

# Inside the Choral Classroom: Advice for the First-Year Teacher (Part 3)

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*Choral Journal* editor

The May, August, and September 2015 issues of *Choral Journal* featured a three-part series of articles featuring interviews with eleven choral teachers sharing advice for the first-year choral teacher. We are reprising that series with a similar set of questions and a new set of interviewees. Participants received the Q&A form via email in January 2020. Part 1 appeared in the August 2020 issue and answered questions about expectations, classroom management, and balance. Part 2 appeared in the August 2021 issue and answered questions about repertoire and resources, voice building, organization/recruitment, and teaching during the pandemic. The third and final part of this series will address questions 8-12. Answers are listed in alphabetical order by last name.

**8. Dealing with first-year surprises:** How should I approach navigating school politics and traditions with other teachers, parents, and administration? I am a new teacher taking over an established program. How can I build trust and start off the year positively with students and parents?

**9. Relating the choir to other subjects/activities:** How can I make sure my choir is valued and supported by the school system (either the local system or the larger administration)?

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**12. Resources for teachers:** Where can I go for help?



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## QUESTION #8

### Dealing with first-year surprises:

How should I approach navigating school politics and traditions with other teachers, parents, and administration? I am a new teacher taking over an established program. How can I build trust and start off the year positively with students and parents?



CAROLYN GROSS

Choir students are fiercely loyal customers. They love their choir teacher, and if it's an established program, it can be challenging to take over. Start your job with the attitude that you are there to learn. You don't need to make waves and change everything that is already in place during your first year. If it's an established program, many events and traditions are probably working. Your respect for that tradition will go a long way with all stakeholders. Speak with respect and gratitude when you talk about the former teacher and their teaching. Acknowledge the tradition and success they have had before you, and then share your vision for the next level or new traditions you would like to begin to incorporate as you become the established teacher. This takes time. Be patient.



DEANNA JOSEPH

It's very important to have a faculty mentor—another teacher at the school whom you can consult about how to best handle situations that will inevitably arise. Don't be afraid to go to this person and ask advice—a lot. They know the intricacies of the school and will help you navigate things smoothly. I often liken taking over an established program to steering an airplane: if the pilot (you) tries to cut a sudden, sharp turn, everyone is going to die! In other words, make changes slowly...and, if it's an established program with lots and lots of tradition, very slowly. This will help to build trust all around

and will keep everyone (including you) happier. It takes years—not weeks or months—to build a program.

Realize that conflict is inevitable when dealing with large groups of people and learn how to manage it. A seasoned school administrator once told me to never put anything in an email that I didn't feel comfortable seeing on the front page of the *New York Times*. I've lived by that rule, and it has served me well. If you get an angry email from a parent or administrator, practice the pause; don't respond immediately. Sleep on it, consult with your faculty mentor on how best to handle the situation, and then resolve the conflict the next day, preferably in person or, second choice, over the phone. Ask questions and do a lot of listening so you understand where the other person is coming from. I've found that most conflicts arise from misunderstandings. Choose to believe that people are good and that everyone always wants what's best for the students.



JASON LEIGH

My usual advice to a newcomer is to get a sense for their building administration, their colleagues in both their department and their building, their support staff and, arguably most important, their community. I have to confess that I often scratch my head when I see a new teacher take a wrecking ball to traditions in a beloved program. These scenarios typically end the same way: Students, who are initially and understandably skeptical, feel as though they have been cheated. Parents, who want their child to have the same experience as previous children, dig their heels in, and administrators normally are the recipients of any e-mail that is far worse than the volume of e-mail received by the offending new teacher.

A far better, and more sensible, approach would seem to involve getting to know and respect current traditions and building culture. Show respect to what has been built and get a sense for why parents and students love it. Maybe it has been forty years of strictly Pop music. Maybe there is little attention paid to a school musical and a ton of effort poured into a talent show. Whatever circumstance you find yourself in, sudden change backed by inflexible indignation is a bad

look and will lead to a disaster. Show respect. Hear everyone out and, as the years turn over, gradually introduce your ideas and perhaps replace some of the older ones. When all of the invested parties see where your heart is, they will be more open to change.



**LULU MWANGI MUPFUMBU**

I have found that preparation and boundaries are key. Preparation, preparation, preparation! It's helpful to use a planner that allows you to make annual, monthly, weekly, and daily goals. A planner helps to schedule daily tasks by the hour with as much detail as possible and gives an opportunity to visually see and balance various aspects of life. It's a wonderful tool for time management. Score study, thorough knowledge of lesson content, and preparation of all teaching materials should be done ahead of time, and lesson plans should be as detailed as possible. It is important to keep it simple and impactful, rather than not to try too many new and complex things at the beginning. Less is more, when approached with intentionality and clear purpose.

We tend to perform our best when we are well prepared, and that can help free up mind space for dealing with other aspects of adapting to a new situation without compromising quality of work. As musicians we have to be particularly intentional about setting boundaries because many times our passion, talent, profession, and ministry are intertwined. This can make it difficult to know when to stop working/practicing because of our constant pursuit of excellence in musicianship and service to our students. Setting a stop time in the workday can help us not to constantly burn the candle at both ends. Including time for family, rest, recreation, and self-development as an educator/musician are key when it comes to growing the whole and balanced person. This is even more true of musicians who serve as educators during the week and minister in churches on the weekend.

### **Part 1 - Choral Journal August 2020**

**1. Setting Expectations:** How do I set realistic expectations for myself and my students during my first year of teaching? What should I be prioritizing?

**2. Classroom Management:** How can I best handle difficult classroom situations or difficult students? How do I establish and maintain authority while creating a safe space in my classroom?

**3. Balance:** How do I balance my personal life and the stress of a new job? How do I balance the roles of educator and musician? What boundaries should I establish between my work and home life?

### **Part 2 - Choral Journal August 2021**

**4. Repertoire and Resources:** Where can I find quality repertoire for the skill/size/balance of my choir? Where should I start when considering putting together a program?

**5. Voice building:** How do I build a strong choral sound in my choirs? What encouragement/advice/practice suggestions can I offer to students who might be struggling?

**6. Organization/Recruitment:** How do I stay organized when conducting multiple choirs? How do I maintain/recruit students to the choral program?

**7. Silver Linings and COVID-19:** What lessons have you learned from teaching during the pandemic? Is there anything you adapted that you will keep as we move forward?



# Inside the Choral Classroom: Advice for the First-Year Teacher (Part 3)



**JELANI WATKINS**

In order to help their community transition from one leader to the next, educators must prioritize highlighting existing and potential connections. These highlighted connections serve as tools educators need to navigate school politics and traditions with other teachers, parents, and administrators. In my first year of teaching, I took over a program that had been built by reputable educators with consecutive superior ratings from district large group performance evaluations, leadership positions in the governing body for music education in our district, and other accolades from previous ensemble trips. More importantly than all of that, my predecessor was loved and appreciated by several members in the ensemble, school community, and administration. I wanted to come in on my first day and lead an activity that would incite students to be excited for the year ahead with their new chorus teacher, but unfortunately, I was surprisingly met with more expressions pointing out the differences between me and their previous director. I did not expect them to see my work and suddenly drop all of their love for their previous director in one rehearsal, but I hoped to spark more joy than sadness.

As the year progressed, things certainly changed for the better. There were moments in the semester when students pointed out differences in my character and style of conducting that they loved and appreciated. However, upon deeper reflection, the greatest moments were not birthed out of appreciated differences that I offered. Students loved the moments when I successfully highlighted a connection between their previous traditions and teachers and the music experiences we were cultivating in our classroom. As we prepared for our large group performance evaluation, I invited my predecessor to watch and critique her old students. They appreciated hearing her observations and noticing the resemblance to the instruction they received with their new instructor. Furthermore, it fostered a sense of an overarching familial connection. In the end, they, along with parents and administrators, wanted the assurance that though things would undoubtedly change, the connections they could make in music would only grow deeper and would not be broken, tainted, lost, or replaced.

## QUESTION #9

**Relating the choir to other subjects/activities:**

**How can I make sure my choir is valued and supported by the school system (either the local system or the larger administration)?**



**JACKSON HILL**

Work to have your program seen and heard throughout your campus and local community. Things such as singing at school football games or taking groups on local “holiday tours” are great ways to start. I would also find ways to connect your program with local universities. This could involve collaborative performances, having a director come clinic your groups, or offering to let music education majors come work with one of your classes. In general, linking your program to institutions of higher learning will garner administrative support.

The phrase “outspoken parents” might conjure up less than friendly experiences from your memory; however, they can be amazing allies. On multiple occasions, I have emailed all my students’ families the morning after a concert with the sole purpose of expressing pride in their child’s work. A small portion has always responded sharing the positive impact choir has had on their child. Out of those who responded, several have always cc’d campus administration. This simple, five-minute task has helped me foster better relationships with my students’ families and proved to administration that the “stakeholders” of my campus actively support choir.



**JOSEPH KEMPER**

Outreach and service are great ways to demonstrate your program’s value. Singing at school events (e.g., sports events, graduation, faculty meetings) show that you are dedicated to enriching the wider community beyond your classroom and the concert space. Of course, at the core

of any successful and highly valued program is the high quality of music making and positive impacts made on individual students, but those are only temporary successes. My goal as a teacher is to engender a sense of service and purpose into my students that can be transferred to whatever vocation and career they pursue.

Additionally, collaborations with other departments are a great way to make cross-disciplinary connections and learning opportunities. Musical collaboration with other musical departments are powerful and important shared experiences. If your school has an ROTC program, at the start of the concert, you could have a group of students present the flag. If focusing a concert on a specific topic or era, you can bring in students from the theater or literature departments to read selections of related poetry during on-stage transitions. Collaborations with the visual arts department is a great way to incorporate student art in promotional materials, programs, and projections during the concert. With a little bit of planning, the sky is the limit in terms of connecting beyond music. Also, creating cross-curricular experiences like those listed above can also serve as powerful recruiting tools.

something special for social media, do it. If your assistant principal comes into your room looking panicked and asks why a wireless microphone has stopped working during an eighth-grade assembly, stop what you are doing and fix it. I do not want to make this seem manipulative and transactional. Any professional should do these things. But I am often surprised by how many do not.

I recognize that administrators are under intense pressure of a different sort. They are often confronting many difficult problems at once, and you and your program could be the bit of relief they experience in their day. When you need something like permission to hold a fundraiser, a signature to attend an ACDA conference, or permission to host a music event in your auditorium, your administration will not hesitate if you have their back. Involve them in your program dreams and goals. Do your best to run a solid program that brings value to the school and the district. I am not aware of an administrator who does not want to see their school and their district portrayed positively in the community or the press. Become a source of pride for your building. Your administration will be grateful, and you will have their support.



**JASON LEIGH**

Something that has always been a priority for me is establishing a great rapport with my administration. It is nearly impossible to run the kind of choral program that you want to run when you are at war with your building or district administration. This is also true of your colleagues in other academic subjects. As a policy, I always try to act in good faith with everyone. This can be difficult because you may have an administrator who is extremely difficult to deal with, and you will likely have several over the course of a career. There are a variety of reasons why an administrator can be challenging, but it is essential that you bring them on board. Your job will be a lot easier when they support you.

I recommend putting yourself and your choral program at the disposal of any part of the district. If your principal needs someone to sing at a board meeting, do it. If your principal says district public relations want



**JELANI WATKINS**

School board members and administrators, like all people, value what they know best and enjoy most. Therefore, the two ways to affect their perspective of your choir is to make sure that they are fully and comprehensively aware of your program and its offerings. The successes in your classroom should never be a part of “the best kept secret” of your residing city or school community. Your success must be shared and highlighted as much as possible over as many platforms as possible.

Musicians seek to find unique ways to connect with listeners. Similarly, music educators must work to do the same with their music programs. Toward the end of my first year of teaching, I took my middle school students on a tour of Atlanta. It was primarily funded by student fundraisers and the budget of our music program. This tour featured connections with rep-

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representatives from the Georgia State capitol building, Georgia State University, Morehouse College, and more. Administrators are less likely to cut a program that they know effectively and affordably connects students with reputable organizations that they otherwise may not have known. They are even less likely to consider negative changes if they are provided the opportunity to enjoy such ventures away from the work they have awaiting them in their office.

### QUESTION #10

#### Rehearsals:

How should I structure my rehearsals? How do I handle cell phones in the rehearsal space? How do I establish a seating chart?



CAROLYN GROSS

Keep your pacing fast but manageable and engaging for students. Never skip warm-ups. Your students are coming from another class and have to negotiate all the social situations in the hall. Use the warm-ups as a time to refocus your students, getting them to be in the space with you and ready to make music.

Take time during the rehearsal to get to know your students through the music or through a quick brain break activity. I prefer to have flexible seating in a choir. You have to arrange by voice part and height, of course. But then I like to switch students around to give them the opportunity to stand next to new people in the class and in new formations.



JOSEPH KEMPER

Some sort of routine is essential in any rehearsal. I always start with some kind of warm-up that engages the whole musician in body, mind, spirit and voice. Make sure that by the end of the warm-up each student has had their body

activated, mind challenged, emotions engaged, and voice set up for success. Beyond the warm-up, daily sight-singing and building of literacy skills is a must for a strong program. I love teaching sight-singing skills as it prepares students for a lifetime of collaborative music making. For the rest of rehearsal, going from whole, to part, to whole is also a very successful method that allows students opportunities to experience large chunks of music, followed by focusing on smaller details, and finally returning to a larger birds-eye perspective of the whole piece.

Cell phones and technology are powerful tools that can be used to great positive effect when used specifically and thoughtfully. When it comes to addressing cell phone use during rehearsal, I don't like physically taking student cell phones for liability purposes. One idea I used that was inspired by another teacher was to create a "phone penalty box" (like a penalty box in hockey). The box can be any sort of container. Each time a student has a "violation" (i.e., the teacher seeing a student using their phone during an unsanctioned time in rehearsal), there is a different "penalty" for each successive offense.

For the first offense, the student had to place their phone in the box and then collect it at the end of the class period. For the second offense, the student had to place their phone in the box for the remainder of class and sight-sing something for the entire class. For the third offense, the student had to put their phone in the box for the remainder of class and sight-sing for any class of my choosing. While this sounds very intense, students *rarely* had more than one offense. Additionally, before actually enacting any of the various violation penalties, I would discretely and briefly chat with the student after class to let them know I noticed them using their phone and that I didn't want to call them out in class, but that I would if it happened again. This allowed me to directly address the issue without resorting immediately to publicly calling them out.



## EMILY MERCADO

I structure my rehearsals in a pretty “typical” format of warm-up, sight-read, repertoire. We sight-read Bach Chorales every day, and because this is a non-auditioned choir with many different abilities, students get to choose the part they feel most comfortable singing in an appropriate octave for their voice. I would also classify the majority of my rehearsals as student-centered. For example, if we stop to work on a section of music I will ask the students something like, “What happened to our intonation at measure 35 and what can we do to fix that?” Most students who are in their first semester offer little input, but as they become more comfortable with this format they start to contribute to the rehearsal process.

In general, I try not have a long “list” of rules and policies beyond grading and attendance. I prefer to talk one on one with students when issues arise. Also, I don’t have specific “seating charts.” I adjust the formation based on the sound and needs of the choir for each piece we are singing. I recommend reading James Jordan’s chapter in *The School Choral Program* for ideas on choral formations (Holt & Jordan, 2008).



## LULU MWANGI MUPFUMBU

There are so many different models for rehearsals and so many amazing resources in publications, videos, webinars, etc. The make-up of each ensemble may call for different things. Something that has worked for me in my general choir class is to use the first minutes of class for students to follow classroom routines (gathering materials, getting seated) then warm-ups, sight-reading, and finally work on repertoire. In the rehearsal I try to vary teaching tools like peer-led activities, sectionals, individual, and whole ensemble work. For the advanced choir, I may use repertoire as warm-ups, sight-reading, and repertoire work for the day. It’s always good to start and end strong, allowing the singers to leave with musical joy in their hearts and have them looking forward to the next class. A sure tell is if they keep singing as they put their folders away and out into the hallway.

## QUESTION #11

### Assessment in the classroom:

How do I best establish a grading/assessment strategy? What are grading pitfalls I should avoid?



## JACKSON HILL

I teach 240 students every day, have limited access to technology, and do not have a co-director, so my advice for those who need efficiency to be a major factor is to decide how to take grades. When I conduct assessments, formal or informal, they are almost always small in scale and focus on a minimal number of skills. For example, if they had a quiz on singing the major scale, I would have half of the class sing up and down the scale twice. I would watch them for accuracy of hand signs and singing posture.

While one half of the class sings, the other half would observe and receive a separate grade based on their audience etiquette. When the first group is done, they would switch roles. Seeing them perform a short exercise in a group setting helps me quickly see how comfortable they are with certain skills without taking up a large portion of class time or needing to set up a recording space/ counting on the students to operate it correctly.

For an added layer, I will ask the observing students to comment on who the “role models” or standout students were in the group they watched. Even if they tend to just notice their friends, peer-to-peer recognition can be a great tool in building positive classroom culture.

Here is an example: “Altos, watch the sopranos sing m. 23-45. I need you to listen to how expressive they were with dynamics in that passage.” After they sing: “I saw several girls who were not only expressive with their voices, but their faces as well. Who did you see? Let’s watch them one more time.” I have been able to assess my students without isolating anyone, and they have already been validated, so they are less likely to let nerves impair their ability to succeed.



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I do give in-class written assessments, but I often either don't grade them, or give them a completion grade. Due to the number of students I teach, I create assignments that are very concise and formatted in a way that lets me easily check their responses. Sometimes this means the assignment only has five questions. Other times there might be more questions, but I know initially, I am only going to only check the ones that are most challenging. This will let me see who comprehends the materials and who needs additional help.

I used to try to offer lots of individual grades that were all thoroughly examined, but I quickly found myself being so overwhelmed that more effort was being put into grading assignments than preparing myself to teach.



DEANNA JOSEPH

Creating opportunities for holding individual students accountable and tracking their progress raises the level in ensemble music making settings. Evaluate students individually with short assignments on repertoire and sight reading that they either do for you in person or that they submit to you electronically with a recording. Avoid over-assigning work; short assignments given frequently will yield better results than occasional long assignments. The point is to get the students to practice skills; as the saying goes, a little bit a lot works better than a lot a little.



JOSEPH KEMPER

A music education professor once said to me, "You should already know they are going to pass the test before you even hand it to them." This has become a mantra for me in remembering the importance of informal assessments along the way to the bigger summative assessments. Giving a sight-singing test? Before doing so, make sure to provide many opportunities for students to practice during low-stakes activities. This can be done with technology, student pairs, small group assessment, etc.

Additionally, choirs often have higher student numbers than other kinds of classrooms. In my first year, I wanted to assess every student every day following a *detailed rubric* of several observable elements. I quickly found that I was going to end up spending more time trying to record every miniscule element of assessment than actually paying attention, teaching, and creating positive experiences for my students. Rather than trying to assess every tiny little thing, craft a smaller number of meaningful, interesting, and creative formative assessments.



JASON LEIGH

Grading and assessment, like so many things in education, comes down to fairness. As a middle school general music teacher, I am very conscious of the fact that students are obliged to take my class. I do not want a student to show up to my room with the idea that they not only dislike music, but they also have to worry about achieving a passing grade in a subject they may not know much about. Many students will miss a year of music because of the school district they attended the year prior or because they were pulled out of their "special" subject for resource. All of this is a way of saying that charity is on my mind in all things. The fairness is in creating a set of expectations in both the classroom management and in grading tools such as a rubric.

In my experience, if you have done your job well as a teacher and sparked some interest in what you are doing, most students will match your effort with enough effort that you are not thinking about grades and neither are they. For me, that is the sweet spot in general music: we are making music on a daily basis in a variety of ways, and the grades will take care of themselves.

Typically, the most stressful situation is a student who will not give effort regardless of how hard you are working, and that probably indicates something deeper and is typically resolved with a conversation. Bringing parents into the discussion can be very awkward and intimidating when you are new to teaching. Likely, what you end up finding on the other end of the phone is a reasonable parent who wants to help you. So I would

say the biggest pitfall in grading is setting up a difficult grading structure where there is little room for a student to maneuver. Always look for ways to help them try again. Find ways to reward any signs of music making, and stay away from grades as punishment. See if you can create an environment where your music class is a sanctuary for your students, even if they are not very interested in music at that moment. There will be countless examples in your career where you affected a student, and you will not even know until they tell you a random story ten years later about the day you made them hear something in a totally new way. You do not forget those moments.



**EMILY MERCADO**

Researchers have found a strong positive correlation between attendance and academic performance (Credé, Roch, & Kieszczynka, 2010; Gump, 2010). Therefore, while trends toward standards-based grading may be beneficial when evaluating student growth, in a large non-auditioned ensemble where some students have been singing for their entire lives, and some students are just learning about quarter notes, assessing a variety of individual student growth can be somewhat daunting. In the last fourteen years, I have experimented with various grading strategies, and I've found that as a choral music educator, grading strategies are context specific. Grading strategies will vary based on age, curricula, and classroom environment. My advice would be not to get hung up on one strategy—try out different systems based on your classroom context, and make your main goal to develop independent musicians.



**JELANI WATKINS**

My grading system supports my belief that students should find music making challenging and rigorous, but that the process of making music is more important than a single product made. My gradebook consists of five main elements listed in order of weight in the final grade: (1)

Projects that take multiple weeks to complete and are graded on components leading up to a final presentation, (2) Self-Assessments created to allow students to reflect on their role in the class-wide process of music making, (3) Minor Assessments that consist of part-checks, recordings, and musicianship skill assessments, (4) Short Writing Activities where students write about a specific element in the music-making process, and (5) Major Assessments that consist of final performances.

In my planning, I worked to foster an environment where students feel intrinsic motivation to perform in concerts and practice for singing tests, and I felt that most work inside of my classroom should be geared toward an ongoing process. Oftentimes, teachers place a large emphasis on a final product such as a concert performance; however, this is not the main reason students choose to engage in music. Performances only serve as one small way for students to connect with others, and I want my students to spend most of the time in the classroom discovering the several other ways that they can use music to connect to the rest of society and themselves.

## QUESTION #12

**Resources for teachers:**  
Where can I go for help?



**CAROLYN GROSS**

Find someone whose work you respect and ask them to be your mentor. There are so many wonderful, giving professionals in our community of choir conductors. Engage with them. The Facebook groups for choral teachers are also a good place for asking for help.



**JACKSON HILL**

When I need help with teaching, I find it most productive to go to other directors. Try to find someone in your area you can

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trust to give constructive feedback who also teaches a similar student population. If you're feeling brave enough, ask them to come watch you teach one of your classes and provide feedback afterward. If you know your kids aren't going to be the same in front of a stranger, record yourself teaching and ask for feedback that way. If you're not feeling self-assured enough to have them into your class, go to theirs.

For your other needs, develop your bond with your school's counselor, custodial staff, assistant principals, coaches, and front office secretary. These individuals can be the lifelines to your program's success without you even anticipating it. Take your kids to sing for them every once in a while, give them a card during the holiday season, find some way to grow those connections and they will eventually pay off.



DEANNA JOSEPH

There is a book that I highly recommend: *Habits of a Successful Choir Director* by Eric Wilkerson and Scott Rush. It's a fantastic resource—an essential how-to guide for school choral conductors. It includes everything from how to work with parents to classroom management to war-mups, music literacy, specific repertoire suggestions—and the material is presented in a clear and useful way. Every choral music educator should own a copy.



EMILY MERCADO

When I need help, where or who I go to depends on the problem. I have found other teachers/professors to be my most valuable resources—they are usually friends I can trust and have my best interests at heart. In addition, here are few resources that have helped me regarding creativity in the music classroom and repertoire:

Abramo, J. M. "Gifted Students with Disabilities: 'Twice Exceptionality' in the Music Classroom," *Music Educators Journal* 101, no. 4 (2015): 62-69.

Allsup, R. E. "Popular Music and Classical Musicians: Strategies and Perspectives," *Music Educators Journal* 97, no. 3 (2011): 30-34.

Garrett, M. L. "Teaching for Transfer: Developing Critical Thinking Skills with Adolescent Singers," *Choral Journal* 54 no. 10 (2014): 25-41.

Holt, M., and J. Jordan, eds. *The School Choral Program, Philosophy, Planning, Organizing, and Teaching*. Chicago: GIA, 2008. Suggested Chapters Include: Chapter 7: A Song Worth Singing—Selecting Choral Literature at All Levels by Paul Head; Chapter 16: The Middle School Choral Program by Judy Bowers

Rayl, D. C., and Z. M. Highben. "Masters in Miniature: Repertoire by Great Composers for Smaller Choirs," *Choral Journal* 55, no. 8 (2015): 9-20.

Tobias, Campbell, and Greco. "Bringing Curriculum to Life: Enacting Project Based Learning in Music Programs," *Music Educators Journal* 102, no. 2 (2015): 39-47.

Choral Net - <https://choralnet.org/>



LULU MWANGI MUPFUMBU

Your fellow music teachers, your mentors/professors, the *Choral Journal*, and any choral books/websites you have at your disposal are a great place to start. In the age of social media, one of the things we are blessed to have is the numerous online communities such as Facebook groups for music educators, conductors, singers, and other variations/combinations. These groups have been so useful, especially in the trenches of the pandemic and the need for educators to come together and share their knowledge base, and in many cases create a means of survival for themselves, their students, and music education at large. These groups have expert advice from fellow music educators who are there to work together to help each other succeed. 