The Purpose-Driven Warm-up
Patterns, Planning, and Practice for Conductors and Singers

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Getting Started:
What is the essence of your choral curriculum?
  Decide on your objectives (however you prioritize them)
  Be sure your philosophy is in line with your action

The Accidental Warm-up
The Purpose-driven Warm-up

PATTERNS:

Good habits for the long haul
Setting the right example

The Warm-up Patterns

1) Vocal:

  Mirror the pattern of vocal production!
  Teach the pattern. Empower your students. Good Pedagogy isn’t a secret!

BASIC:
Relaxation/Alignment
Respiration
Phonation
Resonance
Articulation

*specialty topics: registration, legato, staccato, range extension, agility, etc. may weave inside the order as required

From your colleagues...
2) **Choral:**

Vocal Pattern **AND**

1) Choir-building
2) Literacy/Aural Skills
3) Literature Problem Solving

**CHOIR-BUILDING**

EX: “Rhythm Calisthenics” from Dillworth “Choirbuilders”

EX: Tuning Progression: from Heffernan “Choral Tone”

Next move to chords, singing the five sounds on each chord.

EX: Chord building: from Gordon Lamb “Choral Techniques”
LITERACY/AURAL SKILLS:

EX: Solfege starter on board or “sing what I sign”

EX: Make a game of audiation. (Think every “do” or “sol”)  

EX: Whole step-half-step discrimination

LITERATURE PROBLEM SOLVING:

1. PROACTIVE: Solve it BEFORE they do it!

EX: Bach, “Wir eilen, mit schwachen”

EX: Ellington “It Don’t Mean a Thing”
2. **REACTIVE: Do Battle Tomorrow. With a Strategy!**

EX: Singing on a rest? Add unsuspecting text filler. Then take it out.
EX: Tuning Troubles? Steal the chord for tomorrow. Use more than major triads.
EX: Reconcile vocal part with accompaniment: duple vs. triple
EX: Phrasing trouble?: Air shapes or create a visual picture. Sing the shapes.
EX: Chromatic passages: Take out the hard notes, make a skeleton. Fill in.
EX: Transfer Trouble? Do the custom warm-ups immediately before or during the piece

**PLANNING:**
Think like a day planner!
Drive the car. Look ahead and behind you.

Planning a great warm-up is connected to finding, getting, and organizing "stuff" (materials)
Planning is connected to knowing your overriding choral objectives and direction
Planning is connected to purposeful music selection and score preparation

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### Weekly Lesson Plan - (Advanced Choir)

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<th>State Concept:</th>
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<td>Theory</td>
<td>Choral Development</td>
<td>Choral Music History</td>
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<td>Vocal Pedagogy</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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### ACTIVITY 1

#### START-CLASS
- Listening (choose next piece?)
- Writing Assignment
- Warm-Up (sing short)

#### ACTIVITY 2
- Rehearsal (on attached sheet)
- Sight-Sing/Theory
- Lecture
- Other

### REHEARSAL PLAN:

1. **PREPARE:**
   - Vocalize for trouble spots
   - Review previous work
   - Skeleton

### LITERATURE:

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<th>STRATEGY</th>
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#### 1. BODY:

#### 2. VOICE:

#### 3. MIND:

#### 4. SPIRIT:

#### 5. CONNECTION:

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### NOTES FOR NEXT TIME:

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... a Simple Post-it note
PRACTICE:
EX: Handel, Hallelujah, Amen

KNOW YOUR SCORE:

1. Purposeful Selection (Why does this piece make the cut?)

2. Teaching Opportunities & Challenges IN the SCORE. (What do they have to know to perform the piece with success? What literacy issues are present?)

3. Individual Vocal Challenges: (What does the singer have to DO? Different for each section? Same?)

4. Choral Ensemble Challenges: (What must they do well AS AN ENSEMBLE in order to succeed? What kind of sound am I after?)

**PLAN IT!**

VOCAL WARM-UP: Anything special beyond my regular pattern?

____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

CHORAL WARM-UP:

Choirbuilder:

____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

Literacy/Aural Skills:

____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

Literature Problem Solvers:

PROACTIVE:          REACTIVE:
          (I think they will need help with…)         (What happens IF…)

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____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
Selected Resources:

BOOKS:

Choir Builders by Rollo Dillworth
54 educational songs and exercises for unison 2-part, 3-part or 4-part treble or mixed voices.

Choir Builders for Growing Voices by Emily Crocker & Rollo Dilworth
For younger choirs. Exercises to build a quality sound. Topics include: Posture, breathing, flexibility, and vocal range. CD includes accompaniment only tracks.

Choral Musicianship (A Director's Guide To Better Singing) by William Fenton & Sarah Johnson (Hal Leonard Corporation)
Specific chapters for the choral warmup and ear training as well as lesson planning helps.

Choral Warmup Collection by Sally Albrecht (Alfred Music Publishing, Inc.)
167 favorite warm-ups contributed by 51 choral directors from across the nation. Categories include: *Beginning Warmups, Breathing, Vowels, Flexibility, Intervals, Intonation, Blend, Phrasing, and Diction.*

The Choral Challenge by Michael Kemp (GIA Publications)
Organized alphabetically by topic, this book is full of quick-fix solutions to common "choral challenges". It follows with sections on planning and preparation (including 62 warm-up exercises)

The Complete Choral Warm-up Book by Russell Robinson & Jay Althouse (Alfred Music Publishing)
211 warm-ups in all, organized into eight categories: *Includes general information about designing and planning warm-up activities.*

Evoking Sound: Choral Vocal Technique Sabine Horstmann (GIA publications)
94 sequential exercises that can serve as the central part of vocal training.

Evoking Choral Sound: The Choral Warm-up Method, Procedures, Planning, and Cord Exercises. James Jordan (GIA Publications)
Available with accompanist edition and warm-up cards. Vocalises, philosophical topics, and 24 core vocal exercises.

Hear it and Sing it! Modal exercises in Jazz by Judy Niermack (Hal Leonard)
Vocal warm-ups suitable for all levels, exercises in each mode of the major scale, rhythm section tracks without vocals for improvisation, and more. Also contains warm-up transcriptions

The Perfect Blend: Timothy Seelig (Shawnee Press)
Book and CD. Includes vocal warm-ups suitable for all levels, exercises in each mode of the major scale, rhythm section tracks without vocals for improvisation, and more. The book includes transcriptions of the warm-ups.

The School Choral Program by Michelle Holt and James Jordan (GIA Publications)
Selected chapter specifically devoted to the choral warmup

Voice Builders for Better Choirs by Emily Crocker (Hal Leonard)
Includes dozens of warmups and vocal exercises designed to help singers produce a free and open tone, develop clean articulation and diction, and improve resonance and intonation. Enclosed CD includes demonstrations and accompaniments for each exercise.
Sing Legato by Kenneth Jennings (Neil A. Kjos)
The vocalises are set as short songs emphasizing basic aspects of singing. A little “cheesy”, but can be effective. Includes accompaniments with modulations.

Successful Warm-ups Book 1 by Nancy Telfer (Neil A. Kjos Music Co.)
A systematic approach to vocal production through warming up voice, ears and minds. Contains 78 progressive warmups, each one covering a different aspect of vocal production.

Teaching Kids to Sing by Kenneth Phillips (Macmillan/Schirmer)
Available now in a second edition which includes a revision of the basic methodology, updated research on young singers, a separate new section on vocal physiology, and contemporary music selections. 90 sequential exercise cards for vocalizes also available.

VIDEOS/DVDs:

The Boy’s Changing Voice by Henry Leck (Hal Leonard Corporation)
Warmups and vocal exercises for the male adolescent voice.

Group Vocal Technique; Fraukke Hausseman & James Jordan (Hinshaw Music)
A classic resource which includes method books, cards (300 exercises), and accompanying video. Pricey, but comprehensive and excellent.

Simon Carrington: The Empowered Choral Rehearsal (James Jordan GIA Publishing)
Observe as Carrington takes demonstration choir through two complete choral warm-ups. Includes exercises for ear development via the warm-up, achieving choral balance within the ensemble, listening techniques for choirs and other rehearsal strategies.

Daily Workout for a Beautiful Voice by Charlotte Adams (Santa Barbara Music Publishing)
Older resource, but full of excellent vocal warm-sequences, especially for women’s choir.

Vocal Techniques for the Young Singer by Henry Leck
Covers stylistic technique, vocal modeling, exercises to demonstrate vocal concepts, and warm-ups to improve intonation and tone quality. With Steven Rickards and the Indianapolis Children’s Choir.

ONLINE:

Trade Journal Articles

chorusamerica.org (membership required for some services)

NAfME.org (checkout teacher resources and forums for your topic)

Acda.org (resources and forums as well)

Youtube channels and posts (exercise caution, but there are good things)

Google! (new things are posted all the time. Keep up!)

Amazon.com (“customers also bought” feature is another treasure hunt lead)