

Dear Singers:

Congratulations on your selection to the OAKE National Children's Choir! You are part of a very special group of talented singers. It's a great honor to be selected and I look forward to working with you in Phoenix!☺

As a group of singers coming from all over the country, we only have a few days to put together a polished choir. It will be exciting, but hard work. In order to make the process easier, you need to prepare your music before our first rehearsal. The rehearsal CD contains tracks for voice parts, pronunciations, and full performances for most of the songs. Listen to your CD to help you learn the notes, rhythms, language and style of each song. Use your track listing to see what's on each track. The parts are not announced on the CD.

Below I've listed additional instructions for each piece. Please read over everything carefully and then **mark the details in your music with a pencil**. This process will help us learn the music quicker when we come together.

Nymphs and Shepherds is a very old song about celebrating the arrival of spring. It's a perfect piece for our concert in March 2012☺. The song calls on all the nymphs and shepherds to come dance, sing and welcome spring.

- Breathe after commas in the text (generally).
- m. 25 has some tricky fast notes
- m. 36-38 practice the notes on the word "music" with light doo's
- m. 49-51 practice the notes on the word "express" the same way
- Sing your words very proper - no American r's. Sing round tones.
- Be careful not to spread the vowel sound in "away."
- There are a few different words not usually found in songs such as "nymphs and "whilst." Be sure to fully pronounce them when you sing.
- There are several versions of this song on Youtube you can listen too.

Mendelssohn's Prayer for Peace is one of the beautiful melodies by the composer Felix Mendelssohn. You can read about the composer and this song on the inside front cover of your score.

- The German is not too hard to learn but will take some practice. Make sure you listen to the native German speaker on the CD.
- Learn the notes first, then the German. Speak the German with tall vowels and crisp consonants.
- Sing smooth legato lines.
- Everyone will sing the melody at the beginning.
- P. 7 - Sopranos sing Part 1 and Altos sing the melody - Part II
- *The CD concert performance is sung by Michigan State University Children's Choir.*

Ah Summer and Oh, Spring are too delightful gems not performed much. They are pieces you will remember though. They are not difficult but make sure you know YOUR part well. **Oh Spring** will be sung quite fast after we've learned it well. Take time to learn it SLOWY so it sounds great when we come together. **Ah Summer** has a tricky 5/4 section. Tap the beat as you practice so you get the timing right. *The CD concert performance is sung by the St. Mary's Children's Choir of Canada.*

Campfire Song was written by Lajos Bárdos, one of Hungary's most famous composers. The version you will sing has not been performed very often in English. You will probably be the first honor choir to sing this version.

- This is a very gentle, quiet sounding piece. Imagine sitting around the campfire while singing this song.
- The bimm, bamm, bomm represent bells ringing in the countryside. Sing them like bihm, bahm, boh and go straight to the "m" sound of each syllable. The recording you will hear is not always consistent though.
- *The CD concert performance is sung by the Training Choir of the American Boychoir School.*

Going Down to Cairo is a well known play-party from Illinois. A play party is a song accompanied by simple dance moves. We may even have some choir members dancing to this song when we perform it.

- Sing this song light and bouncy as if you were dancing when singing it.
- Make sure to pronounce "Cairo" as Kay-roh.
- Sing two measure phrases when possible such as "Going down to Cairo---goodbye and a bye-bye."
- m. 48 begin softly and crescendo to the end

Torah Orah is a Hebrew folk song accompanied by clarinet and tambourine. It's a fun song to sing and fairly easy to learn because the main theme repeats a lot.

- Learn the pronunciation from your CD.
- m. 62 – 71 Begin slowly and gradually speed up.
- Try to sing four measure phrases and stagger your breathing.
- p. 9 2nd Ending - Slow down a bit here and hold notes on the fermatas.
- m. 98 – 99 On the last note of the piece, we'll add a sforzando (a strong accent) followed by a crescendo.
- *The CD concert performance is sung by the Stillwater Boys Choir.*

Rejoice and Sing is a song that sends a wonderful message of joy and singing. We'll end the concert with this song.

- This piece needs to be sung with lots of spirit – but be careful not to push the sound.
- Listen to the CD for the style of the piece – gospel swing.
- We will do the repeats on p. 10. Practice the alto rhythm on this page. It's tricky!
- We will hold the last chord of the song and Soprano 2 should sing a "d" to complete the chord.
- *The CD concert performance is sung by the Training Choir of the American Boychoir School.*

Good Luck and have fun working on the music.

I look forward to meeting you soon. ☺

Fred Meads
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