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Northwestern University  
Master's Exam  
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# Question 1

# The Question

- What strategies can middle school music teachers use to incorporate meaningful gesture into the choral rehearsal?

# Why does it matter?

- Does everyone use it?
- Differing pedagogy and strategies
- Student understanding



# Vocal Technique and Accuracy



# Gesture as Communication



# Student Response & Purposeful Effort

- Briggs (2011)
  - 95% - It wakes me up and gets me ready to sing
  - 92% - It improves my technique
  - 95% - It improves my accuracy
  - 92% - It helps me sing more expressively
  - “When students understand the purpose of the movement activities and also perceive them to be beneficial to their individual learning they are willing to participate wholeheartedly”
- Chagnon (2001)

# What strategies should we keep in mind?

- Gain student trust/create a safe environment
- Use exercises that promote body awareness
- Engage in purposeful effort
- Use movement as a supplement to spoken direction
- Experiment with different gestures until you find one that fits this ensemble (student) at this time



## Question 2

# Question

- In what ways can participation in choral music help foster a positive sense of self-concept, self-identity and self-efficacy in young women and how can we, as educators, help create that environment?

# Why does this matter?

- Female singers at this age tend to be more mature and, often, cause fewer discipline problems.
- Vocal issues are often overshadowed by those of their male counterparts at this age.
- There are a large number of females in our choirs, so we believe they will always be there (Gackle, 2011; O'Toole, 1998).

# Defining the Terms

- **Self-Concept:** The mental image or perception a person has of herself
- **Self-Identity:** The awareness of one's personal identity
- **Self-Efficacy:** One's personal belief about her own ability or capacity to accomplish certain goals or tasks (Gackle, 2011)

# What to do about adolescence?



# Student Experiences in Ensemble Music



	Adderley et al. (2003)	Hylton (1981)	Parker (2011)
Academic Achievement	✓	✓	
Musical Achievement	✓	✓	
Social/Interpersonal Benefits	✓	✓	✓
Psychological Benefits	✓	✓	✓
Spiritualistic/ Enlightenment		✓	✓
Expression/ Communication		✓	✓

# Perceived Values and Benefits

- Meaning and direction
- Sense of accomplishment
- Leadership and empowerment
- Collective experience
- Safe environment
- Interpersonal skills (Kleinerman, 2008; Bartolome, 2012).



# Conclusions and Answers

- Empowerment
- Allowing for vocal exploration
- Safe environment
- Choice of repertoire
- Encouraging collective experience

## Question 3

# Question

What are the most effective strategies teachers can employ when faced with a need to adapt instruction to meet the expectations and norms of an increasingly diverse student population?

# Defining Culturally Responsive teaching

## Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

Using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them  
(Shaw, 2012)

# Why does it matter?



# Culturally Responsive Teaching is...

- Ladson-Billings, 1995
- Gay, 2010



# What can we do about it?

- Gaining knowledge
- Validating student culture
- Student empowerment
- Changing the status quo
- Setting the context and making connections



# Gaining Knowledge

- Self-examination (Abril, 2009; Fitzpatrick, 2012; Lenski et al, 2005)
- Students and community
- Use of culture bearers (Abril, 2009; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Mixon, 2009; Shaw, 2012)



# Validating Student Culture



# Student Empowerment

A word cloud centered around the word "Learn". The word "Learn" is the largest and most prominent, rendered in white. Other words are scattered around it in various colors and sizes, including "Explore" in red, "question" in blue, "challenge" in blue, "Prepare" in teal, "Contribute" in yellow, "Learn" in blue, "investigate" in blue, "observe" in grey, "design" in grey, "dig" in grey, and "world" in grey.

Learn

Explore

question

challenge

Prepare

Contribute

Learn

investigate

observe

design

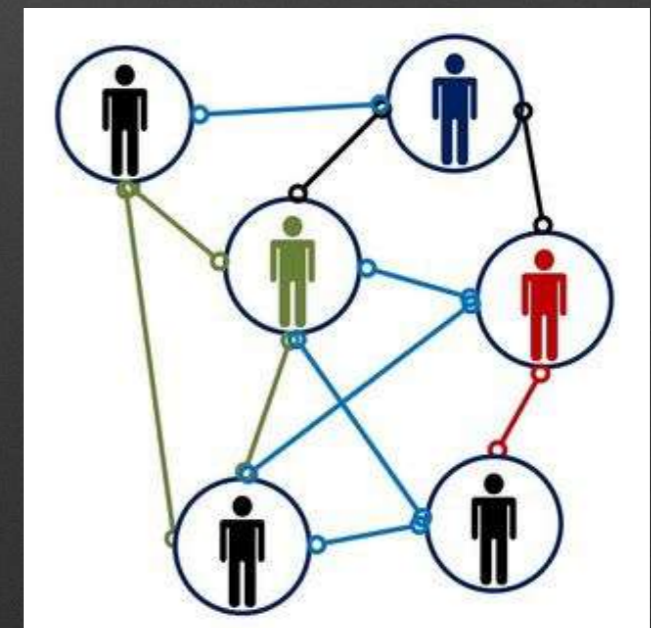
dig

world

# Changing the Status Quo

- Create new opportunities (Abril, 2009; Mixon, 2009)
- Rethink repertoire (Shaw, 2012)
- Flexibility (Mixon, 2009)
- Balancing notation (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Shaw, 2012)

# Setting the Context and Making Connections



# History Domain

# The Child's Voice

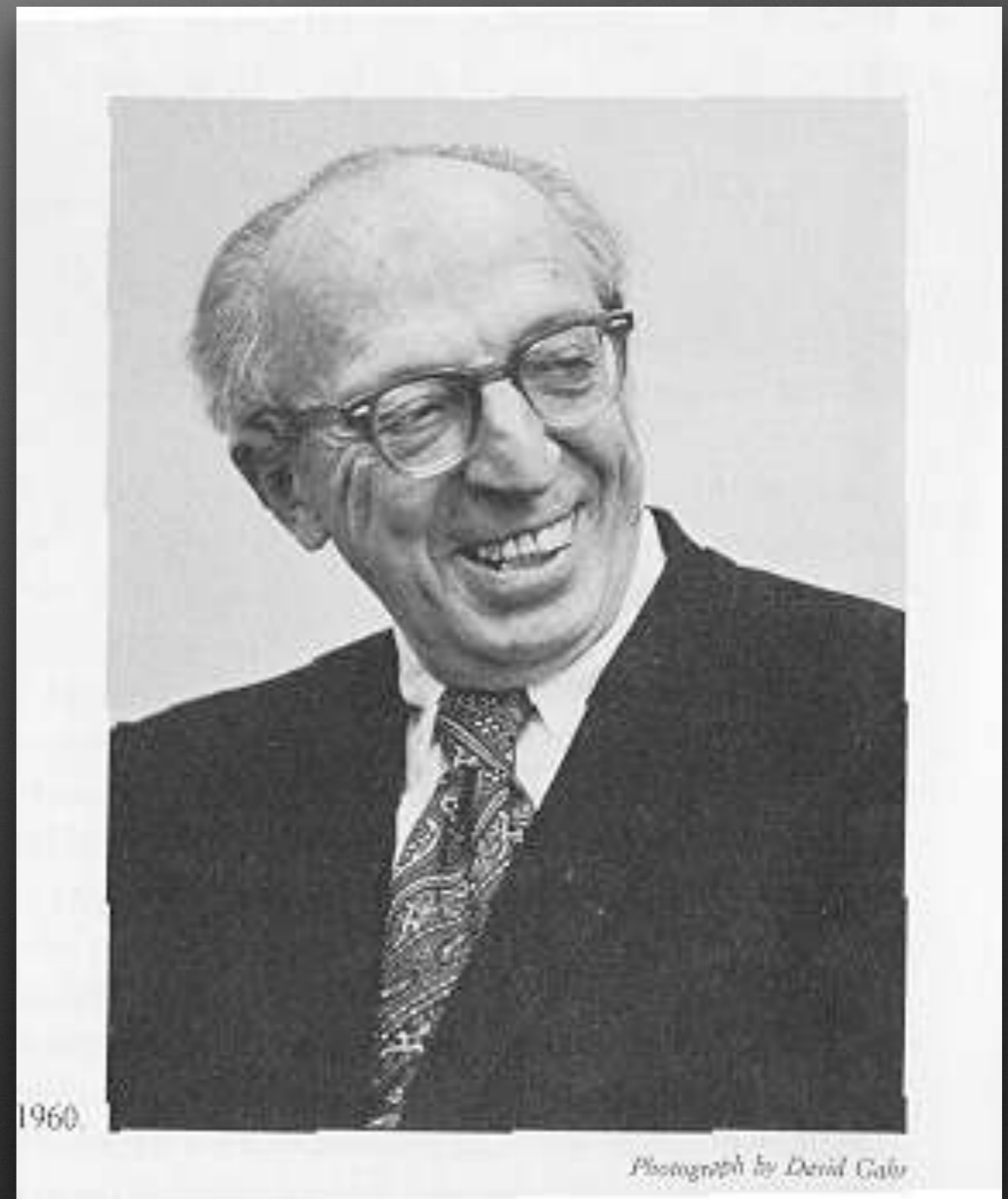
- Explores the Terezin Concentration Camp and the work of Friedl Dicker-Brandeis
- Connects painting (Flowers & Butterflies), poem (I Never Saw Another Butterfly) and song (Birdsong).
- Offers a variety of extension activities including NPR Study: Honoring Our Will to Live
- Reflections on Teaching



# Theory Domain

# Copland: Old American Songs

- Zion's Walls, At the River, Simple Gifts
- Salient characteristics of each: Use of ninth chords, fourths and fifths, Quintal harmonies.
- Historical significance
- Experiences of performing and listening to other ensembles



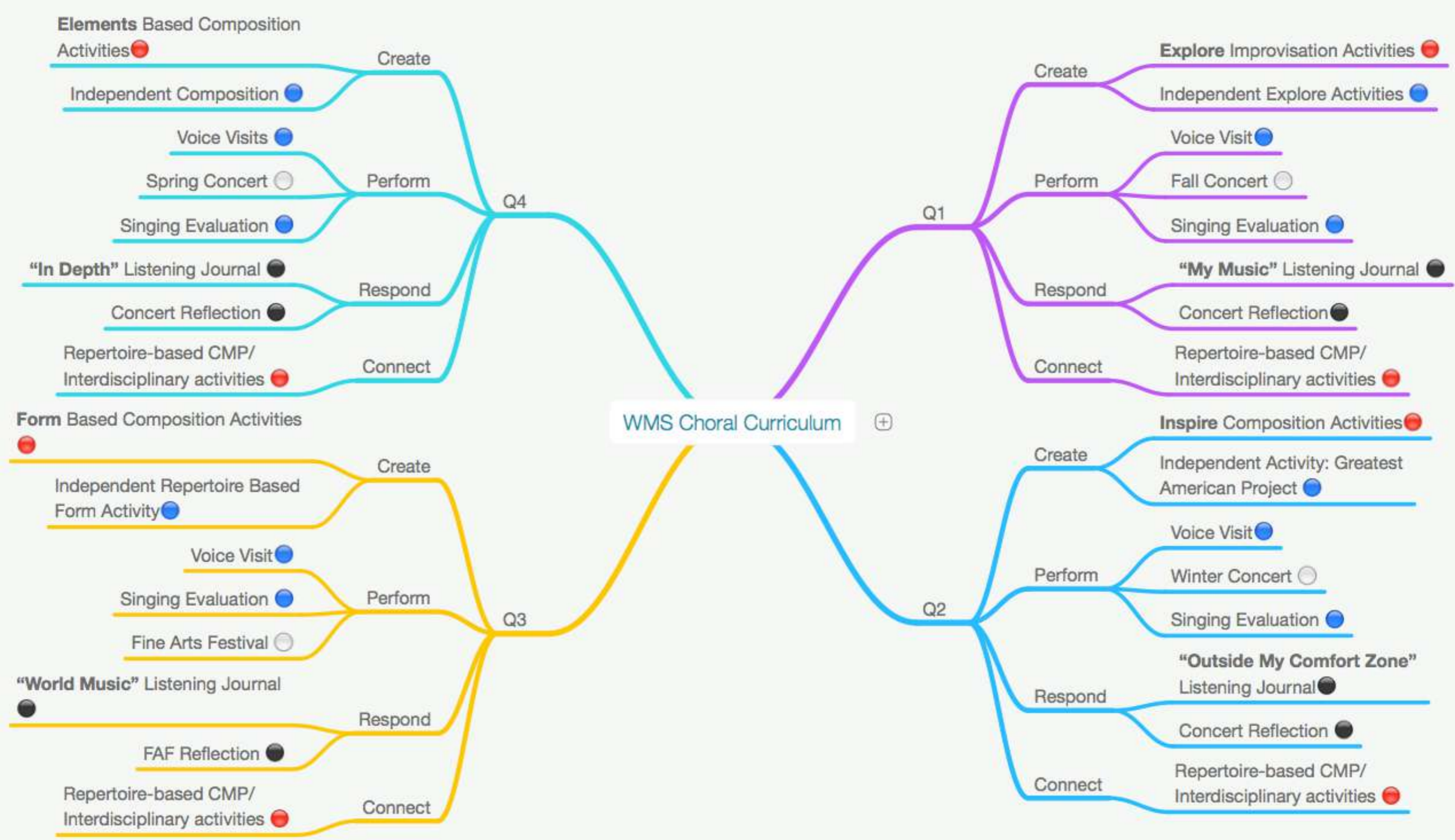


# Curriculum Domain

# Middle School Choral Class

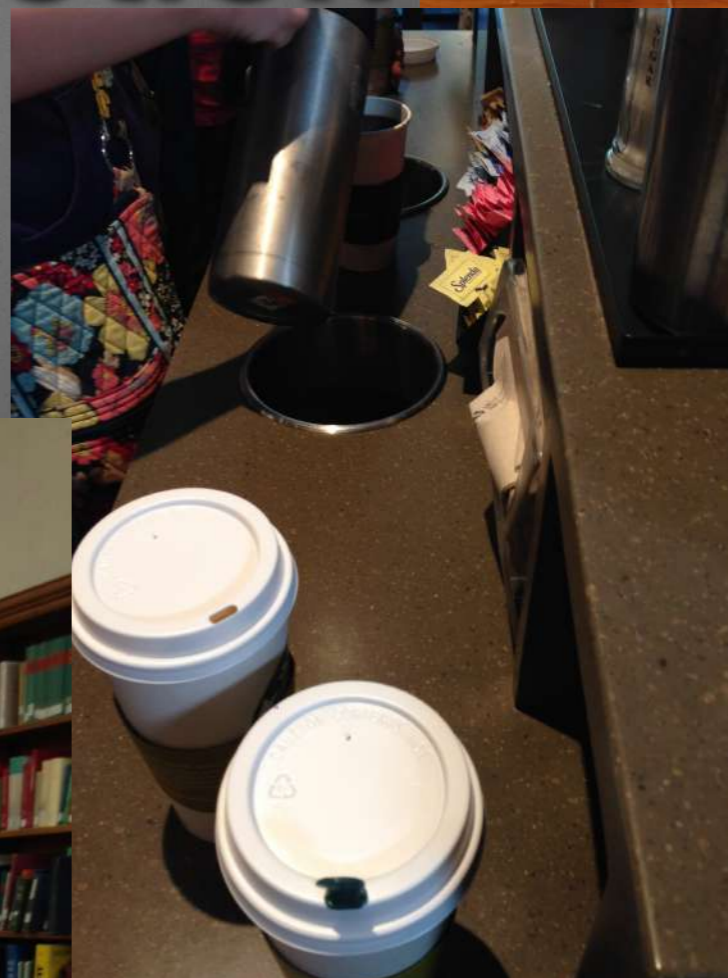
- New this year
- Creating/Performing/  
Responding/Connecting
- Concerts, FAF, Intermediate  
School workshops
- Connections with World  
Music, History, English, Art,  
Spanish





# Milestones

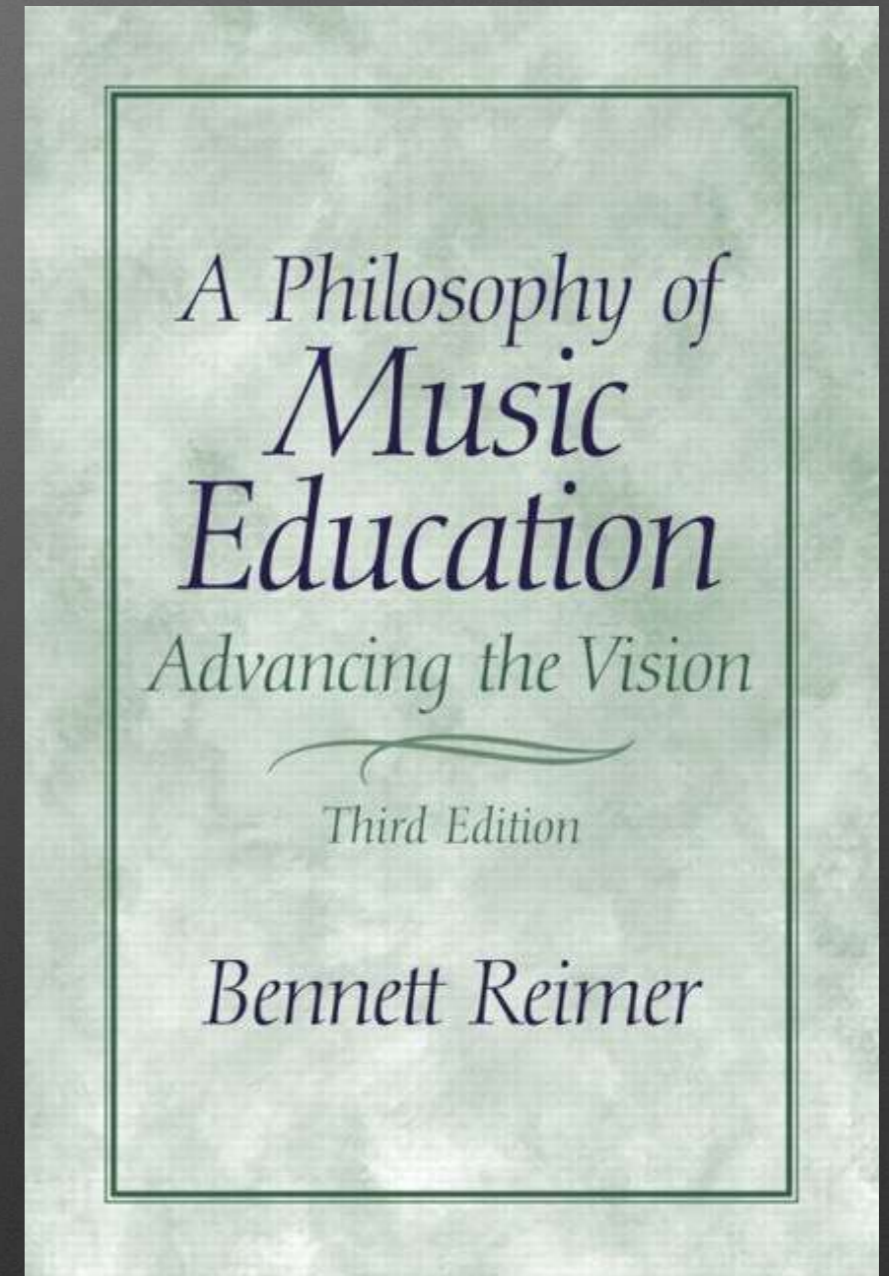
# Coffee Addiction



# Deering Library Steps



# Reimer

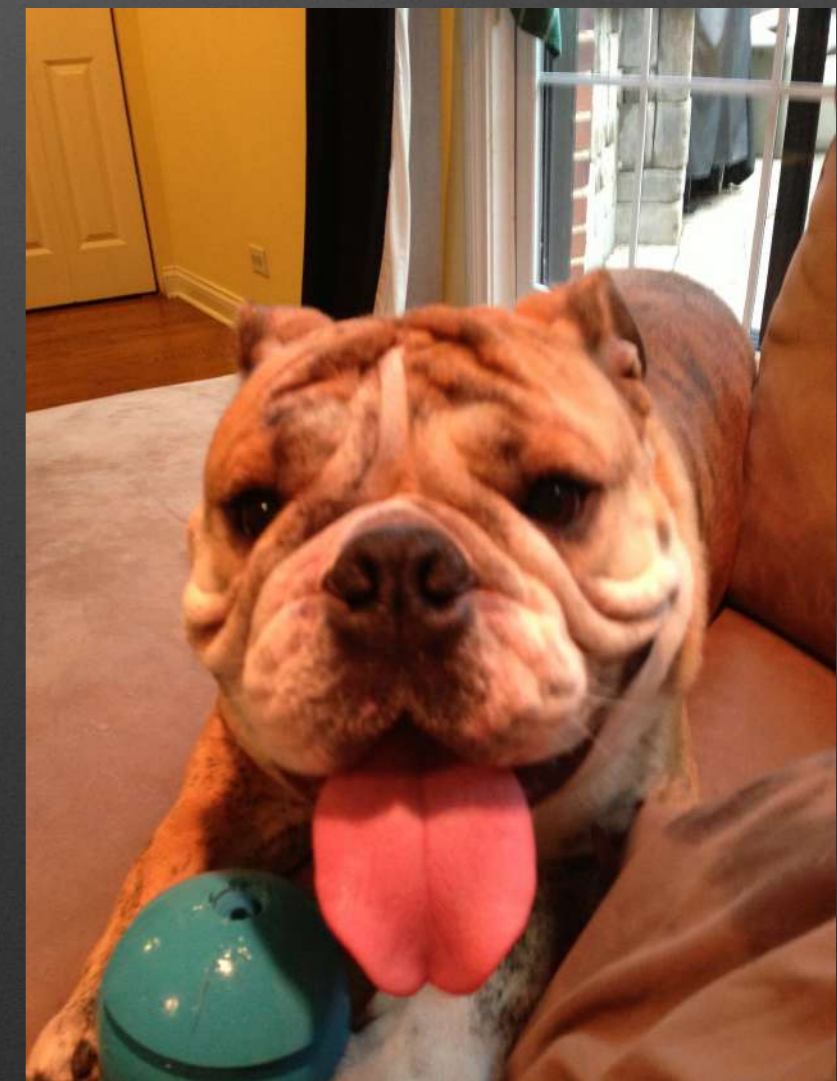


# Lakefront Runs





# Pudge



# Hickey's Hellions

