

Confident Music Selection: A Focus on the Forgotten Layers

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*“Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better.”
Maya Angelou*

Resources to help you and support your decisions in selecting music and teaching songs with respect and sensitivity to underrepresented cultures or recognizing mistakes made in the past. As educators it is our responsibility to offer material to our students or audience that has been vetted by you the expert.

Repertoire selection checklist – beyond the baseline of genre, modality, tempi. Have you considered how balanced your repertoire diet is? Here is a checklist to review to know that you have a healthy, updated, current approach to selecting repertoire for your students and audiences. Do you consider the following??

- Female composers should be represented in your program
- Composers of different backgrounds and cultures
- Non-idiomatic composers – representation of different styles by composers of color
- Is your arrangement written by a “culture bearer”? OR are they taking a folk melody and arranging it to popularize this melody
- Are there program notes or is there background that qualifies the origin of this piece or research done to create the arrangement
- Look closely at the date of publication. Many things have changed regarding how we recognize and represent cultures

Performance practices – instruments and choreography – When performing folk songs from other countries – be aware of the instruments used and that they should be from that country. For example: Using a Latin American percussion instrument for an African song is not culturally appropriate.

Resources for your repertoire tool belt -

Songs with a Questionable Past - Created by Lauren McDougle – laurenmcDougle@gmail.com
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1q1jVGqOgKxfiUZ8N3oz0warXefGIjil2Xha-3X5nUY/edit>

Well-respected arrangers of folk melodies, choral series/publishers and composers of treble music

1. Spirituals/Gospel – Rollo Dilworth – composes and arranges music of the Black diaspora with sensitivity to intent, tone and message.

His gospel arrangements are well written for young singers to perform with limited experience by the students or teachers. He is a wonderful clinician, role model and genuine human being that is inspirational.

2. American Folk Songs – Susan Brumfield – Susan is a master at applying her folk songs to Kodaly methodology and pedagogy. Please cross check her folk songs with the latest listing of *Songs with a Questionable Past* to inform your selection of music.
3. Songs from other cultures – Henry Leck Series – Henry Leck would spend time learning about different cultures and finding songs that would be appropriately arranged and performed by children. He always has program notes and background on the songs, along with directions on performance practices by these cultures.
4. *Earthsongs Publications – One world * Many Voices – excellent resource for choral music that has taken the time to authenticate folk songs and present them with background information, pronunciation guides and recordings.- <http://earthsongschoralmusic.com/>*

Resources on Culturally Responsive Music Pedagogy Culturally Relevant Content

Be informed and equip yourselves with information that will influence the way you approach teaching and your students

Arreon Hartley – Emerson – Chair of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Initiatives for ACDA

- He has an amazing wealth of information in educating us to apply ADEI principles to our music teaching practices.
- Check out his Google document – Equity-Centered Resources for Choral Musicians and more. <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1KgHNcRID9Ac6u6wwFOZTXslAylnsvHgp>

Culturally Responsive Teaching in Music Education – From Understanding to Application

By Vicki Lind and Constance L Mckoy

Combating systemic Racism in the music classroom:

https://drive.google.com/drive/search?q=parent:1E2DTSY_RA7OY5XTzBEzqQWm5cMsvqEfn

Cultural Appropriation: When ‘Borrowing’ Becomes Exploitation

https://www.huffpost.com/entry/cultural-appropriation-wh_b_10585184

In Their Words- Slave Life and the Power of Spirituals by Eileen Guenther

Music By Black Composers: musicbyblackcomposers.org

Beyond Elijah Rock: The Non-Idiomatic Choral Music of Black Composers:

<https://www.mlagmusic.com/research/beyond-elijah-rock>

Music By Women Composers: https://www.hildegard.com/resources.php?page=afro_american

