Voice-Building 101:
*Choral Warm-ups that Build Vocalism and Musicianship in Rehearsals*

Do you use the same three to five warm-ups at the beginning of each rehearsal? Do your singers “tune out” while they are warming up? Warm-ups can easily become routine—a mundane part of daily rehearsals. However, the first few minutes of each rehearsal are the most valuable in building vocalism and musicianship among your singers. This session will provide opportunity to explore the full spectrum of voice-building you can use at the beginning of EVERY rehearsal. Discover how short-term success during the first precious minutes of each rehearsal can provide long-term benefits for every singer in your choir.

**Voice-Building “Masters”**
- Frauke Haasemann
- James Jordan
- Sabine Horstmann
- VoiceCare Network (Bodymind and Voice Course; www.voicecarenetwork.org)

**Voice-Building Sequence** (Jordan, 2005; Horstmann, 2009)
- Relaxation and Body Mapping
  - Deconstruct “posture”
  - Atlanto-Occipital joint (“A-O joint”)
  - Prepare “best balance” for singing
- Breathing (general)
- Breathing (specific)
  - Inhalation
  - Exhalation
- Finding Resonance
- Register Consistency
- Range Extension (High)
- Range Extension (Low)
- Articulation Choices ~ Staccato, Legato, Martellato
- Diction Teaching Principles
• Multi-Voice Part Vocalises
  o Canons
  o Harmonic progressions
  o Excerpts from repertoire

• Yawn Sighs – consistently between voice-building components!

Movement
• General movements:
  o conduct chant circles
  o infinity sign
  o squats & pliés
  o finding ‘best balance’
• Specific movements:
  o claw of sound
  o pull laser beam
  o pull from lips
  o piggy face
  o physical therapy bands
  o throw mini darts
  o point from cheekbones
  o palm of hand on forehead
  o “guns up” near cheekbones
  o these are only a few of the endless choices!

Aural Skills
• Tuning forks
• Cluster chords
• Thirds, fourths, and triads
• Listen vertically while singing chords and harmonic progressions

Suggested Resources


