

Music Educators Journal

<http://mej.sagepub.com/>

For Your Library

Music Educators Journal 2011 97: 16
DOI: 10.1177/0027432111399867

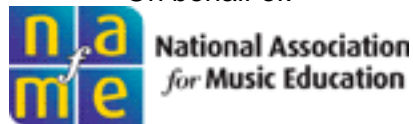
The online version of this article can be found at:
<http://mej.sagepub.com/content/97/3/16.citation>

Published by:



<http://www.sagepublications.com>

On behalf of:



[National Association for Music Education](http://www.nafme.org)

Additional services and information for *Music Educators Journal* can be found at:

Email Alerts: <http://mej.sagepub.com/cgi/alerts>

Subscriptions: <http://mej.sagepub.com/subscriptions>

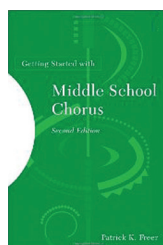
Reprints: <http://www.sagepub.com/journalsReprints.nav>

Permissions: <http://www.sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav>

>> [Version of Record](#) - Mar 23, 2011

[What is This?](#)

For Your Library



Getting Started with Middle School Chorus, 2nd ed.

by Patrick K. Freer.
Lanham, MD: MENC/
Rowman & Littlefield
Education, 2009; www
.rowmaneducation.com

In his book, *Getting Started with Middle School Chorus* (2nd ed.), Patrick Freer targets new middle school choir directors and offers a wide array of practical advice in dealing with the various challenges that often emerge when working with this specific age-group. Topics include considerations for scheduling, concert programming, working with the adolescent singer, recruitment, music selection, budget development, performances, rehearsal planning, and rehearsal strategies.

For those readers who enjoyed the first edition, the new edition of *Getting Started with Middle School Chorus* offers even richer information, with additional recommendations on rehearsal planning, music selection, and a new chapter focused on characteristics of the young adolescent.

While Freer admits this book does not answer every question a new middle school choir director might have, his book does provide practical solutions and recommendations for the common problems that a successful and experienced middle school choir director would likely encounter. This book is a solid addition to the choral methods literature, as few books specifically deal with the unique challenges of the middle school choir student. Freer's contribution is unique in that it not only offers advice on dealing with the adolescent singer, but it also educates the reader on how adolescents see and respond to their peers and teachers. With

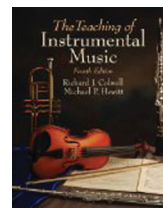
the information gleaned from Freer's book, novice middle school choir directors will be better prepared to experience successful interactions with young adolescents and well equipped to plan for and address the singers' vocal and musical needs.

Getting Started with Middle School Chorus is a quick read, and the information presented is very reader friendly. Freer avoids complicated academic rhetoric that so many method books contain; this is especially helpful to new choir directors who are short on time and need an easily comprehensible reference or guide. I think it would have been helpful for Freer to include a chapter on how middle school choir directors might incorporate creative music components into the rehearsal setting. The specific National Standards concerning improvisation (Standard 3) and composition (Standard 4) remain absent in many middle school choir rehearsals across the United States. Music teachers are still in need of practical solutions for incorporating innovative composition and improvisation activities; but unfortunately, this book does not broach the subject. Perhaps in the next edition, we will see this topic addressed.

Although no book can address all the issues new middle school choir directors may face, *Getting Started with Middle School Chorus* is a great place for teachers to begin. Freer also provides an extensive list of suggested resources beginning on page 115 that help address any lingering questions or concerns teachers might still have. As Freer wrote, "We don't really teach choral music. We teach students" (p. 114). His book encapsulates that belief and is a recommended read for new middle school choir directors.

—**Ryan Fisher**

Assistant professor of
choral music education,
University of Central Arkansas,
Conway; and
Director, Central Arkansas
Children's Choir;
rfisher@uca.edu



The Teaching of Instrumental Music, 4th ed.

by Richard J. Colwell
and Michael P. Hewitt.
Upper Saddle River,
NJ: Pearson Higher Education, 2011;
www.pearsonhighered.com

Richard Colwell and Michael Hewitt provide practical and thoughtful methodology based on long careers in the music education profession. *The Teaching of Instrumental Music* is equally valuable to novice teachers as to veterans needing refreshing advice. This fourth edition appears forty-two years after the first publication. The most recent changes include the addition of chapters titled "Special Learners," "Physiology of Instrumental Music," and "Technology." Sections focusing on motivation, recruiting, and scheduling have been expanded, and discussion questions have been added at the end of each chapter. In addition to fingering charts and diagrams, photographs of proper playing posture, embouchure, and hand position are included for each instrument.

The authors explore the many aspects of instrumental music education with a wide lens. A broad overview of many topics provides a taste of practical and philosophical underpinnings while guiding the reader toward additional resources. The authors realize that a little knowledge can be quite dangerous and suggest many print and Internet resources for additional information on each topic. The text is easily read, and helpful explanations are provided for similar or interchangeable terms that are often confusing to new teachers navigating the profession. Some advice will even be humorous to veteran educators, such as this warning from the marching band chapter: "Do not attempt to design the drill for your first show. Instead, sell your car or nephew to pay someone who knows what he or she is doing" (p. 381).

Although the book focuses on all aspects of instrumental music education, the majority of content favors band instruments and band ensembles. This focus does not seem to be due to any favoritism by the authors but is simply for the reality of exploring all aspects of each instrument in the band and orchestra. Each instrument has its own chapter that provides helpful tips and instructions for launching beginners and teaching intermediate players. A list of common problems and solutions accompanies each chapter to assist with troubleshooting. Inexperienced teachers, however, might be better served by using the multitude of existing fingering charts in other resources. In this textbook, some fingering charts, such as horn and trombone, do not provide enough information to enable band directors who are unfamiliar with these instruments to provide the best options for their students.

This book will serve as a valuable methods class resource as well as a guide and reference for student teachers and their mentors. Veteran teachers may find the instrument-specific chapters to be the most valuable resource, and the chapters on rehearsal techniques can provide a basis for new ideas. Preservice and newer teachers will find the general practical and philosophical chapters useful as food for thought at the start of their careers. The authors reflect current trends in instrumental music education while dispensing useful information for practitioners based on successful teaching experiences.

—**Matthew R. Koperniak**
*Director of bands,
 Riverwatch Middle School,
 Suwanee, Georgia;
 koperniak@gmail.com*



**Singin', Sweatin',
 and Storytime:
 Literature-Based
 Movement and
 Music for the
 Young Child**

by Rebecca E. Hamik
 and Catherine M. Wilson. Lanham, MD:
 MENC/Rowman & Littlefield Education, 2009;
 www.rowmaneducation.com

In *Singin', Sweatin', and Storytime*, Rebecca E. Hamik and Catherine M. Wilson present complementary perspectives for implementing literature-based music and movement activities. This elaborate resource is organized into six units, with each unit comprising various lessons that begin with the relevant National Standards for Physical and Music Education. Each lesson further includes the necessary equipment, a lesson focus, and related literature to be read aloud prior to each lesson. This specific literary connection is incredibly important for engaging young children and will make each lesson more meaningful for them. The book also includes a CD with related recordings.

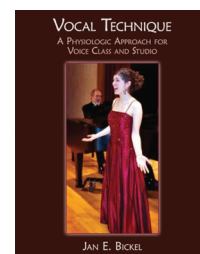
The unit that I found most useful was the first, “My Body and Melodic Voice.” Included are lessons such as “Slow, Fast, Large and Presto”; “Body Control and Dynamics”; and “Body Shapes and Melody Shapes.” For example, lesson 4, “Body Control and Dynamics,” describes how teachers should introduce the terms *forte* and *piano* and define the terms as loud and soft through associating different animals with specific dynamics (p. 9). After reading the children’s book *Cross-Country Cat*, children are encouraged to skate around the classroom on paper plates (not an entirely original idea) and demonstrate their understanding of soft and loud while the teacher plays the song “Forte/Piano.” For a young child, gaining control over the body and acquiring awareness of self and space are important developmental concepts that are often challenging to teach for educators and parents alike, and this unit directly addresses those needs with a creative, engaging approach.

The authors emphasize in their introduction that many of the lessons would be “more productive to team-teach so that two adults can demonstrate for the students a particular skill in music or in PE [physical education]” (p. ix). While this may be an ideal context for implementing music and movement activities with young children, it is not realistic for the many teachers who are in charge of a classroom of twenty or more youngsters on their own. I have too often seen

teacher candidates struggle with writing and implementing lessons and had hoped that each of the lessons in this book would have included specific learning objectives and stronger instruments for assessing children’s learning.

Still, the strength of this book lies in the flexibility of the lessons presented, the range of topics, and the inclusion of specific directions, guidelines, and musical notation. I view this book as a valuable resource that will serve as a wonderful reference for moments when I am seeking new ideas to share with colleagues, and lessons to introduce to my youngest musical learners.

—**Rekha S. Rajan**
*Assistant professor and
 graduate programs coordinator,
 early childhood education,
 National-Louis University
 Chicago, Illinois;
 Rekha.rajan@nl.edu*



**Vocal
 Technique:
 A Physiologic
 Approach for
 Voice Class
 and Studio**

by Jan E. Bickel.
 San Diego, CA: Plural Publishing, 2008;
 www.pluralpublishing.com

From more than thirty years of combined experience as a professor of vocal studies, a choral director, and a professional singer, Jan Bickel has developed an essential reference in her book *Vocal Technique: A Physiologic Approach for Voice Class and Studio*. This textbook is a user-friendly guide to the basics of vocal pedagogy and covers a wide range of topics, including physiology, breath management, tone quality, production, and even how to maintain a healthy lifestyle to sustain your instrument. Within the nine chapters, Bickel includes effective graphics and relevant exercises, and she ends each chapter with a concise summary, a list of important terms, and several additional sources for further reference.

A welcome aspect of this text is Bickel’s inclusion of an often-neglected

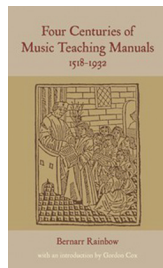
facet of vocal health and training. In chapter 8, “Health Concerns for Singers,” she discusses hydration, nutritional needs, pollution, and many other factors potentially affecting a singer’s vocal health. Another essential section of her book for the novice singer is chapter 2, “Anatomy of the Singer’s Instrument: Design and Function.” This section is extremely comprehensive and well explained, with easy-to-understand figures of the entire physiological mechanism involved in singing.

Despite Bickel’s seemingly thorough text, chapter 6, “Articulation for Singers (The International Alphabet)” is a bit lacking in content. Although Bickel provides charts on both vowel and consonant production in English and Italian, she neglects to cover two other major languages common in vocal music, German and French. Even though this textbook does not assume the role of a stand-alone vocal reference, and Bickel even enlists readers to “go out and read more books and articles on the subjects contained in this book” (p. vii), overlooking two of the commonly used languages in singing in a discussion of the International Phonetic Alphabet creates a hole in any vocal technique textbook.

It is clear that Bickel has combined her knowledge of vocal pedagogy with the practical needs of her students and all beginning singers. The title, *Vocal Technique: A Physiologic Approach for Voice Class and Studio*, implies its intended application in an undergraduate curriculum. However, its use to a secondary beginning choral student or a university choral methods preservice educator is just as relevant.

Although this textbook should not be the only written source of information on vocal technique for students, it is a valuable reference that all aspiring singer with limited formal training should add to their libraries.

—**Naomi Copeland**
Associate professor,
music education,
Chicago State University;
Chicago, Illinois;
ncopelan@csu.edu



Four Centuries of Music Teaching Manuals, 1518–1932

by Bernarr Rainbow.
Rochester, NY: Boydell & Brewer, 2009; <http://www.boydellandbrewer.com>

Primary sources are of critical importance to the understanding of history, and music education is no exception. Many music educators have enjoyed Bernarr Rainbow’s series *Classic Texts in Music Education* for years. Each volume consists of a new introduction, a complete facsimile of the classic text, and a side-by-side translation when the text is not in English. Economic reasons and the death of Dr. Rainbow in 1998 seem to have slowed or stopped the publication of this series. Fortunately, Rainbow had prepared introductions for many more texts, each of which is contained in the new volume *Four Centuries of Music Teaching Manuals, 1518–1932*.

This edition represents a substantial revision to the version published in 1992 under the title *Some Notable Music Manuals: Forty Representative Texts, 1518–1932*. This edition contains five additional texts and corrects or amends information where new scholarship is available, such as the uncovering of much new information regarding the relationship and falling out between early music appreciation advocates Mary Langdale and Stewart Macpherson in the early twentieth century.

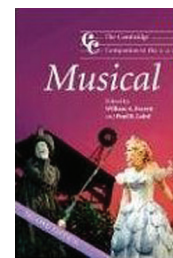
Throughout the book, Rainbow’s introductions breathe new life into the texts, the authors, their times, and their continued significance to the music education profession. For instance, when discussing Pierre Galin, he connects the child-centered vision of learning presented in 1818 with Piaget’s work in the twentieth century. He also connects present-day educators with calls for reform that remain unanswered: “For what confronts us here is not just an historical document, but a challenge to

existing practice as valid today as when it was first written” (p. 127). Rainbow then goes on to present a valuable biography of Galin, his practical efforts to implement his method, and the efforts of others to continue teaching using Galin’s ideas.

Although this is a wonderful volume, prospective buyers should note that there are virtually no musical examples or images from these classic texts. I had hoped to see a representative page of musical examples from each text, but virtually every text is introduced with only a reproduction of the title page from each book, usually entirely text. This may be because the introductions were intended to accompany complete facsimiles, but it does seem a missed opportunity to bring alive the richness of these manuals. Rainbow also focuses entirely on Europe: no William Billings, no Lowell Mason.

With the advent of digital libraries made public through the efforts of Google and the Internet Archive, it may well be the case that many of these classic texts will become freely available. If and when that happens, this wonderful volume will be standing by to help contextualize and introduce four hundred years of music educational thought. For now, the volume remains a rich document by a wonderful scholar, connecting our own teaching efforts with centuries of valuable thought and practice.

—**Matthew D. Thibeault**
Assistant professor of music education,
University of Illinois
at Urbana–Champaign;
mdtibib@illinois.edu



The Cambridge Companion to the Musical, 2nd ed.

edited by William A. Everett and Paul R. Laird. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008; www.cambridge.org

In one of the most recent installments in the popular Cambridge Companion series, editors William Everett and Paul Laird, along with host of contributors, have created a revised edition to the 2002 original publication of *The Cambridge Companion to the Musical*. The volume begins with the history and development of the musical genre from its precursors in the eighteenth century to its early days at the turn of the twentieth. The book then moves chronologically through the genre, focusing especially on the 1940s to 1950s, the rock musicals of the sixties and seventies, and then the megamusicals of the eighties and nineties. Fortunately, the writers do not limit themselves to American theatre only, but discuss British musical theatre as well.

As one would expect from the Cambridge series, this volume is comprehensive in its treatment of the most familiar aspects of the musical's history, but also devotes chapters to the lesser-known facets, including non-English-language musical theatre in America as well as African American theatre. The discussions of subgenres in each period are widely encompassing and often include opera, operetta, vaudeville, film adaptations, and more. The book concludes with a chapter speculating on the future of musical theatre and a chapter offering a detailed look at staging a musical in the twenty-first century.

In addition to the well-researched text, notes, and bibliography, the volume also includes some illustrations of posters, stage photos, and playbills. The number of illustrations, however, seems minimal in comparison with the bulk of the book, and a greater number of these would strengthen the volume and satisfy the reader's visual curiosity. Overall, however, this book is another success for this series and a must-have for librarians and music educators.

—**Kellie Brown**
Chair, Music Department,
Milligan College,
Milligan College, Tennessee;
KBrown@milligan.edu



the 11th
Mountain Lake Colloquium
 for Teachers of General Music Methods

May 15-18, 2011 Mountain Lake, Virginia

Changing Perspectives, Evolving Practices
 Ideas Entertained, Embraced, and Imagined

Featured Guest Speaker: Virginia Richardson
 Guest Participants: Janet Barrett, Mark Campbell,
 Linda Richardson, Carol Scott-Kassner,
 Kathy Robinson, Kim McCord, and many more!



Contact Nancy Boone Allsbrook for registration information:
www.mtnlake.net or nboone@mtsu.edu

cosponsored by
 Middle Tennessee State University,
 Indiana University, and MENC



The fifth *Mountain Lake Reader* is available for purchase.

MENC The National Association for
MUSIC MENC is an official
 EDUCATION cosponsor of this event

eeo/aa

**"An invitation to join the conversation
 on the study and practice of music teaching"**

How Do Books Get Reviewed in "For Your Library"?

Do you have a recently published book on music education or music history or a related topic that would be of interest to music teachers? Send a copy for consideration for review to Caroline Arlington, MENC, 1806 Robert Fulton Drive, Reston, VA 20191. (Review copies music be submitted to MENC without charge. Copies of books chosen for review are given to reviewers and cannot be returned.) Be sure to include the publisher's name, city, and state, as well as the Web address.

For information on how MENC members can review books for *Music Educators Journal*, go to www.menc.org and click "Resources" on the top banner, then "Periodicals" on the left-hand side of the page. Find the "Book Review Guidelines" under *Music Educators Journal*.