

HOW TO LEARN A SONG ACCURATELY THE FIRST TIME

FMS Kingston

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Handout pg 1 Paula Allen

paulaallen@cogeco.ca

Identify your predominant learning style: Visual (V), Auditory (A), Kinaesthetic (K)

What to mark on sheet music:

1. Mark every DOH (tonic) in your part. (See back of page to find note.) V
2. Mark when your note is an octave from another part. Lock needs to be immediate. V
3. Mark all notes that need to be tuned higher: Mi, Fi, La and Ti plus any accidental making a note go up. (Pythagorean tuning – see reverse page) V
4. Devise your own code for the interp. so you OWN the plan early. e.g. a checkmark for a breath, QB for quick breath, NB for no breath. Your part may have a different breath plan than other parts. Lyrics: underline a held syllable, draw a heart over a word to be caressed, put an accent ' over a syllable to emphasize, bracket words to be de-emphasized. Mark dynamics over whole phrases. Coaching can change ANY element in #4, pencil can be erased! V
5. Mark target vowels, whatever makes sense to you. Check it out with a director or section leader for accuracy. (e.g. UH over 'love' so it doesn't sound like 'LAWve')
6. Identify potentially challenging passages: a) key change V
b) accidentals (Use arrows for reminders about whether a note should go up or down) V
c) many words or fast passages V
d) big intervals (jumps between notes) V
7. Identify patterns in your part i.e. how the verses differ, what sections are repeated. V

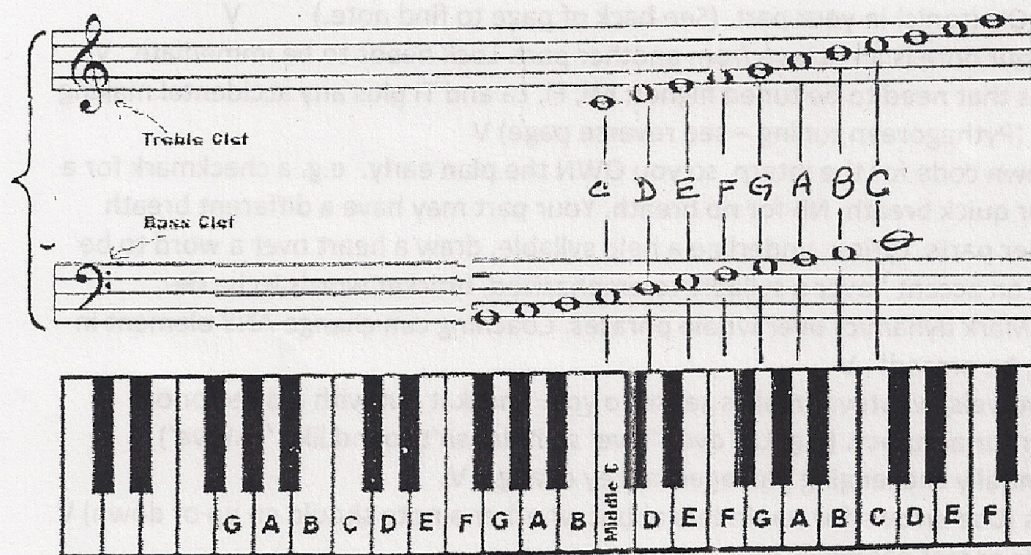
BEFORE you make any sound, listen to the whole song to get the flavour, message, passion. This can be done driving or doing other activities until you are ready to make it your own. Once you are ready to start LEARNING it, pick a time of day when you are the most alert and not likely to be distracted. Use many ways to listen actively:

1. Listen to one section at a time, many times, eyes closed. A
2. Listen to that section while you watch the notes on the paper going up and down. A,V
Use your hand to direct the sound, flowing up and down with the notes and dynamics. K
3. Listen to that section watching only the lyrics. A, V

Be creative when you start to sing:

1. Hum the line, watching the notes. A, V
2. Say the lyrics in the interpretive plan. Speak the lyrics while listening. Speak the lyrics without the song being played. Note where you stumble. Repeat as often as it takes. A
3. Isolate learning to one section at a time. Repeat short sections many times (especially anything you identify in #5 above). Record yourself to monitor how you are doing. A
4. Use body movement to learn the plan: rub your forearm to smooth out choppy phrases, push down an imaginary beach ball to add freedom to a high note, tap hand for tempo. K
5. WRITE out the lyrics in longhand. Type out a double-spaced word sheet so you can add in coaching notes etc. K

ADD YOUR OWN IDEAS FOR WHAT WORKS BEST FOR YOU!!!



Names of spaces:

E
C
A
F

Grass
Eat
Cows
All

TUNING NOTES

Key Signature	Key (Doh)	+8 mi	+6 la	+10 ti	+ fi
no flats or sharps	C	E	A	B	F#
1b	F	A	D	E	B natural ♪
2b	Bb	D	G	A	E natural ♪
3b	Eb	G	C	D	A natural ♪
4b	Ab	C	F	G	D natural ♪

1#	G	B	E	F#	C#
2#	D	F#	B	C#	G#
3#	A	C#	F#	G#	D#
4#	E	G#	C#	D#	A#