

AMI Packet

Day #2

Morrilton Choirs

Name: _____ Date: _____ Period: _____

Choir Persuasive Writing Essay

Write a persuasive essay convincing 6th graders from Morrilton Intermediate to join choir. Give plenty of reasons and use the outline below to gather your ideas BEFORE you write the essay. Take it seriously! If it's really good, I'll use it :)

- use correct spelling, complete sentences, and correct punctuation
- **Helpful tools:**
 - **Hook:** Grab the reader's attention with a quote, scenario, question, vivid description, etc. Must be related to your topic. (1-2 sentences)
 - **Thesis statement:** Simply and clearly state your position on the issue(1 sentence)
 - **Three arguments.** Choose three arguments you can use to convince your reader of your position.

AMI Packet

Day #3

Morrilton Choirs

Name: _____ Date: _____ Period: _____

I. Composer's Intent

Congratulations! You have been selected as a finalist to take Morrilton Senior High Mixed Choir to New York and perform in the prestigious Carnegie Hall! To win this competition, you must write a persuasive justification of your personal interpretation of the composer's intent and meaning of a musical work. The work can be anything you have worked on this year in your choir class.

Consider how you would respond

- Use evidence from the musical score
- Use evidence from research about the composer and text
- Use personal experience(s)

Now, justify your interpretation of the composer's intent (what does the composer want to express to the audience through music and text?) and the meaning of the musical work by writing a persuasive essay. Be sure to provide reasons from the musical score and research to support your position.

Format:

Introduction

Paragraph 1

Paragraph 2

Paragraph 3

Conclusion

Works cited (if you researched)

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Day #4

Morrilton Choirs

Tone Color Writing Assignment

Name: _____ Date: _____ Period: _____

What is Tone Color?

- Quality that identifies an instrument's sound
- Can be *bright, dark, mellow, etc.*
- Changes in tone color create variety and contrast
- Tone colors add a sense of continuity
- Unlimited variety of tone colors
- Modern electronic technique create new tone colors

Using complete sentences, answer the following questions:

Consider the tone color one should use for singing ONE of your CPA songs.

Which song did you choose? _____

What are words you would use to describe the type of tone color you would prefer to hear when someone is singing the song you chose?

Would you want to hear any changes in tone color in this song?

Do you think some performances of this song might have different tone colors than what you prefer?

After you have answered all of the above questions, please write the information about your preferences for tone color of the CPA song you chose into one or two paragraphs.

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Day #5

Morrilton Choirs

Name: _____ Date: _____ Period: _____

What is Form?

Using complete sentences, answer the following questions:

Consider the form for ONE of your CPA Songs.

What Song did you choose? _____

Define the three types of form: (look up information on "Music Form")

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

What kind of texture is used (monophonic, polyphonic, homophonic)?

Are there any changes in textures that creates variety and contrast within the piece?

After you have answered all of the above questions, please write the information above about the texture of ONE of your CPA songs into one or two paragraphs.

AMI Packet
Day #6-10 ONLINE OPTION

Morrilton Choirs

Online Options for Days 6-10

MUST register for an account and send me a screenshot that you have completed the lessons to 100%

Day 6:

<https://utheory.com/app/dashboard/home>

Rhythm lesson until 100%

Day 7:

<https://utheory.com/app/dashboard/home>

Pitch and Harmony lesson until 100%

Day 8:

<https://utheory.com/app/dashboard/home>

Ear Training lesson until 100%

Day 9:

<https://utheory.com/app/dashboard/home>

1 of the Skills Mastered section until 80%

Day 10:

<https://utheory.com/app/dashboard/home>

1 of the Skills Mastered lesson until 80%

AMI Packet

Day #6

Morrilton Choir

Music Coordinator

You have been hired as the new music coordinator for _____. (pick a place to work IE: Disney world, shopping mall, car dealership, ski resort... USE YOUR IMAGINATION!) It is your job to select a music playlist that will be played continuously throughout the workday.

The music selected should have a positive effect on the customer as well as motivate our employees to do more productive work.

1 complete playlist:

Include 10 songs for samples

Include 2 paragraphs discussing why these songs will provide an optimal work environment. Please give specific examples referencing the songs you have selected.

(you may use the back of this sheet for the assignment)

AMI Packet

Day #7

Morrilton Choir

Bad Singing

It took many years of musical training for me to realize just how bad my singing voice is. I'm a respectable musician when I play a guitar, mandolin or other stringed instrument. But when I open my mouth, a cacophony comes out. I have tried to get better — pity the vocal teachers who worked to help me. But my voice remains defiantly bad, and I wonder: What is to blame for this selective musical sabotage? Is it my brain, my ear or my vocal cords? In search of answers, I approach the experts at BRAMS (International Laboratory for Brain, Music and Sound Research), the Montreal-based research institute devoted to musical cognition and the complex neurobiology involved in musical aptitude. I present my problem to Sean Hutchins, who spent four years at BRAMS studying the neuroscience of music. (He is now at the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto.) He says he thinks he can help me. He also tells me that the majority of self-diagnosed bad singers aren't quite as inept as they think. I like him already. Hutchins says that even though nearly all of us are equipped with the biological hardware to produce a wide range of notes, bad singing is rampant. "Singing is a complex expression," he explains. "The majority of people, around 60 percent, have a difficult time" with it.

Over the years, many neurobiologists have investigated musical ability, exploring how and why we create music, the relationships between song and language, and other mysteries of musical cognition. Hutchins, who has a lovely singing voice himself, is an expert in musical aptitude. His work centers on the puzzle of why musical talent, particularly singing, differs so widely among us. Much to my delight, he tells me that his research explores why some people with musical aptitude struggle to carry a tune. It turns out that even though I have a terrible voice, there are some fascinating things going on in my brain — and in the brains of all poor singers like me.

The Tuneless Truth

We all know bad singing when we hear it. I recall a minor league baseball game where an earnest but dreadful version of the national anthem frightened the bald eagle that was supposed to glide majestically out to the pitcher's mound; he retreated high into the outfield bleachers until the song was over. But bad singing also has a scientific definition. It involves a deficiency in three areas: pitch accuracy, the ability to keep time and note memory (remembering the words and how long a note is sustained).

The research shows that most people, regardless of musical training, are quite good at two of the three elements: timing and note memory. That's why you can still recognize the song I'm trying to sing, even though you might regret hearing it.

Instead, the usual cause of bad singing is a problem with pitch accuracy, also called intonation. Pitch is measured in cents (100 cents = 1 semitone = $\frac{1}{12}$ octave), and pitch errors can be defined as the number of cents a sung note differs from the intended note. Being off by more than a half semitone (50 cents) is considered poor singing.

Overall, Hutchins found that about 60 percent of non-musicians could be classified as bad singers because of pitch accuracy errors. Science has proven what anyone who watches *American Idol* already knows: Most people really cannot carry a tune. In 2008, Hutchins began exploring why so many of us struggle with pitch accuracy. He started by ruling out the simplest explanation: Bad singers just have bad vocal cords (more accurately, vocal "folds"). He quickly found that the muscles in their throats were not to blame, and they were all physically capable of hitting a note. That narrowed it down to two suspects. Bad singing could be a matter of perception: Maybe people weren't hearing the

notes correctly to begin with. Or it could be a difficulty with motor control — bad singers couldn't control their vocal cords enough to duplicate what they heard. Hutchins put both theories on trial.

He explored perception first. Hutchins tested non-musicians and musicians with at least seven years of experience, requiring them to reproduce synthesized vocal tones that he made with a computer. First, they matched the note using a slider, a simple device in which a sliding button changes the pitch of a sound, like sliding a finger up and down a guitar string. Both groups eventually were able to make the match, suggesting perception was not the problem. "People were hearing the right notes," explains Hutchins. "While the trained musicians were quicker, all of the participants could accurately match the notes." But when they were asked to use their own voices to match the note, non-musicians were successful just 59 percent of the time.

What accounted for the difference? Hutchins suspected that error correction — the brain's ability to compare its output against a target and adjust its activity in response — was at the root of the problem. Even when he played the same note more than 20 times, the non-musicians who got it wrong the first time could not reproduce the pitch. Tellingly, they often sang the same erroneous note over and over, as if they were locked in. He even allowed them to use a computer for help, with a program that depicted the pitch of their voice as a bar on a screen. They still couldn't get it right.

Sounds Like a Conclusion

The fact that untrained people can't find a note even with help, and even after many tries, suggests that the brain is insistent on producing the error, even when the ear knows better. They know they're off-key, but they can't find their way to the right notes. Hutchins' conclusion: Our brains have the ability to signal the voice to produce the correct note, but have mapped out the wrong output to match a perceived note. "Our brains are quite good at perception, which is why so many of us enjoy listening to music without being great musicians," he says. But those same brains give our vocal cords faulty instructions.

The term for this error is *imitative deficit*. The brains of bad singers associate a note we hear with the wrong muscle movement in the voice. The wires are crossed. In my case, when I hear an E and call upon my brain to reproduce it, my brain commands my voice to produce a G sharp. It's as if someone switched around all the keys on my computer keyboard and punching the letter B produces the letter F. My ear knows better, which is why I cringe when I hear myself, but I cannot easily reprogram my brain.

Researchers studying brain trauma and damage have found that remapping the brain is possible, but for adults it can be a very laborious task, requiring practice every day for years. When I ask Hutchins if there is hope for us poor singers, he laughs. "I would say there's plenty of hope. Practice, practice, practice. A good vocal teacher and patience will help."

Ah, hard work: the answer nobody likes to hear. I think I'll stick with rolling up the car windows and letting the radio drown out my voice — and leave crooning to the pros.

1. Why is it possible for someone to not be able to find a note even with help?
2. Describe the process used to determine that 60% of the population would be considered a bad singer.

3. What metric is used to determine if a singer is “bad”.
4. How do you rewire your brain to learn to sing well?
5. In a few sentences restate the conclusions of this article.

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Day #8

Morrilton Choir

What makes a catchy melody?

Catchiness is how easy it is for one to remember a song, tune or phrase. It is often taken into account when writing songs, [catchphrases](#), [advertising slogans](#), [jingles](#) etc. Alternatively, it can be defined as how difficult it is for one to forget it. Songs that embody high levels of remembrance or catchiness are literally known as "catchy songs" or "[earworms](#)".^[1] While it is hard to scientifically explain what makes a song catchy, there are many documented techniques that recur throughout catchy music, such as [repetition](#), [hooks](#) and [alliteration](#). *Selling Sounds: The Commercial Revolution in American Music* says that "although there was no definition for what made a song catchy, all the [songwriting](#) guides agreed that simplicity and familiarity were vital".^[2]

The physical symptoms of [listening](#) to a catchy song include "running [it] over in our heads or [tapping a foot](#)".^[3] According to Todd Tremlin, catchy music "spread[s] because [it] resonates similarly from one mind to the next".^[4]

Analysis

In an article written by psychologist Tom Stafford for [BBC](#), the psychology of "earworms" (catchy songs) is discussed. These songs are referred to as earworms due to their parasitic characteristics; their entrance and exit from our mind cannot be controlled and despite our best efforts they may refuse to leave. In that aspect, catchiness, depending on how digestible the music is to the listener, has a level of annoyance unlike anything else. In this article Stafford reviews the work of neurologist [Oliver Sacks](#) and the conclusion by Sacks that this catchiness is due to the inherent repetitiveness of popular music, which can affect our ability to remember a song. It is concluded that since memory is powerfully affected by repetition that this could be a significant contributing factor to catchiness, though certainly not the only aspect. A song's catchiness may also be due to the auditory "slave system" of our inner ear, much like the visual slave system of our "mind's eye."^[5]

Often, a song with few qualities can still become immensely popular due to its catchiness. According to T.C.W. Blanning: "I would sacrifice everything – rhyme, reason, sense, and sentiment to catchiness. There is... a very great art in making rubbish acceptable".^[6] A [Billboard](#) review explains that "any lack of originality (in the album [The Remote Part](#)) is more than made up for by the... catchiness of the musical arrangement"^[7]

In response to the 2011 song "[Call Me Maybe](#)", which has been identified as a very catchy song, an article by [ABC News](#) listed some of its "catchiness factors." The article explains that it has a chorus which is "melodically easy on the ear, simple enough to stay in your head all day, and is topically appealing to [Jepsen's](#) target pop demographic." It also briefly describes the concept of musical incongruity and its use within the song. In music, incongruity refers to the inclusion of varied or irregular musical and lyrical features, such as mispronounced words or unexpected syllable accentuation. These incongruities are intended to capture the listener's attention and to preserve their level of interest throughout the song, regardless of the simple and otherwise repetitive [lyrical content](#). [Songwriter/producer](#) Eve Nelson was quoted saying, "a five-year-old could probably sing this, because it's just so easy." As well as having lyrical hooks, the music itself can also be considered a hook.^[8]

Musicologist Dr. Alison Pawley and psychologist Dr. Daniel Mulleniefen identified the following as factors of a song being catchy:

1. Longer and detailed [musical phrases](#).
2. Higher number of [pitches](#) in the chorus hook.
3. Male vocalists
4. Higher male [voices](#) with noticeable vocal effort

Based on these factors, the researchers listed British rock band [Queen's "We Are The Champions"](#) as the number one "sing-along song" in the UK.^[9]

A 2014 study by the [University of Amsterdam](#) and the [Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester](#) found "[Wannabe](#)" by the [Spice Girls](#) to be the catchiest pop song of the last 60 years in the UK.^[10] The study found that having a simple and relentless melody was the key to a song being "catchy". "We found, much to our surprise, that writing a very surprising and unusual hook is not the recipe for long term memorability," musicologist Dr John Ashley Burgoyne explained. "Actually, the more conventional your melody in terms of the interval patterns that you use; in terms of the rhythms that you use, the easier the song is to remember over the long term. What makes Wannabe work so well is that it isn't a difficult song to sing, it has a conventional melody that repeats itself a lot, and it's just relentless."^[11]

Additionally, the book *FutureHit DNA* by Jay Frank says "Wannabe felt like it should have been a 3 1/2 to 4-minute pop song, just like every other hit at that time. To create that feeling, the producers cut the song at the knees. The last thing heard in the song is the a cappella line, "If you wannabe my lover," which is also the first lyric of the chorus.

The audience has a natural desire to hear something to its completion. When they expect a song to go somewhere, they will not feel completely settled until that song resolves itself. "Wannabe" never resolves, and therefore creates a situation where the listener cannot get the song out of his head."^[12]

1. Why are catchy songs called "ear worms"?
2. What are the reasons that "call me maybe" is such a catchy tune?
3. Why do you think repetition plays such an important role in creating a catchy melody?

4. Why do you think male voices are preferred over female voices for creating catchy melodies?

5. What conclusions can you draw from this article?

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Day #9

Morrilton Choir

Music Listening.

Listen to a style of music of your choice for 15 minutes and write a brief description.

Please include what you listened to (names of songs and artists), the style, how it made you feel, and what it made you think about.

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Day #10

Morrilton Choir

Pick a choral composer and listen to 2 of their pieces. For each piece identify EACH voice part used in the work.

1.

2.

What style of choral music do these pieces belong to?

Are the voicings being used common to the genre? Y / N (circle one)

What voicings (SAB/TTBB etc.) are commonly used in this genre?
