

B Choir Grade
2008-2009

The choir grade uses a total point system. Below are details on some of the categories and assignments.

Readiness check – 5pts. At the beginning of each class and after breaks, Dr. Morton will check to see that each student is in his or her seat/riser location with binder and a pencil, and that any other materials are stored against a wall. Should a student have difficulties maintaining any of these during the class period, they will lose points: for example, if they change seats/position without permission, or take out an electronic device.

Theory worksheets and lyric worksheets – 5pts per sheet. There will be many assignments to systematically improve your music reading ability and general music literacy. Students must keep all work, even if already assessed, and turn in the entire grading period packet during the last week of the 6 weeks.

Written quizzes – 5-10 pts. Quizzes will be given most class periods, and can cover anything that has been mastered thus far in class including lyrics of memorized songs, theory material covered in the packets, and in some cases, theory applied to music we are learning.

Performance quizzes – 5-20 pts. Students will demonstrate their progress in performance quizzes. Depending upon the quiz, students may be asked to perform individually, in small groups, in mixed groups, or as an entire section. Students who are unhappy with their performance may try again on their own time and possibly in a modified group configuration at the discretion of Dr. Morton.

Papers and Projects – 10-50pts. Students will also have several written assignments such as research papers on pieces, emotion/image charts for songs, reflections on the meaning of pieces that we sing, and observation reports of performances by ourselves or other groups.

Theory Unit Tests – 20-100 pts. At the end of units, students will take written and performance tests over material covered in the theory worksheets. Each singer will develop at his or her own speed, however, some minimal standards will be required.

Concerts and events– 20-100pts. Attendance is mandatory. Non-attendance will result in a zero except in cases of sudden and extreme illness or previous arrangement with Dr. Morton. Students who miss concerts or events for an excused reason will have to do alternative assignments, such as ear-training work, recording their part for the entire concert and turning in the recording, or assisting the music program with a concert in which you do not perform. The concert schedule is attached, so let Dr. Morton know of any conflicts within the first 3 weeks of school.

Mandatory tutorials – 10pts. Students can miss 1 tutorial in every 6 that are mandatory. Missing more will deduct 5 points to a maximum of 10. Students may do make-up work for excused tutorial absences upon arrangement with Dr. Morton. Concert warm-up counts as a tutorial in this regard.

As much of the work in choir is a collaborative effort, all attendance is critical. Students with unexcused absences will not be able to make up missed work. Students with excused absences will be required to do extra work on their own time to make up any missed points, especially readiness checks and performance quizzes. Readiness checks are, in part, participation records.

CHOIR CLASSROOM RULES

1. Be on time.
2. Have all class materials.
3. NO electronic devices or materials for other classes.
4. NO Food and drink, other than water.

When the bell rings, students are to be in their assigned seats with their binder and a pencil. Backpacks and other items must be against a wall. Binders must contain all music and class materials. Non-choir materials, such as electronic devices or materials for other classes, must be against the wall. All of these should remain true throughout the class period.

Consequences.

Most classes will begin with a 5 point READINESS CHECK which involves being in your seat or riser spot with a pencil and class materials and no other materials. Generally, missing any 1 component is 3 points off, any 2 is all points off.

Non-choir materials will be confiscated 1) for a class period the first time 2) for 24 hours the second time, and 3) for parent pickup subsequent times. Some devices, notably cell phones, will be turned over to the dean's office, as is now school policy, you will have to see them to arrange its return.

TARDY POLICY

At the bell, and at the end of any class break, the door will be closed and students must sit in the hall until Dr. Morton determines a time when it will be the least disruptive to let them in. If unexcused, students will receive no credit for the readiness check or missed graded work. Any makeup for missed graded work will be on the student's own time at Dr. Morton's discretion.

Dr. Morton will follow the school discipline policy regarding tardies and unexcused absences. At the first tardy or unexcused absence, Dr. Morton will meet with the student and call his/her parent. At the second and third tardy, the student will serve a teacher detention. After the third tardy, the student will be referred to the dean, receive a school detention, and may be removed from the class if tardies continue to be a problem. Unexcused absence will be referred to the deans who quickly involve truant officers.

BATHROOM POLICY

Time spent out of class to use the restroom will be recorded. Students have to put in an equivalent amount of their own time doing choir room chores, such as at lunch, after school, or before school. Students who fail to make up such time within a week will be referred to the deans for a school detention.

If an official class break is taken, students may go to the bathroom but must return to the choir room by the specified time. At the specified time, Dr. Morton will lock the door and late students are to remain seated outside the door until Dr. Morton determines an undisruptive time to let them in. Such time will be treated the same as bathroom time, though excessive lateness from breaks may result in post-break readiness checks or quizzes, or elimination of future class breaks altogether.

EXPECTED REHEARSAL BEHAVIOR

If effective rehearsal procedures are mastered, students can learn music faster and more thoroughly, resulting in a deeper aesthetic experience. Without it, the results are tainted because we know that we fell short of our potential. Rehearsing a passage of music involves the following process:

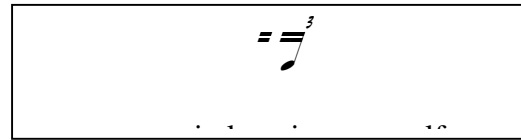
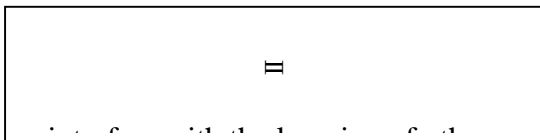
- 1) Select 1-3 aesthetic goals for the passage
- 2) applying a specific strategy to meet those goals, sing the passage
- 3) evaluate the result
- 4) repeat as needed, adjusting the strategy as needed
- 5) address any other aesthetic goals that may arise, or move on to another passage

This process has to flow quickly and uninterrupted. While the specific class rules help frame rehearsal behavior, there is far more involved. There are thousands of things that students can do to disrupt rehearsal procedure. Upon disruption, we will stop singing, even if it sounds really good, and focus on HOW TO REHEARSE. Students who frequently disrupt rehearsals will be addressed individually, will lose participation points, and may be subjected to further discipline actions.

Rehearsing is hard work. Dr. Morton will divide up class time so that students are not taxed for 90 minutes straight. Part of learning to rehearse is learning how to recognize different types of breaks from rehearsing, and then learning to shift between behaviors required at different times. Full breaks last between 5 and 10 minutes, and students should act in ways that allow them to refocus at the end of the break. Between songs, we have small breaks- up to 2 minutes long, where students can talk with their neighbor. Worksheet time and other activities, while requiring focused behavior, is different than rehearsing and thereby gives students a break from the hard work of rehearsing.

At some points, Dr. Morton will focus on another section. You are still accountable to not disrupt the rehearsal. At these times, you may 1) practice your own part in your head (perhaps just focusing on words and rhythm or memorizing); 2) imagine your part against the part being rehearsed so that you know how they fit together; 3) learn the other part, without singing aloud; 4) passively absorb the other part while you take a mental break.

Effective rehearsing will happen naturally if student follow this guideline:



**B Choir Schedule
2008-2009**

Required Events

10/1 (Weds) – “In House” concert at HHS. From 3:30-4:30, the 4 homestead choirs will perform for each other and guests.

10/8 (Weds) – Sing at HHS ELD Multicultural Festival. 6:30 warm up in Choir room. Done by 7:30. Date may change.

12/10 (Weds) – Winter Concert at HHS. Students show up at 5:45pm, concert begins at 7:30.

3/5 (Thu) – Major Works Concert at HHS. Call at 5:30, concerts at 6:30 and 8pm.

5/21th (Thurs) – Spring Concert at HHS. Students show up at 5:45pm, concert begins at 7:30.

Optional Events

Winter Holiday Choir:

Ask Dr. Morton for more information and a separate calendar in early November. This group will learn holiday songs and perform at school and in the community during the holiday season. Open to all students by audition.

Scrip: How to make money for choir expenses

If you plan to continue in choir for a few years, begin earning money for future expenses: its easy and doesn't cost you anything!

HHS Music Boosters have a wonderful accounting system. Each student has an account, and money that they raise is placed in that account. It remains there for them to use for music department trips and supplies as long as they are at Homestead. They can even transfer it to younger siblings when they graduate.

SCRIP is an easy way to begin accumulating money in you account. E-Scrip makes money without even trying. Go to <http://www.escrip.com/> and register for Homestead High School Music Booster, which is # 137634941. (it is listed under Sunnyvale, not Cupertino). What happens is that you register your Safeway card, Macy's Card, Credit Card, etc. Then whenever you use those cards, the vendor donates a certain percentage of the purchase to your school account. It is the vendors way of trying to get you to shop with them more. To make even more money, you can purchase scrip cards, often called paper scrip. These look like gift cards and operate the same way- you swipe the magnetic strip and money is deducted; if you buy a \$20 card, you can spend \$20 at that store. The catch is that the vendor gives you money into your scrip account when you do this. Again, it is their way of marketing- getting you into their store, getting you to buy cards and give them to friends etc. For more on scrip or to order scrip cards (paper scrip) email Mary Mansir at mfmansir@sbcglobal.net.