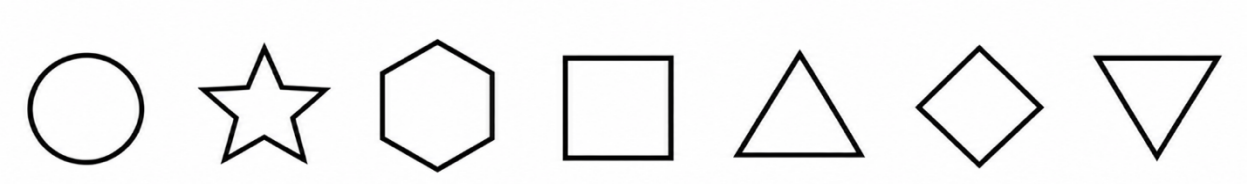
Sight-Reading in the Choral Classroom:

Strategies to incorporate daily and effective sight-reading techniques and methods in the choral rehearsal

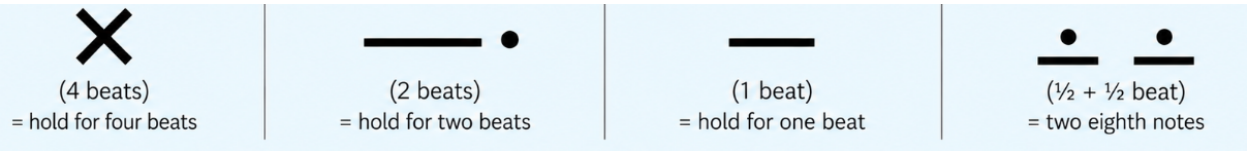
Nebraska Music Educators Association
Thursday, Nov. 19th, 2026
2:30pm

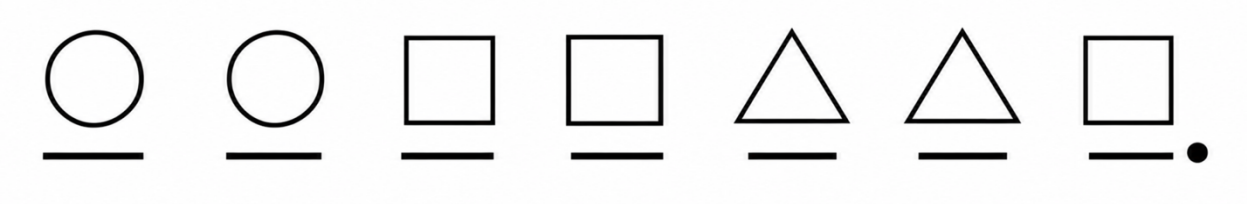
Dr. Richard A. Carrillo
Director of Choral Activities at the University of Nebraska at Omaha

<u>Let's Sight Read!</u>

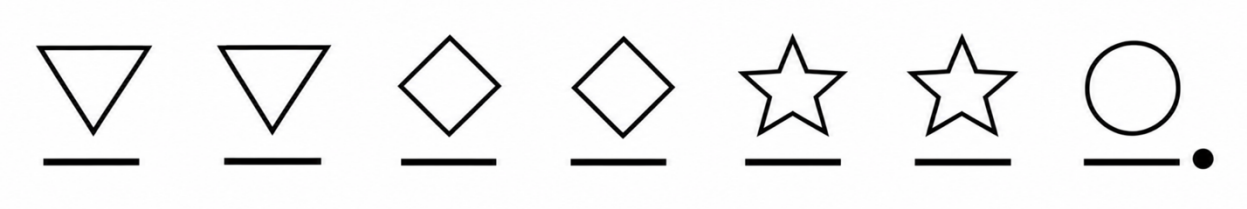


Blue Red Green White Grey Pink Brown





Blue Blue White White Grey Grey White



Brown Brown Pink Pink Red Red Blue

I. Introduction
   a. Purpose of the Season
   b. Importance of Daily Sightreading/Music Literacy Practice
   c. You can't eat a watermelon whole! ☺
   d. This session is starting with beginning students
      i. Many activities can be formatted for students at every level
      ii. Why I still like to start at the basics

II. Pre-Sight Reading Skills Necessary for Success
   a. Let's start at the very beginning – Be sure solfege is posted in the room for everyone to see
      i. First "quiz"
      ii. Follow the hand
      iii. Hand sign races

   b. Ways to increase student's ability to sing up and down the solfege scale
      i. Singing Scales in Rounds
      ii. Solfege Ladder
      iii. Forbidden Pattern

   c. Simplified aural dictation

1.

D	D	D	D	D
T	T	T	T	T
L	L	L	L	L
S	S	S	S	S
F	F	F	F	F
M	M	M	M	M
R	R	R	R	R
D	D	D	D	D

2.

D	D	D	D	D
T	T	T	T	T
L	L	L	L	L
S	S	S	S	S
F	F	F	F	F
M	M	M	M	M
R	R	R	R	R
D	D	D	D	D

3.

D	D	D	D	D
T	T	T	T	T
L	L	L	L	L
S	S	S	S	S
F	F	F	F	F
M	M	M	M	M
R	R	R	R	R
D	D	D	D	D

III. Musically bilingual

a. Note names vs. Solfege
   i. Do we teach both at the same time?

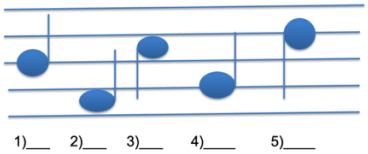
b. Why I teach solfege first
   i. Find Do
   ii. Key Signatures

IV. Sight Singing Examples/First Steps

a. Some things we forget…
   i. Is it on a line or space?
   ii. Does stem direction matter?

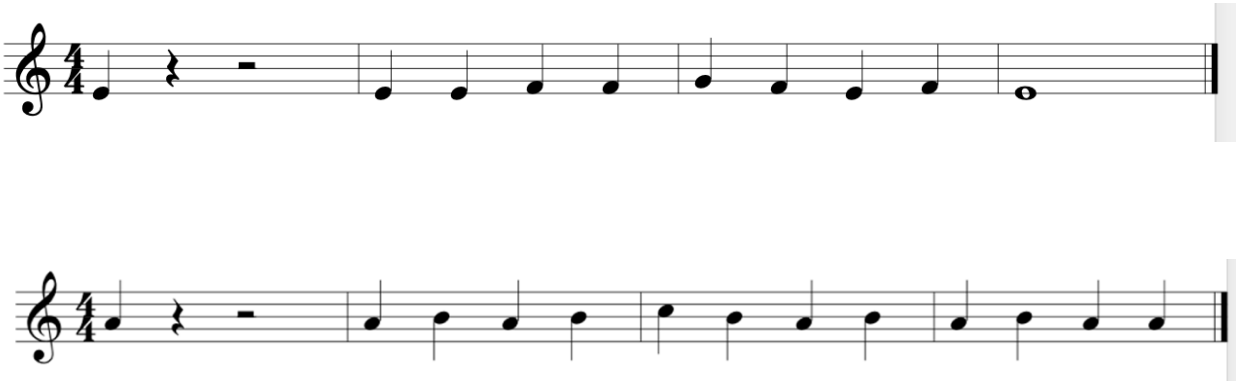
Written/Oral Warm up

Look at this example. Which notes would you call "LINE" notes? Which notes would you call "SPACE" notes?



b. Pre-Activity: Hand Staff

c. First Steps:



d. Resources for Single Line Sight Reading

   i. Folk Songs for Sight Singing – Oxford University Press
   ii. SMART: Sight Singing Made Accessible Reading Teachable
   iii. 90 Days to Sight Singing Success: A Singer's Resource for Competitive Sightsinging
      1. More advanced
      2. Section Leaders
      3. CD
   iv. Sight Reading Factory*
   v. S Cubed*

e. Resources for SATB/TTB/SSA Sight Reading
   i. A Capella Songs Without Words
      1. AMC Publications
      2. SSA/TTB
   ii. Songs for Sight Singing
      1. Volume 1: Covers foundational sight-singing practice and is available in various editions (Junior High/High School, SATB, SSA, SAB, and TB).
      2. Volume 2: Continues with intermediate developmental examples and matching choir voicings.
      3. Volume 3: Provides advanced high school exercises

V. Rhythm

a. Teach in chunks
b. Don’t forget to have fun!

VI. Other considerations

a. How to teach Concert Music when the students are not comfortable with solfège yet
b. How to manage classrooms with mixed reading abilities
c. Do vs La Base Minor – Form vs. Function
    i. D R Me F S Le Te D
    ii. L T D R M Fi Si L
    iii. R M F S L T Di R D Te L S F M R

VII. Questions?