

Technology in the Classroom
Using SmartMusic for Choral Practice and Assessment
WELS Choral Dialogue 2012
Dale Witte - dawitte@wlvikings.org

Things I've learned this past year:

1. Be ready to experiment
2. This takes time and planning
3. Be consistent
4. Be willing to fail

Using SmartMusic with your Choir

1. Buy an educator's subscription to SmartMusic (\$140/yr)
2. Create a class (either in SmartMusic or online at <https://gradebook.smartmusic.com>)
3. Register your students online (outside of class if possible)
4. Consider how many student/practice room subscriptions you can buy/afford for your school. WLA has four student subscriptions in four practice rooms. (\$36/yr)

Getting Music into SmartMusic

1. You will need the latest version of both Finale (2012b) and SmartMusic (2012b) to make choral/vocal assessments.
2. You will need a scanner (I use a Canon LiDE 210) or a MIDI keyboard (I have M-Audio KeyStudio) to directly input your own choral music
3. Finale has a built in scanning program. Access it from the Launch Window
4. Sibelius users can scan music with PhotoScore (<http://www.neuratron.com/photoscore.htm>), export from Sibelius as Music XML file, import into Finale
 - Create a new document using Finale's setup wizard after importing from Sibelius
 - Copy notes and lyrics from imported Music XML file to the new document so that SATB voices appear for assessments.
 - Use full bars instead of pickup bars. SmartMusic will thank you.
5. Consider using more public domain music and downloading Finale and MIDI files directly into Finale (saves time scanning!) Choral Public Domain Library www.cpd.org

My suggestions for a first year:

1. Go slowly!
2. Tell your students this is an experiment in which they get to help you evaluate the use of SmartMusic as an aid to rehearsal and assessment.
3. Work ahead on scanning music and converting to a SmartMusic file. This is not an overnight procedure! Start with something simple. Maybe only do one SmartMusic assessment per concert/quarter.
4. Consider assigning smaller sections of a piece rather than a whole piece. You can always add more later after the students were successful on a little.
5. Train a couple of older students in your choirs to be Finale and SmartMusic mentors both for your sanity and helping other students when you aren't around.

Websites

- www.smartmusic.com Download & learn about SmartMusic
- <https://gradebook.smartmusic.com> Manage your classes, listen to student submissions, input assessments and comments
- <http://techinmusiced.files.wordpress.com/2011/11/smartmusic-in-the-choral-rehearsal.pdf> SmartMusic in the Choral Classroom presentation by
- Download SmartMusic Inbox for iPhone and iPad at the App Store (<http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/smartmusic-inbox/id437476194?mt=8>) or from Android Market (<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.makemusic.smartmusic.gradebook.mobile&feature>) to listen to students and write your assessments on the go!

Ideas

- Share SmartMusic choral files (.smp) on www.welschoralfest.org