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Establishing and utilizing criteria for selecting and composing appropriate choral literature for middle school mixed ensembles

Beery, Lon Scott, Ph.D.
The Ohio State University, 1994
ESTABLISHING AND UTILIZING CRITERIA
FOR SELECTING AND COMPOSING
APPROPRIATE CHORAL LITERATURE
FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL MIXED ENSEMBLES

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the
Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

Lon S. Beery, B.M., M.A.

The Ohio State University
1994

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PUBLICATIONS

Articles:

1. Modified Three-Part Mixed Voicing.
   In Concert. December-January, 1994

2. Three Ohio Educational Choral Composers.

3. Two Ohio educational choral composers.

4. Do you teach music to your choirs?
Published Choral Compositions:

1. "All Good Gifts" (Beckenhorst, 1990)
2. "Blessed Is He" (Beckenhorst, 1989)
3. "Come to Me" (Lorenz, 1990)
4. "Come to the Stable" (Hal Leonard, 1992)
5. "Dreams" (Hal Leonard, 1993)
6. "Gloria In Excelsis" (Kimmel, 1988)
8. "Seal" (Hal Leonard, 1994)
9. "Shout For Joy" (Beckenhorst, 1985)
10. "Worthy Is The Lamb" (Lorenz, 1990)

Published Choral Arrangements and Adaptations:

1. "Amazing Grace - Kum Ba Yah" (Harold Flammer, 1991)
2. "Angels Fanfare, The" (Shawnee Press, 1990)
3. "Canonic Processional" (Hope, 1989)
5. "Freedom Land, Glory Land" (Hal Leonard, 1987)
7. "I've Got Joy" (Hal Leonard, 1992)
8. "Joshua Fit The Battle Of Jericho" (Kimmel, 1994)
9. "Let's Celebrate the Season" (Hal Leonard, 1991)
10. "Let Freedom Ring" (Hal Leonard, 1992)
12. "Love Was Born in a Manger" (Hal Leonard, 1992)
14. "Now Let Us Sing" (Hal Leonard, 1994)
15. "Ragtime Song" (Alfred, 1990)
16. "Santa's Hoedown" (Hal Leonard, 1992)
17. "Sound the Trumpet" (Hal Leonard, 1990)
18. "Tell All The World" (Kimmel, 1994)
19. "This Is The Shepherd" (Kimmel, 1988)
20. "Those Old-Time Melodies" (Hal Leonard, 1993)

FIELD OF STUDY

Major Field: Music: Dr. James Major, Dr. Jerry Lowder, Professor James Gallagher
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PREFACE

Hylton (1983), in his review of research in choral music education between 1972-1981, discussed two doctoral studies at The Ohio State University. He cited Adams' (1973) dissertation which focused on high school choral literature, as well as Jothan's (1978) dissertation which addressed similar issues for elementary aged choruses. Although the methodologies of these two studies were different, they shared two important similarities: (a) both established criteria for composing choral compositions for their respective grade levels, and (b) both composed choral compositions which exemplified the established criteria. In establishing criteria, these studies are valuable not only to the choral directors who work with students at these ages, but also to choral composers and arrangers who wish to write music which is appropriate for these grade levels.

The present study was initiated in a desire to address the same issues for choirs at the middle school level. The methodology taken herein is likewise different from those taken by either Adams (1973) or Jothan (1978). Like those studies, however, it is hoped that the present study will assist middle school choral directors in selecting appropriate choral literature for their choirs as well as choral composers and arrangers in writing for middle school choral ensembles.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

There is perhaps no greater decision made by choral directors than the choice of choral literature to be sung by the choirs under their direction. Although this is true at all age levels, there is possibly no time when this is of greater significance than at the middle school level. As Taylor (1966) has noted, "Particularly at the junior high school level is music suitability a critical factor, for it is often at this level that musical interest is either crystallized--or shattered" (p. 1). As important as selection of suitable literature is at this age, Davis (1970) found that criteria employed by choral directors in the selection of repertoire was virtually neglected in terms of research. In addition, Baressi (1983) discovered that middle school choral directors often reported feeling uneasy in this specific area.

Need for Establishing Criteria

There is little doubt that the process of vocal mutation makes the selection of appropriate choral literature even more difficult. As Baressi and Russell (1983) have noted, the selection of appropriate choral literature is especially important because the pieces will be used as means of vocal training. These authors further noted that establishing criteria for selecting
appropriate choral literature based on vocal mutation research was necessary in order to help train future choral directors.

In addition to helping choral directors, establishing criteria for selecting appropriate choral literature would also be beneficial to composers and publishers. Taylor (1966) noted that there is a need for a description of criteria, including norms and limitations, to aid composers who would write for students at the junior high school level. This is especially true because there seem to be few composers who write specifically for middle school choral ensembles.

As Funderburk-Galvan (1987) has suggested, presently the field of composers and arrangers writing for this age is somewhat limited. Therefore middle school choral directors often select many pieces composed or arranged by the same composer or arranger. Funderburk-Galvan and Fiocca (1986) listed Joyce Eilers (Bacak), Roger Emerson, Linda Spevacek, Natalie Sleeth, Jill Gallina, and Ed Lojeski as the composers and arrangers most often mentioned by the exemplary choral directors in their studies. One may conclude that such a limited field of composers-arrangers may well lead to a repertoire somewhat lacking in variety. When directors select many pieces by the same composer or arranger, it is difficult to avoid this. By identifying specific qualities of appropriate choral literature for middle school choirs, it is hoped that more composers may add to this repertoire and provide choral directors with a wider variety of choral literature from which to choose.
Problems with Earlier Studies

This is not a new area of research. In fact, a large number of the studies which have focused on the phenomenon of the adolescent male changing voice have also addressed the issue of appropriate choral literature for students at this age. Several of these have used a similar approach to the one taken in this study by reviewing the literature for criteria and then composing or arranging pieces to fit those criteria. A few studies elicited responses from choral directors to validate selected criteria. There are reasons to believe that these earlier studies may be somewhat obsolete for today's middle school situation, however.

Emphasis on Range

Perhaps the first observation one makes when approaching the literature concerning middle school choral music is that there has been an overwhelming emphasis on the vocal range limitations of adolescent male singers. In fact, many earlier studies focused so much on the adolescent male changing voice that few if any other considerations were addressed. As Shepherd (1983) has noted, instead of treating adolescent males as whole people, many research studies have treated them as little more than a "disembodied larynx" (p. 114).

There is little doubt that the issues of range and tessitura are extremely important in selecting choral music for students at this age. It should be pointed out, however, that these issues are important only as a
means to selecting voicings which are appropriate for students at this age. Decisions concerning voicing are generally reached through consideration of vocal range, tessitura as well as choral balance. As Funderburk-Galvan (1987) has suggested, an overwhelming number of successful middle school choral directors have adopted the three-part mixed voicing as being the most appropriate for most contemporary middle school situations. Since this voicing includes specific range requirements, the issue of vocal range and tessitura takes on secondary importance. Therefore, the present study de-emphasizes the issues of range and tessitura, attempting rather to be a more global approach in that areas such as appropriate texts, voicings, styles, part-writing, timbral concerns, and dynamics are addressed.

Fortunately, there are several authors who have noted criteria other than vocal range. Unfortunately, some of these merely reiterated the positions of earlier authorities without seeking to validate them in any way. There is, therefore, a definite need to discern which criteria are truly appropriate and which ones are obsolete or otherwise inappropriate.

**Grade Level Groupings**

One reason why some earlier studies may be obsolete is because they were specifically directed toward junior high school rather than middle school choral music programs. Although the terms "middle school" and "junior high school" have been used somewhat interchangeably throughout the literature, a distinction is made in the present study. Curtis (1968) and Braddock (1988) generally refer to junior high schools as containing grades seven through nine, whereas middle schools contain grade six through eight. Early studies
in music, including those by Baker (1927) and Elliott (1939) noted that the majority of junior high schools included grades seven through nine. Since the 1960's, a large number of school districts have reorganized this intermediate school to form what is generally called today the middle school, often including grades six through eight. Braddock noted that the trend away from junior high schools toward middle schools is well documented. Funderburk-Galvan (1987) likewise found that a majority of middle school choir directors she surveyed did not include ninth grade students in their ensembles. In the present study, the term "junior high schools" will refer to those schools which include grades seven through nine, whereas the term "middle schools" will refer to those which include grades six through eight.

Several recent authorities have noted that this change in the grade levels represented at the middle school brings into serious question the appropriateness of the results of earlier studies which assumed the older junior high school grade designation. For instance, Adcock (1970) noted that "...Cooper's proposal is for junior high, grades 7 - 9, whereas middle school encompasses grades 5 - 8..." (p. 42). Funderburk-Galvan (1987) likewise noted that Cooksey's recommendations concerning appropriate voicings for middle school choirs were made in reference to ensembles including both eighth and ninth grade students. Since the majority of the subjects in her study taught choirs which did not include ninth graders, she suggested that recommendations by Cooper and Cooksey may not be completely applicable to middle school ensembles which do not include ninth grade students.

This change in organizational structure makes the present study even more relevant. A number of authorities (Ward, 1941; Park, 1944; Rutkowski, 1985) have noted that students in grades seven and eight often present choral
directors with the greatest challenge in the area of literature selection due to the large number of cases of high vocal mutation among the adolescent males. Karr (1988) suggested that the greatest amount of voice change occurs during the seventh grade. As Ward and Rorke (1964) have suggested, by the ninth grade most of the change has occurred, and the adolescent male has rediscovered his voice. Since middle schools generally include seventh and eighth grade students, the present study will focus specifically on choral music for seventh and eighth grade mixed choirs.

Other authorities have suggested that middle school choral groups are significantly different from those in junior high school. As Funderburk-Galvan (1987) has noted, Cooksey, Cooper, McKenzie, and Swanson all reported that the majority of boys in the eighth grade are in a period of high mutation. In contrast, the voices of ninth grade students are generally more settled. She also noted that Cooksey recognized that there are disadvantages to eighth grade mixed choruses for this reason. Likewise, as Cooksey (1982) noted, a large number of students experience voice change during the seventh and eighth grade years. Funderburk-Galvan suggested that even though it might be desirable to combine eighth and ninth grade students, the grade level structure of most middle schools today makes this impossible. Hassell (1970) has suggested that one effect of the change from junior high schools to middle schools is that much of the music literature once used in the junior high school would best be transferred to the high school where it would be more appropriate.

The result is clear. Generalizations made in earlier studies concerning appropriate choral literature for junior high school may be inappropriate for middle school choral ensembles.
Gender Segregation

There are additional reasons to believe that some of the recommendations from earlier authorities may well not be appropriate today. One plan for working with junior high school singers recommended segregating the male and the female pupils. Although Conrad (1964) stated that mixed groups stimulated the interests of junior high school students more than did segregated groups, a number of authorities strongly disagreed. As Kauffman (1943) noted, in 1930, the Committee on Vocal Affairs of the Music Educators National Conference recommended that females and males should be segregated for their vocal music classes. Ingram & Rice (1962) echoed this view by suggesting that mixed choruses were the least effective approach at the junior high school level, although they recognized that such arrangements are often necessary. Wiseman (1967) was even more emphatic, stating that it was essential to teach adolescent males and females in separate vocal classes at the secondary level. Swanson (1984), who strongly recommended this approach for the changing male voice, noted that this plan was easy to implement since the male and female students at the junior high school level were generally separated in physical education classes as well as in shop and home economics classes.

Although it is common to find gender segregation a popular idea in this earlier literature, there is evidence that this was not necessarily a common practice. Ryan (1958) noted, for instance, that of the 30 junior high school choral directors who responded, only three segregated their choruses by gender. He noted that scheduling was the primary factor for keeping the students on the same classes. More recently, Barresi and Russell (1983)
noted that the mixed chorus was the choral ensemble most often found in junior high and middle schools. Therefore, plans which are based on gender segregation are dated, making recommendations for appropriate choral literature based on this proposal obsolete as well.

**Earlier Maturation**

In addition to the above problems concerning earlier research studies, an additional area must be raised, that of earlier maturation of humans, or what is often called the secular trend. A number of authorities have noted that people are physically maturing earlier, often arriving at sexual maturity a few years earlier than past generations. Tanner (1968), a leading authority on the secular trend, has stated that puberty is being reached 2.5 to 3.5 years earlier today than it was a century ago. Adcock (1986) has likewise noted, "The physical/sexual development of the 1986 10-year-old compares with the 12-year-old of 1900" (p. 40). Although the reason for this secular trend is not absolutely clear, Tanner (1978) has suggested that two variables have perhaps affected it most directly: better nutrition and improved environmental conditions, notably, the lessening of disease.

Some authorities (McKenzie, 1956; Brodnitz, 1988; Sataloff & Spiegel, 1989) have suggested that climate also plays an important role, generally suggesting that puberty tends to occur earlier in warmer climates and later in colder. Spann (1968) noted, however, that several authorities disagreed with this idea. Tanner (1978) suggested that climate exerted only a very mild effect.
This is not to suggest that all authorities agree that a secular trend toward earlier maturation has taken place during this century. McCammon (1965), for instance, has stated that the mean age of menarché was the same in the 1960's as it was in the 1930's. The overwhelming opinion of most of the authorities has been, however, that a secular trend toward earlier maturation has indeed occurred.

In addition to nutritional and environmental concerns, there is some evidence that race may be a variable (Wilson, 1946; Cooper, 1955; McKenzie, 1956; Hollien and Malcik, 1962; Hughes, 1984). Hughes noted, for instance, that non-white students experienced vocal mutation earlier than did white students. Wilson suggested that African-American males experienced voice change one to two years earlier than did Caucasian males. Likewise, Cooper stated that voice changes in African-American male pupils have been discovered in grades three and four. Hollien and Malcik noted that southern African-American males had an earlier maturation and lower terminal pitch than was the Caucasian males reported by Curry in 1940. Hughes recommended that because of the faster mutation of non-white males, groups containing these males at the eighth grade level should use music which has a part in the baritone range. Choral teachers who direct middle school choruses with a large number of African-American students may find, therefore, that the age/range estimates from earlier studies may not be accurate for the male singers in their choral ensembles.

Earlier Voice Change

As one might suspect, as part of this earlier maturation, it has been suggested that the adolescent voice change is occurring earlier than in earlier
generations. This information comes from a number of sources, including comparing earlier research studies and historical records with contemporary studies.

By comparing historical records, Regelski (1979) and Roche (1979) have noted that the male voices in J. S. Bach's choirs in Leipzig (1732-1750) generally changed around the age of 17. More recent reports document vocal mutation generally occurring today during the thirteenth year. They further noted that vocal mutation seems to be occurring progressively earlier by 2.5 months per decade.

By comparing research reports, a number of authorities have also documented this trend toward earlier vocal mutation as well. Groom (1979) compared students in 1978 with the results of Friesen's 1972 study who had in turn compared students with those in a study by Sturdy in 1939. Groom found that the mean age of vocal mutation in 1978 was age 13.5 as compared with 13.8 in Friesen's study, and 14.25 in Study's. Likewise, Karr (1988) found that students were generally reaching vocal mutation earlier than was recorded by Friesen. Rutkowski (1985) also found that students were moving through Cooksey's stages of vocal mutation at an earlier age than she reported in her study conducted five years earlier.

As Tanner (1978) has noted, the secular trend in earlier maturation has a host of educational consequences. Perhaps the most obvious place where these consequences are directly felt is the middle school choral program. This brings into question some of the statements which have been made in earlier research studies concerning the age of voice mutation and consequently what music is appropriate at certain grade levels. This emphasizes the need for continued study in this area. More significant to the
present study, it suggests that, as Cooper and Kuersteiner (1970) correctly noted, compositions which were considered appropriate earlier in this century may well not be appropriate today because the ranges which were assumed at particular grade levels are no longer accurate.

**Student Interests**

A number of authorities have alluded to the idea of recognizing student interests in helping to select appropriate choral literature for middle school students. Jones (1960) has noted that the interests of ninth graders in 1959 were more like those of twelfth grade students in 1935. Therefore, one may not expect that today's adolescents will necessarily find the same music interesting that their parents did. In addition, Boyer (1953) has also noted that discovering the interests of adolescents is an ongoing process since student preferences change with the times.

**Text**

According to many authorities, the selection of appropriate texts is of great importance in appealing to the adolescent. Generally, these same authorities recognize that musical texts (i.e. lyrics) are poetry set to music. It seems a bit odd, therefore, that research studies conducted in the field of language arts education concerning poetry preference have been neglected by these authorities. An assumption made in this study is that since musical texts are poetry, poetry preference research is both relevant and important. It is one of the purposes of this study to incorporate some of the findings of
authorities in the field of language arts as a means of determining what texts may be most appealing and appropriate for middle school students.

Conclusion

It has been suggested that there is a need for the present study based on several issues. Several authorities have noted the need for establishing criteria for appropriate middle school choral literature. Middle school choral directors, as well as composers and arrangers, could benefit from an understanding of these criteria.

Although a number of earlier studies have approached this subject, many were too narrow in that they emphasized the issues of range and tessitura to a degree that other issues were somewhat ignored. It has also been suggested that the effects of earlier maturation, and subsequently of earlier voice change, raise questions as to the appropriateness of range estimates for specific grade levels found in earlier studies. Earlier maturation may also make statements concerning adolescents' preferences somewhat dated. In addition, many earlier studies may be obsolete because they were directed toward junior high schools (grades 7-9) rather than middle schools (grades 6-8). Several authors noted that this may be extremely significant because the greatest number of male singers in high mutation are generally in the seventh and eighth grades. Finally, although authorities have noted that the text of a song is of importance in maintaining student interests, none were found who reported results of any of the number of research studies in the area of poetry preferences from the field of language arts.
By reviewing the pertinent literature for statements of a large number of authorities, criteria for selecting and composing appropriate choral literature for middle school students were listed. Many of these criteria seemed to this researcher as so obvious that there did not seem to be a reason to further validate them. Many others, however, seemed to be dated or controversial. These statements were collected into a questionnaire designed to elicit responses from exemplary middle school choral directors. This permitted the evaluation of the statements from the authorities and discern which statements are relevant and which ones are not. Once these criteria had been substantiated by the teachers, several choral compositions were composed which exemplify the established criteria.
CHAPTER II

RELATED LITERATURE

In order to establish criteria for selecting and composing appropriate choral literature for middle school mixed choral ensembles, a review of pertinent literature was conducted. Sources for such criteria included books, doctoral dissertations, masters theses, as well as periodical literature and miscellaneous reports. Literature which focused on adolescent singing voices, as well as sources concerning choral music for upper elementary through high school choral ensembles, were reviewed as possibly relevant to the present study. A search of the literature concerning adolescent poetry preference was also carried out in order to discern qualities of poetry which appeal to students of this age. Since musical texts are indeed poetry, it seemed reasonable that this literature be included in the present study.

Use of Early Citations

Although it is traditional to limit reviews of literature to a selected number of years, it was decided not to make such a limitation in the present study. There were two reasons for this decision. First, since both the junior high school and middle school are relatively recent phenomena, little was published prior to 1900 which focused on qualities of choral music specifically
directed toward junior high schools or middle schools. In addition, prior to this century, singing was often suspended for male singers when vocal mutation began, so that little was written concerning appropriate choral literature for choirs which included adolescent male singers prior to 1900. During the early part of this century this changed dramatically as the junior high school movement started and as various authorities began to propose that adolescents could continue to sing throughout the process of vocal mutation. For these reasons, no limitation was made concerning the year of various citations except that which was imposed by the literature itself.

Second, it became evident that many criteria could be traced to an early author. These statements were often merely reiterated by subsequent authorities. It was decided that finding the earliest citation may well have historic significance. In addition, since the present study suggests that many criteria suggested in other studies are dated, the historical development of these statements seemed important. Therefore, in instances where there is more than one author cited for an idea, they will be listed in chronological, rather than alphabetical order, as is generally customary.

**Categorizing the Criteria**

A large number of specific qualities has been suggested by various authorities concerning middle school choral materials. Grumley (1958), writing from the perspective of Irvin Cooper's *cambiata* concept, suggested five broad criteria for selecting junior high school choral music, including (a) voicing classification, (b) vocal range demands, (c) interest of supporting vocal parts, (d) articulation speed, and (e) text. Similarly, Russell (1980) and
Barresi and Russell (1983) suggested five broad categories of criteria to help choral directors choose appropriate choral literature for choral ensembles which include adolescent male singers. These include: (a) range and tessitura demands, (b) technical difficulty, (c) musical appeal and textual suitability, (d) adaptability of voicing, and (e) musical worth. These two lists of categories of criteria are similar in many ways. In the present study, they have been modified to form the following five categories: (a) vocal and technical limitations, (b) appropriate voicings, (c) musical appeal, (d) textual suitability, and (e) music of worth. In contrast to the earlier studies, the present study combines the issues of range and tessitura demands, technical difficulty, articulation speed, and voicing classification to form the category of vocal and technical limitations. As it has been suggested earlier, choosing appropriate choral voicings is generally the result of range and tessitura considerations in conjunction with choral balance. The present study also divides Barresi and Russell's third category, musical appeal and textual suitability, into separate categories. This was done due to the large number of statements concerning both of these two areas and the desire to investigate more fully and give more importance to the issue of appropriate texts for middle school mixed choirs.

Vocal and Technical Limitations

Range

A large number of authorities have emphasized the issue of range to such a degree that other issues concerning appropriate choral literature for
middle school students have been somewhat ignored. For instance, Cooper and Kuersteiner (1970) stated that "Range is the prime criterion...Children are capable of singing difficult and complicated music if ranges are compatible with voices available" (p. 58). Likewise, Swanson (1981) suggested that "There is really only one problem that differentiates the young male singer with the changing voice from other singers: range" (p. 32).

Although this may seem to make the issue of selecting appropriate choral literature a simple one, in fact, studies concerning vocal range have been perhaps more confusing than helpful. As Funderburk-Galvan (1987) has noted, the major authorities on the adolescent male voice (Duncan McKenzie, Irvin Cooper, Frederick Swanson, John Cooksey) have all stated that selecting music within appropriate ranges of adolescent singers is important. They did not agree on those ranges, however. In addition, she found that a majority of middle school choral directors did not adhere to the ranges as proposed by one specific theory, but rather, accepted parts from more than one of the major authorities.

Without doubt, the issue of vocal range is an important one, as has been documented by the large number of master's theses and doctoral dissertations which have focused on the issue of the range characteristics of adolescent singers. For the present study, the issue of vocal range is important only as it applies to the selection of choral literature. In this connection, several authorities have made recommendations. Cooksey (1977a) has stated that choral directors should consider the vocal capabilities of each stage of maturation when selecting choral literature for middle school students. Recognizing that perhaps no two voices have exactly the same range, especially in the middle school choral ensemble, Ayres and Roduner's
(1942) suggestion that "The range of each voice part should lie definitely within the voice limits of the large majority of the group singing that part" (p. 18), is perhaps more practical. Barresi and Russell (1983) have stated that this is of particular importance for the male singers, since these voices are the ones experiencing the most dramatic vocal mutation.

Perhaps the most common comment made concerning the adolescent male singing voice is that during the process of change, its range becomes limited. Taylor (1966) has noted that the issue of the limited range of the adolescent male voice has been one of the most emphasized issues by authorities concerning the adolescent voice. Authorities who support this view include Giddings, (1919); Baker (1929); Dabney (1935); Breach, (1936); Irwin (1937); Enlow (1938); Elliott, (1939); Ayres and Roduner, (1942); Best, (1942); Morgan (1947); Dexter (1952); Selk (1954); Zimmerman (1955); McKenzie (1956); Olson, (1956); Leeder and Haynie (1958); Christy (1961); Kemp (1965); Taylor; Swanson (1977b); Cooksey, (1982); Barresi and Russell (1983). As Adcock has noted, narrow vocal ranges are more characteristic of adolescent males than of females.

Although various authorities disagree on the appropriate ranges of the adolescent male singer, some have suggested that the range is often less than an octave. Some have even suggested that the range of the changing voice may narrow to a range between a fourth and a seventh (Coleman, 1939; Cooper, 1941; Wheat, 1951; Dexter, 1952; Kemp, 1965). Kemp noted that this range is often between the alto and tenor ranges, making many adult tenor parts too low and many alto parts too high for these voices. In addition, Kemp stated that the ranges of both alto and tenor parts are generally too wide. Likewise, Glenn and Leavitt (1941) suggested that the
bass range is very limited, generally within the compass of an octave. Christy (1961) recommended limiting the changing voices to five to seven tones.

Although the majority of authorities have suggested that the adolescent male changing voice is often narrow in range, several others have disagreed. These include Wilcox, (1935, 1943), Haywood, (1937), and Mayer and Sacher (1965). As Wilcox (1943) wrote, "Nature has imposed no 'short-range' limitations upon any normal voice" (p. 53). He further noted that the adolescents with whom he worked were able to sing a range of about three octaves (Wilcox, 1935). Christy (1961) also wrote supporting this position, making his conclusions somewhat contradictory. As it was noted earlier, he recommended limiting the alto-tenor voice to a narrow range. At another point, he wrote that boys with changing voices should use a more normal wide range.

Concerning the female voice, Wilcox (1943) wrote that the average middle school age female can be taught to sing freely from Ab (below middle C) to b♭1 above the staff. He further suggested that most of them could sing to high C and a number will easily reach low E or F.

Mayer and Sacher (1965) and Fowells (1983) agreed that adolescents are capable of wider ranges than are often attributed to them, adding that the practice of limiting them to narrow ranged vocal parts might actually be harmful. They stated that singing in a narrow range leads to vocal fatigue, even if this narrow range is within the voice's tessitura. Fowells went on to suggest that limited ranges are not a characteristic of the changing voice itself, but rather a result of a lack of motivation and/or training. In addition,
he, as well as Vincent (1954), suggested that singing in a limited range is uninteresting.

Although the issue of limited range is somewhat controversial, the present study does not seek verification of this issue since a recent survey has already noted that successful middle school choral directors considered vocal parts with a narrow range an important criterion in selecting music for adolescent singers (Funderburk-Galvan, 1987). In addition, since the same survey validated the three-part mixed voicing as the most popular among successful middle school choral directors, the issue of range becomes of secondary importance since vocal range is merely a preliminary issue in selecting appropriate voicings.

Female voices

Specific comments have been made concerning the range characteristics of the various vocal categories found in the average middle school choir. Most authorities recognized that adolescent female singers have a rather common, second soprano vocal range. Most warned against labeling them as sopranos or altos at this age. Cooper (1953) even recommended that vocal directors not label them as first or second sopranos, but rather as "A girls" and "B girls." Hassell (1970) suggested that most choir directors who use music arranged by Cooper find the tessitura for the female voices too high, however. Since there are often more female than male singers in middle school choirs, it seems that dividing the female singers into two or more parts is certainly appropriate to attain an appropriate balance with the male singers. Cooper's suggestion permits all the female singers to gain
experience in singing both melodic and harmonic parts. This also seems to be a reasonable approach.

**Male changing voices**

Although there may be unchanged male singers in middle school choral ensembles, especially in the seventh grade, most boys will be in the process of vocal mutation. Three of the major authorities who have written extensively about the male changing voice have developed stage theories which include approximate ranges for boys in each of the stages. They have also used different names for each of the vocal stages. McKenzie referred to boys in the first stage of vocal mutation as "alto-tenors," whereas Cooper borrowed a term from counterpoint and referred to them as "cambiate" (or "cambiata" in the singular). The most contemporary authority, Cooksey, who studied under Cooper, used the term, "Midvoice."

According to McKenzie (1956), alto-tenors generally sing between G (below middle c¹) upwards to g¹ or a¹ above middle c¹. Parts written for the alto-tenors are purposely limited in compass and generally more simple than parts for unchanged voices.

Cooper (1953) disliked the label, alto-tenor, suggesting that voices in the first stage of vocal mutation are not similar to either the alto or tenor voice in either range or timbre. Although McKenzie and Cooper's vocal range for this early stage of maturation share similar lower limits, Cooper attributed a wider range to cambiate, reaching up to the C above middle C. He further noted that the cambiate were not straining in this upper range, because if they were, the first sign would be that the pitch would be flatting.

Hassell (1970) suggested that most choral directors who use music arranged
by Cooper find the cambiata part a bit too high for the average boy with a changing voice. Interestingly, in his dissertation concerning changing voices in Brazil, Spann (1968), a student of Cooper, gave a cambiata range of f below middle c¹ to the a¹ above for the first voice test. As it can be seen in Figure 1, this range is surprisingly similar to McKenzie's "alto-tenor" range.

![Figure 1: Comparison of Alto-tenor and Cambiata Ranges](image)

Busch (1972) noted the problem which the cambiata voice presents in traditional four-part mixed music. As he pointed out, whereas cambiato can sing around e¹ and g¹ above middle c¹ comfortably, the typical high school tenor would soon find singing in this tessitura a strain.

Cooksey (1982) divided the alto-tenor or cambiata voice categories into two or three distinct vocal stages. He designated this stage of mutation as the Midvoice stage. His ranges for the Midvoice ranges can be seen in Figure 2.
Concerning part assignment, Cooksey recommended that unchanged male singers and Midvoice I's should be assigned to the alto or possibly the tenor part in four-part choral music if the range is fairly high. He also noted that adolescent males often to remain in the Midvoice II stage more than twice as long as any other mutational stage, with the exception of the Unchanged and Settling Baritone stages.

 Changed voices

 All of the main authorities recognized that middle school choral ensembles may well have male singers whose voices are more mature and have dropped to a baritone range. In fact, there is some evidence that young baritones are appearing in the upper elementary grades. Coffman (1969) found a number of baritones in grades four through six in his study. He recommended adding an additional optional singing part should there be any baritones present at this level. Dann (1936) has written that there was a surprising uniformity of range for adolescent baritones (between bass clef B♭ or A to middle d⁴ or e♭¹).
Adolescent basses

Although the baritone singer has been considered by the main theories concerning the adolescent male singing voice, it was Frederick Swanson who wrote the most extensively about the adolescent bass. In contrast to the newly developing, or light baritone described by others, Swanson wrote concerning a lower bass voice which he had observed in his many years of teaching. He (Swanson, 1977a, 1982) wrote that these adolescent basses often sang in the lower area of the bass clef, but have difficulty singing above the A, fifth line of the bass clef. In fact, he went on to suggest that up to one third of males at the junior high school level may well be adolescent basses. Kelley (1934) and Wright (1932) likewise noted that bass voices begin to appear during the eighth grade. Wright added that between one-fourth to over one-third of the boys in the average class might have changed voices. Cooper and Kuersteiner (1970) did not agree, noting that true basses were rare even at the ninth grade level.

If Wright and Swanson are right, however, the effect upon selection of appropriate choral literature is significant. Presently, a large number of choral pieces written for middle school choirs use a limited range which centers around middle c¹. This is precisely the area which Swanson (1959, 1973) has suggested is the most difficult for adolescent basses. Indeed, he notes that many adolescent basses can sing in their unchanged soprano range quite easily as well as in the lower portion of the bass clef. They have the most trouble between these two registers, generally in the area of middle c¹. Some male singers even experience “blank spots” at this range, that is, they are totally unable to phonate in this range. He contends that using such music which remains around middle c¹ may actually discourage one third of
the boys from singing. Cooksey (1978) also notes that if baritones are required to sing in the middle $c^1$ area, especially with long phrases, they will probably use incorrect vocal production to attain these notes. Likewise, Goodhart (1936) recommends that bass parts for adolescent singers should not demand too frequent use of the upper part of singers' range. If music was written with the capabilities of these adolescent basses, Swanson suggests that more *basso profundo* voices might actually be developed.

**Tessitura**

Even if the vocal ranges of a choral selection fit the ranges of the students, some authorities (Olson, 1956; Cooper & Kuersteiner, 1970) have suggested that the piece might still be inappropriate due to the tessitura of these parts. Huls (1957), for instance, has suggested that composers have not always been successful in keeping vocal parts in an appropriate tessitura for adolescent voices. Authorities have suggested that choral music written for middle school singers should have parts which generally stay within the tessitura area of the voices (Larson, 1955; Bellows, 1960; Barresi & Bless, 1982; Barresi & Russell, 1983). Although this is true for all choral situations, some (Morgan, 1947; Shewan, 1966) have suggested that it is especially true for young, inexperienced singers. Similarly, the American Academy of Teachers of Singing (1944) stated that singing in a high tessitura leads to strain and possible vocal injury in young, adolescent voices. Ayres and Roduner (1942) suggested that this tessitura area included the central three-fifths of the voice's range. This does not mean that all the notes must be
within the tessitura area, but rather that the bulk of the vocal line should lie within the tessitura limits.

**Dynamic Limitations**

Wilcox (1943) has suggested that in selecting appropriate choral literature, the issue of dynamics is more critical than the issue of range, especially for adolescent females. Although one might assume that the issue of dynamic limitations of the adolescent voice would not be overly controversial, in actuality it is one of the most controversial issues found in the literature. A number of authorities recommend that adolescents only sing softly, others recommend a wider range of dynamic expression.

Russell (1980) has suggested that adolescents experience some loss in dynamic flexibility. She recommended that composers and arrangers avoid using wide or rapid dynamic variations. This, she noted, was especially important in the extremes of the range and in conjunction with long phrases.

A number of authorities have argued against allowing adolescents to sing too loudly. Chase (1940, cited by Olson, 1956) stated that the surest way of spoiling the adolescent voice was with constant loud singing. Huls (1957) noted

...an equally strong tendency [among many directors] to urge students to work for loud, heavy tone. Results showed considerable stridency and harshness in the voices and off-pitch singing, to say nothing of the danger of forcing the action of the young voices (p. 23).

Likewise, Hirt (1954, quoted by Olson) warned against sustained fortissimo
singing by junior high school students, which he suggested results in a sound
that was strident, out of tune, and out of balance.

Soft singing

Several early authorities not only warned against loud singing but also
insisted upon soft singing. Giddings (1919), Dabney (1935) and Ruby Cooper
(1941), for instance, believed that adolescent singers should sing softly.
Others have made gender related statements concerning dynamic levels.
Hosmer (1958), for instance, recommended that choral directors "Have the
girls sing lightly at this age, even though it may restrict the effect of your
chorus" (p. 9). Baker (1927) likewise believed that adolescent boys should
sing softly. Busch (1972) did not prescribe dynamic levels for the male
singers, but noted that cambiate lacked projective power in the mid-range.

Other authorities (Wilcox, 1943; Huls, 1957; Shewan, 1966) have
warned against this emphasis on soft singing. Wilcox noted that the
emphasis on soft singing often led to a devitalized singing tone. Olson (1956)
cited Wilson's objection to the emphasis on soft singing, noting that it lead to
an weak, anemic tone, which if allowed to continue for a number of years,
could harm the individual voice. Rorke (1964) stated adolescent basses have
big voices and should use them in big way.

A number of authorities (Kwalwasser, 1932; Wilcox, 1943) have
objected to the emphasis upon soft singing on the basis that it negatively
affected the students' appeal. Kwalwasser noted that insisting on soft
singing in the middle school affected the adolescent male's enjoyment and
may affect his participation in chorus. Wilcox likewise noted that adolescents
could sing safely with more power than they were often permitted, and that
they would enjoy such singing far more than they would if only allowed to sing softly.

Besides the appeal factor, some authorities (Glenn, 1933, quoted by Dexter, 1952; Wilcox, 1935 & 1943; Rorke, 1964; Roe, 1970) have suggested that the emphasis on soft singing may actually create vocal problems. Roe stated that soft singing often leads to the presence rather than the absence of vocal strain. Wilcox (1943) also noted that inhibiting young voices leads to interfering muscular contraction which often results in more vocal harm than from singing too loudly. Wilcox (1935) believed that such a persistence was "the most difficult vocal feat in the trained singer's bag of tricks" (p. 56). He also suggested that it is far more difficult to maintain a freely opened throat while singing pianissimo. Glenn likewise stated that the constant use of soft singing was as harmful and unpleasant as loud, forced singing. Olson (1956) noted that the authorities, Stanley and Graveure, claimed that a correctly produced soft singing tone is quite difficult vocally, and should not be attempted until the singing voice has developed. Rorke noted that soft, light singing led to a "fuzzy" tone quality and a lack of definition to the pitch. Rorke also suggested that adolescent males are capable of producing a fuller tone which is pleasant as well.

**Mezzo-forte recommended**

What then is the most appropriate range of dynamics for adolescent singers? Several authorities (Klamroth, 1929, cited by McManus, 1932; Wilcox, 1935; Mayer and Sacher, 1965; Shewan, 1973; Barresi & Russell, 1983) have warned against excessive use of either extreme of the dynamic range. Wilcox, Bellows (1960), Christy (1961), and Roe (1970) maintained
that *mezzo-forte* was the safest dynamic level for adolescent singers. The American Academy of Teachers of Singing (1944) also noted that *mezzo-forte* was the easiest dynamic level for vocalizes in the upper half of their range. Bellows and Christy agreed, adding that successful *piano* and *pianissimo* singing are more difficult. Shewan noted that singing *mezzo-forte* is advantageous because it neither requires forcing nor restraint. Furthermore, Wilcox (1945) suggested that singing *mezzo-forte* was beneficial in developing the soft tone. As Olson (1956) noted, the wise director will begin with singing at a *mezzo-forte* and gradually move in both directions dynamically.

Some authorities have noted that there is a relationship between appropriate dynamic levels and the vocal range. Wilcox (1943) noted that "no music -regardless of range -that calls for powerful dynamics or intensive dramatic 'drive' should ever be attempted with immature voices" (p. 54).

Barresi and Russell (1983) wrote more specifically, noting that a wider dynamic variation (*mp to f*) may be achieved in the tessitura areas, but that such variation diminishes as the singer moves outside the tessitura area. Knauff (1967) also stated that lower pitches should be sung softer.

In addition to the issue of range, a few additional criteria have been suggested by various authorities concerning dynamics. Several authorities (Wilson, 1949; Cooksey, 1978) have argued that sustained *forte* is not desirable for choral ensembles at this age. Large contrasts in dynamic levels should also be avoided according to these authorities. In addition, Cooksey has warned against pieces requiring slow building intensities.
Vocal Timbre

It is generally accepted that adolescent voices do not have the same resonant tone quality as more mature voices. As Joseph (1966) has noted, one should not expect adolescent male singers to have the same quality of tone as adult singers. This point has been somewhat neglected as a criterion for selecting appropriate literature. Drotleff (1976, 1978) has noted that when selecting appropriate literature, directors should consider the light tone quality and lack of vibrato of adolescent singers. A number of authorities have made more specific remarks concerning adolescent vocal timbre.

Cooksey (1982) suggested that the unchanged voice has a rich tone quality. Cooper (1953) and Cooper and Kuersteiner (1970) have written that the *cambiata* voice has a beautiful, sonorous tone, which is rich, "woolly," and undeniably masculine. Cooksey also suggested that "Midvoice I" voices are characterized by an increased breathiness, especially at the top part of their range, "Midvoice II" voices have a tone similar to an alto tone quality, and "Midvoice IIA" singers have an alto sound in the upper range, but a heavier and huskier tone in the lower part.

Cooper (1953) further described the timbral qualities of adolescent baritones as having a warm tone. Cooksey (1982) described the sound of the "New Baritone" singer as being light and thin, whereas the "Settling Baritone" was more powerful and resonant, although it still lacked an adult baritone sound.

Although little has been said concerning the adolescent female singing voice from the perspective of range, Cooper and Kuersteiner (1970) have described its timbre as being thin, colorless and sometimes shrill. Likewise,
Kemp (1965) and Swanson (1975, 1977b) described the voices of middle school females as "breathy."

How this affects choice of material for middle school choirs is clear. Breach (1936) recognized that the wise junior high school choral director should make no attempt to approach the more brilliant sound of senior high school ensembles which generally have a fuller and more powerful sound. Similarly, Busch (1973) noted that "tonal brilliance and richness of resonance, qualities frequently heard in more mature choirs, are not common attributes in junior high groups" (p. 21). Cooksey (1982) also noted, that even after the "Settling Baritone" mutational stage, one should not expect middle school students to sing with an adult tone quality. Indeed, the middle school chorus has a tone color quite unique. McIntosh (1980), speaking specifically of ninth grade choirs, noted that the combination of breathy female voices and the characteristic tone quality of adolescent male voices created a unique, yet pleasant choral tone. She noted, however, that finding appropriate music to fit these voices could be difficult. Certainly, choral music should reflect the tonal quality which is characteristic of this age level.

**Aural illusion**

Related to the issue of timbre, Cooper (1953, 1957, 1964b, 1967) has written on several occasions that the timbre of the *cambiata* voice often led to its misclassification as a baritone. He referred to this as the aural illusion. He suggested that teachers often confused the *cambiato* sound with that of a baritone because the tone quality of the *cambiata* voice often led one to believe that they were indeed singing an octave lower than was the case.
Few areas have caused such heated debate as the issue of aural, or octave illusion. Several authorities, including Swanson, have questioned the phenomenon. On the other hand, Richison (1971) claimed that Swanson's "blank spots" actually occurred an octave higher than Swanson believed, and that the adolescent basses were actually singing an octave higher than Swanson realized. Little research has investigated this phenomenon, although Patricia Watson (1964, cited by Hassell, 1970) noted that Lorene Brunson created an experiment to witness the phenomenon of the aural illusion. The findings were inconclusive, but the octave illusion did not manifest itself.

Articulation Speed

Several authorities on the adolescent male changing voice, especially those associated with Cooper's *cambiata* concept, have raised the issue of articulation speed of the adolescent voice and its effects upon choral literature chosen for choirs at this age. Unfortunately, as Taylor (1966) has noted, there is some ambiguity as to how the term is used. Sometimes it has been used to refer to the articulation of consonants, whereas other times it has been used with reference to the articulation of melodic intervals. Taylor further noted that Cooper did not give specific examples of what he meant by the term. It may be deduced from the literature, however, that articulation speed refers to both the speed of rhythmic articulation which includes the issues of appropriate tempi and rhythms, as well as to how many individual pitches per syllable are appropriate (i.e. syllabic *versus* melismatic style).
This issue also includes the overall speed at which certain melodic intervals can be approached.

Several writers (Cooper, 1950; Bowen, 1951; Vincent, 1954; Gustafson, 1956; Zingale, 1958; Ingram & Rice, 1962; Groom, 1979, 1982; Russell, 1980; Cooksey, 1982) have noted that boys voices are less flexible during this period of vocal mutation. Cooper (1953) and Cooper and Kuersteiner (1970) proposed that *cambiate* were slower in articulation than sopranos, and baritones even slower. Cooksey stated that this was due to the rapid growth and extension of the vocal mechanism. As a result, he recommended that when selecting music for middle school choirs, the teacher should avoid melismas, which he suggested call for rapid adjustments at the laryngeal level. In addition, Cooper and Kuersteiner have suggested that parts for changing voices move relatively slowly, the baritone part even slower than the *cambiata*. Cooper also recommended using music with simple rhythmic and melodic patterns and sequences.

Concerning the female voice, there seems to be a bit more confusion. As Thomas (1974) noted, Cooper seemed to have changed his mind concerning the articulation flexibility of adolescent female voices. In an early writing, Cooper (1953) warned against using music with florid passages since junior high school sopranos are not able to articulate quite as rapidly as those in senior high school. In a later source, Cooper (in Cooper and Kuersteiner, 1970) noted that adolescent soprano voices are very flexible, and are easily capable of singing florid passages.
Rhythmic Flexibility

As has been noted, some authorities include in their use of the phrase, vocal articulation, the issue of rhythmic flexibility. Hosmer (1958) and Barresi and Russell (1983) stated that long florid passages should be avoided. Barresi and Russell stated that singing such parts could lead to improper singing habits.

If adolescent voices, especially those of boys, lack rhythmic flexibility, it seems logical that this should affect the choice of literature. Besides the recommendation to avoid florid, melismatic melodic lines, some authorities have made other applications. As Barresi and Russell (1983) have noted, the speed of phonational articulation is directly related to tempos and rhythms of pieces. They recommended that female singers may perform faster tempos than can changing male voices which must move in more moderate tempos.

Due to this consideration of rhythmic articulation limitations, some authorities have recommended that simple rhythm patterns should be used. Glenn and Leavitt (1941) and Swanson (1977b) for instance recommended that the first songs used with junior high school students be characterized by simple rhythm patterns. In contrast, Barresi and Russell (1983) suggested that rhythmic pieces may be successfully performed if the text is set syllabically. Eilers (1991) was even less restrictive, recommending no restrictions on the rhythms used. She suggested that the students can learn any rhythm that the teacher can teach them, although it is unclear whether she had the idea of vocal articulation in mind.
**Intervallic Flexibility**

As Cooper and Kuersteiner (1970) have noted, articulation speed includes more than rhythmic flexibility. The lack of vocal flexibility also affects the ability of adolescent male singers to perform certain melodic intervals accurately. Irwin (1937) noted that adolescents lacked flexibility and found large skips (i.e. octaves) difficult to perform, as well as small intervals (half and whole steps). Intervals which Cooper and Kuersteiner considered easy to articulate included the diatonic major or minor thirds, perfect fourths, and perfect fifths. They added that the leap of a major or minor sixth takes a little more time to articulate. A leap of a seventh was considered highly difficult. At another point, the same authors suggested that minor sixths are among the easier intervals to negotiate. They also moved the minor seventh from the "disastrous" level to the same category with the major sixth. They further noted that "the augmented fourth presents odd problems but, paradoxically, the diminished fifth correctly resolved is a routine matter" (p. 27). Eilers (1991) recommended that middle school choral composers should avoid augmented fourths, diminished fifths, minor sixths, and major sevenths. Barresi and Russell (1983) also discouraged the use of extended chromatic passages, lines with wide and rapid intervalic leaps, and melodies with rapid, angular pitch changes. Lapierre (1983) suggested that parts should be primarily stepwise. Cooksey (1992) stated that stepwise motion was easier to sing than leaps of fifths or augmented or diminished intervals. Likewise, Eilers suggested that composers should avoid wide or awkward leaps, especially in the inner voices, but the fact that she distinguished between the inner and the other voices suggests that this is possibly due to reasons other than articulation speed.
In writing about choral parts for baritone singers, Cooper (1953) recommended parts which emphasized tonic and dominant pedal points as well as scalar passages. He further suggested that sequential patterns were successful for the baritone part as was an occasional ascending octave leap.

Related to the issue of intervalic flexibility is the issue of chromaticism. Cooksey (1978) and Manzo (quoted by Taylor, 1966) discouraged the use of chromaticism. Cooksey noted that chromatic patterns presented performance problems for adolescent singers. Manzo stated that it presented reading and intonation problems as well. In contrast, Ingram and Rice (1962) stated that adolescents enjoyed singing chromatic patterns. They suggested that although adolescent singers still found diatonic patterns appealing, logical patterns which utilized augmented and diminished intervals were especially appealing at this age.

Related to this issue of vocal articulation is the issue of register changes. Cooksey (1982) noted that distinctions between vocal registers become clear during the middle school years. A few authorities (Cooksey, 1978, 1982, 1992; Russell, 1980; Barresi & Russell, 1983) have suggested that adolescents have some difficulty making quick changes from one register to another, particularly male singers. For this reason, they recommended avoiding compositions which required numerous or sudden changes from one register to another, especially for male singers. Cooksey (1982) noted that key transition areas were F-C (treble clef) for Midvoice II and IIA voices; and middle C-E (above Middle C) for New Baritones. Somewhat related to registral changes, Russell and Barresi and Russell have warned against using pieces which required quick shifting harmonic passages.
Phrase Lengths

Although only a few authorities mentioned this area as a criterion for selecting and/or composing middle school choral music, the issue of phrase lengths is one which should be considered. Taylor (1966) cited Eleanore Tipton in recommending using relatively short phrases in choral music for middle school students. Barresi and Russell (1983) likewise warned against using music with extended phrases, especially for the male singers, due to the fact that the adolescent breathing mechanism was still developing. Due to the breath control capabilities of adolescent singers, Cooksey (1992) suggested that choral compositions by Bach and Brahms were often difficult for middle school singers.

Cooksey (1978, 1992) also warned against the combination of long phrases and high tessituras, noting that this combination caused vocal strain and tension, especially if proper breath support was not used. Cooksey (1992) noted that for this reason, a great deal of Renaissance choral literature was difficult for adolescent voices.

Length of Composition

As Jothen (1978) found concerning elementary choral music, Rhodes (1989) and others have stated that choral music written for middle school students should be relatively short. Several reasons for this have been suggested, some based on adolescents' attitudes, and others based on physiological concerns. Foster (1945) recommended short pieces, due to adolescent interests. Regelski (1979) was more specific when he suggested
that music should seldom exceed a few minutes because adolescents' emotions were often short-lived. Likewise, Gustafson (1956) noted that shorter pieces were required due to the adolescents' short attention span.

Barresi and Russell (1983) also recommended using short pieces because middle school students tended to tire easily. They further noted that their fatigue affected their ability to concentrate. In addition to the issue of concentration, they emphasized that the singing of short pieces may be necessary due to the nature of the changing vocal mechanism at this age. Russell (1980) added that the fatigue caused by singing long compositions led to poor vocal production. They suggested that adolescent singers often did not have the intellectual or physical endurance to maintain proper vocal production for long periods of time. Therefore, they recommended that middle school choral ensembles perform several shorter pieces (two to three minutes) to allow the singers to rest their voices between the selections.

Form

Somewhat related to length is the issue of form. If a piece is to be fairly short, the form will out of necessity be rather simple. Swanson (1976) recommended selections which have short verses and a recurring chorus such as simple A-A-B-A or A-B-A forms. Similarly, Cain (1945) discouraged performing through-composed songs due to their demands on the imagination.
Accompaniment

There is some controversy among the various authorities concerning whether choral music for middle school choirs should be accompanied or unaccompanied. Beattie, McConathy, and Morgan (1930) discouraged the use of the piano, noting that four-part songs are already harmonically complete. They also suggested that unaccompanied singing permitted directors to center their attention more closely on what the singers are doing. Since many choral directors who work with students at this age do not use four-part music, however, this approach may not be appropriate.

Other authorities suggested a combination of accompanied and unaccompanied singing. McCarthy (1937) recommended using some unaccompanied pieces, but noted that this could be tiring for young voices. Webb (1954) likewise advised both accompanied and unaccompanied singing, stating that this depended on the abilities and previous training of the group.

As Jothen (1978) found in the case of elementary choirs, most authorities recommended using music with piano accompaniment with this age level. Beattie (1935) went as far as to state that he believed that it was a mistake not to use a piano. Likewise, Kauffman (1943) recommended using piano accompaniment most of the time due to the fact that both four-part singing is introduced at this age, as well as the bass clef. Best (1942) likewise recommended accompanied singing, stating that the support of the accompaniment was often needed during the period of voice change. Cooper (1953) seemed to have adapted this attitude as well, suggesting that the choral director would be wise to use the piano if it helped the choir achieve a more musical experience quickly.
Having established that music for the middle school chorus should generally be accompanied, several concerns regarding the nature of that accompaniment have been suggested. Several authorities (Barrett, 1935; Goodhart, 1936; Bessom, Tatarunix & Focucci, 1974; McIntosh, 1980) have stated that the accompaniments should be playable by student accompanists. McIntosh, writing about ninth grade choruses, noted however, that there was a lack of good student accompanists at this level. Many had studied piano for just a few years. One should expect that accompaniments written for seventh and eighth grade choral ensembles would need to be less demanding than even those considered by McIntosh.

Certainly, if student accompanists are to be used in middle school choral ensembles, the accompaniments would need to be rather simple, keeping in mind the technical limitations of the vast majority of pianists at this age. It is perhaps for this reason that some authorities have recommended using adult accompanists rather than student accompanists for ensembles at the middle school level. Cooper (1953) for instance, recommended using a teacher who is a competent pianist. Fiocca (1986) found in her descriptive study that among the exemplary middle school directors she interviewed, a majority did not use student accompanists. It would seem that composers and arrangers might wish to consider the technical abilities of students when arranging piano accompaniment parts, but that they should not feel obligated to limit themselves to such restrictions if a more demanding accompaniment part better supports the choir and enhances the musical experience.

Besides technical difficulty, some authorities have given other suggestions concerning piano accompaniments. Best (1942) and Eilers (1991)
suggested that the piano part should re-inforce the voice parts in the right places. Webb (1954) and Eilers stated that accompaniments should add harmonic and melodic interest to the voice part, rather than be a mere duplication of the vocal parts. Swift (1960) recommended using accompaniments to round out the chords, suggesting perhaps that due to range limitations, complete chords are not always possible in the choral parts. Eilers recommended using a low left hand part to compensate for the lack of low vocal range in the middle school male section. Swanson (1977b) recommended choral literature with simple primary chordal accompaniments which could be easily transposed instantaneously.

Finally, although all would agree that accompaniments should be musical, supportive, and interesting, Webb (1954) and Olson (1956) warned against the other extreme, noting that the piano part should not call attention away from the chorus by being overly showy, contrapuntal, or elaborate. Olson referred to this type of an accompaniment as a "piano solo with choral obbligato."

Appropriate Voicings

Although the issue of range and tessitura is of significance to choral directors in selecting appropriate choral literature for their choirs, it is really in the area of selecting appropriate voicings that it is most relevant. In fact, it is only after one considers range in combination with the issue of choral balance that the issue of appropriate voicings can be addressed.
Balance

It is generally true that female singers outnumber the male singers in middle school choral ensembles. As Siltman (1978) humorously put it, "at Typical Junior High School in Ego, U.S.A., (of Pride County) the curriculum includes a mixed chorus made up of approximately 60 eighth and ninth grade singers. The ratio of girls to boys is about 3 to 2" (p. 9). Since it is generally conceded that the adolescent female voice has a rather singular range, the suggestion has been made that the females be divided into two or more parts to balance the number of boys. Working with males in the seventh and eighth grades is a bit more difficult, since, as Cooksey (1982) has noted, they will be in a variety of stages of vocal development.

In determining what voicings are most appropriate for these grades, it is helpful to estimate the number of boys one may find in each of the stages of vocal maturation. Cooper (1955) stated that at grade seven one should expect that out of every five boys, one (20%) will be a soprano, three (60%) cambiate, and one (20%) baritone. At the eighth grade he suggested that out of every eight boys, a teacher might expect one (12.5%) soprano, five (62.5%) cambiate, and two (25%) baritones. Cooper and Kuersteiner (1970) suggested that at the beginning of the school year, one should expect to find out of every 15 boys in the seventh grade, three (20%) will be sopranos, 10 (66.7%) will be cambiate, and two (13.3%) baritone (no basses). At the eighth grade level, out of 15 boys, only one (6.7%) will be a soprano, ten (66.7%) cambiate, and four (26.7%) baritone (still no basses).

Friesen (1972) found that 59.2% of the boys in seventh grade had unchanged voices. In addition, 24.4% were in the process of changing,
whereas 16% had voices which were changed. At the eighth grade level, Friesen found 22.5 unchanged voices, 30.5% in the process of change, and 47% changed.

Groom (1979) reported that at the seventh grade level approximately 10.5% of the males had unchanged voices. An additional 74% were in the process of changing, whereas 15.5% were changed. At the eighth grade level, Groom suggested that no boy sopranos are generally found. He stated that 60% of the males are in the process of changing and the other 40% have changed voices.

Cooksey (1982) suggested that voices in almost all stages of maturation will be found in seventh grade ensembles, with boy sopranos and Midvoice I singers in the majority. Some Midvoice II singers will also be present as well as baritones. In the eighth grade, Midvoice I's and II's are in the majority as well as a significant increase in New Baritones. The Unchanged and Midvoice I voices are few, if any, however, at the eighth grade level.

Hughes (1984) suggested that among non-white males at the seventh grade level, one might expect to find 80% cambiatas and 10-20% changed (baritones). Among Caucasion boys, Hughes suggested that 90% would be cambiatas with 5-10% baritones. At the eighth grade level, Hughes reported similar percentages with the exception of non-white males who increased to between 25-30% in the baritone range.

Karr (1988) suggested the following percentages for boys in the seventh grade: 30% unchanged, 50% changing, and 20% changed. At the eighth grade level Karr stated that 20% of the boys had unchanged voices, whereas 30% were changing, and 50% had changed.

A summary of these findings is presented in Table 1.
### A Comparison of Authorities' Estimates of Unchanged, Changing, and Changed Male Voices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authority</th>
<th>Unchanged</th>
<th>Changing</th>
<th>Changed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Seventh Grade</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooper (1955)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooper/Kuersteiner (1970)</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friesen (1972)</td>
<td>59.2</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groom (1979)</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hughes (1984)</td>
<td>-90-95</td>
<td>5-10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karr (1988)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Eighth Grade**          |           |          |         |
| Cooper (1955)             | 12.5      | 66.7     | 13.3    |
| Cooper/Kuersteiner (1970) | 6.7       | 66.7     | 27.7    |
| Friesen (1972)            | 22.5      | 30.5     | 47      |
| Groom (1979)              | 0.0       | 60       | 40      |
| Hughes (1984)             | -90-95    | 5        |         |
| Karr (1988)               | 20        | 30       | 50      |
Unison Singing

It is not uncommon to find authorities, prior to 1945, recommending the use of unison songs with junior high school students (Kwalwasser, 1932; Gehrken, 1936; McKenzie, 1936; Dann, 1937; Best, 1942). Dann wrote that unison singing was highly desirable. This was based on his belief that approximately 65% of the junior high school students were sopranos. Best recommended unison singing because he believed it was more valuable than part singing for developing good tone. Kwalwasser recommended it because of the time it took to learn separate parts, claiming that part-singing was a waste of time. Gehrken likewise recommended unison singing, including the use of rounds and canons, for students at this age level.

Some other authorities recommended the use of unison songs, but with restrictions. Although Thomas (1974) did not recommend unison songs, he recognized that it might be possible to perform them if they had a very limited range. Bell (1952), Hosmer (1958) and Cooper and Kuersteiner (1970) recommended using unison singing only if the range was within what was called the "composite unison-octave range of junior high voices," which has a lower limit of $B^b$ and an upper limit of $C$, a major ninth above. This assumes, of course, Cooper's recommended ranges. McKenzie's and Cooksey's ranges are less conducive to unison singing. Barresi and Russell (1983), adopting Cooksey's ranges, noted that if unison songs are to be used, they must have a range of $d$ to $g^1$, which may be doubled at the octave below for new baritone singers. Recognizing that most pieces required a wider range than this, they suggested that unison singing should be considered impractical.
Although not denying the value of unison singing in the junior high school, a few other authorities recommended that both unison and part singing be undertaken at this age. Morgan (1947), for instance, recommended using both unison and part songs. Dann (1937), suggested using unison, two-part, and three-part songs with seventh grade ensembles, stating that such groups were practically all made up of unchanged voices. Glenn (1940) noted some limitations in using unison songs. Although she recommended using unison songs in all music classes, she noted that with a combination of unchanged, changing and changed voices in the junior high school singers, unison singing was not very successful.

Other authorities have been even less supportive of unison singing at the middle school level. Glenn and Leavitt (1941) stated that middle school students prefer to sing part songs. Other authorities (Giddings, 1919; Dykema, 1931; Wright, 1933; Dykema and Cundiff, 1939; Ayres and Ruduner, 1942; Keller, 1957; Cooper, 1967; Knauff, 1967; Cooper and Kuersteiner, 1970; Roe, 1970; Bessom, Tatarunix, and Forcucci, 1974; Thomas, 1974; Marple, 1975; Cooper, 1977b; Collins 1982; Barresi and Russell 1983) argued against the use of unison singing on grounds of range. As Cooper (1967) suggested, "...even mediocre unison singing at this age is impossible" (p. 547). In addition to noting that the variety of ranges made unison singing difficult, Keller stated that the students at this age were ready for part singing, mentally and emotionally. In fact, Keller suggested that there was some evidence that middle school students preferred part singing. Spratt (1935) stated that male students at this age preferred part songs both for listening and singing. For these reasons, Kauffman (1943)
stated that junior high school ensembles should sing mainly two- and three-

part music.

It should be noted that some authorities (Dykema and Cundiff, 1939; Bessim, Tatarunix, and Forcucci, 1974; and Herman, in Shrock, 1990) have suggested that most rounds and canons are likewise inappropriate for middle school students. As Herman has noted, "canons, for instance, usually incorporate more than an octave range. I'll tell you right now I don't know one junior high boy who comes into the seventh grade with an octave range" (p. 8-9).

Two-part Voicings

Two-part treble music is generally approached in the grades prior to the middle school, often in the fourth grade (Hesser, 1929; Miller, 1953, Swanson, 1973). Barresi and Russell (1983) have suggested that in seventh grade choral ensembles which do not have baritones or Midvoice II singers, this voicing, as well as three-part treble settings may be appropriate. Concerning the eighth grade level, however, they noted that since all of the stages are usually present, four-part, and sometimes three-part music, will be more appropriate. The practice of using two-part music with baritones singing an octave below the soprano was discouraged by Cooper (1964a) who stated that this gave a false bass which sounds out of balance. Similarly, Cooper and Kuersteiner (1970) stated that the most appropriate voicings for junior high schools are three-part or four-part selections. Hesser (1936), Morgan (1947), and McKee (1955) likewise recommended three- or four- part music, noting that three-part selections are practical in most situations,
whereas four-part singing may not always be possible due to choral balance problems. McIntosh (1980) noted that the ninth grade choir is often a student's first experience in singing four-part music.

It has been the consensus, therefore, that although two-part music might be appropriate for some seventh grade ensembles, older groups generally require three or four voice parts to meet the various stages of vocal mutation. Although some authorities recommended using either three-part music or four-part music for students at this age level, others have taken definite stands concerning which specific voicing is indeed more appropriate.

**Four-part Mixed Voicings**

A number of authorities have recommended four-part mixed music for junior high school students. Bell (1952), Nordholm and Bakewell (1953), and Hosmer (1958) all claim that this is the most satisfying voicing for junior high school students. Cain (1942) was even more emphatic when he claimed that SATB voicings in standard four-part settings were the proper music for junior high school students, although he added that they should employ fairly narrow ranges for the male singers. Besides being most satisfying, Cooper (1953) has noted that practically every junior high school ensemble had the potential for four-part singing. Barresi and Russell (1983) have likewise recommended "judiciously selected" SATB voicings because the number of parts allow for the range and tessitura requirements of all the stages of vocal mutation.

Hilty (1938) recommended using standard four-part music with junior high school singers. He suggested that if there were no basses, which he
stated was unlikely, the teacher should merely omit the bass part. Although such a solution may work for some choral music, one should recognize the problem of this solution. Many pieces arranged for four-part voices are dependent upon that bass part to support the harmonic progression. Deleting the bass part is not a practical solution for many choral pieces.

Herman (1988) has demonstrated a novel approach to using four part music in the middle school setting. She recommended that students be encouraged to pivot from one part to another as a vocal part moves in or out of their own comfortable ranges. This requires that the teacher know each voice extremely well. Herman had students record their singing on portable tape recorders and submit the tapes for her review. Although this is a worthy approach, it may be difficult to achieve in many choral settings. With most teachers stretched for time already, the task of listening to individual tapes on a regular basis may well prove impractical.

It should be noted, however, that a large number of authorities claim that standard four-part music is often not appropriate for junior high school singers. Conrad (1964) stated that it was difficult to find good SATB music which fits the limited capabilities of junior high students and is at the same time musically satisfying. Likewise, Cooper (1953), stated that, 90% of the published SATB choral music did not comply with the ranges of the junior high male singers.

Different authorities have given different reasons why standard four-part music is not appropriate for middle school students. Cooper and Kuersteiner (1970) noted that in much SATB music the alto part is too low for junior high school female voices. They also noted that cambiata voices can generally sing up to five notes higher than those required in average tenor
parts. Busch (1972, 1973) has likewise noted that the tenor part in most SATB settings are actually too low in range and tessitura for the *cambiata* singers. Olson, 1956 has recommended that tenor ranges in SATB voicings should be restricted. Concerning the baritone, Marple (1975) also noted that the bass parts of the usual SATB are generally not suitable for the young baritone voices.

### Three-Part Voicings

Ingram and Rice (1962) suggested that junior high school mixed choral ensembles could sometimes sing four-part music, but that two- and three-part pieces are often more practical. One should recognize that there is a variety of three part voicings which are available and which have been recommended for use at the middle school level: SSA, SAB, SCB (Soprano-*Cambiata*-Baritone), and Three-part Mixed.

#### SSA Voicing

McCarthy (1937) recommended using SSA voicings during the seventh grade year. However, Gustafson (1956) and Richison (1971) noted that at this age it was inappropriate to have the boys sing a part with a feminine designation. As long as a part is marked "alto," a traditionally female designation, one might expect some hesitancy from male singers to sing this part, even though the range may be appropriate. Three-part treble voicings marked with Roman numerals may be more appropriate for middle school ensembles which lack lower voices.
SAB and SCB Voicings

Some early authorities recommended SAB voicings for junior high school choirs. Cooper (1953) noted that there was a great deal of publication of SAB music for junior high school ensembles in response to school demand. Wilson (1959) preferred the use of SATB music with junior high school students, but recognized that SAB might be more practical for ensembles with few male singers. Likewise, Hesser (1929) recommended SAB voicings for junior high school students, noting that many SAB editions could be used effectively with junior high school ensembles, especially with seventh and eighth grade students. Hosmer (1958) also found SAB voicings as appropriate for junior high school students, noting however that the boys' part must lie within the unison range advocated by Cooper. McKenzie (1956) suggested that SAB settings were more appropriate for seventh grade classes than SATB if there were changed voices present. He did not recommend SAB voicings for eighth and ninth grade choirs, however. Morgan (1947) noted that it was better to have good SAB singing than to have mediocre SATB singing.

Although not endorsing the traditional SAB voicing, Leeder and Haynie (1958) and Cooper (1964a, 1964b) recommended a type of three-part voicing, namely SCB (soprano, cambiata, baritone). Leeder and Haynie stated that this was the most satisfactory voicing for vocal ensembles in which there are changing voices. It was assumed that the ranges for each part should fit those established in the Cooper's cambiata concept.

Although SAB voicings were recommended by some authorities, many others discouraged its use. Cooper (1955) claimed that in SAB voicings, all the changing voices were compelled to become baritones. Allen (1982), in
writing about ninth grade choruses, noted that SAB arrangements were often not appropriate because the arranger had an adult baritone in mind. Cain (1942) wrote that choral directors had realized that SAB music was not solving the problem of the changing voices of male singers at the junior high school level. He further referred to SAB arrangements as "detestable" and the third voice in such arrangements as "a nondescript, called a baritone." Likewise, McCarthy (1937) noted that she had practically eliminated SAB voicings from her choral library since they were only practical for some seventh grade groups, and then only for a short period. Collins (1968), a student of Cooper, suggested that the alto range is not commensurate with the cambiata range, and the baritone part is too low for the adolescent baritone. More recently, Cooksey (1982) noted that range and tessitura issues made most SSA and SAB settings unsuitable for middle school choral ensembles. As Barresi and Russell (1983) have noted, when Midvoice II and New Baritone singers are assigned to the baritone part, compromises in range and tessitura is inevitable. In noting that the typical baritone part has a range from B♭ to d¹, it is clear that they have a traditional SAB setting in mind. As they point out, this is certainly below the range of the Midvoice singers. Likewise, Metz (1980) noted that in SAB arrangements, the cambiate were generally shortchanged, since the bass line is too low and the alto line is too high.

In addition to the issue of appropriate ranges/tessitura concerns, some authorities have rejected SAB settings for musical reasons. Although Hilty (1933) suggested that SAB voicings were excellent under certain circumstances, he stated that they had a peculiar hollowness due to the large gap between the alto and baritone parts. This, he believed, led to a less
satisfying harmonic structure. Likewise, Cooksey (1978) proposed that the vocal textures in SAB music were thin and the harmonies were less satisfying than in SATB voicings. This suggests that Hilty and Cooksey had a specific type of SAB voicing in mind, for there is nothing necessarily incomplete in three part choral settings as has been demonstrated by a number of outstanding composers throughout history. It may be assumed therefore, that they were referring to a specific type of SAB setting, indeed the type of setting which was somewhat popular in junior high schools. In many of these settings the lowest part (baritone) was composed in a more traditional baritone range. As Eilers (1991) noted, these arrangements often had a wide gap between the bottom and the upper voices, often sounding like SATB settings with the tenor part missing. Researchers should therefore make a distinction between the older SAB practice and the more contemporary three-part mixed voicing which has become popular with many middle school choral directors.

Three-Part Mixed Voicing

Hickfang (1965) recommended using a type of three-part music for small junior high schools which found SATB music inappropriate due to the lack of baritones. He described this voicing as three-part music, with soprano, alto, and alto-tenor parts. Similarly, Rorke (1964) recommended that in choruses with few boys, or in which the changed voices were unstable, directors should use three-part songs (SAB) in which the bass part is not too low for the changing voices, and not too high for the changed voices. He seems to be describing a type of voicing which is popularly called "three-part mixed" voicing. Although some authorities use the label SAB and three-part
mixed as interchangeable voicings, there are numerous significant differences.

Eilers (1991, 1992), who claims to have created the three-part voicing, stated that it was designed for middle school or junior high mixed choirs, boys' choirs, and other young mixed choruses with few or inexperienced male singers. At the heart of the three-part mixed voicing is a compromise range utilized for the bottom part (labeled part III). Eilers describes this part as having a six-note range (f below middle c to d above), which she claims is a little too high for totally changed voices, a little too low for the totally unchanged voices, and just about right for voices that are in the process of change. This compromise range was designed to be singable by most boys in middle school choral ensembles. In fact, as Eilers noted, another reason for developing the three-part voicing was to meet the adolescent male's social need to sit together and to sing the same part. As Bray (1956) noted concerning the junior high school male, "first of all, his efforts toward adulthood and his group-consciousness must be respected. He should be placed with other boys, rather than with girls, even though his voice has not yet completely changed" (p. 68). Miller (1982) has likewise noted the value of combining the male singers together at this age with a restricted composite range. The range he recommends is similar to that recommended by Eilers.

It is somewhat interesting that Eilers selected the F below middle C as the lower limit of this compromise range. Wilson (1946) stated that the lowest common tone for unchanged voices is the f or g below middle c. This would suggest that even those males whose voices had not yet changed could sing the bottom part in the three-part mixed voicing, although this would certainly limit them to the very lowest part of their range. Collins (1982)
also noted that some boys, whom he referred to as "light baritones," had a limited range from F below middle C\(^1\) up to middle C\(^1\).

Besides the fact that the boys sing together, there are other characteristics of three-part music which should be noted. As Eilers (1991) points out, the lowest part (part III) is written in bass clef. She notes that this part could be sung by a low alto voice. She recognizes that there may be a difference between having some female students sing along with the male student’s part and \textit{vice versa}. By using Roman numerals instead of the traditional voice classifications, Eilers has also avoided the problem of having a boy labeled by a traditionally female classification name. As Roe (1970) has suggested, male singers at the junior high school level will often be unchanged or in the early stages of maturation, but the teacher should not label them as "soprano" or "alto," since young men do not want to be given a feminine voice label. This is also the reasoning for the recommendation by Henderson (1974) not to use SSA or SSAA music with mixed groups.

Although it is the bottom (men's) part which primarily sets three-part mixed music apart from other settings, Eilers (1991) also suggests that the voicing makes limitations upon the soprano part. She notes that the soprano part also should be somewhat limited in range in order to keep the three parts closer together. This close harmony, she suggests, give this voicing a special sound which she states makes the students sound better than they would normally sound in other voicings. By writing the parts in close harmony, three-part settings also meet a need presented by Ayres and Roduner (1942). They wrote that by keeping the voice parts rather close together, students could move from one voice part to the next lower gradually and avoid strain.
Eilers (1991) wrote that the alto part (part II) of the three-part mixed voicing was rather standard. She recognized that a large number of students, both male and female, may well fall into this middle range at the middle school level, so directors should allow both males and females to sing this part if it best suits their individual ranges.

Fiocca (1986) and Funderburk-Galvan (1987) have demonstrated that three-part mixed voicing is popular with successful middle school choral directors. Fiocca noted that of the successful Ohio middle school directors she interviewed, a majority performed SAB and three-part music. In her study of successful Indiana middle school choral directors, Funderburk-Galvan found similar results. She wrote that the majority of the directors she surveyed reported using three-part mixed music most often with their choruses. Noting that there was a limited number of composers who compose music in this voicing, she suggested that there was a need for more composers to write music in a three-part mixed voicing.

Although the three-part mixed voicing seems to be popular with middle school choruses, several authorities have raised questions concerning its appropriateness. Russell (1980) and Barresi and Russell (1983) for instance, have questioned the range of the bottom part for changing male voices. Although they recognized that the pitches within the range g to d\textsuperscript{1} are common to midvoice and baritone voices, they suggested that the pitches of the bottom part (part III) were too high in tessitura for the New Baritone singers and too low in tessitura for the Midvoice II singers. Russell further noted that this range was quite limiting, and restricted those in the high mutation stage to using their upper range only. For this reason, she has warned that careful attention must be given to three-part settings, since the
The baritone part did not meet the needs and restrictions of all three late mutational stages of vocal development. She suggested that carefully selected four-part music gives greater flexibility.

Eilers (1991) has stated that this compromise range is appropriate for voices in the midst of change. Recognizing that this range is a little below the tessitura area which was established by Cooksey and supported by Barresi and Russell, it is a bit unclear on what basis Eilers made this claim. Perhaps she considered range rather than tessitura to be the determining factor in creating the compromise range. Or perhaps like Carlson (1943), and Collins (1982), she is encouraging the changing voices by assigning them to the lowest part possible in order to hasten vocal mutation. This view has been countered by Knauf (1967), however, who has recommended that the male singers should sing as high as they possibly can until the actual change of voice puts them in a different range.

It is perhaps the baritone, however, who has the most to lose in a three-part mixed setting. As Cooksey (1982) noted, when selecting three-part music for middle school choirs, the director should make sure that the bottom part is not too high for the baritone singers. Swanson (1981) likewise noted that if the vocal part remains around middle C or D, adolescent baritones will be forced to strain, or stop singing altogether.

Indeed, Swanson charted a large number of male singers and noted several general patterns, including a number of males who were able to sing in their head voice and their newly developing lower range, but who had a blank spot between the two registers. Often this blank spot occurred right around middle C, the area which makes up the compromise range for the lower part in the three-part mixed voicing. Karr (1988) and Groom (1982)
also noted some boys with vocal blank spots around middle c\(^1\). Cooksey (1992) also mentions that a number of boys may well experience such blank spots.

Although some authorities have discouraged the use of three-part mixed voicings with middle school singers, as it has been noted, one must consider whether these authors have middle school (sixth through eighth grade) or junior high school (seventh through eighth grade) singers in mind. Funderburk-Galvan (1987), responding to Cooksey’s (1978) criticism of SAB (or three-part mixed) voicings, noted that his statements were in reference to choirs which included both eighth and ninth graders. As she stated, many schools today do not include ninth grade students, therefore such criticisms may not be appropriate. As a result of her study, Funderburk-Galvan concluded that three-part mixed choral settings, especially those with additional parts to allow for differences between adolescent tenor and baritone singers, were appropriate for middle school choirs.

Three-Part Mixed (Additional/Optional Baritone) Voicing

Although the three-part mixed voicing is popular with middle school choirs, some of the criticisms seem to be valid. If Swanson is correct, for instance, that there is a larger number of bass-baritones at the junior high school level than is often recognized, many of whom can sing comfortably in the lower part of the bass clef, but who have trouble with pitches above A, fifth line of the bass clef, then the lowest part in the three-part mixed is truly above the bass-baritone tessitura, and these boys will either not be able to sing such parts, or will strain to sing them and do so with poor vocal production. Hassell (1970) agreed with Swanson, as did Mayer and Sacher
(1965) who suggested that among seventh and eighth grade choruses, it is not unusual to find a number of boys who can sing low G comfortably. On the other hand, if these bass-baritones are so few in number that they cannot hold a vocal part, or are present one year and not another, four-part music may be equally inappropriate. On the other hand, Rorke (1964) noted that as few as two basses can sustain their part. It is clear that parts should be within the vocal capabilities of the available singers. At the same time, the voicing must be flexible enough to meet the needs of the choral ensemble at hand. With this in mind, a modified three-part mixed voicing which includes an additional, optional part for baritones is proposed as a more appropriate voicing for middle school choral ensembles.

Beery (1984) has noted several advantages to using this three-part mixed with optional baritone voicing, including,

1. The director can use these pieces with different ensembles depending on the number and ranges of the male singers present.
2. Because they can be performed with either three or four parts, these are ideal pieces for introducing singers to the more standard four-part literature.
3. Such pieces allow choral directors to combine middle and high school choirs together for festivals and for recruitment purposes. Such collaborations might encourage more of them to continue singing through their high school years.

Actually, there is nothing new in using optional voice parts in middle school choral music. Glenn and Leavitt (1941) recommended using three-part songs with an optional bass part which sound equally well whether or not the bass part is used. Collins (1982) recommended adding optional lower notes for boys when the men's part move above middle c^1. As Eilers (1991) noted, her composition, "Brighten My Soul With Sunshine" which she claimed was the most popular three-part mixed piece of all time, used cue-size notes which
allowed for some flexibility. Funderburk-Galvan (1987) also noted that "Festival Alleluia" by Roger Emerson which was recommended more often than any other composition in her study, was in three-parts with some division in the baritone part (part III). Cooksey (1978) seemed to be less critical of some of Roger Emerson's three-part mixed settings, noting that Emerson added notes to allow for the differences in range of Midvoice and Baritones singers. He also suggested that these modifications made these arrangements more suitable for junior high school choruses. Russell (1980) included in her list of appropriate choral literature for junior high school mixed choirs several pieces which employed additional, optional baritone parts, including Joyce Eiler's "It's Time to Fly Away," Ed Harris' "Alleluia," and Luigi Zaninelli's "The Water is Wide." Richison (1971) recommended using optional baritone parts for music written for grades five and six. Certainly if an optional baritone part is necessary at the elementary level, it is essential at the seventh and eighth grade levels. An added, optional baritone voice part gives choral settings the flexibility which is needed for this age group.

**Musical Appeal**

Authors have generally agreed that in addition to being within their vocal capabilities, music selected should also appeal to middle school students and their audiences (Breach, 1936; Miller, 1953; Bessom, Tatarunix, and Foreucci, 1974; Harrison, 1978). Swanson (1959) noted that music appeals to junior high school boys through the words, rhythm, and style of composition.
Likewise, Cooksey (1982) suggested that adolescent singers enjoy music which has obvious rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic interest.

Although he recognized that certain qualities had appeal to the adolescents, Cooksey (1992) nevertheless warned against catering to the tastes of adolescents. He encouraged teachers to avoid the music which represented the "latest fad." Instead, he suggested that music should be chosen which is challenging, appropriate, appealing, and educationally sound. His recommendation is a bit confusing, therefore, since he recommended performing pieces which appeal to the students, but at the same time discouraged teachers from catering to their tastes.

In addition to Cooksey's reticence, there are some authors who have noted that appealing to adolescents is more difficult than one might first suspect. The author(s) of "Teenagers and Music" (1958) noted that adolescents' tastes in music were almost impossible to predict, for what appealed to them one moment was less appealing later. In addition, some have suggested that pieces which have immediate appeal did not necessarily maintain their interest with adolescents for the time it took to learn the pieces. As Miller (1982) has noted, songs which were easily learned and had immediate appeal often lost their appeal in a short amount of time. Other pieces which did not have appeal to the students at first, often tend to grow in appeal with the passage of time. Although one must keep these concerns in mind, there has been a large number of recommendations given by various authorities concerning this issue of student appeal. These focus on the areas of melody, harmony, rhythm, mood, style, and text.
Melodic Appeal

A great deal has been written concerning the melodies of appropriate choral literature for middle school choirs. Olson (1956) has suggested that the musical climaxes of the melodies and the texts must coincide. Kauffman (1943) added that melodies should avoid awkward intervals. Abel (1957) added that melodically romantic types of musical selections appeal to the strong urges for self-expression of adolescents. From these, one may conclude that appropriate melodies should be singable, avoid awkward intervals, fit the text, and meet the emotional needs of the adolescent by being somewhat romantic in style.

Distribution of melody

A number of authorities (McManus, 1932; Breach, 1936; Kauffman, 1943; Bartels, 1949; Zingale, 1958; Marple, 1975; Cooksey, 1978) have recommended allowing each section of the choir to carry the melody at some time. As Bartels noted, allowing each section of the choir to sing the melody gives every student the pleasure of singing the melody. In addition, it leads to interesting arrangements. Likewise, Breach suggested that distributing the melody to all the parts of the choir helps to maintain interest.

A large number of authors (Norton, 1932; Spratt, 1935; McCarthy, 1937; Ericson, 1941; Cooper, 1950; Wheat, 1951; Andrews and Leeder, 1953; Nordholm and Bakewell, 1953; Webb, 1954; Gustafson, 1956; Swift, 1960; Cooper and Kuersteiner, 1970; Andrews, 1971; Bessom, Tatarunix, and Forcucci, 1974; Swanson, 1973, 1975, 1977b, 1984; Cooksey, 1982, 1992), have specifically recommended allowing the boys to sing the melody. Cooksey
for instance, noted that the changing or changed males singers voice should have the opportunity to be featured on the melody part. He added that giving the men the melody during a section of the piece helps to develop their confidence.

Bessom, Tatarunix and Forcucci (1974) and Swanson (1975) have suggested that it is especially appropriate to give the melody to the boys and harder, more complex parts such as descants to the female singers since the boys are challenged with both the changing voice and harmony parts at once. Winslow (1946) also added that singing harmony parts generally require a more sophisticated level of reading ability. Furthermore, Ericson (1941) has suggested that male singers are naturally introduced to part singing by giving them the melody. For these reasons, it is not surprising that Funderburk-Galvan (1987) found that "there is a demand for music composed or arranged for junior high school mixed choruses which allows the boys to sing melodies and contains easy parts for students with limited experience in part singing" (p. 74).

Some authors (Cooper, 1950; Andrews and Leeder, 1953) have written more specifically, some suggesting that boys in early mutation be permitted to sing the melody often. Nordholm and Bakewell (1953) likewise recommended using the alto-tenor voice on the melody because of its beautiful tone quality. Others (Spratt, 1935; Swift, 1960; Swanson, 1977b) have emphasized the need for giving the melody to the bass part. Spratt stated that this practice allows adolescent boys to learn to use their new voices. Likewise, Swanson stated that "if you have a weak, uncertain section, put these singers into a special place and give them the melody, preferably one they know well" (p. 96). Later he added that the voice part most in need
of development was obviously the bass voice. Like Spratt, Swanson suggested that giving the basses the melody allowed them to more fully concentrate on using their developing vocal mechanism.

In contrast, a number of authorities have discouraged the practice of placing the melody in the boys' parts. Foster (1945) wrote that it was difficult to present familiar song material in unusual settings, such as giving the melody to the basses and accompaniment figures to the upper parts. Likewise, Northcote, (1955, quoted by McKenzie 1956) noted that baritones needed to learn how to sing more traditional baritone parts, so that the idea of giving them the melody should not occur too often. Knauf (1967) was more emphatic in stating that the melody should never be given to the basses. He suggested that it was appropriate for boys in the primary grades to sing the melody, but not for adolescent males, since they will soon become a part of the high school choir, and shall sing a more traditional tenor or baritone part. Spratt (1935) even suggested that boys actually preferred to sing harmonic parts rather than the melody.

If the boys do not sing melody parts, what should they sing? A number of authorities (Cooper, 1950; Andrews and Leeder, 1953; Nordholm and Bakewell, 1953) have suggested that basses should sing slow moving parts emphasizing tonic, subdominant, and dominant tones (leaps of fourths and fifths) with short scale patterns. Barrett (1935) suggested that the parts for the male singers should be easier than the parts for the female singers so that the learning time might be balanced. He further noted that the parts for male singers should be primarily characterized by long, sustained tones, whereas the parts for the females could have running notes. Knauf (1967) similarly wrote that bass parts should be kept rather basic, using the roots
and fifths, with an occasional first inversion. Likewise, Barresi and Russell (1983) recognized the need for each voice to be vocally interesting, but also noted that music which employs tonic and dominant pitches in the baritone part reinforced the harmonies in the upper voices.

Cooper (1950) seemed somewhat contradictory on this issue. Although he recommended slow moving, harmonic pedal tones, he also wrote that the male singers should not be relegated to merely providing a vertical harmonic background for the girls’ melodies. Swanson (1977b) is more direct in condemning the practice of relegating the baritone to harmonic pedal tones, noting that having the baritone part following the chord progressions, leaping by fourths and fifths, is "the opposite of what the situation demands" (p. 96). Furthermore, Swanson (1984) noted that by assigning the sopranos to the melody and the others to harmony parts, the female singers were allowed to "coast" while the male singers were forced to struggle, or even give up.

**Texture**

The issue of melodic interest is closely related to the issue of musical texture. If, as some have suggested, interest is maintained through the use of vocal parts which are melodic, the result is polyphonic texture. Several authorities (Cooper, 1950; Hosmer, 1958; Cooksey, 1977b, 1978; Russell, 1980; Barresi & Russell, 1983) have recommended that polyphonic music is especially appropriate for middle school singers in helping to maintain the interest of the students.

Cooper (1950), and his students such as Gustafson (1956), stated that in order to maintain the students’ interest, the music should be completely polyphonic. Collins (1982) stated that Cooper believed that junior high school
students could sing three and four part music if each part was a melody. He also suggested that Cooper thought that melodically constructed parts were more interesting and easier for the students to remember. McIntosh (1980), also noted that ninth grade students enjoy the challenge of singing polyphonic music. In fact, because each voice has a melody, polyphonic music is often an easy way to introduce part singing. In addition, Barresi and Russell (1983) added that music composed in a contrapuntal style increases the possibility that each section of the chorus may sing the melody. Swanson (1973) recommended singing counterpoint as means of developing the skill in more homophonic singing. He recommended beginning with partner songs, moving toward descants, then proceeding to harmonic passages, beginning with parallel thirds and sixths.

In addition to maintaining interest, some authors (Zingale, 1958; Cooper and Kuersteiner, 1970) have suggested that polyphonic music aids in keeping singers from singing the wrong part. Cooper and Kuersteiner noted that if a part gets dull, junior high school students tended to stray from their own part to the melody. In order to avoid this, they recommended writing each part in a contrapuntal style. Swanson (1977b) seemed to have the same issue in mind when he encouraged using music which gave a challenging descant to the sopranos in order that the young male singers would not be tempted to sing the soprano part an octave or two lower.

If one accepts the range characteristics of most of the authors concerning the adolescent voice, not only is unison singing problematic at this age, but also is the singing of rounds and canons at the unison. Other types of contrapuntal writing have been suggested by some authors, including songs with multiple melodies (i.e. partner songs) and those with counter
melodies or descants. Eilers (1991) recommended using partner songs, noting that the technique of combining multiple melodies prevented boredom. Swanson (1973) noted that using partner songs was a good way to begin part-singing. He recommended, for example, combining "Home on the Range" with "Good Night Susannah," in the key of F Major. Similarly, Funderburk-Galvan (1987) has noted that pieces which contained counter melodies were in demand by performance-successful teachers.

Other authors have recommended a broader approach. Rhodes (1989) has suggested that choirs perform pieces in both polyphonic and homophonic textures. Best (1942), noted the value of polyphonic pieces, but added that homophonic music provided an easier and clearer setting of the text than was possible in a polyphonic texture. Eilers (1991) merely noted that the vocal texture should match the song.

Cooksey (1978) raised an issue concerning the use of polyphonic texture with this age student, noting that "the melodic approach to part writing produces constantly changing textures/densities of sound. This sometimes interferes with the development of choral blend and the singer's awareness of harmonic movement" (p. 13).

Part Writing

Sequential-type Patterns.

In addition to encouraging a contrapuntal approach to part writing, Cooper and Kuersteiner (1970) also recommended that short, repeated melodic or rhythmic sequential-type patterns be used in the vocal lines which do not contain the melody. Zingale (1958), who studied with Cooper,
recommended using short sequential patterns due to the short concentration span of adolescent singers.

**Voice Leading.**

Eilers (1991) also encouraged choral directors to consider voice leading when evaluating a piece to be performed by middle school choirs. Diercks (1965) likewise noted that logical voice leading was especially important for young or inexperienced singers. Van Camp (cited by Cooksey, 1992) suggested that choral composers/arrangers should be careful in assisting students to find initial pitches, especially after rests. Eilers recommended having all voices begin on the same pitch.

**Voice Crossing.**

Several authors (Barrett, 1935; Best, 1942; Kauffman, 1943; Wilson, 1949; Webb, 1954; Selk, 1954) have recommended that voice crossing be avoided or kept to a minimum. Webb suggested that crossing voices often confused students at this age. Collins (1982) stated that voice crossing should be allowed in the upper parts. In this way the female singers are allowed to develop the full extent of their ranges.

**Parallel and Contrary Motion.**

Another issue concerning part writing is the use of parallel and/or contrary motion. Swanson (1977b) recommended using parallel thirds and sixths between the tenor and bass parts in his specially created first songs which he used with his junior high school choirs. Eilers (1991) on the other hand, noted that contrary motion was easy to sing and sounded good.
Solos

The use of solos has been generally discouraged by the authorities (Foster, 1945; Ingram and Rice, 1962; Rorke, 1964; Harrison, 1978; McIntosh, 1980). Foster suggested that by keeping all the parts active, interest is maintained. Solo or soli sections lead to inactivity for other singers and results in a diminished level of interest.

In addition to the issue of maintaining the attention of the choir, others have discouraged the use of solos at this age because of the tone quality of the adolescent voice. McIntosh (1980) noted that the average ninth grade student had a fairly small or average voice, generally without the dramatic power to present a successful solo. If this is true, it is certainly more so with seventh and eighth grade singers.

Harmonic Appeal

Although some have suggested that it is melody which primarily appeals to the adolescent, others have suggested that harmony is more important. Beattie, McConathy, and Morgan (1930) have suggested that of the three elements of music (rhythm, melody, and harmony), it is harmony which has special appeal to adolescents. For this reason, Beall (1958) suggested that music selected for junior high school singers should be harmonic, but rhythmically and melodically simple.

Taylor (1966) described the compositions he created for junior high schools as being "neo-romantic." By this he meant that they were generally tonal but with some modal, quartal, or impressionistic harmonies.
Swift (1960) stated that harmony parts for this age should be simple. Olson (1956) disagreed, writing that if the voice leading was smooth, the harmony need not be too simple, although a diatonic feeling should be maintained with a minimum of chromaticism. Lapierre (1983) likewise stated that part-writing should be basically diatonic. Best (1942) suggested that unusual dissonances could be performed successfully if they were approached smoothly. Ingram and Rice (1962) took a middle position, noting that the harmonies could either be colorful and rich, or plain and straightforward.

In addition, several authors (Best, 1942; Kauffman, 1943; Webb, 1954) also noted that the harmony of the vocal parts should be complete. Although three-part singing can meet this requirement, it seems that these authorities were referring to four-part (SATB) voicings.

**Rhythmic Appeal**

A number of authorities (Spratt, 1935; Park, 1944; Bell, 1952; Taylor, 1966; Knauf, 1967; Roe, 1970; Regelski, 1979) have suggested that rhythmic pieces are highly popular with adolescent singers. Spratt, for instance, stated that strongly rhythmic songs were the most popular type of song among students. Taylor noted that youth enjoy interesting rhythms. Park stated that adolescents prefer gay, fast, rhythmic music over slow music. A few authors (Miller, 1934; Bell) recognized this, yet noted that teachers often did not consider this in their selection of literature. Miller wrote, "The rhythm of school selections is usually straight-forward and often too slow to wake up the class. I cannot see any crime in occasional syncopation" (p. 62).
Regelski (1979) proposed that to the degree that they related to similar experiences in the adolescents' lives, powerful rhythms and exciting tempos were all attractive to students at this age. Abel (1957) likewise proposed that strong rhythmic pieces were appropriate for adolescent groups. As he noted,

Vocal groups should offer musical opportunities which cater to the strong urges for self-expression in predominantly rhythmic types of musical selections. Strongly rhythmic music, having a direct physical and kinesthetic appeal, includes the appeal to the patriotic and hero-worshiping propensity of the adolescent (p. 76).

Jothen (1983) noted that appropriate music for elementary choirs often contained rhythmic repetition. This seems to be equally appropriate for adolescents who are increasingly interested in performing the popular music they listen to in the popular media. On the other hand, Ingram and Rice (1962) recommended that rhythms should be varied since adolescents will not tolerate monotony. It is not clear, however, whether they were referring to rhythmic variety within a piece or between pieces.

This is not to say that all authorities recommended strongly rhythmic compositions. Swanson (1976) and Lapierre (1983) suggested that the first songs learned in the junior high school should be characterized by simple rhythm patterns. Cooksey (1978) likewise encouraged choral directors to be cautious of pieces which contained fast moving rhythms.

Mood

The issue of mood has been raised by a few authors (Kauffman, 1943; Miller, 1953). As Kauffman noted, "Since the adolescent is emotional, music must be chosen that will appeal to him emotionally" (p. 37). Likewise,
Regelski (1979) suggested that teachers should consider the adolescents' experiences, emotions, and need for relatively quick payoff when choosing music. Regelski further noted that adolescents respond more favorably to music which is characterized by powerful "romantic" emotions than by those reflecting subtle "classical" or "impressionistic" emotions.

Several authors have addressed the issue of mood in relation to the adolescent male. Beattie, McConathy, and Morgan (1930) stated that adolescent males preferred music which dealt with human emotions. Spratt (1935) stated that junior high school males liked songs of many moods. Bartels (1949) suggested that they enjoyed a variety of moods, and should perform songs of dignity and character in addition to more lively songs. Leeder and Haynie (1958) also noted that male students at this age will occasionally accept a quiet, gentle song, but warned against too many of this type. Likewise, Marple (1975) warned against using songs which were overly-sentimental, even though the adolescent often has a "tender heart."

Musical Style

A number of authors have suggested that certain styles of songs have a greater appeal to the adolescent than others. A large number of authorities (Sprague, 1931; Spratt, 1935; Mursell, 1943; Morgan, 1949; Hosmer, 1958; Leeder & Haynie, 1958; Christy, 1961; Ingram & Rice, 1962; Swanson, 1976; Harrison, 1978; Cooksey, 1992) have suggested using a wide variety of song material with middle school students. Spratt has suggested that it is important to use a wide variety of styles due to the wide variety of tastes among middle school students. Monsour and Perry (1970) recommended
selecting both recreational music and high art music. Webb (1954) recommended the broad categories of folk music, music of the great composers, contemporary music, familiar and well-known songs, religious music, and humorous songs. Likewise, Russell (1980) encouraged the use of folk songs, spirituals, sacred selections, and carefully selected original pieces.

In addition, some have suggested that using a wide variety of music is actually good for the vocal apparatus. Ingram and Rice (1962) stated that by singing a wide variety of songs, vocal strain may be avoided. Likewise, Christy (1961) noted singers should experience both a light style of literature, such as madrigal singing, as well as music which requires a more resonant and sonorous tone.

**Appealing to the Adolescent Male Students**

A large number of authorities have emphasized the need to appeal specifically to the adolescent male students. As Eilers (1991) noted, "Look for...songs acceptable and appealing to boys. This is a vulnerable age in their social and vocal development, and they may 'clam up' or quit choir rather than look bad in front of the girls." Glenn (1940) noted that junior high school females enjoyed a more subtle type of song than did males at this age because they are emotionally older. A number of authorities (Olson, 1956; Leeder & Haynie, 1958; Ingram and Rice, 1962; Roe, 1970; Marple, 1975) have suggested, however, that girls generally liked, or at least went along with, the songs which the boys liked. The opposite, they suggested, was not always the case.

Dennis (1939) has suggested that directors should not use too many songs which appeal only to one gender. The majority of authorities, however,
have held the former view. As Andrews and Leeder (1953) have stated, when one is selecting songs for junior high school students, keep the boys uppermost in mind. With this in mind, several authors have proposed that certain types or styles of songs appeal most directly to the adolescent male pupils.

As Sur and Schuller (1958) have noted, some authorities have emphasized that it is important to allow adolescent boys to sing music that interests them. Keller (1957) suggested that one may appeal to the adolescent male singers by using music which has real musical value and that appealed to their social, dramatic, and emotional instincts. Likewise, Davis (1952) recommended using music which would meet the adolescent male's vocal, psychological, and educational needs.

A large number of authorities (Baker, 1927; Beattie, McConathy, and Morgan, 1930; Sprague, 1931; Miller, 1934; Weis, 1936; Wetsel, 1936; Dykema and Cundiff, 1939; Ericson, 1941; Best, 1942; Kauffman, 1943; Wilcox, 1943; Winslow, 1946; Morgan, 1949; Johnson, 1950; Redner, 1951; Boyer, 1953; Selk, 1954; Beall, 1958; Leeder and Haynie, 1958; Swanson, 1959, 1976, 1977b; Slaughter, 1966; Cooper and Kuersteiner, 1970) recommended using music which they considered to be masculine in character for adolescent boys. Leeder and Haynie suggested that boys like songs which are strong, robust, masculine, and rhythmic. Wetsel stated, "If you know the boy at all, he is not fond of singing about butterflies and that sort of thing" (p. 185). Likewise, Johnson noted that boys do not like to sing lullabies or other music they consider to be effeminate. Lists of appropriate styles appear throughout the literature which include some of the following: songs of adventure, sea songs (sailor songs or chanteys), soldier songs, cowboy
songs, patriotic songs, railroad songs, southland songs, farming songs, river
songs, work songs (i.e. western), lumberjack songs, mining songs, folk songs,
songs of the out-of-doors, songs from Latin America, Stephen Foster songs,
love songs, fun or humorous songs, spirituals, selections from operas and
light operas, plantation songs, mountain songs, pioneer songs, marching
songs, camp songs, and college or school songs.

Most of the statements made concerning what styles or types of song
appeal to adolescent males have been made by educators, no doubt through
their interaction with them. Few have actually surveyed the boys themselves
or sampled appropriate music educators to better substantiate these
statements. Boyer (1953) did survey a number of music educators and
concluded that adolescent boys were likely to enjoy singing humorous,
patriotic, work, and chantey songs. In fact, ratings from the panel members'
designations of the boys preferences of different types of songs suggested that
humorous, patriotic, work songs, and chanteys all elicited a "more than
average interest" whereas sacred songs and songs of devotion received only
an "average interest" mean rating.

Sacred Pieces

Although sacred songs received only an average rating in Boyer's
study, others have suggested that boys actually like sacred music more than
they readily admit. Rangeler (1956b) noted that boys enjoyed singing songs
of praise and worship. Bradshaw (1939) likewise noted that hymns and
sacred songs were also popular with boy choruses, although he noted that
this may seem surprising. He suggested that sacred songs can appeal to the
boys' sincerity and idealism. In addition, singing sacred songs allowed the
male students to express these thoughts without exposing the fact that they indeed found this meaningful.

Indeed, a large number of authorities (Baker, 1927; Beattie, McConathy, and Morgan, 1930; Sprague, 1931; Bradshaw, 1939; Mursell, 1943; Selk, 1954; Rangeler, 1956b; Leeder & Haynie, 1958; Rorke, 1964; Cooper and Kuersteiner, 1970; McIntosh, 1980) recommended using sacred music, not only with boys, but with all adolescents. Leeder and Haynie suggested that cantatas, oratorios, carols, and service music were all appropriate. Others (Morgan, 1949; Bradshaw) suggested singing hymns, whereas Redner (1951) specifically suggested performing gospel hymns. Morgan recommended singing chorales as well as holiday and religious seasonal songs. Several authors (Bradshaw; Ericson, 1941; Morgan; Cooper & Kuersteiner; Swanson, 1976 and 1977b) recommended performing spirituals. Bradshaw noted that spirituals, with their rich yet simple harmony and their emphasis on rhythm, may also be excellent teaching material because they lend themselves to tone blending and harmony drill.

In more recent days, some have questioned whether it is appropriate to include sacred music in the public schools. It is not the purpose of this study to address this issue. Concerning the use of sacred music in the public schools, however, McIntosh (1980) noted that ninth grade singers generally accept sacred English texts if they are non-sectarian.

Secular Pieces

Folk songs.

In addition to sacred selections, a large number of authorities recommended various types of secular songs which they recommended for
middle school students to sing. Several (Earhart, 1928; Miller, 1934; Spratt, 1935; Bradshaw, 1939; Ericson, 1941; Kauffman, 1943; Mursell, 1943; Morgan, 1947; Leeder & Haynie, 1958; Swanson, 1977b) recommended using folk music. Miller encouraged using folk songs as a means of moving toward classical music, noting that one might begin with American folk songs, moving toward folk songs of other nations, and leading toward more classical literature. Furthermore, Bradshaw noted that because folk songs were often rhythmic, had expressive yet genuine texts, and often had a lilt to the melody, they had a special appeal to the male singers.

Miscellaneous Secular Songs.

Singing humorous or novelty songs was also recommended by some authorities (Baker, 1927; Sprague, 1931; Norton, 1932; Dykema & Cundiff, 1939; Winslow, 1946; Morgan, 1949; Boyer, 1953; Leeder and Haynie, 1958; Cooper & Kuersteiner, 1970). Leeder and Haynie also recommended lullabies, dance songs, and recreation songs, whereas Baker and Sprague suggested singing friendship songs. Love songs, or song of romance were suggested by several authors (Sprague; Miller, 1934; Leeder and Haynie) as were songs of sentiment (Morgan).

Western Art Music

A number of authorities recognized the need for performing representative pieces of the western art music tradition. Several authors recommended performing art songs (Earhart, 1928; Ericson, 1941; Kauffman, 1943; Morgan, 1947; Leeder and Haynie, 1958). Others (Earhart; Spratt, 1935; Mursell, 1943; Leeder and Haynie; Cooksey, 1982;
Funderburk-Galvan, 1987; Cole, 1990) likewise recommended performing literature recognized as "classics" or "songs of the masters." As Cooksey noted, there is a great deal of classical music which middle school students can sing once they have gained an understanding of their voices. Leeder and Haynie recommended using selections from the operatic repertoire. Others have suggested benefits from singing pieces from specific style periods.

Bray (1956), Hosmer (1958), McIntosh, (1980) and Herman (1988) noted some of the benefits of singing Renaissance music. Bray noted that works by Palestrina, Victoria, and DesPres demonstrated the type of active part writing which helped to stimulate the students' interests. Drotleff (1976, 1978), who created a list of Renaissance choral pieces which he proposed were appropriate for middle school students, suggested that this style is often ideal because it makes use of the high range which is more appropriate for younger voices, especially the male singers. Likewise, Herman and Hosmer pointed out that Renaissance literature is valuable, especially for the adolescent male singer, because it encourages the use of the upper range of the voice and helps to develop control of phrasing.

Although he gives no indication that he is opposed to using Renaissance music per se with middle school students, Swanson (1977a) did take issue with part of Drotleff's rationale for using this literature with middle school students. According to Swanson, it was this upper range which is the most troublesome for between one-fourth and one-third of the adolescent males with whom he has worked.

Yarrington (1980) stated that adolescents sound pleasing when singing music form the late Renaissance to Baroque periods due to the lightness of
vocal texture. He suggested that choral directors consider the works by Schütz, Handel, Pachelbel, Bach, and Telemann as well as others.

Bradshaw (1939) listed several selections from the Romantic period which he felt were appropriate for middle school students. He noted that Schubert's melodies appealed to the junior high school male singers. In "The Linden Tree" the text has the elements of nature, of home, and of dreaming. He also suggested that the males like moody, sentimental pieces such as Tschaikowsky's "Only the Lonely Heart," but they resent showing it. Furthermore, he noted that the boys liked "Passing By" because of the simplicity of the words and music as well as the quaintness and genuineness in this song. Likewise, Herman (1988) has suggested that Romantic pieces such as Schumann's Wenn Ich Ein Voglein War or Brahms's Gute Nacht were very appropriate for middle school singers, especially as they allow the student to develop skills in interpreting the emotional content of the text. She does, however, caution that music from this period must be chosen carefully.

Little was mentioned by the authorities concerning the appeal or appropriateness of using twentieth-century art music. McIntosh (1980), however, when referring to ninth grade students, mentioned, that this style is generally unfamiliar to most ninth graders. She further noted that the students may not be musically prepared to perform the dissonant sounds often associated with the more avant-garde.

Not every authority has given full support to using western art music. Shepherd (1983), a sociologist, has suggested that this genre may be so far removed from the social background of the students that they find it irrelevant. As he noted, "music drawn from the 'classical' tradition simply
does not speak to their [lower, middle class Americans] situation in life and is therefore felt to be a cultural invasion of privacy" (p. 125).

Prince (1972) found that seventh grade students did not actually dislike classical music *per se*, but rather certain types of classical music. He found that the students preferred to listen to orchestral pieces rather than choral. Other factors which lent to a stronger liking included a fast tempo, well-defined meter, clear cut rhythmic practices, and clear melodic definition. Although this was primarily a listening preference study, this may indeed assist choral directors in selecting classical music to perform which will have a better chance of being liked by the students.

**Popular Music**

This brings to the fore one of the most controversial issues concerning musical style: the appropriateness of using popular music. A large number of authorities (Miller, 1934; Dykema & Cundiff, 1939; Mursell, 1943; Morgan, 1947; Redner, 1951; Bell, 1952; Andrews and Leeder, 1953; Olson, 1956; Beall, 1958; Leeder and Haynie, 1958; Rogers, 1960; Holtgreve, 1962; Swanson, 1976 and 1977b; Shepherd, 1983) have recommended using some popular music with middle school students.

It is generally accepted that most students in the middle school generally enjoy listening to popular music. As Rogers (1960) has noted, as children grow older, their preference for popular music increases and their preference for classical music decreases. In addition to being of interest to middle school age students, popular music may actually be good teaching material. As Miller (1934) has suggested, popular songs are generally emotional and use repetitious phrases, strong rhythms, simple melodies, easy
to remember texts, and moderate ranges. Combine these and Miller suggests that one has "an easy learning situation" (p. 62).

Some authors (Sprague, 1931; Miller, 1934; Beattie, 1935; Redner, 1951) have suggested that popular music should be used as a tool to lead the students to "better music." As Redner has suggested, one may need to temporarily desert the classics and start with more popular music. Her suggestion is to "get them to singing something, and then go on from there." (p. 55).

Others have suggested that music directors should include popular songs in order to be relevant to the adolescent. As Bell (1952) has noted,

How can we compete with the appeal of the 'music of the streets' if we, as teachers, offer nothing but dull songs -far removed from the daily 'bill of fare' offered by radio and television? To get along with adolescents we must make an effort to understand them and to talk their language (p. 38).

Likewise, Yarrington (1980) suggested using some rock music in the choral program, since it was basic to the nature of the "beast."

Shepherd (1983) noted, however, that despite the fact that most school students identified most closely with popular music, it was seldom included in the school curriculum. He further noted that popular music had immediate personal and cultural significance for adolescents. Furthermore, he added that "it seems strange that school music curricula tend to be drawn overwhelmingly from precisely those kinds of music which the majority of students do not identify in their daily lives" (p. 116).

As suggested earlier, some authorities suggest using popular music as a means to leading students to more serious, classical music. As Shepherd (1983) has noted, however, this implies that such music is aesthetically and
culturally more valuable and challenging than popular. Shepherd notes that Vulliamy and Lee have challenged this assumption, suggesting the view that classical music is superior to popular music in an aesthetic or moral sense is essentially mistaken. They also recommend that popular musics be included in the school music curriculum "because they speak to the world of young people and so provide them with a means of critically exploring and developing their personal and cultural realities."

Park (1944) has stated that adolescents preferred popular music over classical music. He further noted that this preference was more noticeable in the seventh and eight grades than in the ninth grade. McIntosh (1980), however, noted that most ninth graders liked popular music as well. She does recommend that the teacher be careful in the selection of popular pieces to assure a satisfying musical experience. Certainly the same is true for popular music selected for middle school students. McIntosh suggested that the primary consideration in selecting popular music for middle school students is the range and tessitura. In addition to range and tessitura, however, the text should be considered. As McIntosh pointed out, the lyrics of some popular songs may cause some embarrassment to middle school ensembles. Similarly, Leeder and Haynie (1958) recommended that popular songs used in school should have an inspiring text.

Several authorities discouraged the use of popular music with choirs. Barrett (1935) stated that students actually prefer to sing folk songs, marching songs, cowboy ballads, Mexican and Spanish songs, and old-time favorites more than popular songs, although one may question whether or not this is as true today as it was in 1935. Cooksey (1992) wrote emphatically that teachers should avoid "popsy" tunes and rather "go for quality."
Similarly, Myers (1950) suggested that very few popular songs met the requirement of a "good song."

Some authors were not as dogmatic in their views, but warned against using too much popular music nevertheless. Rangeler (1956b) noted that although boys claimed to like popular songs, they lost interest after a period of rehearsal. Also taking this middle-of-the-road approach was Morgan (1947) who recommended balancing the repertoire between the standard repertoire and more popular pieces. Sally Herman (in Shrock, 1990) simply stated, "Pop must be a part of your program, not your entire program" (p. 14).

Textual Suitability

Musical Sources

A number of authorities (Spratt, 1935; Goodhart, 1936; Mursell and Glenn, 1938; Ericson, 1941; Mursell, 1943; Selk, 1954; Olson, 1956) have emphasized the importance of text as a criterion for music selection for junior high school students. Selk stated that of the 10 criteria for high school men's choruses, the text was first in importance. As Mursell and Glenn have noted, the words are the most important element in holding interest of the students. Likewise, Goodhart suggested that "it is to a great extent through the textual content of choral material that an appeal to the unique personalities of our students is made" (p. 220). In a 1935 survey, Spratt found that the music was preferred by 41% of the boys over their liking for the words, while 51% of them liked music and words equally. For this reason, Olson suggested that the words were of utmost importance since the message
is conveyed through the text. Therefore, texts should be selected for original choral compositions which appeal to the adolescents in the choral ensembles.

Quality Texts

In addition to noting the importance of the text as a criterion to be considered, several authorities (Barrett, 1935; Goodhart, 1936; Dykema and Cundiff, 1939; Carlson, 1943; Krone, 1945, cited by Olson, 1956; Olson, 1956; Leeder and Haynie, 1958; Wilson, 1959; Ingram and Rice, 1962; Cooksey, 1978) have recommended that texts be selected for their quality. Barrett suggested that the texts should be worthwhile literature and represent the work of a reputable poet. Likewise, Cooksey recommended that musical texts have worth in themselves. Dykema and Cundiff asked,

Is the text attractive and worthy? Would it be selected as a 'memory gem' if it were judged merely as poetry? Is adapted in thought and expression to the age for which the song is intended?...Is the music suited to the text? Does it strengthen the main ideas and suggestions of the words? Is the poem more effective when sung with the music than when recited? Usually all these queries should receive an affirmative answer before any song is selected... (p. 113).

Ingram and Rice suggested that adolescents are capable of responding to the best poetry, therefore texts should be meaningful and well written. In addition they should have a rhythmic flow. Cooksey (1992) stated emphatically that directors should avoid trite texts. Similarly, Christy (1940) suggested that one must always consider the literary worth and suitability of the text. He describe appropriate texts as having five characteristics: (a) poetic value, (b) clarity of idea, (c) power of imagery, (d) suitability for singing, and (e) appropriateness of content. Likewise, Wilson listed five characteristics of quality texts as (a) permanence, (b) worthwhile
association, (c) sincerity, (d) originality, and (e) workmanship. Miller (1979) suggested that the texts should be meaningful and have educational worth.

**Text and Music Compatibility**

In addition to recommending poetry of high quality, some authorities (Kauffman, 1943; Webb, 1954; Leeder and Hainie, 1958; Miller, 1979) have also suggested that one should consider the compatibility of the text and the music. Webb suggested that the words and music must be compatible in accent, feeling, and climax. As Miller pointed out, the text should be easily sung. Kauffman added that they should be singable to the point that they are practically wedded to the music. Miller suggested several points to consider: (a) the music should follow the rhythm of the text, (b) the musical pitch should help the listener's understanding of the text, (c) the cadences in the text and music should coincide, (d) the form of the music should be compatible with that of the text, and (e) the focal point of the text and the music should coincide. Wilson (1949) emphasized that the accent of the words should be simultaneous with the accent of the music within a bar. Likewise, Cain (1945) noted that the melody should follow the natural inflection of the spoken lines.

**Texts that Appeal to Adolescents**

As Russell (1980) and Barresi and Russell (1983) have suggested, student interests may be heightened by selecting texts containing topics with which they relate. Likewise, Gustafson (1956) suggested that texts should be within the understanding and experience of the adolescent. Barrett (1935) and Cooksey (1978) suggested that texts used as lyrics should be relevant and
interesting to middle school students. Taylor (1966), however, raised some questions as to whether it was possible to predict what texts would appeal to adolescents. He suggested that adolescent tastes were unpredictable. In addition, the teacher had an impact on the attitudes of the students.

Webb (1954) suggested that the quality of the poetry was a factor in appealing to adolescent students. He recommended that the texts be within the students' understanding and worthy of the time taken to learn the work. He further recommended that the texts represent a variety of subjects including the sea, soldiers, love, religion, heroic deeds, historical events, seasons, folklore. The texts should be more mature and not too silly.

Fowler (1965) criticized many of the lyrics used in educational song materials, noting that they were generally unrelated to contemporary culture. It seems appropriate to ask what types of texts are relevant and appealing to adolescents. Several authors have attempted to answer this question. Taylor recommended using a wide variety of subject matter. Monsour & Perry (1960) also noted that adolescents are energetic and require active participation. These characteristics should affect the selection of appropriate texts.

Beattie, McConothy, and Morgan (1930) recommended texts based on epic and heroic subjects. Andrews and Leeder (1953) added that junior high school students often prefer sensations rather than ideas. Perhaps it is for this reason that Marple (1975) suggested that adolescents preferred songs with strong emotions rather than those which portrayed the subtle meaning of life.

Several authors have also recommended that more serious types of texts are appropriate for adolescents. As Earhart (quoted by McManus, 1932)
suggested, "...at the time of adolescence the music that speaks of the joys and sorrows of earth, that wrestles with the problems of human emotions, must become part of his inheritance." Likewise, Andrews and Leader (1953) noted that dominant characteristics of junior high school pupils include hero worship, love of adventure and excitement, reverence for God, and great emotional capacity. Similarly, Roe (1970) stated that teen-agers were interested in songs about people of other nations, in songs of romance, and in songs about the origin of life and life after death. Ingram and Rice (1962) suggested that middle school students enjoyed texts that are concerned with adventure, people, life, mysticism, God, and brotherhood, in other words, "the world which beckons the adventurous spirit to go, to see, and to do" (p. 83). Likewise, Russell (1980) and Barresi and Russell (1983) encouraged middle school choral directors to select texts which were noble, heroic, religious, or humorous in nature.

**Appealing to the adolescent male student.**

As with the case of musical styles, several authorities (Kauffman, 1943; Swanson, 1976, 1977b; Eilers, 1991) have made specific recommendations concerning the need to appeal especially to the adolescent male students when it comes to selection of appropriate texts. Enlow (1938) suggested that adolescent males preferred to think of themselves as men, and did not care for "matters that are of concern to women" (p. 6). Eilers has suggested, "Find songs with masculine appeal in the lyrics, or at the very least, not geared to girls. Non-age and non-sex lyrics are safest" (p. 2).

A number of authorities (Kwalwasser, 1932; Spratt, 1935; Gehrkens, 1936; Viggiano, 1941; Kauffman, 1943; Bartels, 1949) have suggested that
to appeal to adolescent boys, texts should be selected for their virility. In addition, Gehrkens recommended that choral directors avoid songs that were mushily sentimental or suggestive. Likewise, Spratt noted that

> Words are of great importance in creating mood and rhythmic grasp: must have poetic meaning and interest; must be natural and unforced and go hand in hand with the social experience of the boy. Uninteresting words devitalize singing; they must not represent the 'faded and reminiscent' things of life, but must [be] virile, rugged, powerful, to appeal to adolescent boys. Never cheap, tawdry, nor trashy --must have imaginative appeal (pp. 20-21).

Similarly, Grumley (1958) suggested that love songs were not popular with male students at this age since male/female relationships had not been firmly established. Grumley also recommended avoiding texts dealing with nature, which he stated male students at this age dislike. Grumley and Gustafson (1956) both recommended that hero worship texts were popular at this age.

This is not to say that all songs must be of this virile type. As Taylor (1966) noted, texts which evoked a warm emotion or sentiment were equally recommended. Dennis (1939) also recognized that in adolescent males "the yearning for adventure, the desire to be heroic, the sensitivity to religion, consciousness of beauty, vulnerability to the tender passion -all cry for expression" (p. 169). Gehrkens (1936) also encouraged choral directors not to fear "...a song that has pathos...or one that has tender sentiment, like Believe Me if all Those Endearing Young Charms..." (p. 78).

Certainly there is a place for a wide variety of texts in the curriculum. Hannan (1928) noted, however, that although quiet, contemplative texts are useful, too much of this type of text should be avoided. Most of the authorities, then, agree that lyrics which appeal to the adolescent male will tend to be more on the virile side than on the contemplative. As Hirt (1954, quoted by Olson, 1956) noted,
'We are tired of moon-rises, fairy pipers and odes to spring'...remarks one of the boys in the 1953 California-Western All-Conference Chorus in Tucson; and he is echoing here the attitude of the many high school singers consulted who say in essence; we are tired of trite nobleness like 'Courage,' 'Invictus' and 'Pirates Bold.' We are tired of cute andarty things. Either speak to us in today's idiom or in a language that does not embarrass us' (p. 87).

Kwalwasser (1932) stated, "Boys do not dislike music. They dislike the emaciated stuff which they are getting in place of music" (p. 43). For this reason, he, as well as Krone (quoted by Selk, 1954) agreed that songs about flowers, rippling brooklets, birds, and butterflies are definitely "out."

Whether or not adolescents find lyrics about love to be appealing is somewhat controversial. Abel (1957) noted that "there is a wealth of untapped love lyrics through different periods of time from the Elizabethan to modern times that bear adolescent listening" (p. 75). Whether or not he would encourage using such literature in the choral ensemble is not clear.

Cooper and Kuersteiner (1970) and Ingram & Rice (1962) recommended singing love songs, although they added that emotionalism or sentimentalism might embarrass the students, especially the male students. Others (Kauffman, 1943; Rangeler, 1956b; Barresi & Russell, 1983) have been less supportive of using love songs. As Rangeler noted, the boys in his ensemble were "not too interested in love songs unless the songs are sung in a humorous vein. Serious expressions of their feelings for girls is somewhat embarrassing at this age" (p. 51).

Age appropriateness.

A number of authorities have implied that musical texts should be age appropriate. Several (Dennis, 1939; Ingram & Rice, 1962; Cooper and Kuersteiner, 1970) have warned against using texts which are too immature.
As Cooper and Kuersteiner have suggested, "do not use childish words. These young people have outgrown the cute little jingles so successful in elementary school; they can understand and interpret adult poetry with surprising sensitivity" (p. 62). They, along with several other authors (Beattie, McConathy, and Morgan, 1930; Goodhart, 1936; Kauffman, 1943) suggested that adolescents were ready for more mature, adult poetry. As Goodhart suggested, adult texts, especially those which appeal to adult men, should be chosen.

In contrast, a few authorities (Gehrkens, 1936; Cooksey, 1978) have warned against using texts which are too mature for middle school students. As Cooksey noted, some choral works, such as Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus" or "Surely He Hath Bourne Our Griefs" may be textually too mature for middle school students.

This position seems to be in line with those who suggest that instead of being too childish or too mature, texts should be appropriate to the middle school aged student. As Bessom, Taterunix, and Forcucci (1974) have suggested, the text should be suitable, not too mature or immature.

Although it is reasonable that texts should be age appropriate, the question remains as to how one can evaluate the age appropriateness of individual texts. It is rather surprising that although a number of authorities in the field of music education have raised this issue, none could be found who attempted to answer this question.

Related to the issue of age appropriateness is the issue of wording. Miller (1934) stated that colloquially worded texts, associated with the experiences of the child, should be used in the school setting. Miller claimed that too much of the materials used in the schools did not appeal to students
because the text was stated using words which the students could not understand or relate. McIntosh (1980) warned, however, that some popular vernacular texts, including nonsense syllables such as "Ob-La-Di, Ob-La-Da," were often outdated by the time the music becomes published. In addition, such texts may cause embarrassment for some students.

Foreign languages texts.
A few authorities have suggested that foreign language texts may stimulate interest with middle school students. As Russell (1980) and Barresi and Russell (1983) have noted, if these are not too complicated, a song in a foreign language may stimulate the interest of the students. Likewise, Krone (quoted by Selk, 1954) stated that "a few folksongs in the original language are usually popular also, and provide good correlation with the work of the foreign language classes" (p. 17).

Technical Aspects
Rhyme and rhythm.
Little has been said by authorities concerning rhyming patterns or poetic rhythm. Wilson (1949) did note that free verse poetry is more difficult to set musically than poetry with a pattern of rhyme. Regelski (1979) also suggested that musical texts should be strophic.

Vocal Propagation.
Cooper and Kuersteiner (1970) have suggested that although word content is important, it is the vocal propagation of the text which the teacher should be most concerned. On one hand, as Taylor (1966) noted, there should
be few conflicts between syllables in different voices so that the songs are easily sung and understood. Others have been more concerned about the vowel and consonant sounds themselves in the choral setting.

Cain (1945) suggested that successful texts have good sounding vowels and few rough consonants. Which vowels and consonants are objectionable is not stated. Olson (1956) suggested that texts should have no harsh or awkward successions of consonants. Similarly, Cain recommended that the composer consider a number of questions concerning texts:

Are elisions, or opportunities for the same, present? (Some of these sound very amusing when the final composition is sung by the chorus; for example, the phrase 'I'm as happy as can be' will be sung 'I'm as sappy as can be.') It is the composer's duty to avoid such continuity of words even though he may have to change the original text in places. In this point alone a text requires considerable study and going over by the composer before he sets it to music (p. 122).

Likewise, Wilson (1949) noted that double consonants and sibilant consonants are difficult to sing. He recommended avoiding too many instances of "d" followed by "b" or "t," as in "loud tone," or "t" followed by another "t," as in "last time" (p. 104).

In addition to awkward vowel and consonant combinations, several authorities (Wilson, 1949; Cooper and Kuersteiner, 1970; Van Camp, cited by Cooksey, 1992) have noted that certain vowel sounds are difficult to use in certain ranges. Wilson recommended that composers should not places words with the vowels ee, i, eh, or ay on high notes for unchanged, treble voices, although tenors and baritones may be able to sing them fairly easily. In fact, he suggested that tenors and baritones find these vowels easier to perform than ah or aw and that the oo vowel was neutral and could be used at will. Cooper and Kuersteiner recommended avoiding ee and oo vowels on high notes, stating that the ee was often sharp and the oo is often flat.
Poetry Preference Literature

It may seem surprising that although a large number of music educators have mentioned the importance of using quality poetry which appeals to adolescents as musical texts, the research concerning adolescent poetry preference in the field of language arts has been generally neglected. This is especially surprising because of the amount of work that has been done in this specific area.

Several observations from the literature concerning reading preferences are not only appropriate, but also extremely relevant to the issue of selecting appropriate texts for middle school choral pieces. Kangley (1938) noted, for instance, that some qualities, such as delicacy or whimsicality, are valued by adults, but often do not appeal to younger readers. This may suggest that adults are not always the best judges of appropriate literature for adolescents. Kangley suggested that "children tend to prefer poetry that is below what is ordinarily considered to be their grade level" (p. 142). Perhaps this is as Zancanella (1987) has suggested, due to the fact that junior high school students like poems which help them remember their younger days. Gillespie and Connor (1975) suggested that many poems from early childhood continue to appeal to adolescents. Terry (1972) also pointed out that poems which were popular were often popular across several grade levels. Therefore, research studies concerning poetry preferences of elementary as well as high school students may be relevant in determining what qualities in poetry are best liked by middle school students.
Subject Matter

As Norvell (1950) and Nelms (1967) have emphasized, the content of the poems plays a more significant role in the liking of a specific poem than do the poem's form and style. In fact, Norvell noted that for adolescents, content is the "touchstone of popularity." It is therefore important to identify the types of subject matter which make certain poems popular with adolescents. Nelms, writing of tenth grade students, noted that the content of poetry for adolescents parallels their interests in other types of writing. Nelms further suggested that poetry which appeals to adolescents is that which is about conflicts and values of serious concern to adolescents. Wickens (1963) stated that junior high school students enjoy stories of "action, human interest, imagination, and humor" (p. 506). Wickens continued, "Elements of style which appeal are a free and easy manner of writing, brevity, sincerity, and straightforwardness of language, joined with rapidity of movement" (p. 506).

Simmons (1980) has also noted that adolescents enjoy poems with an interesting subject matter. Likewise, a number of authorities (Mackintosh, 1924; Kangley, 1938; Kyte, 1947; Norvell, 1950) have suggested that these students liked poems which describe strong action. Mackintosh noted that fifth grade students did not generally like calm, thoughtful, meditative poetry.

Although some earlier studies (King, 1922; Avegno, 1956) suggested that students in upper elementary and middle school age liked poetry about nature, Kutiper (1985) found mixed results and concluded that nature was generally disliked as content for poetry for adolescents.
The majority of authorities who have addressed the issue of children's poetry preferences (King, 1922; Mackintosh, 1924; Kangley, 1938; Kyte, 1947; Martin, 1947; Norvell, 1950, 1958; Avegno, 1956; Hofer, 1956; Bridge, 1966; Tom (1967 & 1984, cited by Thomas, 1986); Terry, 1974; Ingham, 1980; Simmons, 1980; Kutiper, 1985; Reed, 1985) have noted that humorous poetry is generally the most popular. Kangley indicated the popularity of humorous poetry, such as that which narrated absurd mishaps involving a character or characters in comic misery. Likewise, Wells (1934) noted that absurdity and slapstick were popular among junior and senior high school students. Bryan and Agee (1979, cited by Kutiper, 1985) suggested that humor was still popular with high school students, but not as much so as with elementary children. Norvell (1950) suggested that both males and females gave high rankings to poems with obvious humor. Norvell added that neither males nor females ranked subtle humor, such as allusion and parody, high. Bryan and Agee noted, however, that females tended to enjoy satire and whimsy more than did males.

The literature also suggested that adolescents enjoyed nonsense poetry. Norvell (1958) and Terry (1974) found this to be true at the upper elementary level. Simmons (1980) also pointed out that tongue twisters were popular at that age level. Gillespie and Connor (1975) found nonsense poems popular with middle school students, as did Carlsen (1980) with students with students in high school.

Due to the overwhelming number of studies which have pointed to students' preference for humorous poetry, it is not surprising that some authors (Hofer, 1956; Terry, 1974; Simmons, 1980) have found that limericks were popular, especially among upper elementary students. Not all
studies have substantiated this finding, however. Kutiper (1985) found that although many seventh and eighth grade students liked limericks, some found them to be a bit childish.

Poetry about animals was also popular with school aged children. Avegno (1956) and Simmons (1980) studied the poetry preferences of fourth through sixth grade students and found that poems about animals, especially in humorous situations, were most popular. Kutiper found similar results in grades 7-9 as did Norvell (1958) in a study of third through sixth grade students. Kangley (1938) found that among the reasons which younger readers gave for liking certain poems, the idea that a poem was about animals was among the top seven. Terry (1972) also found that students enjoyed poems about animals. Norvell (1950) suggested that among students in grades 7-12, poems about animals ranked at or near the top of the list of content preferences, especially those poems which were concerned with domestic animals.

A number of studies (Kangley, 1938; Kyte, 1947; Hofer, 1956; Bridge, 1966; Terry, 1974; Ingham, 1980; Simmons, 1980) which focused on elementary age children suggested that those children liked poetry about familiar subjects and which related to familiar experiences. Kutiper (1985), Kangley, Terry, and Kyte noted that this can work negatively, however, if the experience or subject is unpleasant, disagreeable, or disturbing.

Gender Differences

Some authors have suggested that there may be gender related differences in the area of poetry preference. Kangley (1938) noted that students appeared to prefer poems that dealt with their own gender. Even
the use of a proper name in a title that suggested one gender seemed to have influenced the students' preference. She further noted that male students were more likely to reject a poem because of a feminine name in the title than female students were to reject one with a masculine name.

Likewise, Norvell (1950) suggested that males preferred patriotic and humorous poems, poems with adventure (including war), and poems about animals. They disliked, however, poems about romantic love, home and family life, religion, poems of nature, sentiment, reflection, philosophy, didacticism. Females at this age, he suggested, were more influenced by gentler emotions than boys.

Sussams (1936, cited by Kangley, 1938) noted that in a study of 11-14 year old students in England, the females preferred nature poetry. The males liked sea poems and poems about animals, but the females did not. Likewise, Kangley found that female pupils liked poems with commonplace subject matter more than did the males. For example, the females were highly consistent in their liking of poems which focused on home life. Males did not seem to care for such poems. Female students also preferred poems which contained imagery twice as much as the males. Females seem to like nature poems more than the males as well, although neither the males nor the females listed these as their favorites. Concerning humorous poems, Kangley noted that whereas the girls seemed to prefer the poems which were amusing or playful, the boys liked poems which were broadly comic. Kangley also suggested that female students' poetry preferences were more like those of adults. Kangley noted that unlike the girls, boys seemed to prefer adventure poems whereas girls preferred poems of sentiment. Kangley also noted that the males preferred poems that dealt with crude but colorful
characters, especially those which also portrayed action or adventure. They also seemed to like poems depicting war and violent action, whereas the female pupils seemed to dislike poetry which portrayed violence, bloodshed, or unpleasant, unhappy situations. Finally, Kangley suggested that female students preferred "romantic" poetry more than the males.

Kangley (1938) also noted some studies which, although focusing on prose rather than poetry, pointed out some gender preference differences which may well be applicable. She cited a 1921 study by Jordon in which it was suggested that boys in grades 6-12 "enjoy books that portray action, courage, loyalty, mastery, and new experience. Girls enjoy books that portray unselfishness, benevolence, affection, and social success." Similarly, a study by Monto (1927, cited by Kangley) of junior and senior high school students suggested that the boys preferred adventure stories whereas the females liked sentimental fiction. Another study by Garnett (1924, cited by Kangley) of fourth grade students demonstrated that

Both boys and girls react negatively to stories that deal with meanness, greed, and cruelty. They also dislike 'hard' or 'silly' stories. Both boys and girls like action, adventure, humor, faithfulness, happy endings, and fairy tales. Girls like stories that teach kindness, deal with everyday life, and have an ethical import. Boys like stories of animals and stories involving fighting (p. 8).

Although a number of studies have suggested that males and females tend to like different types of poetry, other studies have suggested that there really are no significant differences in preference. Bryan and Agee (1979, cited by Kutiper, 1985) found no significant difference between males and females at the high school level. Kutiper (1985) studied the preferences of junior high school students and found no overall significant differences based
on gender or grade level, although there were with some differences on specific poems.

At the upper elementary level, Macintosh (1924) found that gender did not significantly affect the choice of poems with students in the fifth grade as did Bridge (1966) with student in grades 4-6. Simmons (1980) similarly found that among students in grades 4-6, choices of favorite poems were fairly similar based on grade level, gender, and chronological age, although there was some variations in degree of liking in cases. Norvell (1950) likewise found that patriotic and adventure poems were equally popular with both male and female students.

**Contemporary vs. Traditional Poems**

Although Bryan and Agee (1979, cited by Kutiper, 1985) suggested that high school students did not necessarily like contemporary poems better than traditional poems, most other studies have suggested the opposite. Terry (1974) and Ingham (1980) have noted that students in the upper elementary levels have shown a preference for more contemporary poems rather than more traditional poems. Ingham especially recommended the poetry of Shel Silverstein and Dennis Lee. Similarly, Kutiper (1985) noted a definite preference for contemporary poetry with students in grades 7-9. Nelms (1967) noted that tenth grade students preferred modern poems over classic poems and suggested that teachers should use poems which utilize direct, modern language. Likewise, Carlsen (1980) noted that for high school students, modern verse was more significant for adolescents.
Technical Considerations

When asked to give reasons for preferring their favorite poems, Kangley (1938) found that among the top reasons were narrative form, rhyme, and rhythm. Kangley also noted that characteristics which children noted in liking certain poems included simplicity, dialogue, and obvious sound effect.

Narrative vs. Lyric Poems

Norvell (1950) has noted a definite preference for narrative poems over lyric poems for school aged children. Norvell suggested that this is truer for male students that with female students at this age. Nelms (1967) found a preference for narrative poetry with tenth grade students. Carlsen (1980), in a study of high school poetry preferences, noted that although students often say they liked humorous poems the best, when asked to list their favorite poems, they often cited narrative poems. At the middle school level, Martin (1947) found that junior high school aged students preferred narrative poetry. Kutiper (1985) likewise wrote that students in grades 7-9 preferred narrative poems, especially those which included humor. Hofer (1956) found the same results with sixth grade students who especially liked narrative poems about people. Several studies found similar results with upper elementary age children, including Mackintosh (1924), Terry (1974), Ingham (1980), and Simmons (1980). Ingham and Simmons noted that narrative poems which included humor were especially popular. Simmons also suggested using narrative poems related to holidays. Gillespie and Connor (1975) noted that story poems and ballads about heroes, famous people, and events in history
are popular. Similarly, Hofer (1956) suggested that sixth grade students liked poetry about people.

Although narrative poetry tends to be quite popular with adolescents, Carlsen (1980), in a study of high school students, noted that some narrative poems were written in a Victorian style which adolescents generally reject. In addition, Norvell (1950) suggested that boys in grade 7-12 might reject narrative poems in which a female played the leading role.

In contrast, Nelms (1967) pointed out that lyric poems are generally not popular with adolescents. Similarly, Gillespie and Connor (1970) suggested that lyrical poetry has little appeal to middle school students.

It has been noted that specific types of lyric poetry are often disliked by students at this age. Haiku, for instance, is cited throughout the literature as an unpopular poetic form with school aged children. Simmons (1980) noted that fourth through sixth grade students do not care for haiku. Terry (1974) in an earlier study with the same age students found similar results, noting that the students suggested that their dislike was due to the fact that haiku are too short, too difficult to understand, and did not rhyme. Kutiper (1985) found a similar dislike for haiku among students in grades 7-9.

Rhyme, Meter, and Rhythm

With the exception of Nelms (1968) who found that with tenth grade students rhyming schemes and rhythmic patterns were not very influential in poetry preference, most studies found the opposite to be the case, especially with younger students. Most authorities (King, 1922; Mackintosh, 1924; Kangley, 1935; Avegno, 1956; Hofer, 1956; Bridge, 1966; Terry, 1974; Ingham, 1980; Simmons, 1980) suggested that poems with rhyme were
generally more popular than those without among children from upper elementary grades through middle school. Kutiper (1985) did suggest, however, that rhyme can work negatively with students in junior high school.

Likewise, many authors (King, 1922; Hofer, 1956; Bridge, 1966; Terry, 1974; Simmons, 1980; Kutiper, 1985) have noted that students responded positively to obvious rhythm. Erickson indicated that eighth grade students preferred poems which were metrically regular. Kangley (1938) further noted that rhythm was definitely attractive to a large number of the children, although a few were annoyed by poems characterized by repetitious, heavily stressed beats. In addition to preferring poems with marked rhythm, the students in Kangley's study responded positively to sound effects such as repetition and refrain. On the other hand, Hofer found that the sixth grade students in that study responded negatively to excessively repetitious phrases.

Due to the student's preference for rhyme and rhythm, blank or free verse has generally rated low in preference studies of school aged children. Terry (1974) found this to be true with fourth through sixth grade students. Hofer (1956) also noted that sixth grade students did not care for blank verse. The same was found with students in grades 7-9 in Kutiper's (1985) study. Similarly, Hofer found that sixth grade students did not care for poems characterized by repeated verse.

Terry (1974) has suggested that some sound effects were present in some of the most popular poems chosen by the upper elementary students in her study. She cited one such poem as "Poem to Mud." Kangley (1938) suggested that male students seemed to like poems with obvious sound
effects even more than the female students. A more recent study by Kutiper (1985) suggested that with students in grades 7-9, sound devices such as repetition and onomatopoeia had mixed results.

Difficulty

Practically all studies (Kangley, 1938; Kyte, 1947; Avegno 1956; Simmons, 1980; Kutiper, 1985) of poetry preference of school age students have noted that the students prefer simpler poetry. Students reject poetry which they do not understand, regardless of the literary quality of that poetry.

Characteristics which marked the most popular poems included simple vocabulary, few if any abstractions, and very modest demands of the imagination. Such characteristics as subtlety, delicacy, and technical perfection were sources of irritation rather than pleasure to young readers. Kangley (1938) found that the students had difficulty in understanding even simple abstractions. As she noted, "To perceive courage as it is displayed dramatically in a brave act is one thing; to understand courage as an abstract quality is quite another" (p. 61). When students had difficulty understanding a poem, they generally disliked it. In addition, Weekes (1929, cited by Kangley) in connection with sixth grade students noted that "though both involved sentence structure and figurative language obscure meaning, figurative language is the more serious difficulty for children" (p. 9). Simmons (1980) suggested that personification and abstract ideas led to an uncertainty and disliking by fourth through sixth grade students.

Studies have demonstrated that figurative language and imagery add to the level of comprehension difficulty, and therefore inversely affect
preference. Terry (1974) suggested that sixth grade students did not like figurative language or involved sentence structure. Likewise, Kyte (1947) found that students in grades 3-8 disliked poetry with figurative language. More recently, Kutiper (1985) suggested that with junior high school students, figurative language produced mixed results, although it was generally a negative influence which interfered with comprehension. Similarly, several authorities have noted that imagery often made poetry more difficult to understand and affected the students' preference for poems containing the device. Terry (1974) suggested that sixth grade students found visual imagery a negative influence in that it made the poetry more difficult to understand. On the other hand, Kutiper (1985) suggested that for junior high school students, imagery was not necessarily a negative influence when it was combined with other positive qualities. As suggested in the Bryan and Agee study (1979, cited by Kutiper, 1985) of high school students, as students become older, they seem to become more receptive to figurative language and imagery.

Length

Length has been suggested as a factor in the preference of students for various poems. Kyte's (1947) study of students in grades 3-8 as well as Avegno's (1956) study of fourth through sixth grade students emphasized that these students had a preconceived idea of proper length for poems. Poems which were perceived to be too long or too short were not well liked. Kutiper (1985) also noted that length was a factor for the junior high school students in that study.
In conclusion, Kangley (1938) suggested that student preferred "simple material, presented in story form, spiced with adventure or action, and, if possible, humor as well." As Kangley noted, the implication for teachers is simple:

Teachers should frankly recognize the fact that much of the world's greatest poetry cannot be appreciated even by children of superior ability as they lack the emotional maturity that makes such poetry significant to older readers (p. 142).

Music of Worth

A number of authorities (Hesser, 1929, 1936; Goodhart, 1936; Morgan, 1947; Davis, 1952; Gustafson, 1956; Russeil, 1980; Baressi and Russell, 1983) have recommended that one criterion to be used in selecting appropriate choral music for middle school students is that the piece being reviewed should have "musical worth." Hesser (1936), citing the 1930 Report of the Committee on Vocal Affairs of the Music Educators National Conference, noted that "the time devoted to music in the schools is at best so limited that no really conscientious teacher can afford to waste a moment of it on poor material" (p. 208). Therefore, he suggested that

The number must be worthy, both musically and poetically, of becoming a part of the students' permanent repertory. More and more we must give our boys and girls during this impressionable age those finer things which will remain a source of joy and beauty throughout their whole life (Hesser, 1929, p. 502).

This has not been the only view, however. Swanson (1959) suggested that at the junior high school level, the goals of the choral program should be to arouse an interest in singing, improve the singing technique and increase participation. Because of the many changes occurring at this age, he
suggested that plans to improve the musical tastes and the aesthetic appreciation of the students may need to be delayed until a later date.

Subjective Nature

Although few would suggest that "poor" music should be used with any student ensemble, the suggestion that only "good" music be used raises some problems. Some authors have noted that it is difficult to define just what constitutes "good music." As Mursell (1943) suggested, "...it remains extremely difficult to say what the essential nature of good music is" (p. 105). Other authorities have noted that this is a highly subjective criterion. As Kauffman (1943) has noted, "What one considers good material is mainly a matter of personal taste."

Olson (1956) describes this problem clearly when he wrote,

In any discussion of music and text requirements for the junior high vocal group, the question arises, 'What is 'good' music?' Krone refers to two schools of thought on the subject of what constitutes 'good' music. One is that the best music be used--best referring to an absolute quality inherent in the music as associated usually with the names of great composers. The other is that the director is the wisest who takes his students where they are and leads them by easy stages to levels that are better than where they were. There should be no absolute standards of 'good' or 'poor' music. These are relative terms and should be modified to 'poor' for whom or 'good' for whom (p. 84).

Others have also proposed that the students' tastes and interests should be considered in this evaluation of worthy music. As Barresi and Russell (1983) noted,

In selecting music of worth--music which will have lasting value and will contribute to the musical, aesthetic, and vocal growth of the singers--the director is faced with a difficult problem. The director is obliged to consider not only his own musical taste and interest but also those of the singers. In order to balance his rather subjective feelings,
the director should focus upon the needs of the singers to achieve the
element of objectivity required for effective repertoire selection (p. 172).

Goodhart (1936), recognizing this problem, redefined "worth while" music to
mean music which meets the criteria which had been established for student
of this age. He wrote,

Our consideration for the physical, intellectual and emotional changes
occurring during the stage of early adolescence readily aids us in
perceiving the important fact that much music which in general might
be termed 'worth while' is wholly unsuited for performance by boys
and girls during this period. The term 'worth while' then, takes upon
itself important significance, and can best be defined through the
criteria recommended (p. 218).

Christy (1940) has suggested six criteria to help establish the musical
worth of a composition: (a) consideration of originality, (b) charm, (c) taste in
adaptation, (d) usefulness, (e) skill in arrangement, and (f) probable
permanence (p. 92). Miller (1979) suggested that music be chosen which
meet three criteria: (a) the edition should be valid, (b) arrangements should
reflect the spirit of the original, and (c) the purchase should be a wise
financial investment.

Suggested Criteria

Recognizing that there is certainly a subjective element in discerning
musical worth, some authorities have suggested several criteria for
evaluating musical worth. Cooksey (1982), for instance, listed several such
criteria, including the composer's craftsmanship, or "how he combines the
melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic elements, or welds together the text and
music," the worth of the text, and other educational factors.
Barresi and Russell (1983) gave a similar list of criteria which they suggested was a "framework for considering the musical worth of pieces under scrutiny." They list the following criteria:

1. The work is by a composer or arranger with a reputation for fine musical craftsmanship.
2. The work contains musical ideas and technical requirements which will contribute to the singers' vocal and musical growth.
3. The text of the piece is well integrated with the music and is apt to evoke singer expressiveness and interest.
4. The work will assist in the aesthetic growth of the singers by contributing to their awareness of the different styles and types of choral music.

Russell (1980) also added that the piece possesses the potential for lasting value.

Barresi and Russell's (1983) fourth criteria, "contributing to their awareness of the different styles and types of choral music" may be broadened to mean that a choral work has educational value. This has also been suggested by Cooksey (1978) who noted that musical worth might be viewed in relation to educational or historical worth. Likewise, Bessom, Tatarunix, and Forucci (1974) recommended that music selected for choral ensembles "provide for the development of musical knowledge, understanding, and skill" (p. 201).

In addition to having value in imparting musical knowledge, some authors have suggested that music selected for middle school students should also contribute to the students' vocal development. Indeed, vocal lines which can be used as vocalizes give warm-ups meaning. As Swanson (1977b) has noted, "Adolescent boys are usually quite amenable to vocalizing IF they see a purpose for doing so." In relation to this, choral directors should be especially on the look for choral pieces which utilize descending scalar passages. Many
authorities have noted the value of descending scale patterns for developing the changing voice. As Swanson (1976, 1977b) noted, when songs are used which include descending scale passages, these can follow similar vocalizes, giving them meaning. He noted the value of using descending melodies with newly developing baritone singers, especially.

Physical Characteristics

Several authorities have made suggestions concerning the actual physical characteristics of choral music. Although some of this is specifically aimed toward choral publications for middle school, much of it is general enough to be applied to choral music in general.

Several authorities (Selk, 1954; Siltman, 1979) have recommended that vocal parts be written on separate staves. Swanson (1973) suggested that the soprano and alto parts could be printed on one staff if they move simultaneously in simple rhythms. The tenor and bass parts could also use a single staff if the tenor part stays in the bass clef range. He tended to prefer using separate staves for the two men’s parts, however. Hammer (1982) took this position as well, suggesting that if two parts move together homophonically for extended periods, they could be written on the same staff using stems in opposite directions. Gustafson (1956) merely stated that the music should be printed in such a way that it is easy to read. He recommended having no more than two parts on the same staff, and preferably only one. Voices should certainly not cross on the same staff. He also recommended that the parts be free from optional and alternate parts.
Webb (1954) further noted that notes and text should be well spaced and large enough for easy reading.

Selk (1954) and Hammer (1982) also suggested that publishers include the time of performance in choral editions to help directors in planning programs. Likewise, The American Academy of Teachers of Singing, 1944; Selk; Bellows, 1960; Christy, 1961; Shewan, 1973; and Van Camp (cited by Cooksey, 1992) suggested that publishers include an indication of tessitura as well as range for each vocal part.

Although this may seem to be a small issue, Hammer (1982) recommended using instrumental beams instead of flags. This has become the practice of choral publishers in recent years. Hammer also suggested that measures should be numbered.

Webb (1954) recommended that materials should be properly documented and sources indicated. Selk (1954) recommended that publishers print a short paragraph about the composition and the composer to help acquaint the singers with the composition.

Conclusion

It has been shown that in the literature numerous statements have been made concerning qualities of appropriate choral literature for middle school students. These statements may be grouped in five categories, (a) vocal and technical limitations, (b) appropriate voicings, (c) musical appeal, (d) textual suitability, and (e) music of worth. Although a number of these statements had rather unanimous support among the authorities, quite a few were contradictory. In addition, some of the criteria listed by some of the
earlier authorities seemed somewhat dated, especially those concerning student preferences.

Therefore, it may be concluded that there does not exist an exhaustive listing of criteria for middle school choral music which has been substantiated by successful teachers as being appropriate. It is the purpose of this study to provide that substantiation.
CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES

In order to determine appropriate criteria for selecting and composing appropriate middle school choral music, several major steps were undertaken: (a) the identification of criteria as noted by various authorities in the literature, (b) the adoption of those criteria which seem clearly supported in the literature, (c) the determination of those criteria which could be, or should be used as items on a survey, (d) the construction of the survey instrument reflecting the selected, stated criteria, (e) the identification and surveying of exemplary middle school choral directors, (f) the computation of the results of the survey, providing substantiation of the criteria, and (g) the composition of several compositions which reflected the substantiated criteria.

Identification of Criteria

A thorough search was made of the pertinent literature, including books, doctoral dissertations, masters theses, periodical literature, and miscellaneous reports. Literature which mentioned the adolescent voice or choral music for middle school or junior high school was considered pertinent. In addition, sources which spoke of male singing groups in the junior or
senior high school were also reviewed. Due to the suggested effects of the secular trend in the age of maturation, it was deemed necessary to include early literature concerning high school choral ensembles as well. Statements which were made concerning appropriate qualities for junior high school or middle school choral music were noted and organized into appropriate categories.

Adoption of Untested Criteria

Although it was the original intent to test all suggested criteria which had been suggested in the literature, this approach was abandoned because a few major issues, including vocal range, text, and musical worth were deemed to be inappropriate areas for the survey instrument.

The literature is replete with statements concerning what ranges are the most appropriate for middle school students, especially male students. Indeed, this has been the major thrust of the research in this area. In spite of the enormous amount of work in this specific area, a consensus has not been reached among those writing in the literature, although it does seem that John Cooksey's eclectic approach has gained considerable support. To ask middle school choral directors to identify appropriate vocal ranges for their students in a survey instrument seemed problematic. In addition, this approach has been done a number of times with conflicting results.

Perhaps the most important reason for neglecting the issue of vocal range is that other research made such an approach unnecessary. Certainly the issue of vocal range is an important, if not the most important, issue in the selection of choral music for middle school students. This criterion is
really only important in selecting and composing appropriate voice parts, however. Since the recent work of Funderburk-Galvan (1987) and Fiocca (1986) have both demonstrated that the three-part mixed voicing is the most popular voicing selected by exemplary choral music directors, the issue of vocal range became a secondary concern. It seemed appropriate to accept this finding with some qualifications. As it has been noted, Funderburk-Galvan's study suggested that optional parts which permitted some flexibility in voicing for the young baritones made three-part mixed voicing even more appropriate. This suggestion was in keeping with all the major authorities on the adolescent voice, especially Frederick Swanson. For this reason, this study accepts three-part mixed music which utilizes an optional-additional baritone part as the most appropriate voicing for middle school choirs.

A second area which was not approached in the survey instrument was the issue of text. This should not be interpreted to suggest that this issue is of secondary importance. Rather, it was the general lack of substantive statements throughout the music education literature concerning texts which made it necessary to investigate the poetry preference studies in the field of language arts education. Statements in the field of music education were generally absent, or vague when present. Getting feedback from the exemplary choral directors on these statements seemed of little value. The findings of the researchers in the field of language arts education were generally very specific but were concerned with issues which may be beyond what those in music education have addressed. For this reason, the findings of the language arts education studies have been accepted without further substantiation. The following criteria from the poetry preference studies will be adopted as appropriate for this study.
Popular poems were characterized by:

1. interesting and familiar subject matter,
2. strong action, rather than a calm, meditative mood,
3. obvious humor,
4. simplicity, few abstractions, modest demands on the imagination (figurative language and imagery inversely affects preference),
5. dialogue and obvious sound effect,
6. rhythm and rhyme,
7. the use of personal voice.

In addition, the following types of poems were popular:

1. nonsense poems,
2. poems about animals,
3. contemporary poems over traditional ones,
4. narrative texts, especially those including people or containing humor.

Instead of selecting the texts, Kutiper's (1985) study was used to identify poetry which was popular with middle school aged students. Kutiper listed the 100 poems used in her study in rank order of the students' preference. The top 20 poems were considered to be examples of poems which were most popular with students of this age, and therefore were considered as possible texts for this study. These poems included the following:

1. Sick (by Shel Silverstein),
2. Oh, Teddy Bear (by Jack Prelutsky),
3. Mother Doesn't Want a Dog (by Judith Viorst),
4. Mummy Slept Late and Daddy Fixed Breakfast (by John Ciardi),
5. The Unicorn (by Shel Silverstein),
6. Why Nobody Pets the Lion (by John Ciardi),
7. Homework (by Russell Hoban),
8. Dreams (by Langston Hughes),
9. Questions (by Marci Ridlon),
10. Willie Ate a Worm Today (by Jack Prelutsky),
11. There Once was an Old Kangaroo (by Edward Mullins),
12. The Ruckus (by Dr. Seuss),
13. The Young Lady of Niger (unknown),
14. Peter Piper (unknown),
15. Eletelephony (by Laura E. Richards),
16. Little Miss Muffet (by Paul Dehn),
17. There Was An Old Man of Blackheath (unknown),
18. Betty Botter (unknown),
19. Billy Batter (by Dennis Lee),
20. Wanting (unknown).

Of the poems listed above, "Dreams" by Langston Hughes was eliminated from consideration because the author had already published a choral setting of that text. The poems, "The Ruckus" by Dr. Seuss and "Wanting" could not be located. The publishers of the remaining 17 poems were written. Most of these did not respond to the request to use the poems for this study. Of the publishers which did reply to this request, permission was denied to use Judith Viorst's "Mother Doesn't Want a Dog." Random House, Inc. sent notification that "There Was an Old Man of Blackheath" was in the public domain. Similarly, Houghton Mifflin Company sent notification that "Betty Botter" was in the public domain as did Macmillan Publishing Company for "Peter Piper." Little, Brown and Company granted permission
to use Laura E. Richard's poem, "Eletelephony." Marci Ridlon McGill, author of "Questions" responded personally and gave permission to use her poem free of charge. Sterling Lord Associates (Canada) Ltd. also granted one-time, non-exclusive, permission to use Dennis Lee's poem, "Billy Batter" and waived their normal fee (see Appendix B). The poem, "The Young Lady of Niger," was listed by Kutiper as having an unknown author. It is therefore assumed that it is likewise in the public domain and acceptable to set chorally for the purpose of this study. Therefore, the poems selected to be set for this study include the following:

1. Betty Botter (unknown),
2. Billy Batter (by Dennis Lee),
3. Eletelephony (by Laura E. Richards),
4. Peter Piper (unknown),
5. Questions (by Marci Ridlon),
6. The Young Lady of Niger (unknown),
7. There Was An Old Man of Blackheath (unknown).

The issue of musical worth seemed likewise problematic. Asking teachers whether they believed that their choirs should sing quality music seemed of little value. Few, if any, teachers would respond that they used "worthless music." As has been suggested in the literature, this is a highly subjective topic. Instead, the approach taken in this study is that worthwhile choral music for middle school choirs is that which conforms to the criteria established, including vocal and technical limitations, appropriate voicings, musical appeal, and textual suitability.

A summary of the criteria which have been adopted without further substantiation is provided here.
Summary of Untested, Adopted Criteria

I. Vocal and Technical Limitations
   A. Middle school students should not be expected to produce the timbral brilliance which older ensembles are capable. Female voices are traditionally breathy at this age.

II. Appropriate Voicings
   A. The three-part mixed voicing has been shown to be the most popular voicing with successful middle school choral directors. The addition of an optional baritone part makes this voicing even more appropriate for middle school male singers whose voices have dropped to a lower range. This voicing, three-part mixed with an additional, optional baritone part, has been adopted for this study.
   B. Vocal parts should use Roman numbers rather than traditional soprano, alto, tenor, bass designations in order to avoid assigning a student to a vocal part with a vocal designation traditionally recognized as being of the other gender.

III. Musical Appeal
   A. Compositions should be selected with the students interests in mind as well as the interests of the audience.
   B. Students should experience a wide variety of musical styles.

IV. Textual Suitability
   A. A variety of texts should be used in middle school choral situations.
B. The qualities of poetry which appeal to middle school students should be considered when selecting and/or composing for students at this age. Poetry preference research has suggested that these qualities include: (a) interesting and familiar subject matter; (b) strong action, rather than a calm, meditative mood; (c) obvious humor; (d) simplicity, few abstractions, modest demands on the imagination; (e) dialogue and obvious sound effect; and (f) rhythm and rhyme. Nonsense poems, poems about animals, contemporary rather than traditional poems, and narrative texts, especially those including people or containing humor, are all popular with middle school aged students.

V. Music of Worth

A. Rather than viewing the musical worth of a composition in terms of a highly personal, subjective set of criteria, pieces should be valued as worthwhile if they meet the criteria associated with the other qualities of middle school choral music. These include conforming to the vocal and technical limitations of adolescent singers, having an appropriate voicing, being musically appealing to the students and audience, and being suitable textually to the interests of adolescents.

B. Quality choral music is that which also aids the students in developing their vocal skills.

C. The following suggestions concerning the physical appearance of educational choral music have been adopted: (a) the time of performance should be included, (b) measures should be
numbered in a logical manner, (c) sources should be properly documented and a brief statement added if it is helpful.

Determination of Criteria to be Tested

Having adopted a number of criteria, many more statements concerning qualities of appropriate middle school choral literature remained unsubstantiated. Many of these were somewhat controversial, even contradictory in the literature. It was decided to limit the survey to these statements, rather than to create a long questionnaire.

It seemed important to raise several general issues concerning the organization of the choirs represented by the teachers responding to the survey. First, the teachers needed to be asked what grades are included in their middle school or junior high school. If a large number of these intermediate schools are indeed middle schools (grades 5- or 6-8) rather than junior high schools (grade 7-9), then one may conclude that many of the criteria established in earlier studies may be outdated. This is also true concerning the issue of gender segregation, so the teachers needed to be asked whether or not they separated the male and female students in their choirs. Similarly, they needed to identify how they organized their choir(s) along grade levels. Choirs containing two or more grade levels may need quite different music from those groups divided by grade levels.

Several issues were raised in the literature related to appropriate dynamic levels for choral pieces at the middle school level. Several of these were controversial or unsubstantiated. In order to resolve these and
establish appropriate criteria for selecting and composing choral music for this grade level, several questions needed to be addressed:

1. What are the upper and lower dynamic limits which are appropriate in the tessitura area?
2. Is a sustained *forte* desirable at this age?
3. Can middle school students successfully perform large contrasts in dynamics?
4. Are crescendos difficult for students at this age?

Since the three-part mixed voicing (with an additional, optional baritone part) was adopted as the most appropriate voicing for middle school choirs, the issues of vocal range and tessitura were not as central to this study as they were in many of the other studies of the related literature. A few questions were in need of further substantiation, especially related to the need for, and range of, this additional, optional baritone part:

1. How prevalent are middle school baritones who find the popular compromise range of f-d\(^1\) too high?
2. How are choral directors presently accommodating these adolescent baritones?
3. What is a more appropriate range for middle school baritones?

The issue of vocal articulation was raised in the literature. Some statements were unclear, some were contradictory. Since this issue directly affects the nature of the vocal lines, several questions needed to be addressed in the survey:

1. Are melismas problematic for middle school students?
2. Are florid vocal lines more difficult for male singers than female
singers at this age, and if so, does this mean that vocal lines for male singers should move at a slower rate?

3. Can rhythmic pieces be performed successfully if they are set more syllabically?

4. Are certain melodic intervals difficult for middle school singers to articulate?

5. Should passages containing rapid harmonic shifts be avoided?

6. Does chromaticism present performance problems for middle school singers?

Several questions presented themselves in the review of literature concerning the musical accompaniment of choral pieces for middle school singers:

1. Should choral pieces for middle school students generally be accompanied, or is unaccompanied music also appropriate?

2. Should piano accompaniments be simple enough to be played by student accompanists, or are adults generally called upon to accompany the choirs?

3. Should the left hand part of the piano accompaniment be written rather low to compensate for the lack of low voices in middle school choral ensembles?

4. Should composers/arrangers avoid creating more elaborate accompaniments?

Several authorities also made statements concerning appealing to the adolescent student. Several of these focused on melodic appeal. Several questions seemed necessary to resolve these issues:
1. How important is it to allow each section of the choir to sing the melody on occasion?

2. Do some students actually prefer to sing harmony parts rather than melody?

3. Are tonal melodies more successful at this age?

4. Do middle school students enjoy singing chromatic passages?

A number of statements concerning musical texture also appeared in the literature which needed further substantiation. The questions raised by these statements include the following:

1. Should music for middle school choirs be primarily polyphonic, homophonic, or should both be utilized?

2. Are polyphonic settings such as partner songs or descants appropriate at this age?

3. Is it difficult for middle school students to maintain their vocal lines in non-polyphonic settings?

4. Should accompanying vocal lines be characterized by short, repeated melodic or rhythmic patterns?

Related to the issue of vocal texture is that of part writing. A number of authors made suggestions concerning part writing, but some of these needed substantiation before being adopted as appropriate criteria for selecting or composing choral pieces for middle school choirs. Several questions seemed unresolved:

1. How crucial is simple voice leading for middle school choral compositions?

2. Is voice crossing acceptable, and if so, between which voices?

3. Are parts which move by parallel thirds and sixths easier or
more difficult to sing than vocal lines which use more contrary motion?

4. How important is ease of finding initial pitches for middle school singers?

A number of miscellaneous issues have been made in addition to these which required further substantiation:

1. Should vocal lines with extended phrase lengths be avoided?
2. Does the combination of long phrase lengths and a high tessitura create vocal problems for adolescents?
3. Should choral compositions for this age be relatively short in order not to harm the vocal mechanism?
4. How important is it to select music on the basis of appealing specifically to the male students in the chorus?
5. What musical qualities appeal to adolescent males?
6. Should sections for soloists be written for middle school students?
7. Do adolescents enjoy singing music in a popular style?
8. Should the vocal parts be on separate staves, or can adjacent parts be put together if they move together rhythmically for long periods of time?
9. Do foreign language texts appeal to middle school students?
10. Should choral music for middle school students have a simple form?
11. Should choral compositions for middle school students be primarily tonal?
12. Should harmony parts be simple and complete in themselves?
13. Are rhythmic pieces popular with adolescents?

Construction of Survey Instrument

With the various statements collected and organized into categories, a questionnaire was constructed which permitted the exemplary middle school choral teachers to give feedback concerning the appropriateness of the statements. The directors were asked to rate each statement using a five point Likert scale as follows: strongly agree, "5"; agree, "4"; neutral, "3"; disagree, "2"; strongly disagree, "1" (see Appendix D).

Because it was essential that the statements were worded clearly, the survey went through two major revisions. First, an early draft of the survey was given to a number of music education students in a graduate course in music education research techniques. All the students were presently or had recently taught in the public schools. They were asked to complete the survey as well as to make comments concerning which questions were unclear or misleading. Additional comments were received concerning the survey instrument in general. All questions which were not absolutely necessary were eliminated as recommended by Sudman and Bradburn (1984). After revisions were made based on these suggestions, a second draft of the survey was submitted to the members of the committee overseeing this research project. Upon receiving feedback from the three committee members, the survey was further revised to take the final form.
Identification and Surveying of Exemplary Middle School Choral Directors

Two recent dissertations have used somewhat different approaches in defining what is meant by an exemplary middle school choral director. Funderburk-Galvan (1987) relied solely on contest ratings in the state of Indiana. Middle school choral directors who received at least three superior ratings within the prior five years were considered exemplary. Fiocca (1986) used contest ratings as well as the recommendations from university professors in determining the population in her Ohio study. This narrowed the number of subjects considerably which was appropriate since Fiocca's study was based on actual interviews.

The present study established the population of exemplary middle school choral directors solely on the recommendations of college and university faculty members from the member schools of the New York State Council of Music Teacher Education Programs (COMTEP). This was done for several reasons. First, a review of contest results made it clear that few middle schools in New York state entered large group competitions, and very few received high ratings several years in a row. Second, the researcher had philosophical reservations of using contest ratings as a means of establishing this population. Third, it was decided that university music education faculty are often most qualified to evaluate exceptional teaching, especially as they look for placements for their student teachers. For these reasons, the recommendations of the university faculty members were used as the sole means of determining the teachers who would be invited to respond to the survey.
Dr. Ruth Brittin, COMTEP secretary, suggested that 21 of the 24 colleges and universities had active music teacher education programs. These were contacted in order to identify the professor(s) who might be the most appropriate in identifying exemplary middle school choral directors. In several cases it was difficult to ascertain this information over the telephone, so the survey was sent to the professor who represented their respective college or university on COMTEP. Twelve faculty members from 10 colleges and universities replied, supplying names and addresses of up to five middle school choral directors they stated were exemplary (see Appendix A). A total of 38 were identified as exemplary by these college and university faculty.

Once the exemplary teachers were identified, the survey was mailed along with a cover letter (see Appendix F) and stamped return envelope. In order to avoid mailing problems, the addresses which were supplied by the college professors were checked with the 1994 edition of Pattersons’ American Education.

Recommendations by authorities in survey techniques were adopted in order to achieve the highest possible return rate. The survey was copied on off-white paper, which has been suggested by some, although Sanders and Pinhey (1974) found the effectiveness of this to be inconclusive. The addresses on the envelopes were handwritten rather than typed or word processed (Dillman, Dillman, and Makela, 1984). The survey itself was kept to five pages, within the length suggested by Erdos and Morgan (1970; cited by Sudman and Bradburn, 1984). The questions were kept as short as possible and arranged in a logical fashion (Sanders and Pinhey). There was also an attempt to avoid establishing a response set (i.e., too many expected positive responses in a row) as recommended by Sanders and Pinhey.
short, open ended questions were included, and the teachers were given the opportunity to respond to other topics not adequately covered at the end of the survey as suggested by Sudman and Blackburn.

The cover letter included information about the survey, including why the survey was important to the respondents, why the respondents were important, and the social usefulness of the study (Dillman, Dillman, and Makela, 1984; and Baumgartner and Heberlein, 1984). The subjects were also notified that their participation in the study was entirely voluntary (Dillman, Dillman and Makela). The cover letter was also printed on department letterhead (Altshuld & Lower, 1984) from Syracuse University, giving the survey the sense of university sponsorship (Sanders and Pinhey, 1974). They were individually word processed, included the teachers' names and addresses on the top, and were signed with a blue ballpoint ink pen (Dillman, Dillman, and Makela). The teachers were also informed that their responses would be kept confidential and that a summary would be sent to them at the conclusion of the study (Alschuld and Lower). The send out date was listed in the cover letter along with the date due (Baumgartner and Heberlein). The letter was written in a permissive rather than a firm style, as recommended by Sanders and Pinhey, and included information on how to contact the author in case of questions (Altschuld and Lower). In addition, the cover letter expressed concern about making the survey too long in order not to take too much of the teachers' time (Alschuld and Lower). The teachers were told that the survey should take approximately twenty minutes to complete. Giving such time cues was recommended by Baumgartner and Heberlein.
The survey and cover letter were mailed first class (Dillman, Dillman, and Makela, 1984). In addition, the return addressed envelope was also stamped with first class postage. As timing has been suggested to affect response rate (Altschuld and Lower, 1984), the survey was mailed in the early spring in order to avoid the traditional concert seasons of December and May-June. It was also assumed that many of the teachers would have just gone through the process of selecting their Spring repertoire so that the issues raised in the survey would be timely.

A week after the survey was mailed, a postcard was sent to those who had not responded, as recommended by Dillman, Dillman and Makela (1984), which included a thank you, a reminder, and the mail out date. After the original deadline was reached, 22 of the 38 surveys had been returned. A replacement survey was mailed to those who had not yet responded with a new due date and cover letter (Baumgartner and Heberlein, 1984; Dillman, Dillman, and Makela). As suggested by Baumgartner and Herberlein, several attempts were made to reach those teachers by phone. A number of teachers reached by phone replied and quickly returned their finished surveys.

**Computing the Results**

Thirty-two of the 38 teachers responded to the survey. Of these, eight were disqualified from the study as they were from teachers who did not actually teach at the middle school level. The other 24 teachers were presently teaching at the middle school level and were therefore deemed appropriate. The results of these teachers' responses to the five point Likert
scale for each of the statements was tabulated. These results are found in Chapter IV. Those statements which received a mean rating between 3.5 and 5 were considered as appropriate criteria for middle school choral music. Those receiving a mean score between 2.5 and 3.5 were considered neutral. Those receiving mean scores below 2.5 were rejected as appropriate criteria for selecting or composing middle school choral literature.

Compositions Based on Substantiated Criteria

Once a list of appropriate criteria had been substantiated by the exemplary middle school choral directors, several choral compositions were composed to conform to these criteria. These are found in Chapter V. A discussion of how the pieces demonstrate how the criteria have been utilized precedes the pieces themselves.
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Of the 38 teachers who received the survey, 32 responded. This represented an 84% response rate. This was in keeping with Sudman and Bradburn (1984) who generalized that questionnaires directed toward teachers generally produce between a 71% and 88% response rate. Eight of these were eliminated from the study because the respondents did not teach middle school aged students. The remaining 24 surveys were considered as appropriate and the data from them were analyzed (see Appendix B). This represents a 63% response rate.

General Information

The responding teachers were asked to note the number of years they had taught choral music at the middle school or junior high school level. The responses ranged from two years to 27 years with a mean of 10.54 years. The teachers were fairly evenly distributed by five year groupings, with six teachers having one to five years of experience, seven with six to ten years, five with 11 to 15, five with 16 to 20 years. One teacher had 27 years of teaching experience at the middle school level (see Figure 3).
The data also supported the earlier studies which have suggested that middle school choral ensembles today most generally do not contain ninth grade students. Of the 24 respondents, only three taught in buildings which included ninth grade students. Two taught in more traditional junior high school settings, including grades 7-9. One teacher reported teaching in a building which included grades 8 and 9 only. On the other hand, three worked in middle schools which contained grades 5-8. The largest number of teachers, 14, worked in buildings which included grades 6-8. Four represented schools which included grades 7 and 8 (see Figure 4).
Similarly, when asked what grades the teacher taught in a choral setting, the results were similar, although it became obvious that some of the teachers also worked at other grade levels as well. As it is shown in Figure 5, two teachers taught grades 5-3. One taught grades 5-12. The largest number, nine teachers, taught grades 6-8 whereas six taught in grades 7 and 8. One teacher taught grades 6 and 8, but not grade 7. Another taught grades 7-9. Two teachers taught grades 8 and 9. One teacher taught grades 7 through 12.
The directors were asked whether or not they divided male and female singers into separate choral classes or ensembles. Only two responded "yes," and upon reading the rest of the descriptions, it became clear that one teacher may not have understood the question. Another teacher noted that the male and female singers might be featured for a single choral selection, but that they did not regularly rehearse separately. Therefore, it may be concluded that criteria based on the practice of gender segregation may not be appropriate for a majority of the school situations represented in this study. This also supports the earlier findings that the mixed chorus is the most popular choral ensemble at the middle school level.

The directors were also asked to describe the grade level groupings of the choral groups in their middle school, especially in terms of which grade levels sang together. As Figure 6 shows, two responded that they combined
fifth and sixth grade students together. One teacher formed two choruses, one a purely treble and one which included changing voices regardless of grade level. Nine teachers had separate sixth grade choruses whereas three combined all students in grades 6-8 together in one chorus. Nine teachers directed separate seventh grade choirs, whereas 12 directed choirs made up of eighth grade students. Twelve teachers also reported combining seventh and eighth grade students together to form a single chorus. Only one teacher reported having a chorus which included both eighth and ninth grade students, whereas another had a separate ninth grade choir in their junior high school. This lends supports to the position that criteria suggested by earlier studies which included ninth grade students may not be appropriate for the many choral ensembles found in the contemporary middle school.

![Figure 6: Grade Level Organization of Choirs](image-url)
In addition to these large choruses, a number of extra-curricular choral ensembles were noted. Three teachers indicated having an all female ensemble whereas only one had an all male barbershop quartet. One teacher reported directing a madrigal group. Another directed an extra-curricular chorus which included all grades at the middle school level. Six teachers reported having a select ensemble which included both seventh and eighth grade students. Three of these were specifically noted as a "pop" or "swing" ensembles.

Musical Characteristics

Dynamics

In the first section of the survey, four questions were asked concerning dynamics in choral literature for middle students. The first question asked the respondents to list the lower and upper dynamic levels which middle school students should approach in the tessitura areas. As Figure 7 shows, three teachers did not respond whereas six responded with "no opinion." Those who did respond with specific recommendations for a lower limited included eight who identified *pianissimo (pp)* as the lower limit. Five listed *piano (p)*, and two listed *mezzo-piano (mp)*. For the upper limit, two teachers listed *mezzo-forte (mf)*. Nine listed *forte (f)*, three listed *fortissimo (ff)*, and one listed *fortissimissimo (fff)*.
With such a large number of teachers giving no opinion or not responding to this question, it is difficult to make clear conclusions from the results. Since a larger number of respondents listed pianissimo (pp) as the lower dynamic limit and forte (f) as the upper, however, these will be used in the compositions created to conform with the established criteria.

The teachers were also asked whether they agreed that a sustained forte is not desirable for middle school choral ensembles. The mean response was 3.17 (N=24) which is a neutral response. Some teachers wrote some comments in the spaces around the question. One wrote, "forte - what do you call forte? 100% is not desirable for any singer." Another stated that one needed to know other variables to answer correctly. Another replied that it depended on "how you do it." One teacher seemed to emphasize the strength of his/her response by underlining the word "not."
The directors were also asked to respond to the statement, "Adolescent singers can successfully perform pieces which contain large contrasts in dynamics." The mean response of 4.42 (N=24) made this an appropriate characteristic of middle school choral music. One teacher emphasized his/her answer by underlining the words "successfully perform."

Although middle students may be able to perform large contrasts in dynamics, slow building intensities, or crescendos, seem more difficult to achieve at this age. The teachers responded to this idea with a mean response of 3.71 (N=24), which made it an appropriate concern for composing and selecting appropriate choral literature for middle school students. One teacher responded, however, that although performing slow building intensities was difficult, "we work on it."

Vocal Range and Tessitura

In the past, a large number of studies have focused on the range characteristics of adolescent male singers. The present study approached this issue only as it related to the selecting of an appropriate voicing for middle school mixed choral ensembles. Using the six note compromise range which was made popular by Joyce Eilers and others, the teachers were asked to estimate the number of male singers in their choirs who (a) found this range too low, (b) found this range just right, and (c) found this range too high. This was divided by grade level so that the teachers were requested to give the numbers for each category for both seventh and eight grades. A number of the respondents gave percentages rather than raw numbers. This made making any comparisons highly difficult. Fourteen of the teachers did
give raw counts by grade level. A summary of the composite results of these 14 teachers is found in Table 2.

Table 2

Numbers of Male Singers Finding Compromise Range
Too Low, Just Right, or Too High

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Range</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Too low</th>
<th>Just right</th>
<th>Too high</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7th Grade</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>86 (24.16%)</td>
<td>236 (66.29%)</td>
<td>34 (9.55%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th Grade</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>22 (7.01%)</td>
<td>212 (67.52%)</td>
<td>80 (25.48%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined</td>
<td>670</td>
<td>108 (16.12%)</td>
<td>448 (66.87%)</td>
<td>114 (17.01%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A few conclusions can be reached from these results. First, approximately one out of every four seventh grade boys found the range too low as compared with 7.01% of the eighth grade male singers. These singers may be male sopranos or those in the first stage(s) of voice change. Generally, these singers can be accommodated by using either the top (part I) or middle (part II) parts in the three-part mixed voicing. This does not seem to be problematic. Second, approximately two out of three male singers in both grades find this range to be very appropriate. This lends support to the earlier findings by Fiocca (1986) and Funderburk-Galvan (1987) who reported
that the teachers in their studies found the three-part mixed voicing an appropriate voicing for a large number of middle school choral singers. Third, although only 9.55% of seventh grade male singers find this range too high, there was a large increase in the eighth grade. One out of every four male singers in the eighth grade were reported as having a lower, changed voice, either bass or baritone in range. In choirs which combine seventh and eighth grade students, one might still expect between 15%-20% of the male singers to have changed voices and who find this compromise range difficult to perform. It is clear that the three-part mixed voicing does not meet the voice range requirements of a significant number of male singers represented in this survey.

Recognizing this large number of adolescent male baritones, the next question took on greater significance. The teachers were asked how they accommodated those boys who found the compromise range too high. The responses to this open ended question resulted in a wide variety of responses. These responses can be grouped together into those teachers who (a) did not encounter such voices, so the question was not applicable; (b) selected music which would automatically fit all the needs of the choir; (c) had those boys drop out for the sections which were too high; (d) rewrote a part for the new baritones; (e) focused on vocal training and maturation rather than on the literature itself.

Although a number of teachers who responded to the earlier section did not report any baritones in their choirs who might have trouble with this popular compromise range, only one responded that this question was not applicable. The other teachers gave some suggestions on dealing with these male singers. Six teachers responded that their way of working with middle
school bass/baritones was to select music which automatically fit their ranges. Three of these suggested that by using four-part mixed music, the problem was lessened. Two directors recommended that the male singers who found this range too difficult could drop out during the sections which were too high for them to sing comfortably, especially in three-part mixed music. A popular response for dealing with the problem of the middle school baritone was to rewrite a part. Four directors recommended rewriting the lower vocal part to better suit the vocal needs of the baritones. Three suggested writing a new part when the tessitura remained too high for these singers. Two mentioned writing optional or additional parts as viable options.

Instead of rewriting or creating new vocal parts, a number of the teachers recommended making octave adjustments. Three suggested lowering a note or phrase from the lower part of the three-part voicing an octave than it is written. Six teachers suggested allowing the baritones to double the melody, or soprano part, an octave lower than written. Two suggested that at times the baritones could double the alto part an octave lower.

Nine of the responses focused more on vocal training than on the literature itself. These suggested that by teaching the students proper vocal production through specialized exercises, their ranges would increase and the students would be able to sing the upper notes required by the compromise range of the three-part mixed voicing. Five teachers specifically mentioned working with the male singers in using the falsetto voice.

Recognizing that a significant number of teachers responding suggested rewriting a baritone part or creating a new part more appropriate,
the next question on the survey was of special importance. The teachers were asked to state what range they considered to be most appropriate for those boys who found the compromise range too high. One teacher responded that this was not applicable since all the male singers in that school's choir could sing one of the parts of the three-part mixed voicing comfortably. Another teacher did not give a range, noting that "Each kid has his own range & it differs greatly. It isn't that easy." One teacher who did give a range, likewise suggested that it depended on the individual singers. The others who responded wrote suggested ranges. Eliminating accidentals, these were combined by treating each pitch of the scale between the upper and lower limits of each suggested range as individual points. By plotting all the points, a composite range with frequency of respondent recommendations could be created as shown in Figure 8. As one might suspect, the plotted points from the suggested ranges form a bell-shaped curve. It might be suggested that the pitches which fall in the central part of the curve are safest when writing baritone parts for middle school male singers. Those at the extremes are appropriate for fewer baritone singers at this age. For the sake of this study, it is determined that the octave from B (or B♭) to b is the best range for middle school baritones with middle C permitted at times on the upper limit, and low A, possibly G, at the lower limit.

![Figure 8: Composite Baritone Range](image-url)
This range is similar to those recommended by McKenzie, Cooper, and Cooksey as shown in Figure 9.

![Figure 9: Comparison of Baritone Ranges of Authorities](image)

Several teachers made comments at the end of the survey concerning the issue of range. One noted that the range of the parts for the male singers is one of the most important considerations in choosing music. Another suggested that "there is a definite need for pieces of literature for mixed groups in which changing voices has [sic] a range of a 3rd or 4th (bass clef e-a; f-a; e-g) An optional part written for these boys would be helpful." Another teacher suggested that a narrow range for the male singers is helpful, "but if the boys can be proud of their work and enjoy it, 2 or 3 octaves in the bass/tenor can be OK." One teacher raised an issue concerning the range of the female singers. This teacher suggested there is a growing number of female singers in the seventh and eighth grade who have low alto voices. She noted that "in a mixed group (SAB) these girls feel out of place because alto tests the upper limits and the baritone is for boys! It is often necessary to use SSA or SSAA arrangements and reassign voices at various octaves."
Several teachers made comments at the end of the survey related to the issue of appropriate voicings for their middle school choral ensembles. One teacher noted that her sixth grade chorus performed two-part music (soprano/alto) whereas her seventh-eighth grade chorus primarily sang pieces in a SSA voicing. Toward the end of the year, this group occasionally performed music in a SAB voicing. Her eighth grade select choir began with pieces in a SAB voicing or very simple SATB. She also noted that she kept her male singers on the alto part as long as possible which helped to solidify the otherwise "wispy" sound of the adolescent females. Another teacher noted that, during some years when she has a relatively strong bass section in her seventh-eighth grade, this directly influenced the music she selected. One teacher mentioned that she preferred to keep all the male singers together to help them feel more secure. She noted that her "biggest frustration is in finding well written SAB music."

**Vocal Articulation**

As has been stated earlier, the issue of vocal flexibility has been raised in the literature concerning middle school choral music, especially in the writings of Irvin Cooper and those influenced by him. This issue was addressed in the survey by a number of questions, reflecting both the ideas of rhythmic flexibility as well as melodic or intervalic flexibility.

Rhythmic flexibility includes issues related to melismas or florid vocal lines as well as rhythmic speed. The respondents suggested that middle school students indeed found melismatic passages to be difficult (M=3.67, N=24) although one noted that "this doesn't mean they shouldn't sing
melismas." Similarly the respondents found the statement that rhythmic pieces can be performed successfully if they are set syllabically as appropriate \((M=4.00, N=24)\). Although the teachers tended to agree that female singers are capable of more florid melodic passages than male singers at this age \((M=3.83, N=24\) appropriate), the statement that suggested that vocal parts for male singers should move in slower, simpler rhythmic patterns produced a neutral response \((M=2.92, N=24)\). Similarly, the statement that students can perform any rhythm that the teacher can teach them was strongly supported with a mean score of 4.75 \((N=24)\).

The teachers' responses to statements concerned with intervalic flexibility did not generally generate strong results either positively or negatively. The statement that augmented intervals should be avoided melodically received a neutral response \((M=2.88, N=24)\). Likewise, the statement that major sevenths and minor sixths should be avoided melodically also received a neutral response \((M=2.71, N=24)\). One teacher added that it "depends on the context" to both of these statements. Also receiving a neutral response was the statement that passages containing rapid harmonic shifts should be avoided \((M=3.04, N=24)\). The remaining two statements were deemed appropriate, including that middle school singers can successfully perform vocal lines with wide leaps \((M=4.04, N=23)\). One teacher added the word "some" to the beginning of the statement, suggesting that not all middle school students are successful at this task. The other statement which was deemed as an appropriate characteristic of appropriate choral literature for middle school students was that chromaticism presents performance problems for adolescent singers \((M=3.83, N=24)\). One teacher
added "and adults," suggesting that this is not a unique problem for middle school students.

In summary, choral music written for middle school students should be arranged in a more syllabic, rather than in a florid, melismatic style, although the female singers may be more capable of singing more florid lines than the males. There should be little concern about the student's ability to perform more rhythmical patterns. The students are generally able to perform melodic lines containing wide leaps, but chromaticism may cause performance problems.

**Accompaniment**

Issues concerning piano accompaniment generally fostered neutral responses from the teachers. One exception was the response to the statement that unaccompanied choral music is appropriate for this age. This was deemed an appropriate statement for middle school choral literature ($M=4.46, N=24$). Other responses suggested that although unaccompanied singing was appropriate, there was some hesitancy to perform too much *a cappella* music at this level. One teacher wrote the word "some" in the margin next to the statement. Another responded that unaccompanied singing was appropriate "once in a while" and later added "I would not, however, work on more than one *a cappella* piece at a time." This was supported by the comments added around the following statement that choral music for middle school students should generally be accompanied by the piano. Although this
received a neutral response ($M=3.22$, $N=23$), three teachers underlined the words "generally." Another added the comment, "it helps" in the margin.

The remaining four statements concerning the accompaniment all received neutral responses. In response to the statement that if used, piano accompaniments should be written at a level which could be played by a student accompanist received a neutral mean score of 2.55 ($N=22$). Four teachers added comments in the margins. One suggested that it depended on who was available. That teacher also added that it was good to have some simpler accompaniments for students and more difficult ones if a more experienced player is available. Two other teachers echoed similar thoughts by adding that "it is nice but not necessary" and "sometimes." Similarly, the statement that adult accompanists should generally be used to accompany middle school choirs received a neutral response ($M=3.43$, $N=23$). One teacher noted that their school had very competent pianists at this level. Another added that he generally accompanied the choir during the performance since the students could not play the part and the school would not pay to hire an accompanist.

The final two statements focused on specific aspects of the accompaniment. The statement that the left hand part of the piano accompaniment should be rather low to compensate for the lack of low voices in most middle school choral ensembles received a neutral response ($M=2.67$, $N=24$). One suggested that teachers consider using a cello since it was capable of sustaining tone better than the piano. Another noted that one could often simply double the left hand part of the accompaniment in octaves. The other statement, that if used, the piano part should not be overly showy,
contrapuntal, or elaborate also received a neutral response ($M=3.00, N=24$). One teacher added to "just make it an integral part of the piece -it can be any of your examples." Similarly, another noted that "if its well written it can be showy."

In summary, the responses to the statements concerning accompaniment suggest that unaccompanied music can be successfully performed, but some teachers seem cautious of doing too much *a capella* singing at this level. Since the other statements received a neutral mean score, little more should be concluded from this study concerning the nature of the piano accompaniment for middle school choral music.

**Melodic Appeal**

One of the strongest, positive responses in the survey was related to the statement that each section of the choir should have the opportunity to sing the melody on occasion. This received a mean score of 4.75 ($N=24$) making it an appropriate quality of middle school choral literature. One teacher added that "the students enjoy singing the melody." Another noted that this was why Renaissance and Baroque music was so appropriate for this age level.

The responses to the following two statements were consistent with the first. The statements that adolescent baritones should not sing melody, but rather learn to sing traditional bass parts, was rejected ($M=1.71, N=24$) as was the statement that adolescent males prefer to sing harmony parts ($M=2.04, N=24$). The added comments from three surveys suggested that the
baritones should get experience singing both harmony parts as well as melody. Another noted that "nobody prefers always doing harmony."

The remaining two statements were concerned with the specific nature of the melodic or harmonic lines used in choral music at the middle school level, specifically whether the passages are tonal or chromatic. The teachers' mean score of 4.38 (N=24) for the statement that tonal melodies are most successful at this age makes it an appropriate statement for middle school choral literature. The statement that adolescents enjoy singing chromatic passages received a neutral response (M=2.79, N=24).

In summary, in light of these responses it can be concluded that choral music written for middle school students should be so composed or arranged that everyone has the opportunity to sing melody on occasion, even those who are newly developing baritones. Melodies which are tonal tend to be more successfully performed at this grade level.

Texture

Several statements on the survey were concerned with the texture of the choral parts for middle school singers. The statement that middle school choirs should sing a variety of pieces reflecting both polyphonic and homophonic textures achieved a very high mean score of 4.96 (N=24). One teacher emphasized the strength of the response by adding five exclamation points after the statement. The teachers also found as an appropriate quality for choral music at this level the statement that short, repeated melodic or rhythmic patterns are recommended in accompanying vocal lines (M=3.83,
As stated previously, some authorities have suggested that polyphonic textures are best for middle school students. This was supported by the responses of the teachers which suggested that partner songs ($M=3.63$, $N=24$) and descants ($M=4.13$, $N=23$) are appropriate musical textures for middle school students. In response to the two statements which suggested that polyphonic texture is superior to homophonic settings, however, the teachers responses resulted in neutral mean scores. The response to the statement that music for middle school choirs should be primarily polyphonic received a neutral mean score of 2.75 ($N=24$). One teacher added the comment "when possible" in the margin. The response to the statement that if vocal parts are not independent, middle school singers will often sing a different part by mistake also resulted in a neutral mean response ($M=3.21$, $N=24$). One teacher who agreed with the statement, added however, "...true, but they should learn to follow their line!"

In summary, the responses to the survey suggested that middle school students can successfully perform choral music which is both homophonic and polyphonic in nature, including partner songs and descants. Short, repeated melodic or rhythmic patterns should be considered when composing or arranging accompanying vocal lines.

**Part Writing**

Several statements were made concerning issues pertaining to part writing, specifically voice leading, voice crossing, and parallel or contrary
motion. The mean score resulting from the responses to the statement that pieces for middle school choirs should utilize simple and logical voice leading was 4.58 ($N=24$) which made this an appropriate quality for middle school choral literature. Similarly, the teachers rated the statement that parts should be written in such a way that the singers are able to find their initial pitches easily at vocal entrances received a mean score of 4.42 ($N=24$) which also made it an appropriate statement.

As has been mentioned earlier, some authorities have discouraged the practice of voice crossing at this age level. The results of this study did not support this position. Although the response to the statement that voice crossing should be avoided received a neutral mean score, ($M=3.13$, $N=24$), the mean score in response to the statement that voice crossing is acceptable in the upper voices was 3.75 ($N=24$), making it an appropriate characteristic.

There were also some conflicting opinions in the literature concerning the appropriateness of parallel versus contrary motion. The teachers in this study suggested that harmonizations of parallel thirds and sixths could be successfully performed at this age ($M=3.96$, $N=24$). In contrast, the statement which suggested that contrary motion was easier to sing than parallel motion resulted in a neutral mean score of 3.33 ($N=24$).

In summary, choral music for middle school students should utilize simple and logical voice leading and have vocal entrances in which the initial pitches are easy to find. Voice crossing is acceptable, especially in the upper voices. Vocal harmonizations using parallel thirds and sixths can be successfully performed at this age.
Miscellaneous Issues

In the final section of the survey, the teachers were asked to respond to a number of statements concerning a variety of issues. These included phrase lengths, length of the composition, appeal of the composition, the use of soloists, physical aspects of the music, form, and harmony.

Two statements were included in connection with the issue of phrase lengths. Although the teachers responded with a neutral mean score \( (M=2.88, N=24) \) to the statement that vocal lines with extended phrase lengths should be avoided, the statement that the combination of long phrase lengths and a high tessitura creates vocal problems for middle school students achieved a mean score of 4.46 \( (N=24) \) making it an appropriate concern. A few teachers added comments in the margin. One added "How extended?" Similarly, another teacher added, "High? For whom? Which kids?" Both statements recognized that it is difficult to quantify these issues. In response to the statement concerning the combination of high tessitura and long phrase length, one teacher added that a "high tessitura is a killer."

As stated previously, some authorities have suggested that choral compositions for middle school students should be relatively short due to the student's relatively fragile vocal development. This issue received a neutral response \( (M=2.83, N=24) \) from the teachers in this study. One teacher who gave a "strongly agree" rating to the statement added the comment, "Not always" in the margin.

The issue of appeal was raised by a large number of authorities, especially the ideas of using popular style music, the appeal of rhythmic pieces, music with foreign language texts, and appealing specifically to the
adolescent males in the chorus. The teachers found as appropriate the statement that middle school students enjoy singing choral pieces in a popular style \((M=4.42, N=24)\). One teacher who agreed with the statement added, however, that “This does not mean that it is the only style they enjoy!” Similarly, the statement that rhythmic pieces are popular with middle school students received a high mean score \((N=4.63, N=24)\), making it an appropriate quality of middle school choral music.

Two statements were concerned with the appeal of the music to the adolescent males in the chorus. The teachers found the statement that one should especially consider a song’s appeal to adolescent male students when selecting music for the mixed choir as appropriate \((M=3.50, N=24)\). Two teachers who did not agree added comments in the margin. One noted that one should "consider appeal to all students." The other responded, "No - pick what’s good, then convince them they like it!" The statement that adolescent males prefer songs which are strong, robust, and rhythmic achieved a neutral mean response \((M=3.35, N=23)\). One teacher who agreed with the statement added, "At first yes (so do my girls), but Rutter’s "Pie Jesu" was one of the favorites."

Although the issue of musical style was not significantly addressed in the survey, except in conjunction with musical appeal, nine teachers added comments related to this issue at the end of the survey. Several raised questions concerning the use of popular music in the middle school choral setting. One noted that "the kids like music that sounds good to them. Some pop music doesn't really sound right for chorus and they know it.” Another suggested that "often aesthetic beauty is forgotten or put aside in favor of a pop style at this age." She went on to state that
I also think we have crossed the line and placed too much emphasis on show choir choreography. It has its place and is lots of fun, but in too many programs it has become the mainstay. We really need to elevate the musical tastes of our future concert goers (and their parents)!

Another teacher suggested that "although students think they may prefer pop or movie or Broadway tunes, exposure and mastery of classical, folk, ethnic, spiritual, and other genre may and often times turns students 'on!'"

Likewise, another teacher wrote,

I also believe that students should get used to singing many styles of music from elementary through high school. Limiting them to popular music in middle school could be a big mistake. They will miss many important aspects of singing and they will probably not be open-minded to trying other styles when they get into high school.

Other teachers mentioned the benefits of including examples of more standard, classical choral literature. One teacher noted,

I keep a time line across my wall. It keeps me honest. I attempt to have each choir sing at least one piece from each major period of music history. At the 8th grade level I also try to have them sing rounds, fugues, song forms, pieces from masses, operas & oratorios.

Another teacher suggested that although she likes to include selections from the "classics", "some of the arrangements which have been edited to fit the 7/8 voice leaves the piece "lifeless" and therefore not suitable for use." She added,

I try to use unaccompanied songs (spirituals or an easier Baroque piece) when possible, but arrangements are not always good. I find that my kids prefer the hard work of a "classic" (we're doing "Hallelujah, Amen" this year) to the easy learning of a "fluff" piece.

Two of the directors made a case for including a variety of choral literature, both from the more popular as well as from the more serious repertoire. One noted a lack of quality music for middle school choirs, adding that "Good transcriptions of Mozart, Haydn, etc. are always welcome, as are
good popular arrangements with accompaniment tapes.” Another teacher seemed to be able to find an abundance of appropriate literature and have "tried to pick a variety of serious, pop, classical, English, non-English, accompanied, a capella, etc. Variety is the key!"

Another statement in the questionnaire in connection with student appeal was concerned with foreign language texts. The statement that texts in foreign languages appeal to middle school students received a neutral mean score of 3.04 (N=24).

One statement was concerned with the use of soloists at the middle school level. The teachers rejected the statement that pieces with passages for soloists should generally be avoided in the middle school (M=1.75, N=24). One teacher noted that "for soloists passages, middle school students can be successful in trios or quartets."

The teachers were asked to respond to two statements concerning the physical layout of the musical score, specifically whether or not the separate vocal parts should be written on the same staff. The teachers generally agreed that each vocal part should be written on a separate staff (M=3.83, N=23), although one teacher noted that it "depends on the piece." Another teacher added that this was more important for the vocal parts for the male singers, but less so for the female singers. This may help to explain why the statement that two parts which move together rhythmically for long periods of time may be written on the same staff also received an appropriate mean score (M=3.78, N=23), even when this may seem to be in conflict with the earlier statement.

Only one statement was made in the survey concerning the musical form of compositions for middle school students. The statement that middle
school choral music should generally have a simple form (i.e. A-A-B-A or A-B-A) received a neutral mean score of 3.09 (N=23). One teacher added the question, "Why?" in the margin.

The teachers were asked to respond to three statements concerning harmonic issues in choral pieces for middle school students. The statement that compositions for middle school choirs should be primarily tonal received a mean score of 4.38 (N=24), making it an appropriate statement. Similarly, the teachers found the statement that harmonies should be kept fairly simple to be appropriate for students at this age (M=3.65, N=23). One teacher who did not respond to the Likert scale for this statement added the comment, "Yes at the beginning, but aleatoric music is fun and try other stuff too," in the margin. The final statement, that the harmony of the vocal parts should be complete in themselves, also received an appropriate mean score (M=3.59, N=22).

In summary, the teachers suggested several miscellaneous issues should be considered when creating or selecting music for middle school students. Pieces which contain phrases which are both long and in a high tessitura should be avoided. One should consider appealing to the adolescent male students in the chorus especially. Pieces in a popular style or rhythmic are popular and may have a more immediate appeal to the students. Pieces may also include solo sections. Vocal lines should be written on separate staves unless the adjacent parts move together rhythmically for a long period of time. The harmonies of the vocal parts should be complete in themselves, tonal, and fairly simple.
Additional Comments

The teachers were given the opportunity to make additional comments concerning characteristics of appropriate choral literature for middle school students which they felt were not adequately covered in the statements provided previously. Many of the respondents did so. Those comments which actually related to the issues already raised have been addressed earlier. Those which are not closely related to one of the issues raised in the questionnaire have been organized by topic below.

One theme which appeared in several of the respondents' comments was the suggestion that it is difficult to come up with actual ideals for music at this age. This was reflected in one teacher's comment that "this questionnaire doesn't work too well for me because I like to use variety." Three others expressed some frustration with the survey because it suggested that ideals could be established. One answered that "finally, a beautiful song will always inspire them, regardless of its technical challenges. Most of the considerations you've mentioned are, in fact, simply considerations, not iron-clad rules to live by." Another suggested that the rules fluctuate by year:

Middle school is a difficult age for singing. I tried to answer these questions generally, but quite often the rules change every year depending on the students. Their capabilities and ranges can vary widely.

Another teacher expressed a similar idea by suggesting that

Singers at this age should be carefully and individually monitored. It is very difficult to make sweeping generalizations about repertoire. Each student and each chorus needs to be handled individually. I have had many choruses capable of singing fine melismatic phrases and others that could not match pitch. The teacher needs to be aware
of their group and adjust the repertoire to fit the voices - always aiming for successful outcomes and proper vocal development.

Three teachers also raised the issue of appropriate texts. All three mentioned that worthwhile, quality texts should be considered as a criterion for selecting choral music. One added, "I've found that students respond well to good quality texts, regardless of the subject matter, but are unresponsive to the 'rainbows and sunshine' pabulum that is so common."

Two final comments seem to be appropriate. One director noted that she generally chooses pieces arranged by those who have proven to be successful in the past, that is, those who know what works well with middle school voices and interest. Another teacher gave a different perspective in suggesting that "in reality, a Jr. Hi choral director had better be creative in changing arrangements to fit their group." Taken together, this suggests that successful middle school choral directors need to know what criteria to look for in selecting appropriate choral literature, as well as have the skill to doing some arranging. It is hoped that the results of this study will allow both of these activities to fall within the reach of many middle school choral directors.

Summary of the Findings

I. Vocal and Technical Limitations
A. Vocal Range and Tessitura
   1. Many adolescent male singers find the popular six-note compromise range to be too high for their voices.
2. The range for a baritone should fall approximately between \(B^b\) and \(b\).

3. The combination of long phrase lengths and a high tessitura creates vocal problems for middle school students.

B. Dynamics

1. The general dynamic limits which are most appropriate for most choral music for middle school singers in the tessitura areas are between *pianissimo* (pp) and *forte* (f).
   
   [NOTE: this was not clearly established by the results, but will be adopted for the compositions in Chapter V.]

2. Adolescent singers can successfully perform pieces which contain large contrasts in dynamics.

3. Slow building intensities are difficult to achieve at this age.

C. Accompaniment

1. Unaccompanied choral music is appropriate for this age.

D. Texture

1. Middle school choirs should sing a variety of pieces reflecting both polyphonic and homophonic textures.

2. Partner songs are appropriate at this age level.

3. Singing descants is appropriate at this age level.

E. Articulation

1. Middle school choral singers have difficulty with music containing melismas.
2. Female singers are capable of more florid melodic passages than male singers at this age.

3. Rhythmic pieces can be performed successfully if they are set syllabically.

4. Students can perform any rhythm that the teacher can teach them.

5. Middle school singers can successfully perform vocal lines with wide leaps.


F. Part writing

1. Pieces for middle school choirs should utilize simple and logical voice leading.

2. Short, repeated melodic or rhythmic patterns are recommended in accompanying vocal lines.

3. Voice crossing is acceptable in the upper voices.

4. Harmonizing with parallel thirds and sixths is successful.

5. Parts should be written in such a way that the singers are able to find their initial pitches easily at vocal entrances.

II. Musical Appeal

A. Melodic Appeal

1. Each section of the choir should have the opportunity to sing the melody on occasion.

2. Adolescent baritones need not be restricted to singing traditional bass parts.
3. Adolescent males do not necessarily prefer to sing
    harmony parts.

B. Harmonic Appeal
1. Compositions for middle school choirs should be primarily
tonal.
2. Harmonies should be kept fairly simple.
3. The harmony of the vocal parts should be complete in
    themselves.
4. Tonal melodies are most successful at this age.

C. Miscellaneous
1. Rhythmic pieces are popular with middle school students.
2. One should especially consider a song’s appeal to
    adolescent male students when selecting and
    composing/arranging music for the mixed choir.
3. Middle school students enjoy singing choral pieces in a
    popular style.
4. Pieces with passages for soloists may be used successfully
    with middle school choral ensembles.

III. Physical Characteristics
A. Staves
1. Each vocal part should be written on a separate staff.
2. Two parts which move together rhythmically for long
    periods of time may be written on the same staff.
Recommendations for Further Study

One of the assumptions of this study is that qualities of age-appropriate poetry are the same as those of age-appropriate lyrics of choral compositions. It would be interesting to test the validity of this assumption. A common model used in poetry preference studies is one in which students listen to, or read, a number of poems and then respond with a numerical rating. Perhaps a similar approach could be used in a choral setting. Students could be asked to give numerical ratings to the musical texts they perform. Such an approach could be problematic since the results might be confounded by the music. However, an attempt to evaluate the age-appropriateness of musical lyrics would be a worthwhile investigation.

One of the problems of the present study is that it relies upon the written responses of exemplary teachers to specific statements. This presents the problem which is present in all studies in which self reporting is a part. It might be argued, for instance, that a common characteristic of exemplary teachers is that they have high expectations for their students. It is therefore possible that some exemplary teachers overestimate the abilities of the choirs under their direction. Another approach which might help avoid this problem would be to analyze the actual choral selections which selected choirs perform. The researcher might sample the choral compositions performed during the past year or take a sample of compositions from a school's choral library. Another approach might be to ask the exemplary teachers to list a selected number of choral compositions which they have used with their choirs and believe are the most appropriate. These pieces could be analyzed for the specific qualities listed in this study and the results compared.
CHAPTER V

COMPOSITIONS

Seven poems were set to music. The two limericks, "There Was an Old Man of Blackheath" and "The Young Lady of Niger" were joined together to form one composition, "Limericks." As may be seen in the note to the students at the top of "Limericks," they were invited to set another limerick as the third verse, or to write one of their own. Two of the poems, "Betty Botter" and "Peter Piper" are popular anonymous tongue twisters and should serve as excellent tools for developing clean diction. The author also received permission to set Dennis Lee's "Billy Batter," Laura E. Richard's "Eletelephony," and Marci Ridlon's "Questions." With the exception of this last poem, all the texts are humorous. Since they are all rather short as well, it is recommended that they be viewed as a suite of humorous pieces. "Questions" is likewise humorous, but not as obviously so.

The pieces have been composed to comply with the qualities adopted from the review of literature as well as established by the survey of exemplary teachers. A few comments follow which discuss how the pieces demonstrate the characteristics established under the five broad categories of (a) vocal and technical limitations, (b) appropriate voicings, (c) musical appeal, (d) textual suitability, and (e) music of worth. In addition, several comments concerning the physical characteristics of the music are made.
I. Vocal and Technical Limitations

A. Timbre

1. Nothing in the pieces calls for the brilliance of tone of which older ensembles are capable.

B. Tessitura and Phrase Lengths

1. None of the pieces require the students to sing long phrases in a high tessitura.

C. Dynamics

1. The lower dynamic limit does not exceed pp, nor the upper dynamic limit exceed f.
2. Slow building intensities have not been included in the compositions.

C. Accompaniment

1. All of the pieces are accompanied even though it is recognized that unaccompanied choral music is appropriate for this age.

D. Articulation

1. The pieces are rhythmic, but the words have primarily been set syllabically, with a little use of neumatic in "Limericks." No melismas are included.
2. Although the vocal parts move primarily by steps, some skips have been employed, especially skips of thirds, fourths, and fifths.
3. The pieces are diatonic.
II. Appropriate Voicings

A. All of the pieces are written in a three-part mixed voicing with an added, optional baritone part.

1. The range of the additional, optional baritone part lies within the octave between B♭ and b.

2. Vocal parts use Roman numbers rather than traditional soprano, alto, tenor, bass designations in order to avoid assigning a student to a vocal part with a vocal designation traditionally recognized as being of the other gender.

III. Musical Appeal

A. The compositions have been composed with the students' interests in mind as well as the interests of the audience.

1. A variety of musical styles has been employed, although the nature of the texts determined a generally humorous approach. This has affected the choice of musical style.

2. The pieces have been composed so that each section of the choir has the opportunity to sing the melody on occasion, especially the male singers.

3. All of the pieces are highly rhythmic.

4. An attempt to appeal to the adolescent male students has been made by creating melodies which fit the ranges of the male voices. In the composition, "Limericks," the men (part III) were assigned the first verse which was about a male character. The female voices (parts I, II) were given the second verse which was about a female
character. In the song, "Betty Botter" having the men sing about a female character was somewhat unavoidable.

B. All of the compositions are tonal, melodically and harmonically.

C. The harmonies of the voice parts are complete in themselves and quite simple.

D. Although none of the pieces would qualify as being in a "popular style," "Betty Botter" is in a country style. All of the pieces are generally humorous which hopefully compensates for the lack of a popular style.

E. Texture

1. Both polyphonic and homophonic textures have been employed.

2. "Peter Piper" is actually a round which fits the range limitations of the three-part mixed voicing.

3. "Betty Botter" demonstrates the use of a descant which was shown to be an appropriate technique at this age level.

F. Part writing

1. The pieces have utilized simple and logical voice leading.

2. Harmonizing with parallel thirds and sixths has been utilized throughout, especially between parts I and II as well as between part III and the additional, optional baritone part.

3. The parts have been arranged in order that the singers should be able to find their initial pitches easily at vocal entrances.
4. Although solos have not been used extensively, one has been composed at the end of "Questions" for a male singer.

IV. Textual Suitability

A. A variety of texts has been used in these pieces.

B. The qualities of poetry which appeal to middle school students have been considered in composing these compositions.

1. All have interesting and familiar subject matter as well as strong action. None are calm or meditative in mood.

2. Each poem has obvious humor, even "Questions," which at first glance is not humorous. In actuality, it is a funny look at child/parent relationships with which all the students (and parents!) can probably relate.

3. All of the texts are simple, having few abstractions and modest demands on the imagination.


6. All of the texts have strong rhythm and rhyme.

7. Several of the poems are nonsense poems.

8. Although some of these are more traditional, "Billy Batter," "Eletelephony" and "Questions" are contemporary poems.

9. All of the poems are narrative texts and include people or contain humor.
V. Music of Worth

A. These pieces meet the general requirements which have been established for middle school mixed choral ensembles and are therefore considered worthwhile for musical study by middle school students. There is a sense that the true worth of these cannot be known until actual students perform them and are able to respond to the pieces directly.

Physical Characteristics

A. Each vocal part has been written on a separate staff with the exception of the optional baritone part which shares the bottom, third vocal staff with part III.

B. The approximate time of performance has been included,

C. The measures have been numbered.
PLEASE NOTE

Copyrighted materials in this document have not been filmed at the request of the author. They are available for consultation, however, in the author's university library.

170-177

University Microfilms International
Betty Botter
3-pt Mixed (with optional-additional baritone)
Performance Time: Approx. 45 sec.

Author unknown

Music by Lon Beery (ASCAP)

With a country style \( \frac{d}{= \text{ca. } 104} \)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Betty Botter} & \quad \text{Botter bought some butter.} \\
\text{Betty Botter} & \quad \text{Botter bought some butter.} \\
\text{Betty Botter} & \quad \text{Botter bought some butter.}
\end{align*}
\]
it will make my last

bit-ter,

bit-ter,
But a bit of butter butter
Will make my butter better.
So she bought a bit of butter.
Better than her, bitter.
And she put it in her batter

And the batter was not bitter

And the sour batter was not bitter
So 'twas better Bet-ty Bot-ter

So 'twas better Bet-ty Bot-ter

So 'twas better

So 'twas better

So 'twas better

So 'twas better

Bought a bit of Bot-ter

Bought a bit of Bot-ter

Bought a bit of Bot-ter

Bought a bit of Bot-ter

Bought a bit of Bot-ter

Bought a bit of Bot-ter

Bought a bit of Bot-ter

Bought a bit of Bot-ter

Bought a bit of Bot-ter

Bought a bit of Bot-ter
PLEASE NOTE

Copyrighted materials in this document have not been filmed at the request of the author. They are available for consultation, however, in the author's university library.

186-193
194-204

University Microfilms International
Peter Piper
3-pt Mixed (with optional-additional baritone)
Performance Time: Approx. 1:15
Author Unknown

Lon Beery (ASCAP)

Simply \( \left( \frac{4}{\text{quarter note}} \right) \text{ (d = ca. 126)} \)

Slowly \( \left( \frac{4}{\text{quarter note}} \right) \text{ with acceleration} \)

Peter Piper picked a peck of pick - led peppers;
A pack of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked.

Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.

Where the peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked?
A Little Faster ($d = \text{ca. 100}$)

Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers;

Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers;

Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers;

Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers,

A peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked,

A peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked:

A peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked.

A peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked.
Where's the pack of pickled peppers, Peter Piper picked.

Faster Yet \( \left( \frac{d}{d} = \text{ca. } 112 \right) \)
Faster (d = ca 126)

Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers; A peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked;
Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.

Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.

Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.

Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.

Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.
Where's the pack of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked?

Where's the pack of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked?
Limericks
3-pt Mixed (with optional-additional baritone)

Performance Time: Approx. 1 min.

The first two verses of this piece are popular limericks. You are encouraged to select a favorite limerick to sing for the third verse. Better yet, you may wish to write an original limerick, possibly related to an event or person in your choir! Have fun! -L.B.

There Was an Old Man of Blackheath (Author unknown)

Music by Lon Beery (ASCAP)
5 "sat on his set of false teeth. Said he, with a start, "Oh, Lord, bless my heart!"
7 bitten myself underneath. I've bitten myself underneath!"
The Young Lady of Niger (Author unknown)

was a young lady of Niger, who smiled as she rode on a Tiger; They came

back from the ride with the lady inside, And the smile on the face of the Tiger, And the
smile on the face of the Tiger.
APPENDIX A

COLLEGE & UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS
College & University Professors Making Recommendations
(New York State)

Dr. Ruth Brittin
Syracuse University

Prof. Margaret Byrne
College of Saint Rose

Prof. Lawrence Eisman
Aaron Copland School of Music, Queens College

Prof. Donna Brink Fox
Eastman School of Music

Dr. Anne K. Franco
Concordia College

Dr. Rosalind A. Knowles
Nazareth College

Dr. Walter S. Mayo
State University of New York - Fredonia

Dr. T. Regelski
State University of New York - Fredonia

Dr. Maria Runfala
State University of New York - Buffalo

Prof. J. Robert Sheehan
College of Saint Rose

Prof. Robert Shewan
Roberts Wesleyan College

Prof. Joseph R. Sugar
C. W. Post College, Long Island University
APPENDIX B

LIST OF EXEMPLARY MIDDLE SCHOOL CHORAL DIRECTORS
Exemplary Middle School Choral Directors
(New York State)

Sue Fay Allen
Amherst Middle School, Amherst

Carol Bryant
Onondaga Hills Middle School, Syracuse

David Bulan
Crane Middle School, Valatie

Barry Dietsch
Lakeshore Central Middle School, Angola

Fred Dunn
North Rose-Wolcott Middle School, Wolcott

John Gabrieli
Douglass Middle School, Rochester

Loree Hartzler
Churchville-Chili Middle School, Churchville

Carol Hasselback
Mill Middle School, Williamsville

Lori Ianniello
Dake Middle School, Rochester

Nancy Krestic
Silver Creek JSHS, Silver Creek

Sherryn Malm
Brown Middle School, Fairport

Douglas March
Woodland Middle School, East Meadow

William R. Margiotta
Locust Valley Junior-High School, Locust Valley

Cinthia Mayo
Orchard Park Middle School, Orchard Park
Joe O'Keefe
Jamesville-Dewitt Junior High School, Jamesville

Carolyn Pardee
Hazard Street Junior High School, Solvay

LaMont Ridgell
Durgee JHS, Baldwinsville

Ann Rhody Schott
Greece-Athena Middle School, Rochester

Renee Sherer
Belleville-Henderson Central School District, Belleville

Doris E. Smith
Grand Ave. Jr. High School, Bellmore

Karie Schroer Templeton
Pittsford Middle School, Pittsford

Margy Tillistrand
Albert Leonard Middle School, New Rochelle

Carl Wager
Greece-Athena Middle School, Rochester

Mary Wagner
Lisha Kill Middle School, Albany
APPENDIX C
LETTERS FROM PUBLISHERS
April 13, 1994

Lon S. Beery  
109 Crouse College  
Syracuse University  
Syracuse, NY 13244-1010

Dear Mr. Berry:

Thank you for your letter dated February 8th. Unfortunately, the considerable delay in responding to your request was due to the fact that your letter was sent to Macmillan, Mr. Lee's publisher. They sent it on to him directly and, as we handle all his permission requests, he, in turn, sent it to us to handle. Hence the delay.

Sterling Lord Associates grants you one-time, non-exclusive, permission to use the poem, "Billy Batter" for use in your doctoral dissertation. (If your dissertation is to be published at some later date, you will have to re-negotiate the terms of the request.)

For said right, we agree to waive our normal fee.

We do ask, however, that you grant proper copyright notice. The copyright credit should read: Billy Batter © 1974 Dennis Lee

Please sign both copies of this letter to indicate your agreement and return one copy to our office.

Sincerely,

Doreen Potter

AGREED:
February 23, 1994

Lon S. Berry  
109 Crouse College  
Syracuse University  
Syracuse, NY 13244-1010

Dear Mr. Berry:

Thank you for your request to reprint the poem "Eletelephony" from TIRRA LIRRA: RHYMES OLD AND NEW by Laura E. Richards.

Little, Brown and Company has no objection to your using this material in the manner you have described.

It is understood that this material will not be formally published. If you plan to publish in the future you must reapply for permission.

We appreciate your interest in our book. Please let us know if you have further questions.

Sincerely,

Ezra T. Ernst  
Permissions Editor
March 14, 1994

Mr. Lon S. Beery
109 Crouse College
Syracuse University
Syracuse, NY 13244-1010

Dear Mr. Beery:

You requested permission to use my poem "Questions" in your doctoral dissertation as a choral composition. You have my permission to do so free of charge unless you publish said composition.

I would be interested in seeing a xerox of how you use it, if you do. Also would like to know how you found the poem.

Good luck with your dissertation.

Sincerely,

Marci Ridlon McGill

P.S. It was a miracle you found me through Follett. I have moved many times since the publication of that book and didn’t know Follett even existed anymore.
APPENDIX D

MIDDLE SCHOOL CHORAL MUSIC SURVEY
Middle School Choral Music Survey

General Information:

1. Name: __________________________________
2. Number of years teaching middle school/jr. high school choral music: _______
3. What grades are included in your middle school (or junior high)? _______
4. What grades do you presently teach in a choral setting? _______
5. Do you divide male and female singers into separate choral classes/ensembles in your choral program? (please circle) YES NO
   If YES, at which grade level(s)? _______
6. Describe the grade level groupings of the choral group(s) in your middle school. (For instance, do your seventh and eighth graders sing together or separately?)

Instructions:

The following statements or questions are in consideration of mixed choruses, including 7th and/or 8th grade students. Please respond to these statements or questions as completely and accurately as possible. Circle the number which best describes your opinion of each statement or question using the following five-point scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>No Opinion</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. **Dynamics**
   
   A. What are the general dynamic limits (i.e. pp, f) which you feel are most appropriate for most choral music for middle school singers in the tessitura areas?
      ______ (softest) ______ (loudest) ______ no opinion
   
   B. A sustained forte is not desirable for middle school choral ensembles.  1 2 3 4 5
C. Adolescent singers can successfully perform pieces which contain large contrasts in dynamics.

D. Slow building intensities (crescendos) are difficult to achieve at this age.

2. **Vocal Range and Tessitura**

   A. Below is a range which is often used for middle school choral music. Estimate the number of boys in your 7th & 8th grade choral program who might find this range 1. too low, 2. just right, or 3. too high:

   ![Bass Clef Range]

   **7th Grade Boys**
   1. _____ # find this too low
   2. _____ # find this just right
   3. _____ # find this too high

   **8th Grade Boys**
   1. _____ # find this too low
   2. _____ # find this just right
   3. _____ # find this too high

   B. How do you accommodate those boys who find this range too high?

   C. What range would you consider to be appropriate for those boys who find this range too high? Please indicate:

   ![Bass Clef Range]

3. **Vocal Articulation**

   A. Middle school choral singers have difficulty with music containing melismas.

   B. Female singers are capable of more florid melodic passages than male singers at this age.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C.</td>
<td>Due to a lack of flexibility, vocal parts for male singers should move in slower, simpler rhythmic patterns.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.</td>
<td>Rhythmic pieces can be performed successfully if they are set syllabically.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.</td>
<td>Students can perform any rhythm that the teacher can teach them.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F.</td>
<td>Augmented intervals should be avoided melodically.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.</td>
<td>Major sevenths and minor sixths should be avoided melodically.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.</td>
<td>Middle school singers can successfully perform vocal lines with wide leaps.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.</td>
<td>Passages containing rapid harmonic shifts should be avoided.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.</td>
<td>Chromaticism presents performance problems for adolescent singers.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. **Accompaniment**

A. Unaccompanied choral music is appropriate for this age. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
B. Choral music for middle school students should generally be accompanied by the piano. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
C. If used, piano accompaniments should be written at a level which could be played by a student accompanist. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
D. Adult accompanists should generally be used to accompany middle school choirs. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
E. The left hand part of the piano accompaniment should be rather low to compensate for the lack of low voices in most middle school choral ensembles. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
F. If used, the piano part should not be overly showy, contrapuntal, or elaborate. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

5. **Melodic Appeal**

A. Each section of the choir should have the opportunity to sing the melody on occasion. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree Somewhat</th>
<th>No Opinion</th>
<th>Agree Somewhat</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. **Texture**

A. Music for middle school choirs should be primarily polyphonic (contrapuntal, or "quasi-contrapuntal").

B. If vocal parts are not independent, middle school singers will often sing a different part by mistake.

C. Partner songs are appropriate at this age level.

D. Singing descants is appropriate at this age level.

E. Middle school choirs should sing a variety of pieces reflecting both polyphonic and homophonic textures.

F. Short, repeated melodic or rhythmic patterns are recommended in accompanying vocal lines.

7. **Part Writing**

A. Pieces for middle school choirs should utilize simple and logical voice leading.

B. Voice crossing should be avoided.

C. Voice crossing is acceptable in the upper voices.

D. Harmonizing with parallel 3rds and 6ths is successful.

E. Passages utilizing contrary motion are generally easier to sing than those with parallel motion.

F. Parts should be written in such a way that the singers are able to find their initial pitches easily at vocal entrances.
8. **Miscellaneous Issues:**

A. Vocal lines with extended phrase lengths should be avoided. 

B. The combination of long phrase lengths and a high tessitura creates vocal problems for middle school students. 

C. Choral compositions should be relatively short. 

D. One should especially consider a song’s appeal to adolescent male students when selecting music for the mixed choir. 

E. Adolescent males prefer songs which are strong, robust, and rhythmic. 

F. Pieces with passages for soloists should generally be avoided in the middle school. 

G. Middle school students enjoy singing choral pieces in a popular style. 

H. Each vocal part should be written on a separate staff. 

I. Two parts which move together rhythmically for long periods of time may be written on the same staff. 

J. Texts in foreign languages appeal to middle school students. 

K. Middle school choral music should generally have a simple form. (i.e. A-A-B-A or A-B-A) 

L. Compositions for middle school choirs should be primarily tonal. 

M. Harmonies should be kept fairly simple. 

N. The harmony of the vocal parts should be complete in themselves. 

O. Rhythmic pieces are popular with middle school students. 

9. **Additional Comments**

Feel free to make any additional comments on the back of this page concerning characteristics of appropriate choral literature for middle school students which are not adequately covered above.
Professor
College/ University
School of Music
City, NY Zip Code

Dear Professor;

I am undertaking a research project which is concerned with identifying criteria for composing appropriate choral music for middle school mixed choirs. The project includes a survey of exemplary middle school choral directors in the state of New York. Of course, "exemplary" is difficult to quantify. For the sake of this study, I am accepting the recommendations of the college professors from a number of institutions from throughout the state. I am asking you to identify up to five teachers whom you feel are exemplary middle school choral teachers.

I assume that these teachers will generally have several years of teaching experience. In addition, they should demonstrate an understanding of adolescents at the middle school age, the adolescent voice change, and what choral music is appropriate for these students. Ideally, these should be the middle school choral teachers whom you would select as your top choices for placing your student teachers.

Would you please list up to five middle school choral teachers whom you believe are truly exemplary. Please fill out the enclosed sheet as completely as possible. If you do not have all the information available, I will try to fill in those blanks. At the very least, I need the names of the teachers, the names of the schools in which they teach, and the cities where the schools are located. If you believe that another faculty member at you institution would be more qualified to make these recommendations, please feel free to forward this to that faculty member.

Confidentiality will be maintained. The teachers will not be told who recommended them. Your contribution will be noted, however, in the final document.

I recognize that your time is valuable. I trust that this will only take a few minutes of your time. Please complete the enclosed recommendation sheet and return it to me in the enclosed, stamped envelope at your earliest convenience. If I do not hear from you within a few weeks, I will try to reach you by phone. Your assistance in this research project is highly appreciated.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call me at (315) 443-5897 [work] or (315) 453-9617 [home]. Thank-you for your assistance!

Sincerely,

Lon S. Beery
February 18, 1994

Teacher
School
Street
City, NY Zip Code

Dear Teacher;

I am presently working on a research project which is concerned with the qualities of appropriate choral literature for middle school choruses. A major part of this project includes a survey of middle school choral directors like yourself who have been identified by other professionals as being exemplary choral directors.

As you are no doubt aware, a number of statements have been proposed concerning specific qualities of choral literature for students at the middle school level. Many of these are reflected in the enclosed survey. Your responses to these items will help identify which qualities are truly appropriate and which ones are less so. I believe that the results of this study will be of tremendous value to all choral music educators. The literature has suggested that the selection of appropriate choral literature for students at this age is one area in which many teachers feel uneasy. Your responses may well help these teachers learn to select appropriate choral literature with more confidence.

Your participation in this study is totally voluntary. However, as a successful choral director, I believe that your contribution is extremely important. Your responses will be kept confidential. The introductory information on the survey is merely for identification. Nowhere in the final result will your answers be noted or identified individually. I do plan, however, to recognize those who respond by acknowledging them in the report.

Recognizing how busy middle school choral directors are, I have tried to keep the survey as short as possible. The survey should take no more than twenty minutes or so to complete. I will also send a summary of the results to all who complete and return the survey. I am sure that we will all find some valuable results from this study.

In order to finish this report in a timely fashion, I would appreciate having the survey returned by Friday, March 11, 1994. If you need additional instructions, or would like to speak to me concerning any part of the project, please feel free to call me at my office at Syracuse University, (315) 443-5897. You may also call me collect at home, (315) 453-9617.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Lon Beery
LIST OF REFERENCES


Dennis, C. M. (1939). The musical needs of the junior high school student. 1939-1940 Yearbook of the Music Educators National Conference, (pp. 168-170).


