountered a piece from the choral contest list that had poor editing marks that did not fit the style period?

“Often on the contest list, the pieces are preferred arrangements or more accepted. If there is something I disagree with, I mark it myself. I think you would have encountered more problems twenty years ago because there were not as many revisions and edits. However, because of technology and research, there are less editing mistakes. There are more vendors and you can go online and listen to or see parts of the score before you buy it. That definitely helps when choosing a good piece. My own process of looking for a good piece is listening to ensembles, cds, and records and hearing what conductors say and asking them questions. This is how I learn. I listen to other conductors to get the bigger picture and ask questions to understand more.”
If you are rehearsing a romantic piece, how do you get the mature sound intended for an adult chorus without harming the younger voice?

“Rehearse vowels, vowels, vowels. I also talk about the color of the voice. I have them sing in different ways. For example, I would ask them to sing like a child, teenager, college student, opera star, or an old person. I try these different ways and sometimes it works and I get a better sound. Modeling also works very well. It is a very valid way to change their voice without harming it. You can not ask them to have an older voice but they can definitely improve their timbre, color, and vowels by imaging how more mature people would sing. If you could work with this and the voice placement, the overall sound will be better.”

During the Baroque period, ornamentation was not written in the music. How do you go about applying it? Do you use what the editor gives or use your own research?

“Ornamentation is much easier to do in a solo setting. For choral pieces, there are places you change or add the ornamentation, and if the ornamentation is written in it could be from the editor or composer. That is one thing to look into when looking at ornamentation. In the adjudicated setting, judges are very open to that sort of thing. For research on ornamentation, I look on the internet, listen to other choirs and conductors, and draw from my own conclusions. More importantly, I ask questions and listen to someone who knows and understands Baroque ornamentation.”

(B. Polen, personal communication, November 1, 2011)
Douglas Beery - Massillon-Washington High School

Background

“I went to Capital University in Columbus, Ohio for my Bachelor of Music Education. I taught three years in Lima High School. After that, I became a graduate teaching associate at Ohio State University and it was there that I pursued my Masters in Conducting. After that, I was hired at Massillon as the assistant director for four years and upon the retirement of the head director, I was granted the position of head director.”

Did you feel prepared to teach stylistic accuracy after your undergrad?

“I did. I came out feeling stylistically ready although I will admit that when I went to get my Masters at Ohio State was when I delved into really specific aspects of those topics. While I felt prepared, it felt good to go back and work more specifically in the stylistic conducting area.”

In developing your choral program, how do you go about teaching stylistic accuracy? Could you give some examples?

“I think it all comes down to musical concepts. I give these concepts first when the students are freshmen. I teach musical elements and musical literacy as tools so they can grow and become stronger and more knowledgeable when they go into the advanced choir. They then can understand and sing the Messiah choruses different than Beck’s Exhortation. We try to do as much stylistic variety for the
students and expose the students to these styles through musical elements and musical literacy.”

When in the process of rehearsing a piece, do you focus on the stylistic accuracy?

“From the beginning, there has to be some element of that in the teaching and it depends on the level of the group. First, you have to get notes and rhythms. Once that is in place, the style factor is in full force clear to the entire end.”

In the years that you have taught for adjudicated events, do you feel that there has been more or less emphasis on stylistic accuracy?

“I can’t say that I have seen a change. Over thirteen years, I would say in the State contests you definitely see a more pressing view of stylistic views.”

Have you ever encountered a piece from the choral contest list that had poor editing marks that didn’t fit the style period?

“I would say they are usually pretty good at that. I can’t say I see a lot of problems with that. However there are a lot of the markings in the choral world. You have to be careful and ask yourself, “Is this Haydn’s idea or the editor’s idea?” I am sure I have come across this where the editor makes markings that I don’t agree with.”

If you are rehearsing a romantic piece, how do you get the mature sound intended for an adult chorus without harming the younger voice?
“A lot of that has to do is with space. A warmer, darker sound is something you want to go after. Vowel unification is first and foremost. You can’t create a good choral sound without it. I use many physical movements like moving their hands to their cheeks to remind them of the space. This serves as a physical reminder. Eventually they will learn and remember to do that on their own. Another example is lift formation and how to create good round sound. Comments, such as making sure the corners of the lips in and making sure the lips are in and not spread, help achieve this formation.”

During the Baroque period, ornamentation was not written in the music. How do you go about applying it? Do you use what the editor gives or use your own research?

“I would say I mostly do research. For instance, there is an editor who edits the Messiah and wrote a lengthy book about the technical markings of the Messiah. I look for someone who is reputable for a strong edition of music. There are some editors I don’t care for their markings. It depends on the research.”

Do you incorporate atonal music in your program? If yes, how do you go about introducing the piece?

“I do some atonal music. I wouldn’t say a lot but usually we find one piece in the year for the younger groups to work on those aspects. I introduce the piece by solfege. It’s a big understanding of the intervals and your place in the chord.”

(D. Beery, personal communication, January, 1, 2012)
Through this interview process, I received many different answers, approaches, and techniques that can be applied to my rehearsal in the future. I found that these three individuals come from different backgrounds and focus their choir music on different subject matter. However, they agree that it is important for every choir to sing a wide range of repertoire from each style period. Each individual agrees that in their years of judging or bringing their choirs to large group adjudicated events, there has been little to no difference in the importance of stylistic accuracy. This accuracy remains a key ingredient to a successful performance and a superior rating. There were, however, differing opinions on introducing atonal and avant-garde pieces. However, they do agree that it is not meant to be done often but rather done to challenge the students to listen and sing in new ways. Every teacher that I interviewed recommended that I keep everything that I do including notes on a score, research done for any style period, and any techniques that assist in a correct stylistic performance. These three teachers also believe that an educator is to use any credible source of information, such as the internet, research books, and other experienced conductors, when preparing for a piece. To get a Romantic sound out of a younger chorus, all three teachers agree it starts with correct vowels and space. They also emphasize that the young choir is never going to sound like an older choir. The students can still give a superior performance when vowels, timbre, and space are emphasized in choir practice. An educator must utilize rehearsal time efficiently to make comments about the style period information. Although this information is important, the conductor must balance this information and a strong
rehearsal schedule. If information is the only focus during the class, valuable rehearsal time is lost. Every choral director’s process is going to be different in how they present the information regarding the style period and how it is represented in the music.
Chapter IV

Style Periods and Characteristics

Style in music consists of the distinctive qualities which, through sound, identify a particular composer and a general period in history. There are six style periods in European-centered music. They are: Middle Ages (500-1450), Renaissance (1450-1600), Baroque (1600-1750), Classical (1750-1820), Romantic (1820-1900), and Modern (1900-present day). For the purpose of this study, I am focusing on music in a high school setting and have chosen music representing these styles found on the adjudicated large ensemble events list published by the Ohio Music Education Association (for all music, refer to Appendix B). Since there are no examples of music from the Middle Ages on the OMEA High School SATB choral adjudicated events list, repertoire from the Middle Ages will not be included in this paper. The choice of music from the OMEA Adjudicated Events list is appropriate since the selection was made by experienced, and successful choral music educators, and represents quality high school-level choral literature. In addition, the repertoire included in this list is categorized by difficulty level. The levels are divided into Class AA, A, B, and C. Class AA is a recommended for an experienced choir and consists of choral music of the highest level of difficulty. Class C consists of the least challenging repertoire of choral music.

While one cannot ignore the fact that stylistic characteristics do overlap the identified musical history periods and there are similar or comparable musical elements in all style periods, one can make decisions regarding how to interpret the music based
upon the composer, the time at which the piece was composed, and how or why the piece came to be created. In order to approach the task, some definitions must be provided.

Musical elements are compositional tools used to express musical meaning. There are elements of music common to all of these style periods. For the purposes of this study, these elements were chosen for study: genres, meter, tempo, dynamics, texture, and timbre. These are the elements that will be the focus of discussion for each selected choral piece.

A music genre is categorized by similar characteristics belonging to a particular period in time or reflective of a particular cultural group. For example, some current popular genres are rap, hip hop, and rock. Examples of genres in past historical periods have included motets in the Renaissance, masses in the Baroque Period, and symphonies in the Classical Period. These musical genres became popular within specific social classes of those periods just as our music became popular today. Genres often exemplified the fads or fashions in the time they existed. Just as in the past, musical genres of today represent political statements, values, relationships, religious beliefs, and other broad topics.

Meter is one aspect of rhythm. Meter is defined by “The grouping of beats into a recurring pattern defined by accentuation. An entire piece or section of a piece is constructed of a succession of bars, and the recurring accentual pattern, whether explicitly stated are present only by implication, is the framework within which rhythm is established and perceived.” (Kernfeld, 2011) Stress, is an aesthetic aspect of performance
which is somewhat related to meter. Performers use the placement of stress to accent beats or syllables of text for the purposes of musical interpretation.

Tempo is known as “the musical speed or pacing” (London, 2011) of the music. This is usually determined by the mood of the text. For example, a piece concerning death and sadness may have a slower tempo to reflect the state of mind the text is using. However, a piece dealing with happiness and life can be upbeat and lively. As the style periods change, the way of determining the tempo changes as well.

Dynamics serve as an element of expression in music. Dynamics reflect the loudness or softness of a section or piece or “the intensity of volume with which notes and sounds are expressed”. (Thiemel, 2011) The notation and interpretation of dynamics varies according to period style. For example, terraced dynamics are common in the Baroque Period and refer to patterns of sudden shifts in dynamics. The range of dynamics in the Romantic Period was extensive to meet the popularity of emotionally expressive music. Traditionally, music markings are printed in the music in Italian. Such indicators include but are not limited to piano (p) - soft, mezzo piano (mp) - medium soft, mezzo forte (mf) – medium loud, and forte (f) – loud.

Texture is the relationship between and among the lines in music performed at the same time. There are three primary textures in music, and include polyphony, monophony, and homophony. Monophony is completely unison in all parts (all voice parts sing the same note). Polyphony is evident in music written for more than one voice part, and can be described as the independent movement of separate voices performing simultaneously. Another more specific term for this voicing independence is
counterpoint. Rounds and canons are simple examples of counterpoint. In counterpoint (canons and rounds) each vocal part is given equal weight. Homophony is a type of “polyphonic music in which all melodic parts move together at more or less the same pace.” (Hyer, 2011) Homophony is encountered on a daily basis. A melody supported by chords is an example of homophony. All notes usually move at the same time making the words easy to understand and easy to follow. A church hymn is a homophonic piece because there is a melody and the other voice parts and accompaniment support the melody and generally move with the melody. While all three types of texture can be found in the same piece of music, the emphasis on a particular textural style can be associated with definite style periods, or subsets of historical style periods.

Timbre, also known as tone quality, is identified through the performance rather than musical notation. Each style period valued different tone qualities of the performer and the ensemble. Whether the timbre is full and rich or light and delicate, the performer and conductor must realize that it is very important to sing in the manner common to the time in which the music was performed in its original cultural setting whenever possible. Singing a light piece with heavy vibrato is not stylistic or healthy for the voice. In this section, it is important for the conductor to have techniques to lead the singers to the correct way of singing. Singing with incorrect tone quality will result in a less than acceptable style performance and will not express the composer’s intent for the piece.

Expression is the aesthetic interpretation of the music, and utilizes all elements to display feeling from the performer, with a goal of bringing about an aesthetic response in the listener. We make decisions about how to interpret elements to create a stylistic
performance. The expressive qualities of music are reflection of what is valued within each style period. Thus, music becomes a language of culture, history, spirituality, and what is in vogue. Without the human quality of expression, music would lose meaning. It is the task of the conductor to maintain an exciting and dramatic rehearsal/performance through appropriate application of the elements of music.

As stated earlier, the source of the SATB high school choral music for my research was the OMEA Large Group Adjudicated Events Required Repertoire List for High School for 2011. For the purposes of this study, one piece was chosen as a clear representation of each of the following historical periods: Renaissance, Baroque, Classical, Romantic, and Modern. This was accomplished through a consultation with Mr. Kerry Glann, a music professor at Kent State University. Characteristics commonly found in each of the style periods have been identified in each of these choral pieces. Following each style period, an analysis of the chosen representative piece will be presented with performance suggestions as concluding statements.
Chapter V

Style Study Pieces

The following choral pieces will be discussed with identification of the principal style characteristics of the time in which the piece was composed and the intentions of the composer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contest Level</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Composer</th>
<th>Arranger/Editor</th>
<th>Date Composed</th>
<th>Historical Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AA</td>
<td>Verbum Caro Factum Est</td>
<td>Hans Leo Hassler</td>
<td>John Leavitt (editor)</td>
<td>1591</td>
<td>Renaissance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AA</td>
<td>Sing Unto God</td>
<td>George F. Handel</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1746</td>
<td>Baroque</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Gloria</td>
<td>Franz Joseph Haydn</td>
<td>Patrick M. Liebergen (Editor and Arranger)</td>
<td>1802</td>
<td>Classical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Lebenslust</td>
<td>Franz Schubert</td>
<td>Ray Robinson (editor)</td>
<td>1818</td>
<td>Romantic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AA</td>
<td>The Coolin’</td>
<td>Samuel Barber</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1942</td>
<td>Modern</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Renaissance


This motet, “Verbum Caro Factum Est”, is a AA (highest level of difficulty) piece and is an example of Renaissance music. A motet is a typical genre of the Renaissance style period. This piece was chosen because it contained clear examples of Renaissance characteristics. Although this edition of Verbum Caro Factum Est is arranged in SATB format, Renaissance style music utilized all male voices in their choral pieces. Women were not allowed to sing in the church setting until a later style period. Men singing in the church were made up of changed and unchanged voices including countertenors. This sacred text is in a Latin language which is traditional Renaissance text. The church set sacred music to the Latin text because it held a religious connotation. Because the church controlled the print and importance of music, the majority of music in this style period is sacred. Word stress is importance because the church believed the text is more important than the music itself. Thus, it is important that text considerations come first in the piece. For example, longer note values emphasize the important parts of the text. As seen in, the first phrase of Verbum Caro Factum Est. Ver and Est have the longer note value and should therefore receive a greater emphasis.

Meter and Stress

The following text shows the longer note values and subsequently the word stress implied. Verbum caro factum est. Et habitavit in nobis. Et vidimus gloriam ejus. Gloriam quasi unigeniti a Patre. Plenum gratiae et veritatis. This piece is edited to show marked
measures. In the Renaissance style period, barlines and measures did not exist. Inherent focus was placed on linear quality of the music. It is important for the conductor to not let the barlines obscure the linear quality. The conductor should lead the choir to sing their individual lines without an interruption in the linear line.

**Tempo**

The tempo is editorial and not suggested by the composer. Although editorial, the tempo marked clearly follows Renaissance rules regarding text and tempo collaboration. Because this piece reflects the glory of God, the resulting tempo is marked as andante (half note = 92 bpm). This tempo reflects a faster tempo rather than slow based on the text meaning. The composer also used note duration to quicken or slow the tempo. For instance, the composer utilizes quarter notes in this piece to gain a faster sounding tempo. Near the end, the composer incorporates a rallentando by incorporating longer note values to slow down the piece. Renaissance conducting was done by the lead singer who tapped a stick on the floor to keep the beat steady. The present conductor must not slow the beat in any way.

**Dynamics**

The composer achieved dynamics by adding voices to chords to make it louder and taking voices away to make it softer. These additions of voices occurred at new sections when introducing a new part of the text. The composer also used a method known as terraced dynamics. Terraced dynamics suggest a sudden shift in dynamic level as opposed to gradual shifting in dynamic levels. Adding voices to increase dynamic level is one way of applying the principle of terraced dynamics. Terraced dynamics were
a typical characteristic for the Renaissance period. This method allowed the composer to control the emotion in the piece and shape it towards the textual meaning. Verbum Caro Factum Est is a choral piece of the glory of God. Because this text is joyful and uplifting in nature, the dynamics follow this by growing to a forte at the end of the piece.

**Texture**

This piece is consistently consonant except for dissonances created by the use of suspensions. A suspension utilizes notes not common in a chord that move to a common note by step. This piece also incorporates the seamless technique of composing by means of little to no cadences until the end of a section. This creates the feeling of continuation rather than the feeling of harmonic arrival.

Verbum Caro Factum Est was written in antiphonal style. The antiphonal style is a technique common in the Renaissance that broke the choir into two choirs of higher voices and lower voices. In this piece, the higher voices sing a section of the piece which is then repeated by the lower voices. These two choirs have their own individual lines which at times are brought together. The sound that is produced should sound like two choirs singing the same piece.

**Timbre**

The conductor of this Renaissance piece must be sure to eliminate the majority of vibrato. Because this piece was originally composed for young boys and men, vibrato was not found in the higher unchanged voices. Vibrato should also not be used because it will destroy the pure and linear line of the piece. The timbre should be kept light and
energized. These characteristics will allow the voice to move quicker and concentrate on the long melodic lines.

**Baroque**

Sing Unto God (Chorus from “Judas Maccabaeus”), George F. Handel. H. W. Gray Publications.

“Sing Unto God” by George Handel has a AA level of difficulty. This piece is appropriate for a more advanced chorus due to the melismas incorporated into the music. A melisma is a long run of notes on a single syllable. A singer or choir that performs a melisma must maintain a constant flow of air and energy to achieve a light and smooth line. It is part of the oratorio “Judas Maccabaeus” by Handel. This chorus follows a march within the oratorio and is comprised of a duet between alto and tenor soloists and chorus. An oratorio is an unstaged composition that features an orchestra, soloists, and a chorus. Oratorios are centered on religion which remains the focus through the Baroque style period. Secular songs start becoming more important but the control of printed music still lies with the church. The sacred text is in English. Although this piece contains a piano reduction as the accompaniment, the original performance would require a Baroque orchestra. Because this is a joyful and rallying piece, the tempo should reflect this mood.

**Meter and Stress**

It is during this style period that barlines became an important aspect of organizing music. In “Sing Unto God,” the linear quality is still important and stressed beats should still occur on the important words. A method that is practiced in the Baroque
period is staggered breathing. Staggered breathing is important in long lines of the music where a collective breath would disrupt the vocal line. The rule of staggered breathing is to not take a breath too often or in the middle of a word. Following this rule will keep the inherent beauty of the line and the desired continuous line.

**Tempo**

Baroque tempo characteristics follow the same mannerisms of typical Renaissance music. Tempo is a reflection of the text and allows the listener and performer to understand the text on a different level. This is an important characteristic of the Baroque period. During the late Renaissance and early Baroque, a theorem known as the Doctrine of Affections developed. This was a written belief that certain characteristics and techniques could be applied to elicit a deeper feeling in the listener. Examples of common compositional techniques to express emotional states included a rapidly rising sequence of thirds to express euphoria, or a repeated descending walking bass line to indicate death or dying. The tempo statement also allowed the composer to reflect this doctrine. Allegro, as stated in “Sing Unto God,” reflected the upbeat and joyous event of singing unto God. The conductor must not perform this piece with any ritardandos because the composer’s intent is still incorporated inside the music.

**Dynamics**

The dynamics in this piece are editorial and not used by the composer. The dynamics, however, do correlate to the music. This piece is more intense and calls for a rally cry to sing unto God. The *forte* dynamics helps achieve this rally. At the end, where
the voices come together, the dynamic changes to a fortissimo. This is a result of all the voices singing together in homophony rather than polyphony creating a larger sound.

**Texture**

This is also a representation of the linear focus that composers emphasized. To achieve the linear line, the composer kept the cadences to a minimum. The piece is primarily polyphonic. The composer uses the soloist at the beginning to clearly state the text before the polyphony is brought in. This was done to show that the text is still the most important aspect of the music.

**Timbre**

The practice of staggered breathing can be used in this piece because there is never a clear stop in the vocal line. This allows the piece to have an uninterrupted linear vocal line. The tone should be full of life and energy and have a minimum of vibrato. Baroque music features clean articulation as well as smooth legato phrases. There should not be a broad vibrato in the sound with the same reasoning as the use of vibrato in the Renaissance music. A wide vibrato distorts the pitch and tuning and interrupts the overarching quality of the phrasing.

Due to the ornamentation and the pulsating rhythm of this Baroque piece, it is important to have the vocal agility necessary to provide musical momentum in phrasing. Appropriate vocal agility will allow for the energized sound required in Baroque music.

**Classical**

“Gloria” from Harmoniemesse by Haydn has a difficulty level of B. There is no AA level Classical music found in the SATB choral contest list. Gloria comes from the mass “Harmoniemesse” and is the second movement of the Ordinary of the Mass. Composers and artists such as Haydn were supported in their efforts through the patronage of the wealthy. Because of this hierarchy, the composer created works on the demands of their patrons rather than artistic expression. The original composition had orchestra, chorus, and soloists. Because this is an arrangement, it includes a soloist, chorus, and a piano reduction.

**Meter and Stress**

Keeping with the pulsation of Baroque music, Classical music also pulsates, but is more delicate than the previous period. The conductor should be able to reflect this delicate pulse in his conducting. The conductor must maintain a precise beat but also reflect the lighter nature of the music to keep the singers on track. While Baroque music was heavily pulsed and moved by beats, the conductor must view Classical music as moving by phrasing grouped according to barlines found in the music. Composers of this style period disregarded the seamless technique as used in the Renaissance period and made the harmonic arrivals more obvious and absolute. The conductor should consider the symmetry of Classical pieces. In this style period, four bar length phrases were more commonly used and should be treated as distinct phrases and symmetrical to the rest of the piece. It is important to execute a slight decrescendo at mid cadence and a light stress on the final cadence according to Lewis Gordon (p. 124). The editor of the piece gives the text stress in the program notes.

Tempo

The tempo of this piece is labeled Vivace assai meaning “quite quickly.” This is a clear representation of the feeling of Glory to God and exalting His Name. Unlike previous periods, Classical composers are indicating tempos in their music. The presto and andante at the beginning of the piece not only reflect the character of the section, but also reflect the tempo that is to be taken. Later in this period, the metronome, a device that is able to keep a clear and steady beat, is used and the resultant tempo is more precise and measurable. However, the metronome marking in this piece is editorial. The tempo is still restrained and not rushed. There is also no extreme tempo. It is important to keep the music moving and pulsing.

A ritardando is used at the end of the piece. The singers, when utilizing rubato, must know that the accompaniment is to keep a strict tempo. This is a reason to not exaggerate the use of rubato and to keep the music progressing.

Dynamics

The dynamics in the piece express the textual meaning. For example, Adoramus te meaning “Worship” is set to a mezzo piano. Later in the piece, Glorificamus meaning “Glorify” is set to forte. These words demonstrate the dynamics contrast and how this is effectively utilized in this piece. Terraced dynamics are also used in this piece. Each new section is set to a different dynamic that appropriately describes the feeling of that section. The first section, forte is used to represent the glory of God. To show contrast,
the next section is piano. This section refers to peace on Earth. There are no extremes used in this period or piece and the conductor should not exaggerate the dynamics out of proportion. The use of crescendo and decrescendo increases. This allows for more expression inside individual phrases and as well as between sections of the piece. It is important for the conductor to recognize the performing space and its acoustic capabilities. The conductor might need to adjust dynamics to get the desired dynamic correctly resonating in the hall.

**Texture**

This piece is a clear representation of the clarity of the voices rather than the thick polyphonic music found in the Baroque period. The clarity of voices is featured in the homophonic style of music. However, some polyphony and imitation is used in this piece. Thus, we see a combination of textures. Musical forms and structures became more symmetrical and formal in nature in the Classical period. These forms were influenced by the growth of opera and symphonies. The overall music texture became lighter and contained a vertical structure. In the vertical structure, the melody reigned important and the harmony was used as the accompaniment. This light and homophonic texture is a result of a slow harmonic structure where the music would stay on one chord longer before moving onto the next chord. As opposed to the thick contrapuntal texture of the Baroque period, the texture of Classical music is marked by clarity. Homophony was used to maintain the vertical flow and simplistic nature of the song. The bass voice became more flexible and the inner parts became more important and received more attention.
**Timbre**

During the past style periods, vibrato has been avoided or used with much restraint. Vibrato in the Classical period is no different. Vibrato should still be focused on a minimum amount of vibrato. This type of vibrato is used to reflect the light and delicate nature of the Classical period. Too much vibrato will destroy the clarity of the music.

**Romantic**


*Lebenslust* by Franz Schubert has a difficulty level of B and is an appropriate piece for intermediate choirs. The text emphasizes the joy of life with friends. This text reflects typical Romantic compositions which focus on secular material such as love, life, and happiness. According to the program notes of this piece, the translation for Lebenslust is “He who feels the joy of life does not remain alone. Being alone and dreary, who can be happy like that. In comfort among friends in the affectionate kiss, to live together is bliss.”

**Meter and Stress**

Rather than word stress, stress occurs on the main beats and follows the lyricism and nuances of the voice. The secular text offers the view of a traditional Romantic perspective. Lebenslust incorporates this Romantic characteristic into the music. For example, the first phrase “Gloria in excelsis, in excelsis Deo” is set to the appropriate main beats to encourage correct word stress.
Tempo

With these dynamics, there comes a connection to the tempo. In some cases, when a crescendo is used an accelerando can be used and with a decrescendo the music is slowed down. As a result, there are more climaxes that appear more suddenly and frequently (Gordon, p. 177). The tempo, “Quickly”, is reflective of the mood of “Lebenslust” and the blissful happiness that the text infers. It is important to remember the tempo should reflect the lyricism of the voice.

Dynamics

Repeated phrases require two different dynamics to show contrast. For example, the first phrase in the piece is at a forte level. The phrase is repeated at a piano level. In the last section of the piece, the phrase, “To live together is bliss” starts at a piano and ends at a forte. The phrase is repeated until the end of the song. The repeated phrase goes from a piano to a fortissimo. The Romantic use of dynamics is seen in this last section. Unlike previous pieces, this piece utilizes more crescendos and decrescendos to achieve a wider range of emotions. With these extreme dynamics, it is very easy to exaggerate dynamics and not have any room to grow. The conductor should make certain that all dynamics have room to grow. A choir should not give all they have on a forte when they have to grow to a fortissimo and vice versa. The conductor should make sure it is balanced to result in a fuller sound. It is important to think of pianissimo as a “hushed intensity and fortissimo as an emotional vigor” (Gordon, p. 128).
Texture

Although not as heavy and thick as most Romantic pieces, this piece offers a lighter texture meant for the popular singing clubs of the period. Typical Romantic pieces contain heavy harmonies which result in a heavier mature sound. Lebenslust is beneficial for high school students because it allows them to sing a Romantic piece without the heavy sound. Lebenslust is a part song meaning a secular choral piece that is primarily homophonic in texture. The melody is located in the upper voice and the lower voices act as chords to musically support the top voices.

Timbre

“Lebenslust” offers a lighter and clearer timbre than typical Romantic pieces. This piece should be performed quickly and lightly and shows Schubert’s lighter style of composition according to the program notes in this edition. Romantic pieces usually require a heavier and more mature sound. Choruses and orchestras became bigger and supported this heavy, large sound. “Lebenslust” is perfect for a high school chorus that can not produce a mature sound that older choruses typically rehearse and perform.

20th century or Modern


Samuel Barber, a leading American composer of the 20th century, composes in a clear representation of modern compositional techniques. *The Coolin’* received a AA difficulty level and is only appropriate for advanced choirs due to the syncopation, dissonance, difficult melodic leaps, vocal control issues, and complex rhythms. *The Coolin’* is a part of a song set of three called *Reincarnations*. The other two songs in the
set are named “Mary Hynes” and “Anthony O’ Daly.” Reincarnations is a reflection of James Stephens’ technique of writing new poems in English based on Gaelic sources.

These sources are love songs or praises for women. The Coolin’ is a love song for women. A Coolin’ is a piece of hair that grows on a woman’s neck. This piece of hair later became known as sweetheart.

**Meter and Stress**

The meter changes many times in this piece. This meter change is due to the complex rhythms and syncopations found in this piece. Word stress is shown as longer note values on the key words of the text which follows the typical rule of word stress that is used throughout the style periods. For example, on page seven, the text “And we will drink our fill of the milk of the white goat” follows the word stress. The words, we, drink, fill, milk, white, and goat all represent longer note values to emphasize their importance in the text. The meter constantly changes 12/8 to 9/8. These changes occur at new sections and in the middle of phrases. Modern music frequently utilizes different meters to keep the sound energized and exciting for both the listener and performers.

**Tempo**

Samuel Barber specifically states the tempo “Andante con moto-Dotted quarter note= 50-54” at the beginning of the piece. The conductor should maintain this tempo as suggested by the composer. There are multiple tenutos, rallentandos, and “a tempos” that need to be addressed when rehearsing the piece. It is important to honor the composer with the correct tempo to maintain a stylistically correct piece.
Dynamics

The dynamics found in this piece change rapidly and each vocal part, at times, has different dynamics at the same time. These dynamic changes are an expansion of the Romantic large use of crescendos and decrescendos. The different dynamics bring out different voice parts and recognize the most important vocal line at that particular moment. For example, the alto text on page four is at a piano dynamic level with the text “on the hill.” The soprano line comes in soon thereafter with the key text at a mezzo piano level. This dynamic difference causes the soprano line to be heard over the alto line creating the important phrase that needs to be heard.

Texture

The texture in this piece is a clear representation of what is achieved in the modern period. The Coolin’ changes from a homophonic line to a polyphonic line suddenly. The modern period uses any texture that is found in previous style periods and is applied to the pieces. This piece also incorporates melismas in the bass, alto, and soprano lines at different times. The harmonies, chromaticism, and chord sonorities have a modern impact on this older style texture. Conductors should be wary of the half steps/whole steps and leaps required of the singer because the singer is not supported by a piano accompaniment. If these steps and leaps are not emphasized, the piece can easily become out of tune.

Timbre

Within the Modern style period, the composer specifically states what is needed from the singer. The tempo is stated as “Tenderly” and is a reflection of the love for
women as suggested by the poet. The conductor and singers must portray this emotion in
their voice using long vowels and legato, moving lines to simulate a tender emotion.
Another timbre marking is found on page six. Samuel Barber marked this section as
espressivo. The singers must utilize their breath to create an energized sound with an
addition of dynamics to create this sound.
Chapter VI

Summary and Conclusions

In writing this thesis, my research has allowed me to become more familiar with the characteristics of musical style periods exemplified in choral literature. With this knowledge of style periods and their characteristics, I will be able to identify the characteristics in the music score and how this can be applied in the rehearsal. With this research, I will also become a conductor who is more aware of how to create correct stylistic performances. In familiarizing myself with the style periods, I have also learned the historical background of these style periods and will be able to introduce these topics in my classroom and rehearsal. I will be able to lead my students to more effective performances through this knowledge.

During my interviews with high school choral conductors, I learned how prepared they felt to lead rehearsals after their undergraduate studies, and how they teach musical style in the classroom. I also had the opportunity to ask questions that went deeper than my research has allowed me. They talked to me about their experiences, both negative and positive, so that I can learn from them and possibly avoid certain teaching pitfalls in my career. These interviews allowed me to network with professionals that I will be able to contact for mentorship in the future.

Through score analysis I have become familiar with traditional and current choral selections that are present on the Ohio Music Education Association Large Group Adjudicated Events Required Repertoire List for 2011. This has allowed me to take
knowledge from my research and apply it to the music representative of particular style periods. From style analysis, I learned that music within any style period can vary greatly. If I were to go further into this analysis, I would focus on the individual compositional techniques used by the composer and how these techniques might differ from the representative style period. Style period dates are not cut and dry and neither are compositional techniques. They vary in accordance with the individual talents, education, and life experiences of each composer. This research has also provided me with a deeper understanding of the content of many of my college courses that, until now, appeared unrelated. This investigation will benefit me as I start my career in music education as a teacher/conductor and will allow me to see the music I choose as representing past and present history, world cultures, and the voices of human expression. I am able to recognize a continual development in choral music as every aspect and characteristic studied demonstrates a metamorphosis over time. In the Renaissance piece, dynamics were very restrained and aimed for a very pure sound. These dynamics became more evident and extensive in later style periods. In the Coolin’, the dynamics show a wide range of contrast and extremes. Composers became more specific in their writing and composing. Modern day music indicates tempos, dynamics, and other notes about how the music should be performed. Earlier Renaissance music contained very little composer markings and there is still debate on what the composer desired for many pieces. New compositional forms developed over time. However, many compositional techniques used in early styles are still used today. All pieces analyzed were a representation of their style period and what was valued, meaningful, and in style in society. For example,
Verbum Caro Factum Est represented the influence of the church. From this came many prominent choral pieces representative of religion. In Lebenslust, society focused on secular music and how it can be used as entertainment. Through these analyses, a reader can see how society changes to incorporate many different ideas and values. When a choral conductor has a proper study of well-chosen repertoire, he can provide a window of knowledge that extends beyond the rehearsal room and performance hall that allows students to make connections and have a better understanding of the world around them.


Appendix A: Interview Questions

Was stylistic accuracy focused on in your undergraduate training to become a conductor and teacher?

Did you feel prepared?

If you did not feel prepared, how did you prepare yourself on the job?

In developing your choral program, how do you go about teaching stylistic accuracy? Could you give some examples?

When in the process of rehearsing a piece, do you focus on the stylistic accuracy?

When do you start talking about different style periods when presenting a piece to your choir?

Could you give me a few examples of pedagogical techniques that you would use for a different style periods?

In the years that you have taught for adjudicated events, do you feel that there has been more or less emphasis on stylistic accuracy?

Have you ever encountered a piece from the choral contest list that had poor editing marks that did not fit the style period?

If you are rehearsing a romantic piece, how do you get the mature sound intended for an adult chorus without harming the younger voice?

If so, what have you done?

During the Baroque period, ornamentation was not written in the music. How do you go about applying it? Do you use what the editors give or use your own research?

In this research, it also states that some music educators shy away from incorporating unwritten Baroque ornamentations. Is it safer to not incorporate or should a conductor always aim to incorporate this ornamentation?

Do you incorporate atonal music in your program? If yes, how do you go about introducing the piece?
What is the most difficult style period to teach?
Appendix B: Sorted Ohio Music Education Association Large Group Adjudicated Events Required Repertoire List 2011 According to Level of Difficulty Classification and Style Period

AA-Most Challenging Level of Difficulty

C-Least Challenging Level of Difficulty

Renaissance (1450-1600)

AA- Verbum Caro Factum Est – Hassler/ed. Leavitt

A – Domine, labia mea operies – Lassus/ed. Archibeque

C – Love Now Invites Us – Gastoldi/arr. Liebergen

C – Psallite – Praetorius/ed. Leck

Baroque (1600-1750)


AA- Sing Unto God – Handel

A – Sicut Locutus Est – Bach

B – Come, Sing and Be Joyful – Vivaldi/arr. Spevacek

C – Love Now Invites Us – Gastoldi/arr. Liebergen

Classical (1750-1825)

A – Michelangelo’s On Beauty – Knecht

B – Gloria (from Harmoniemesse) – Haydn/ed. Liebergen

C – Ave Verum Corpus – Mozart/ed. Dunn
**Romantic (1825-1900)**

A – Der Abend – Brahms

B – Lebenslust – Schubert/ed. Robinson

B – You Stole My Love – MacFarren/ed. Leavitt

**20th century (1900-Present)**

AA – Ave Maria – Saunders

AA – Come to me my love – Dello Joio

AA – The Coolin’ – Barber

AA – Elijah Rock – Hogan

AA – If Ever Two Were One – Walker


AA – Musica – Armstrong

AA – Sleep – Whitacre

AA – Yo le Canto Todo el Dia – Brunner

A – Ce beau printemps – Sirett

A – The Cloths of Heaven – Stroope

A – Echo – Young

A – Glorious Everlasting – Cousins

A – I Got a Home in-A that Rock – Butler


A – Wondrous Love – arr. Foster

A – Zion’s Walls – Copland/arr. Koponen

B – Cantate Domino – Hayes

B – Earth Song – Ticheli
B – Esto Les Digo –Lange
B – For the Beauty of the Earth –Rutter
B – From There –Bair
B – Gate Gate –Tate
B – If Music Be the Food of Love –A. Beck
C – Bound to Go –Althouse
C – By Waters Clear and Flowing –arr. Wagner
C – Dindirin –Gray