

SINGING SONS

Nurturing Boys' Voices from Six to Sixteen

Dan LeJeune

The Blake School, Hopkins, Minnesota

Who Will Buy sung by Kennan LeJeune, age 8



Notes and resources at www.mrlj.com

Goals

- To inspire boys to sing for a lifetime.
- To help boys feel comfortable singing.
- To honor boys singing where they “ring”.
- To make singing as inclusive as sports.

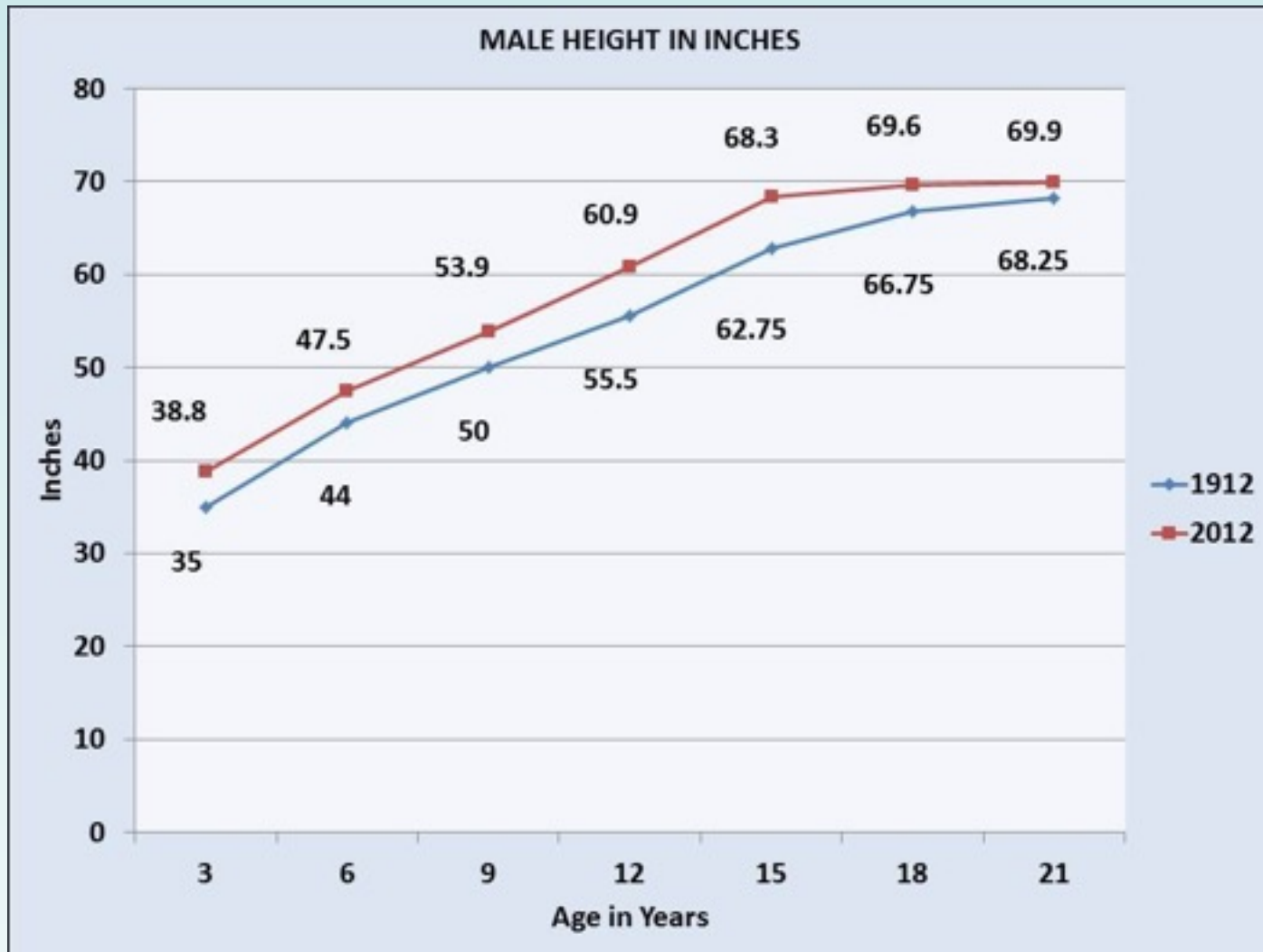
Agenda

- Stages of the male changing voice.
- How these stages influence repertoire choice
- 35+ audio samples of repertoire for each stage.
- Ideas for choosing/teaching repertoire and creating ensembles that keep boys singing!

Vocal Metamorphosis

- Voice change can begin early (9) or late (14+).
- One part may not fit one voice.
- Stages of change can last days or months.

Maturation over 100 years



Questions

- Do our ensembles promote or discourage the inclusion of boys singing where they ring?
- What can we do to make a safe and welcoming singing environment for all boys, regardless of ability or vocal range?

About the Recordings

Selections are from my choirs rehearsals/performances from 1995-present, Gr. 6-8 middle school public and independent schools.

Examples are from music that fits the various ranges of the male emerging adolescent singer.

Field Recording 1

- Male in Grade 6, 7, 8,
- About 18 months between recordings.
- Sang in school and honor choirs.
- Sings “Red River Valley”

Field Recording 2

- Studied voice from early age.
- Warm-up and Brother John: Gr. 6
- Kodaly: Isten Kovacsza-Gr. 7
- Rachmaninoff, 'Vocalise'-Gr. 8
- Handel: Si tra i ceppi-Gr. 12

Common Range of Male Voice Change (Cooksey)



Many have contributed research, articles, videos, and practical experience to the field including Ken Phillips, Henry Leck, Patrick Freer, Terry Barham, André Thomas, Anton Armstrong, & Sally Herman. For categorizing repertoire today, I'm using a simplified structure based on Cooksey's research.

Practical Application

- 1. Male Treble Voice (not included today)
- 2. Early Stage Changing Male Voice
- 3. Middle Stage Changing Male Voice
- 4. Later Stage Changing Male Voice
- 5. Emerging Adolescent Male Voice
- 6. Mature Adolescent Male Voice

2. Early Changing Male Voice

- Appears age 10-12, some in HS
- Light quality, more breathy above C5.
- Best range Ab3-C5, tessitura B3-G4.
- Less flexibility, especially in upper range.

2. Early Stage Changing Male Voice Repertoire Considerations



- Choose music with some parts below C5.
- Music with narrow 5-7 note range or with simple or repetitive lower harmonies.
- Feature lower part singing the melody or doubling upper part melody.

Spanish Ladies

Orff Schulwerk Vol. 5

We will rant and we'll roar like true Bri-tish sai - lors, We'll rant and we'll roar all on the salt seas

REFRAIN

Fare-well! ____

Fare-well! ____

Pat Works on the Railway

Arr. Ruth Dwyer/M. Ellis

47

Fil-li-me-oo - re - ay Fil-li-me-oo - re - ay Work - in' on the rail - way Fil-li-me-oo - re - ay.

47 *ff*

Fil-li-me-oo - re - oo - re - ay Fil-li-me-oo - re - oo - re - ay, Fil-li-me-oo - re - oo - re - ay, To work up-on the rail-way.

ff

Fil-li-me-oo - - - Fil-li-me-oo - - - Fil-li-me-oo - - - work up-on the rail-way.

The musical score is for the song 'Pat Works on the Railway', arranged by Ruth Dwyer and M. Ellis. It features three staves: a vocal line and two piano accompaniment staves. The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat), and the time signature is 4/4. The score begins at measure 47. The vocal line has lyrics: 'Fil-li-me-oo - re - ay', 'Fil-li-me-oo - re - ay', 'Work - in' on the rail - way', and 'Fil-li-me-oo - re - ay.'. The piano accompaniment consists of two staves. The upper piano staff has lyrics: 'Fil-li-me-oo - re - oo - re - ay', 'Fil-li-me-oo - re - oo - re - ay,', 'Fil-li-me-oo - re - oo - re - ay, To work up-on the rail-way.', and 'Fil-li-me-oo - re - oo - re - ay, To work up-on the rail-way.'. The lower piano staff has lyrics: 'Fil-li-me-oo - - -', 'Fil-li-me-oo - - -', 'Fil-li-me-oo - - -', and 'work up-on the rail-way.'. The piano part includes dynamic markings of *ff* (fortissimo) at the beginning of the second and third staves. The score is written in a standard musical notation style with treble and bass clefs, and various note values including quarter, eighth, and sixteenth notes, as well as rests.

Fuyu No Uta

Arr. R. Stenson

21 *mf*

Yu - ki kon - ko, Yu - ki kon - ko, fut - te - wa fut - te - wa zun zun tsu - mo - ru.

f

Yu - ki ya kon - ko, a - ra - re ya kon - ko, fut - te - wa fut - te - wa zun — zun tsu - mo - ru.

Soli Deo Gloria

Paul Kickstat

Ex. 1

1.
Glo-ria, glo-ria, so-li De-o glo-ria, glo - - - ri - a, glo - ri - a, so-li

52.
De-o, so-li De - o, so-li De-o glo-ria, so-li, De-o glo - - - ri - a, so - li

93.
De-o, so - li De - o, so - li De-o glo - ri-a, glo - ri-a, glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a!

4. *Ostinato*
So - - li De - o glo - ri - - - a!

3. Middle Stage Changing Male Voice

- Average age 13-14.
- Can have breathy/husky voice.
- Decreased projection, agility, pitch accuracy.
- Falsetto emerges usually above G4
- F3-A4 pitch range but G#3-F4 is realistic.



3. Middle-Changing Male Voice Repertoire

- Alto often too high, tenor too low.
- Seek F4-F5 parts that can be doubled 8va
- Seek SATB rather than SAB/3 pt mixed
- Avoid baritone notes below C3/D3.
- Avoid part writing with awkward leaps.
- Closed position harmonies are effective.

***Bound for Jubilee* (SATB)**

Joyce Eilers

Oh my broth-er, won't you come with me Oh my sis-ter you must come to - day.

Oh my broth-er, won't you come with me? Oh my sis-ter you must come to - day.

Oh my broth-er, won't you come with me? Oh my sis-ter you must come to - day. -

Oh my broth-er, won't you come with me? Oh my sis-ter, you must come to - day.

Amani

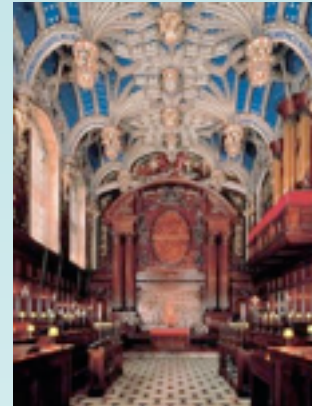
Jim Papoulis

- Treble voicing (SSA)
- Works for the changing voice since the harmony is a 6th below the melody.
- Parts can be doubled an octave lower, accommodating bass voices.
- Has energy and appeals to this changing voice stage while allowing treble voices to sing in a comfortable range.



Come Ye Sons

Henry Purcell



Works as a solo, duet, or with SATB
Add strings or continuo alone for color.

Ex. 2

Sopranos

Altos

Tenors

Basses

Come, come, ye Sons of Art, come, come a - way, tune all your voi-ces and

Come, come, ye Sons of Art, come, come a - way, tune all your voi-ces and

Come, come, ye Sons of Art, come, come a - way, tune all your voi-ces and

Come, come, ye Sons of Art, come, come a - way, tune all your voi-ces and

22

Strike it Up Tabor (SST)

Thomas Weelkes

Ex. 3

(Allegro)

CANTUS
(Soprano I)


TENOR
(Soprano II)

BASSUS
(Tenor)

Strike it up Ta - bor and pipe us a
Lu - sty Dick Hop - kin lay on with thy

Strike it up Ta - bor and pipe us a fa - vor, thou
Lu - sty Dick Hop - kin lay on with thy nap - kin, the

Strike it up Ta - bor and pipe us a fa - vor, thou
Lu - sty Dick Hop - kin lay on with thy nap - kin, the



We Be Three Poor Mariners

Ravenscroft/ed. Harold Owen

Ex. 4: Narrow range 3-part song.

The image displays a musical score for a three-part song in 2/4 time. It consists of three staves, each with a treble or bass clef. The lyrics are written below each staff, with some words hyphenated across measures. The melody is simple and narrow in range, typical of a folk song. The first staff uses a treble clef, the second a treble clef, and the third a bass clef. The lyrics are: 'Wee be three poore Mar - in - ers new - ly do come from the seas. Wee care not for those mart - ial types Who do our states dis - dain'.

Wee be three poore Mar - in - ers new - ly do come from the seas.
Wee care not for those mart - ial types Who do our states dis - dain

Wee be three poore Mar - in - ers new - ly do come from the seas.
Wee care not for those mart - ial types Who do our states dis - dain

Wee be three poore Mar - in - ers new - ly do come from the seas.
Wee care not for those mart - ial types Who do our states dis - dain

Bonse Aba

Arr. Andrew Fischer

7

Ku-ba-ba na

7

pe-le ma - ka a ku ba-ba-na Ku-ba-ba-na

7

pe-le ma ka a ku-ba-ba-na Ku-ba-ba-na

4. Later Stage Male Voice Change

- Most insecure time for a boy's voice
- Average 8th grade/late 7th age 13-14
- Unstable upper range, emerging baritone.
- Falsetto transition challenging for some.
- Pitch range D3-F#4, tessitura F#3-D4



4. Later Stage Male Voice Change Repertoire

- Moments of vocal rest within music is helpful.
- Develop falsetto downward.
- Music which alternates/shares/pairs SA/TB
- Avoid parts with many sustained pitches.
- Breath control issues require shorter phrases.

She Walks in Beauty

Laura Farnell

9

T

8

mf

of cloud - less climes and

B

mf

9

She walks in beau - ty like the night

Detailed description: This is a musical score for two voices, Tenor (T) and Bass (B), in G major (one sharp). The Tenor part begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It features a melodic line starting on a whole rest, followed by a half note G4, and then a series of quarter notes: A4, B4, C5, and D5. The Bass part begins with a bass clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It features a melodic line starting on a whole rest, followed by a half note G3, and then a series of quarter notes: A3, B3, C4, and D4. Both parts include a dynamic marking of *mf* (mezzo-forte) and a crescendo hairpin. The lyrics are: 'of cloud - less climes and' for the Tenor and 'She walks in beau - ty like the night' for the Bass. The number '9' appears at the beginning of each staff.

Old Joe Clark

Arr. M. Goetze

- SSA works great for changing boys voices!
- A cappella allows transposition to best key for your boys.



Hope is the Thing with Feathers

Kenney Potter

- Closed harmony, variety of textures, mixed meter, paired parts.

mp

Hope is the thing with feath - ers That perch-es in the soul,

Hope is the thing that perch-es in the soul and sings the tune and nev - er stops at all, Hope

Hope is the thing that perch - es in the soul and sings the tune and nev - er stops at all, Hope

Hope is the thing that perch-es in the soul and sings the tune and nev - er stops at all, Hope

Psallite Praetorius

Ex. 5

The image displays a musical score for a four-part vocal setting of 'Psallite'. The score is written for Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass voices. The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 3/2. The lyrics are in German. The Soprano and Alto parts have complete lyrics, while the Tenor and Bass parts have lyrics with blank lines for improvisation or continuation. The music is written on four staves, each with a clef and a key signature of one flat. The Soprano and Alto staves use a treble clef, while the Tenor and Bass staves use a bass clef. The lyrics are written below the notes, with some words split across lines. The Soprano and Alto parts have a more melodic line, while the Tenor and Bass parts have a more harmonic line. The lyrics are: 'Psal - lit - te, Singt und klingt, u - ni - ge - ni - to, Je - su, Got - tes Kind, Chri - sto De - i fi - li - o, und Ma - ri - en Söh - ne - lein,'.

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

Psal - lit - te,
Singt und klingt,

u - ni - ge - ni - to,
Je - su, Got - tes Kind,

Chri - sto De - i fi - li - o,
und Ma - ri - en Söh - ne - lein,

Psal - lit - te,
Singt und klingt,

u - ni - ge - ni - to,
Je - su, Got - tes Kind,

Psal - lit - te,
Singt und klingt,

u - ni - ge - ni - to,
Je - su, Got - tes Kind,

Amavolovolo


Arr. deBeer



High Flight


Written for SSA or TTB

Karen Robinson



The first staff of music is written on a treble clef. It begins with a green *f* (forte) dynamic marking. The melody starts with a dotted quarter note on G4, followed by an eighth rest, then a dotted quarter note on A4. This is followed by a half note on B4, then a half note on C5. The next measure contains a half note on D5, a half note on E5, and a half note on F5. The final measure contains a half note on G5, a half note on A5, and a half note on B5. A blue *3* (triple) marking is placed above the first measure of the final measure.

wheeled and soared and swung High in the sun - lit si - lence.



The second staff of music is written on a treble clef. It begins with a dotted quarter note on G4, followed by an eighth rest, then a dotted quarter note on A4. This is followed by a half note on B4, then a half note on C5. The next measure contains a half note on D5, a half note on E5, and a half note on F5. The final measure contains a half note on G5, a half note on A5, and a half note on B5. A blue *3* (triple) marking is placed above the first measure of the final measure.

wheeled and soared and swung High in the sun - lit si - lence.

Oy es dia de placer

Arr. Jody Noblett

- Accommodates narrow range for tenors.
- Needs few baritones to sound good.
- Sustained open 5th is wonderful for tuning.

Da Pacem

Melchior Franck/arr. Goetze

- Ex. 6-Double canon-works for SSAA/TTBB
- Perfect piece to determine parts.

$\text{♩} = 90$

Alto
d r m f f m s f r, m d r r m

Tenor
s, l, t, d d t, r d l, t, s,

Baritone
d r m f f m

Bass
s, l, t, d d t,

Nine Hundred Miles

Philip Silvey

The image displays a musical score for the song "Nine Hundred Miles" by Philip Silvey. It consists of four staves, each with a treble or bass clef and a key signature of three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). The time signature is common time (C). The first two staves are vocal parts, and the last two are piano accompaniment. The lyrics are written below the notes. The score includes dynamic markings: *mp* (mezzo-piano) and *p* (piano). The lyrics are: "I'm try'n' to read a let-ter from my home" and "I am walk-in' on this track, - I've got tears - in _ my eyes, Oo Ooh - -".

I'm try'n' to read a let-ter from my home

I'm try'n' to read a let-ter from my home - A

mp *p*

I am walk-in' on this track, - I've got tears - in _ my eyes, Oo Ooh - -

mp *p*

I am walk-in' on this track, - I've got tears in _ my eyes, Oo Ooh - -

Ukrainian River Song

Roman Yakub



5. Emerging Adolescent Male Voice

- Often referred to as “new baritone” in 7th/8th grades, more in 8th/9th
- Sound gaining clarity but lacks fullness.
- Some gain stability in falsetto register.
- Pitch instability especially in upper range.
- Ideal range Bb2-C4 max.



5. Emerging Adolescent Male Voice Repertoire

- Seek SATB or TTB music to fit various ranges.
- Voices gaining flexibility for more complexity.
- Improved balance with treble voices emerges.
- Avoid bass below A2 or tenor below F3.

Niska Banja

Arr. Nick Page

The image displays a musical score for the song "Niska Banja" by Nick Page. It consists of four staves of music, each with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are in Slovenian and are written below the notes. The first two staves have a green 'f' marking above the first measure, indicating a forte dynamic. The third staff has an '8' below the first measure. The fourth staff also has an '8' below the first measure. The lyrics are: "Za - nis - li - je zi va - va zjo da. Em - ka ra - vla, em ka-me ra - vla,". The music features various note values, including eighth and sixteenth notes, and rests. There are also some red markings above the notes, possibly indicating phrasing or breath marks.

Za - nis - li - je zi va - va zjo da. Em - ka ra - vla, em ka-me ra - vla,

Za _ nis-nis _ li _ je zi va _ _ _ zjo - da. Em ka ra _ vla, em ka-me ra _ vla,

8 Za - nis - li - je zi va - va zjo da. Em ka ra - vla, em ka-me ra _ vla

8 Za _ nis-nis _ li _ je zi va _ _ _ zjo - da. Em ka ra vla, em ka-me ra vla,

Vo pole berjozonjka stajala (Birkenbäumchen)

Ex. 7 Little Birch Tree/Arr. Jens Klimek

37 Tutti

Sré - zu ja sber - jó - zy tri pru - tó - ka, z - de - la - ju iz nich ja tri gu - doc - ka.

This musical system covers measures 37 to 42. It features a treble and bass staff in G major (one sharp). The melody is primarily in the treble staff, with the bass staff providing harmonic support. The lyrics are written below the notes.

43

Ljú - li, ljú - li, tri pru - tó - ka, ljú - li, ljú - li, tri pru - tó - ka.

Ljú - li tri pru - tó - ka, ljú - li tri pru - tó - ka.

This musical system covers measures 43 to 48. It continues the melody and accompaniment from the previous system. The lyrics are repeated. The system ends with a double bar line.

Old King Cole

Arranged Donald Moore

- Great example of an ideal SATB range.
- Alternates between SA and TB
- Imitation between parts facilitates learning.
- Effective way to teach 4 part chorale.

SATB with 7/8th Gr. Boys

Set Me As a Seal

David Childs

Wa-ters can-not quench love, nei-ther can the floods - drown it.

nei-ther can the floods drown it.

Daisies White

Traditional/Arr. N. Harmony

35

The image displays a musical score for the song 'Daisies White', arranged by N. Harmony. It consists of four staves, each with a treble or bass clef and a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The lyrics are '3:And in the morn when I a - rise,'. The first staff is a treble clef with a key signature of one flat. The second staff is a treble clef with a key signature of one flat. The third staff is a treble clef with a key signature of one flat. The fourth staff is a bass clef with a key signature of one flat. The lyrics are '3:And in the morn when I a - rise,'. The score includes fingerings (M, S, D, R, T, L) and slurs. A page number '35' is in the top left. A small '4' is in the bottom right.

3:And in the morn when I a - rise,

3:And in the morn when I a - rise,

3:And in the morn when I a - rise,

3:And in the morn when I a - rise,

4

6. Mature Adolescent Male Voice



- Generally 9th gr. and age 14-15+
- Tone is more stable/consistent, larger range.
- Upper range/falsetto gain clarity, control.
- Best range Bb2-A3.
- Tendency to push above A3.

Riu, Riu, Chiu

16th century (ed. Greenberg)

18

Dios guar - do el lo - bo de nue - stra cor-de - ra.

18

Dios guar do el lo - bo lo - bo de nue - stra cor-de - ra.

18

8

Dios guar - do el lo - bo el lo - bo de nue - stra cor-de - ra.

Dios guar - do el lo - bo el lo - bo de nue - stra cor-de - ra.

Fa Una Canzona Vecchi

mf p

1.Sing me a song, and one that I may sa - vor,
 Fau - na can - zo - na sen - za no - te ne - re.
 2.Let me hear on - ly sounds of per - fect beau - ty,
 Per en - tro non vi spar ge - re du - rez - ze
 3.Sing not a song with notes of learn - ed fash - ion,
 Ne vi far ci - frao se - gno con - tra se - gno.

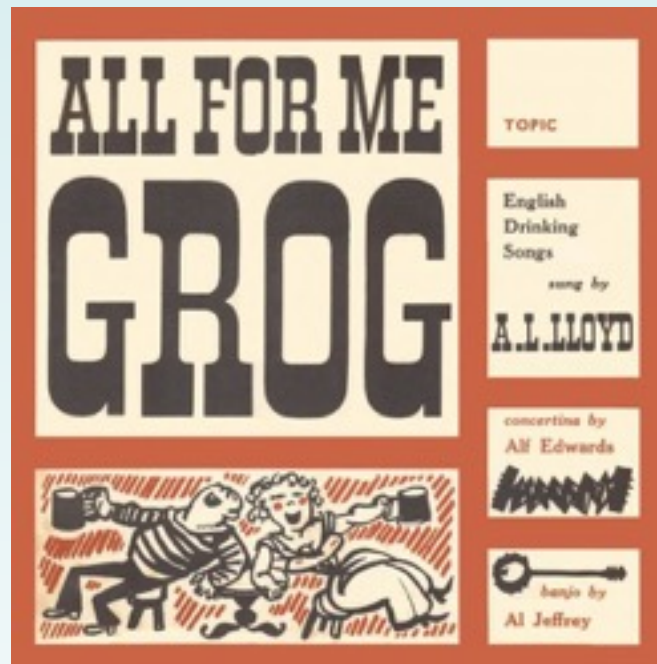
1.Sing me a song, and one that I may sa - vor,
 Fau - na can - zo - na sen - za no - te ne - re.
 2.Let me hear on - ly sounds of per - fect beau - ty,
 Per en - tro non vi spar ge - re du - rez - ze
 3.Sing not a song with notes of learn - ed fash - ion,
 Ne vi far ci - frao se - gno con - tra se - gno.

1.Sing me a song, and one that I may sa - vor,
 Fau - na can - zo - na sen - za no - te ne - re.

All for Me Grog

Stephen Hatfield

- Unusual maturity for 7/8th gr. boys.
- Atypical male sound-similar to 9/10th gr.



Example of Gr. 7-9 Sound

- *Duond Akuru* by Rollo Dilworth (SATB)
- Increased projection in the sound.
- 9th grade basses and tenors enrich the sound.

Example of Gr. 7-9 Sound

- ***Minstrel Boy***, arr. Michael Mauldin
- Note the improved clarity of tone.
- Pitch is more stabile.

Ponder This...

Some of these singers you heard in my examples would not be able to perform in an OAKE Honor Choir because of their changing voices. I share these excerpts so that you that can hear that their voices remain very much expressive instruments worthy of being heard right through the voice change.

Motto and Vision

OAKE's motto is "Music for Everyone".

OAKE's vision reads, *"Our vision is the realization of a world where the power of music as a unifying, humanizing, and healing force is an integral part of the lives of the American People"*.

Let's be sure our "Singing Sons" are nurtured from Six to Sixteen and beyond.

Thanks for attending today!

“However much we stumble, it is the teacher’s burden always to hope, that with learning, a boy’s character might be changed, and so, the destiny of a man.”

From “The Emporer’s Club”



Age 4



Age 15