

# Arts Assessment For Learning

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MUSIC — 6<sup>TH</sup> GRADE

## REFLECTION: SIGHT-SINGING PROTOCOL

### **Without judgment, describe what you did. Just the facts:**

I had students sight-read a musical excerpt with no assistance as a pre-assessment. I divided students into differentiated sight-reading groups, based on voice part and ability. I introduced a new musical element each week, and students sight-read musical excerpts focused on each musical element. After each sight-reading exercise, students self-assessed their work, and discussed their process in their groups. I introduced a protocol for sight-reading to help students organize their thinking as they decode musical elements. I taught students a mnemonic device to help them remember the protocol. Students practiced using the protocol by sight-reading new musical excerpts each day. Students completed a post-assessment, using the protocol.

### **What went well?**

Students sight-read very accurately by the end of the unit. Students successfully memorized the protocol using the mnemonic device. Students became more independent musicians, and are applying their sight-reading skills instinctively when faced with new choral music in class.

### **What was so-so?**

Some students became bored in the middle of the unit because they wanted to sing repertoire instead of working on sight-reading.

### **What was the most challenging part of trying this?**

It was challenging developing the protocol. I had to consider which musical elements would be most important for beginners to look at, and in what order. It was challenging designing specific sight-reading exercises that would address each musical element.

### **What was the impact of this strategy on student learning? (specific examples)**

Students became more independent musicians as a result of improved music literacy. Students demonstrated the ability to transfer their literacy skills from basic sight-reading exercises to repertoire in choral rehearsals. Students became excited about decoding sheet music, and took greater ownership over the music because they “figured it out” themselves.

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**What new insights or understandings are forming as a result of this experience?**

**(share with group)**

Based on my observations, I would like to create a "Sight-reading Olympics" which should help keep students motivated throughout the unit. I feel that if students can see a visual representation of the "medal" they have achieved in each musical skill, and if students feel there is a competitive element, they will be more driven and motivated.

**How do the results of your action plan inform your inquiry question?**

I want to find a way to keep students excited in the middle of the unit. Students lost some of their drive and motivation about half-way through the unit.

**Documentation to bring (student work, photos, writing, teacher journal, etc.):**

Student work, protocol photo, video