S**upplementary Material**

**Choir protocol**

* 90 min rehearsal = 45 mins + 15 mins break + 45 mins. Beginning at 10:00 am and finishing at 11:45 am
* Singers will be encouraged to have water with them. If necessary, bottles and cups will be supplied
* **15 mins warm-up**:
	+ **5 mins breathing exercises (selection of 3)**
		- Sitting upright towards the front of your chair. Close your eyes. Pay attention to your breath coming in and out – just breathing relaxed, not trying to change anything. Place your hands under your belly-button. Feel your breath coming in and out, moving your stomach (ca. 30 secs). Now move your hands to your back – just above your pelvis. Again, feel the breath moving your body under your hands (ca. 30 secs). Now place one hand on your chest and one on your lower abdomen, feeling your breath flowing in and out (ca. 30 secs.). Now, in your own time, open your eyes.
		- Think about being like a whiskey barrel – the breath fills up the whole body not just the stomach/ front. The body is strong and flexible – like the wood of the barrel. The body doesn’t collapse like a deflating balloon as you breathe out, rather it stays nice and strong – but not ridged. (Also helps combat shoulder breathing).
		- Sitting upright towards the front of your chair or standing. Think about the breath coming in to your body like water filling up a carafe – it goes all the way down to the bottom (i.e. you feel it right down to your pelvic floor first) before filling up the top – your chest.
		- (Done as a group). Sitting upright towards the front of your chair. Breath in for 3-hold for 3-breath out for 3-hold for 3. (To be built up to 4-4-4-4)
		- Sitting upright towards the front of your chair or standing. Take a deep breath in and breathe out on an ‘S’/ ‘Z’ for as long and as smooth as you can.
		- Sitting upright towards the front of your chair or standing. (With caution to avoid hyperventilation). Breathe in and pant like a dog (10 secs max). Once through mouth and once through nose.
	+ **5 mins physical exercises (selection of 3)**
		- Sitting upright towards the front of your chair. Close your eyes. Feel your feet on the floor – wiggle your toes and move your feet in your shoes. Feel your sitting bones against the chair. Feel how your spine grows out of your pelvis, how your head balances on top. Your spine is strong and flexible. Let your shoulders relax. Keep your breathing relaxed (ca. 2 mins total). If the participants can manage, the same can be done with standing, getting them to feel their knees and legs too.
		- Sitting upright towards the front of your chair. With your hands on your knees, curl your shoulders and upper back – like a cat. Now push your chest out and your shoulders back. Alternate between the two ca. 4 times, holding each stretch for ca. 5 seconds.
		- Sitting upright towards the front of your chair. Lift your right arm up as far as you can and lean over to the left. You should feel a stretch down your right side. Now repeat, lifting your left arm up and reaching over to your right. Hold each side for a couple of seconds.
		- Sitting upright towards the front of your chair. Let your lower jaw hang loose. (You can keep your mouth closed if you’d rather, but don’t let your top and bottom teeth touch). Massage along the length of your jaw, behind your ears, around the base of your skull. Massage up your temples and finish up back along the like of your jaw.
	+ **5 min vocal exercises (selection of 3)**
		- Humming: keeping your jaw relaxed – your top and bottom teeth not touching, hum up and down a few notes (may need to do this with a target note from leader). Feel the vibrations in the front of your face – through your cheek bones, across your nose. Feel a sense of space at the back of your mouth (might help to give the image of having closed an ‘ah’ vowel into a hum.
		- Glissandos: like a large exaggerated sigh (hand gesture might help) slide down from your highest note to your lowest. Let the sound go at the bottom. The aim is to produce as smother sound as possible. (May help initially to encourage plenty of breath in the sound – aiming to reduce any vocal tension as well as extend range)
		- Lip/ tongue trills: using either glissandos or arpeggios. If lip trill can’t be achieved, participant can push their cheeks forward (making a cabbage patch baby face) to help. Alternatively they could try tongue trill instead.
		- 1-3-5-3-1 (+variations). These will be provided on staff notation.
		- Crescendo and decrescendo: Practicing crescendo alone for fist few weeks. Crescendo: Start on a soft ‘ah’ at a comfortable pitch for the singers and encourage them to gradually get louder until they’ve reached a comfortable loud sound. Couple this with a hand gesture – start with hands together in front of your chest, move the hands out as you increase in loudness. Your arms should be full extended to the side when you reach your loudest sound. Progress through loudness at a pace matched to what the singers can manage. Decrescendo is the opposite of this. However, ensure the singers use a smooth onset – using a consonant such as ‘s’ or ‘s’ or ‘m’ will help with smooth onset before both crescendo and decrescendo.
		- Mesa-di-voce: Progressing from crescendo and decrescendo – start with a soft sound, get louder and then quiet again. Looking for smooth progression, not pushed sound. Can also be coupled with hand gesture as above (helps coordinate coordination)
		- Cannon: e.g. Bella Mama, Kookaburra sits in the old gum tree… to be provided on sheet music
* **30 mins learning new repertoire**
	+ - Usually learnt phrase by phrase. Looking for note and rhythm accuracy.
		- Usually get the piano to play accompaniment and melody and the leader to sing melody of each phrase.
		- Maybe once through the whole song initially for familiarity or at least one verse – encouraging the singers to sing along if they know it.
		- Depending on level of singers, separate rhythm and notes. Sing phrase melody on ‘ah’ or ‘ee’ and say words in rhythm. Maybe get the singers to clap the beat of both the music and the rhythm of the melody.
		- Always practice the joins between phrases.
* **15 mins break**
	+ - Water, toilet break, conversation.
* **45 mins singing familiar songs**
	+ - Re-capping if necessary on the basics of melody and rhythm if necessary.
		- Focusing on affect – dynamics, mood, vocal colour – depending on the song lyrics. All this will be written into the song scores