**MUS721**

**Unit Study Lesson Plan**

***“Sicut Cervus” –* Giovanni Pierluigi Da Palestrina (ca. 1525-1594)**

**Pretest**

1. Name as many periods in history as you can.
2. Describe what you know about music during those time periods.
3. Match the following terms with their definitions:
   1. Monophony a. Loudness and softness, crescendo and decrescendo
   2. Homophony b. a single unaccompanied melodic line, as in Gregorian chant
   3. Counterpoint c. the speed of a piece of music
   4. Polyphony d. multiple lines of music, each maintaining independence & contrasted

with monophony and counterpoint

* 1. Motet e. sound
  2. Tone f. genre of composition set to sacred Latin text & scored in imitative style
  3. Dynamics g. combination of multiple melodic lines
  4. Tempo h. vertical & chordal texture of music

**South Dakota Music Standards Met Through This Unit**

* + - 1. Students will use the performance of music as a means for

creative expression and communication.

* + - 1. Students will listen to, analyze, and evaluate music.
      2. Students will understand music’s relationship to society,

the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts, history, and culture.

**Historical and Analytical Notes**

**Historical Notes**

***The Composition:***

1. This piece is a motet written in imitative polyphonic style by Giovanni Pierluigi of Palestrina, Italy during the Renaissance period.
2. The text is originally Latin and is taken from Psalm 42:1-3. Translated: As a deer longs for springs of water, so longs my soul for thee, O God. Most commonly, this piece is sung with the prima parts; however, the secunda are also easy to find.
3. The text for the secunda parts is a continuation of Psalm 42: My soul has thirsted for the strong living God: when shall I come and appear before the face of God? (Sitivit animea mea ad Deum fortem vivum: quando veniam et apparebo ante faciem Dei?. My tears have been to me bread day and night, while it is said to me daily: where is your God? (Fuerunt mihi lacrymae meae panes die ac nocte, dum dicitur mihi quotidie: ubi est Deus tuus?) See Score #2 for secunda

***The Composer:***

1. Giovanni Pierluigi, (ca. 1525-1594) was given the name most call him as Palestrina during his life and after.
2. Palestrina is also the name of a town near Rome where he is thought to have been born. Palestrina’s influence and reputation during the latter part of the 16th century were incredible.
3. Not only did he hold leading musical positions in Rome’s most notable sacred institutions, but he also served during the Council of Trent and was considered to be its musical figurehead and the musical leader of the Counter-Reformation.
4. He was thought to be the savior of Catholic church music and today he is the best-known and most critically acclaimed composer of the Renaissance period.

***The Historical Style Period:***

1. Renaissance (ca. 1400-1600).
2. Music of the Renaissance was unmetered, with stress occurring only through the emphasis on particular syllables in important words.
3. The bar line is generally not used; however, editors of current editions often insert regularly spaced bar lines to guide the eye and keep singers together.
4. Tempo is determined by the syllabic setting of the text and mood of the music.
5. Dynamics are related to and dependent upon any changes of mood in the text. Dynamic levels should always remain moderate, never extreme, as climaxes seldom occur.
6. Tone quality – singing in the early church was limited to the voices of men and boys. Tone should be light and clear, with a minimum amount of vibrato if any.
7. Texture was primarily contrapuntal, meaning vocal lines were conceived as horizontal in nature. Sacred music of the Renaissance sounds remote and restrained.
8. Music possesses very subtle points of harmonic arrival.
9. Word painting in the music was common.

‘For example – leaps in the melody were often used to depict joy, while the voices might ascend on such words as “heaven” and descend on words such as “earth.” To depict grief and sadness, a diminished or augmented triad was often used, and dissonance was employed to represent such words as “sadness” and “pain.”’ (“Choral Music – History, Style, and Performance Practice” by Robert L. Garretson)

***Performance and Interpretive Aspects of the Piece:***

1. **Sicut Cervus** is a motet which represents imitative polyphony, with balanced melodic shapes, consistently prepared and resolved dissonances, and structural symmetry.
2. Melodies and rhythms are not varied for expressive purposes and textures do not alternate phrases of imitative polyphony with passages of homophony.

‘Palestrina’s motets are modeled after the pervasive point-of-imitation style…melodies are characterized by wide melodic intervals, with stepwise motion in the opposite direction following any leap of a third or a fourth; rhythms are within a narrow range of durational values, with a preponderance of half and quarter notes (in today’s transcriptions); and harmonies are logically ordered with buildup of tension followed by inevitable resolution. The text is divided into three short phrases – each given equal treatment imitatively.’ (“Choral Repertoire” by Dennis Shrock)

**\*\*\*It is crucial to avoid metrical stress, as this will lessen the flow of the vocal lines and the natural expression written within them. Read the text over and over to find the natural flow of the text in determining the feel or pulse of the piece. Careful attention to the moving lines so that they will be clear. When syllables are set to different notes of longer duration, the tempo may be pushed forward slightly. Careful analysis of the poetic text will help in determining the tempo.**

**Points of imitation should be emphasized, the entrances definite and precise but without accents. Entering parts should be brought out but never overshadow the other contrapuntal lines. Motets of the Renaissance should be of quiet reflection.\*\*\***

**Analytical Notes**

***Rhythm:***

1. Rather than using the term ‘rhythm’ for this motet, it is better to think about the flow or pulse of the piece.
2. This piece has three sections of imitation.
   1. The first two sections begin with the text sustained and the pulse being the same in the beginning of each section among all four voice parts.
   2. The third section has a pulse similar to the first and second section; however the pulse feels quicker and is the same idea for all four voice parts.

See Score #1 for divisions

***Texture:***

1. The texture of this piece is polyphonic with four equal voices.
2. The text is divided into three sections: 1. Sicut cervus desiderat ad fonts aquarum; 2. Ita desiderat; 3. Anima mea ad te Deus. Each section is imitative. See Score #1 for divisions

**Concepts, Subconcepts, and Objectives**

***Rhythm*** Unmetered piece with stress being determined by pulse of text.

**Objectives** The student can be expected to:

* Demonstrate through recitation of text the natural flow/pulse of the text.
* Demonstrate through performance the stressed syllables and words which determine the overall reflective life of the piece.
* Compare and contrast the use of bar lines in current editions of the piece versus more historically accurate scores without bar lines.
* Determine through performance how the bar lines help or hinder accurate presentation of the piece according to the time period in which it was written.

***Texture*** Polyphony, Motet

**Objectives** The student can be expected to:

* Identify why this piece is polyphonic.
* Identify other pieces of choral literature which are polyphonic
* Give a brief explanation of what a motet is.

**Glossary of Musical Terms**

**Polyphony** Renaissance era texture of multiple lines of music, each of which generally maintains independence: contrasted with monody (monophonic) and with counterpoint (contrapuntal).

**Monophonic** Monophony is a single unaccompanied melodic line, such as in Gregorian chant.

**Homophony** Vertical and chordal texture of music; opposed to polyphony or counterpoint.

**Contrapuntal** (Counterpoint) – term used in the latter part of the Baroque era and beyond to describe the combination of multiple lines, usually in a fugal arrangement.

**Motet** A genre of composition generally set to a sacred Latin text and scored for chorus in an imitative style.

**Activities for Teaching Comprehensive Musicianship**

***Introduction:*** Play a recorded performance or video of the piece before singing. Reason: The piece is challenging and independence on each vocal line is important before they can all work together. Also, by playing a recording of a performance from time to time students will be able to hear the aesthetic result of the work being done. Preface the playing of the performance with historical information about the composer, time period and background information of the piece itself.

***Warm-up Drills:*** (Skills Development – Aural, Dexterous, and Translative): Relate warm-up drills to the development of skills needed to perform the piece.

1. Begin with long, sustained tones with good resonance on pure vowels, free from vibrato.
2. Practice random cued entrances by choir sections singing an ‘oo’ and entering on pitch intervals of 4ths and 5ths.

***Rhythm:*** Replace the term ‘rhythm’ with pulse or flow in order to begin accurate interpretation of the piece.

1. Study and recite the Latin text, identifying the stressed syllables.
2. Discuss the similarities and differences in the length of pulse throughout the three textual sections and how those findings affect the performance of the piece.
3. Identify where the pulse or stress feels faster and discuss why that would be true.
4. Reflect on the English translation and discuss how the change in language may affect the pulse of the piece.
5. Study various scores of the piece, observing the use of bar lines in comparison to no bar lines or use of varia-bar system. Compare and contrast the results and perform using the various scores.
   1. Score #2 – no bar lines
   2. Score #3 – varia-bar system
   3. Score #1 – bar lines

***Performance Aspects:***

1. Comment on the interpretive aspects of the piece (see “historical Notes” under “Performance and Interpretive Aspects of the Work”).

Question

How does the composer achieve the effect of reflectiveness?

Answer

Moderate dynamics, unmetered notation, medium vocal range – does not push the high or low registers, no climax, led by text, pure vocal tone

1. Rehearse each of the three imitative sections independently.

Question

What are the similarities and differences among the three textual sections?

Answer

Sections one and two begin with the same feeling of length and meter while section three feels slightly quickened at the onset and pulls back toward the end.

Question

How do the similarities and differences in pulse feel aid in communicating the text and mood?

Answer

In particular, section three brings a calm urgency for Deus – God. The motion of the lines set this text apart.

***Aesthetics:***

1. Stimulate a group discussion concerning the aesthetic qualities of the piece.
2. Do you like “Sicut Cervus”? Why?
3. Can you describe the unique musical features in the piece?
4. How can you tell the piece was written during the Renaissance period?
5. How do you think the societal events at the time of the Renaissance had an impact on this piece and/or the composer who wrote it?
6. In your opinion, is this a good piece, mediocre or excellent? Why?

**Final Unit Examination**

1. Briefly write a definition for each of the following terms:
   1. Monophony
   2. Homophony
   3. Counterpoint
   4. Polyphony
   5. Motet
2. Give a brief explanation or examples of Palestrina’s contributions to music during the Renaissance and today.
3. Explain the following musical elements during the Renaissance period:
   1. Meter
   2. Tone
   3. Dynamics
   4. Tempo
4. Application of what was learned: Listen to the following youtube recordings and identify if the pieces are polyphonic, chant, homophonic or motet:
   1. “If Ye Love Me” by Thomas Tallis - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1zGOsN0pAw0>
   2. “Ubi Caritas” by Maurice Durufle - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=457nVpxJDkA>
   3. “Jesu, Meine Freude” by Johann Sebastian Bach - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XVa3nR-2bVc>
   4. Miss lux et origo – Gloria - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OVKC7oVWYBA>
   5. “Are You Not Aware” by Mary Van Houten - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wE0FnUd_LOI&index=5&list=PLG6hbA4Sc4q504e69BKhprG-4eg6dL_ge>
   6. “Set Me As a Seal” by Rene Clausen - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CZiDPbiTCqE&index=1&list=PLG6hbA4Sc4q5RKiGNjzlayxWeUatgIpfK>
   7. “Ave Maria” by Ramiro Real - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Snx8mVPrBcc&index=1&list=PLG6hbA4Sc4q7-diZcc9MsgIhDeFtX62AB>
   8. Requiem Aeternam –

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TjrsqJaLDOg&list=PLG6hbA4Sc4q4sF0GxGQekOMtZsu5roV9O&index=4>

* 1. “Kyrie” (Requiem/Missa pro defunctis) by Francisco Guerrero -https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nn0vEMbda6g