

Choral Score Analysis and Preparation

GOAL: understanding how to analyze a piece of music for rehearsal

MUSICAL ANALYSIS

SOUND

- Texture:** -Homophonic vs Contrapuntal; identify sections and locate in score.
-Acapella vs accompanied; # of voices (instruments); is accompaniment independent doubling or imitative?
-certain voice pairings; eg. s/a-t/b or s/t-a/b
- Dynamics:** -determined by text or texture (terraced dynamics)
-given by composer or editor
-overall dynamic range
-different for different voice parts (eg. melody vs accompaniment)
-special markings

HARMONY

- Key:** -diagram the general harmonic outline of the piece including modulations if necessary.
- Cadences:** -identify and locate all cadence points and analyze the harmonies (Mark in score)
- Harmonic Devices:** -such as suspensions, anticipations, unusual chords (Mark in score)

MELODY

- Motives-Themes:** -Identify and locate. (Mark in score) These are the dominant voices at that point.
- Range:** -For each voice part and overall. Identify high points (Mark in score).
- Melodic Devices:** -Text painting. General movement (step vs leap). Difficult spots like accidentals. (Mark in score)

RHYTHM

Meter: -Identify and note any changes in meter including hemiolas. (Mark in score)

Tempo: -Identify all terms and their meaning. Determine general metronome markings for all tempos.

Rhythm motives: -Identify and locate. (Mark in score)

Rhythmic Devices: -Augmentation, diminution; polyrhythms (3 vs 4); general rhythmic movement; contrasting lines.

Articulation: -(Mark in score), this includes places to breathe.

GROWTH (FORM)

Sections: -Identify and locate major divisions of the piece. Then determine if it fits an existing form. Even through-composed pieces have sections that should be identified.

Phrases: -Mark in the score. Look at cadence points and breaths to determine phrase locations.

Unifying Element: -What holds the piece together? Eg. melodic theme or rhythmic motive?
-Identify how the element provides structural unity.

TEXT

Translation, Pronunciation (IPA), and articulation.