

# SIGHT-READING AND QUICK RESPONSE

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*Sophisticated methods of teaching sight-singing are admirable but perhaps less effective than standing next to a better reader who digs you sharply in the ribs every time you sing a wrong note! This tried and tested method does wonders for the concentration, the real key to successful sight-reading!*

The **Singer's Commitment** is the most important single ingredient in learning to read fast.

- **Rhythm - internal counting**

Singers get away with much lower counting skills than instrumentalists.

Pitching is more difficult for a singer than for a clarinetist; but counting is not!

Increase the choir's confidence in handling Rhythmic Sub-divisions

- have the singers practise varying patterns silently and vocally.

Develop confidence in internal counting.

As a singer: practise counting every rest conscientiously; never depend on cues.

As a conductor: never give cues in rehearsal!

- **Pitch**

**Essential Requirements; teachable with no method other than constant reminders!**

Sure knowledge of keys – question the singers gently but constantly.

Sure knowledge of clefs - instant recognition of position of surrounding voices.

Sure knowledge of intervals.

Ability to visualise the keyboard.

Acceptance of the principle that no one singer should follow another

- every member of a choir has an equal responsibility.

- **Digest Tonality: (practise silently)**

Read the score vertically to anticipate each singer's role in the texture

Read at least 2 measures ahead

- **Helpful Techniques:**

Create Confidence in Recognising Intervals (*Music Reading by Intervals*; Brock McElheran, pub. Brichtmark)

- practise different leaps from single notes: e.g. 12131415 etc. Quiz note identity

- train yourself to anticipate intervals

- practise strings of the same intervals

- practise strings of alternative intervals

Expand your feel for the tonal center

- select individual chords, move from one to another on cue

- analyse harmonic movement

- sustain one note while imagining the choir moving around you

- stop in the middle of a passage, count silently and resume on pitch