



Lesson: Texture

OVERVIEW

Rosephanye Powell uses a variety of textures throughout *When I Sing* that effectively create dynamic interest and musical flow in the piece. The gradual increase in texture compliments the transition in the text from the singular (when I sing) to the plural (when we sing).

NATIONAL STANDARD

National Standard: Performing/Analyze Mu:Pr4.2

Analyze the structure and context of varied musical works and their implications for performance.

LEARNING GOAL

When students identify changing texture and imitation in the music by sight and sound, they will demonstrate their understanding of Powell's use of texture in the music.

RESOURCES & MATERIALS

- Music Score to *When I Sing*
- [Recording](#) of "When I Sing"
- Recordings of music that contain monophonic, homophonic and polyphonic textures

PRIOR KNOWLEDGE

Students:

- can sing sung rounds and canons
- know that all vocal parts within the brackets are sung at the same time

PROCESS

1. Play a recording of *When I Sing*, as students following the score.
2. Discuss texture in music (monophonic, homophonic, and polyphonic), providing examples drawn from repertoire students know or classroom music textbooks.

3. While rehearsing *When I Sing*, ask students where in the music they sing the same words and pitches together. Review the term monophonic.

- Display the voice parts in mm. 5-9 and ask students what they notice about the voice parts.
- Help student focus on how parts “line up” in unison (monophonic) singing:

When I sing, I feel won - der - ful, I feel
 When I sing, I feel won - der - ful, I feel
 joy, I feel peace, I feel love

4. Display this excerpt and ask students to compare it to the prior example. Follow this with a discussion of polyphonic texture (each voice singing different pitches and rhythms at different times).

work to - geth - er, work to - geth - er. We sing to -
 work to - geth - er, to - geth er. —
 work to - geth - er, —
 geth - - - er, work to - geth - er. —
 We sing to - geth - er, to - geth - er. —
 We sing to - geth - er. —

5. Display this excerpt and compare it to the previous two examples. Follow the same procedure for homophonic sections (each part sings different pitches at the same time)

The image shows a musical score for three voices (Soprano, Alto, and Tenor/Bass) in 4/4 time. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The music is in a homophonic texture, meaning all three voices sing the same rhythm and melody at the same time, but at different pitch levels. The lyrics are 'doo doo' repeated throughout. The score consists of two measures, each ending with a repeat sign. The first measure starts with a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note, a half note, and a quarter note. The second measure starts with a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note, a half note, and a quarter note. The lyrics 'doo doo' are written below each staff, corresponding to the notes.

6. There are many instances in the music where the composer uses imitation. Have students look at the score and identify where the voices seem to answer and/or imitate each other. Sing these sections. How does the use of imitation help portray the mood of the text?

ASSESSMENT

Students demonstrate their understanding of texture changes found in the music by identifying textures in the score by sight as well as by sound.

EXTENSIONS

- Explore texture in other music students are rehearsing, through analysis or listening.
- Play recordings of other choral music and ask student to identify the texture in the music by ear. Examples can be taken from a variety of classical, jazz and pop styles.
- Students in groups may develop a choral reading of the text, using both call and response and varying textures and dynamics. The full text can be found in the opening pages of the vocal score.