



## Vocal Warm-Ups for *Thinking of My Home*

The following warm-ups may be used in conjunction with rehearsal strategies found in the Skill Builder Lessons.

### RHYTHMIC ACCURACY - SYNCOPATION IN EIGHTH, DOTTED NOTES AND TRIPLET RHYTHMS

In preparation for teaching *Thinking of My Home*, consider highlighting these syncopated rhythm patterns, reinforcing them as a part of your rehearsal. Practice clapping and counting the following rhythms, and create new patterns from one rehearsal to the next. Strive to make the rhythms very fluid—often a characteristic of Chinese music.



Follow this activity with Skill Builder [Lesson #1 – Rhythmic Accuracy](#).

# SINGING IN PENTATONIC MODE

*Thinking of My Home* requires singers to sing in pentatonic mode, both in unison and in harmony. Chinese music uses five variations of the pentatonic scale. The form used in this piece is known as the “Zhi” pentatonic scale, one of five pentatonic scales used in Chinese music.

Practice singing a C major scale in solfege until students sing with good intonation.

Sing the following pentatonic scale using solfege syllables until students can sing the pitches accurately. (Note that the pentatonic scale below is structured to coincide with C major, the key of the piece.)



Do            Re            Fa            Sol            La            Sol            Fa            Re            Do

Then, divide students into five groups, and have each group in turn sing scale pitches; repeat with students holding each pitch as the succeeding groups add their note.

Fa-----

Re-----

Do-----            etc

## SINGING WITH LEGATO PHRASING

As noted previously, the pentatonic scale is frequently used in Chinese music. The beauty of singing in pentatonic mode is that pitches of the scale sound pleasing in any way that they are combined.

Take short legato lines from *Thinking of My Home* and sing on a neutral syllable in call-and-response style to help achieve good legato phrasing, breath control and dynamic balance.

Teachers may use newly-composed music for this activity as well. Follow this by rehearsing mm. 7-8 in *Thinking of My Home*, applying the same rehearsal procedure to the music.



The image displays three staves of musical notation, each representing a different voice part for a singing exercise. The notation is in treble clef and consists of two measures per staff. The first measure of each staff features a melodic line with a slur over it, indicating a legato phrase. The second measure contains a sequence of notes, including triplets (marked with a '3' and a bracket) and rests, designed to be sung on a neutral syllable. The three staves are vertically aligned, showing the call-and-response structure of the exercise.

Other possible sections for this exercise include mm.15-17 and 20-22.

## SINGING HARMONY IN PENTATONIC MODE

The following short passages are adapted from measures in *Thinking of My Home* which require students to sing more challenging harmonies with intervals of the 2<sup>nd</sup>. Teachers may also wish to create additional patterns.

Practice the following passages until students can hold each part securely with good intonation. Consider using solfege syllables, neutral vowels, for the “Yue,” “Ye” and “Woo” syllables from the text.

The image displays two musical exercises in 4/4 time, each consisting of three staves. The first exercise is marked *p* (piano) and features a melody in the top staff and two accompaniment parts in the middle and bottom staves. The second exercise is marked *mp* (mezzo-piano) and features a melody in the top staff and two accompaniment parts in the middle and bottom staves. Both exercises focus on intervals of a 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Follow this exercise with the rehearsal process found in Skill Builder [Lesson #2 – Singing Harmony with Intervals of a 2<sup>nd</sup>](#).