

Unit Title		Time Required	
Lesson Plan Title:	Bella Ciao: Meaning, Melody, and Diction	Grade:	7th Grade Choir
Teacher:	Grace Alai	# of Students per group	20-30
Classroom Set-Up:			
Students are seated according to their section: sopranos on left, baritones in the middle, altos on right. The teacher is at the front.			
Key Musical Learning Goals			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Understanding melody vs. harmony vs. accompaniment</li> <li>- Understanding the meaning of Italian words</li> <li>- Understanding Italian diction</li> <li>- Making artistic choices</li> </ul>			
National Music Standards			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Musicians evaluate and refine their work through openness to new ideas, persistence, and the application of appropriate criteria. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>MU:Cr3.1.E.8a:</b> Evaluate and refine draft compositions and improvisations based on knowledge, skill, and collaboratively-developed criteria.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Performers make interpretive decisions based on their understanding of context and expressive intent. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>MU:Pr4.3.E.1a:</b> Demonstrate an understanding of context in a varied repertoire of music through prepared and improvised performances.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>			
MUSICAL GOALS			
Knowledge/Skills			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Understanding melody vs. harmony vs. accompaniment</li> <li>- Learning measures 23 to 29 of Bella Ciao</li> </ul>			
Social, Cultural, Historical Understandings			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Students will understand how to sing the music based on what the song means and who wrote the song.</li> <li>- Song is from World War II</li> </ul>			
Artistic Expression (creative individual choices by means of interpretation, exploration/research, improvisation)			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Turning the meaning of the song into artistic choices</li> </ul>			
Assessment used:			
Personal assessment through questions and through ensemble work and challenges (hearing others around you and knowing when something you are doing is incorrect).			
Learning Tasks: (sequence of lesson plan)			
Time	Materials	Activity	Accommodations (504/IEP)
2:00		<p>*If words are written on board, ask them to look at it for 10 seconds,</p> <p><b>Now, close your eyes. Repeat after me:</b></p>	<i>The room overall has dimmer, warm lighting which I think is great for people with sensory overload.</i>

<p>3:00</p>		<p><i>E seppellire sulla montagna sotto l'ombra di un bel fior. O bella ciao.</i></p> <p>Listen to your neighbor!</p> <p>If students start looking at their paper, tell them to listen and repeat without looking, just aurally.</p> <p>Do this multiple times, with comments like “more italiano!” and “more consonant” or “more vowel”</p> <hr/> <p><b>I read it in a wimpy, tired voice:</b></p> <p><i>E seppellire sulla montagna sotto l'ombra di un bel fior. O bella ciao.</i></p> <p><b>I ask the students:</b> <i>What does this translate to?</i></p> <p>Tease them a little, <i>you should know what you're singing! It's in the music on the very front!</i></p> <p>It translates to:</p> <p><i>Bury me in the mountain under the shade of a beautiful flower. Goodbye, beautiful!</i></p> <p><b>What does that mean?</b> <i>I know Mrs. Rankin has talked to you about the meaning of this piece... and it's right on the front of your music!</i> It means <i>I would rather be not alive than to not have freedom.</i> The Italians were fighting, this song is a war cry!</p> <p><b>So how should we say these lines?</b> <i>Passion, drama</i></p> <hr/> <p><b>Now open up to page 6, we are at measure 22. Speak your lines in rhythm.</b></p>	<p>Have the lyrics written on the board if possible (not sure if Mrs. Rankin will already have the board filled).</p> <p><i>Overall, I don't know what students have 504/IEP so it is difficult to know exactly who to accommodate for and how.</i></p>
<p>5:00</p>	<p>“Bella Ciao” page 6; piano</p>		

Walk around to hear different sections and individuals while they do this.

Pause them if their rhythm, diction, or intention needs work.

“I’m not convinced...”

“Give it a grade.”

**Okay see the consonants? Get rid of them. Speak only on vowels.**

Demonstrate.

Imagine if we talked like that? Or if we talked with just consonants.

Some days when I was just not feeling it in choir I would make a deal with the person next to me to sing all the vowels if I covered all the consonants.

Make the vowels less “American”

Listen to everyone but yourself

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**If you have the melody, sing your line. If you have the accompaniment, clap your line.**

Give no other instruction, see how they do. If other parts start singing, or if a part does not sing, pause and give the instruction again.

Stress the importance of expression in the text, “I’m not convinced...”

**Do the opposite.**

***If there is time:* If you have the bass line, sing your line.**

**Where else can you hear the bass line?**

*In the left hand of the piano.*

If you didn’t know, the piano is played with both hands, with the right hand almost always having the higher notes and the left hand almost always having the lower notes. So when people say “the left hand of the piano” they are typically referring to the lower notes, which is often the bass line.

4:00

1:00		<p><i>Otherwise: Baritones you'll get your solo in the next section, don't worry.</i></p> <hr/> <p><b>Sing m. 21-29</b>  Listen to everyone but yourself  "Give it a grade."</p>	
Teacher Notes/Reflective Praxis:		Next Steps:	
<p>This was a nerve-wracking experience since it was my first time in front of a choir. I did my best to not let my anxiety show by putting on a confident demeanor; it went well for a while until I felt myself losing steam. What made me the most anxious was not having my lesson plan in front of me with all of my carefully thought out points and steps. I jumped too many steps and also found it hard to listen to the choir while trying to sing along with them and conduct. Something was always sacrificed, often the conducting or the singing. I really wanted to find a way to have my lesson plan in front of me rather than on the piano, but I noticed that in the room there was no music stand for me to use so I just tried to go without my lesson plan, hoping I knew it well enough in my mind. I intended to walk around the room more but was really afraid to not have my music in front of me. I intended to have the ensemble assess themselves often, but I often got lost in my own thoughts and forgot to ask them questions that lead to self-assessment.</p>		<p>Next time I will make sure I have a stand in front of me, even if it means I need to borrow one from the band room upstairs. I will also remember to conduct more in order to keep the ensemble more together. I will also try to have the music I am teaching close to memorized so that I can walk around the room more. Having recorded accompaniment for them to sing along with seems like a good option to try next time as well. I should remember to leave time for them to assess themselves! Work on smaller sections at a time, maybe even two measures, and conduct them into it.</p>	