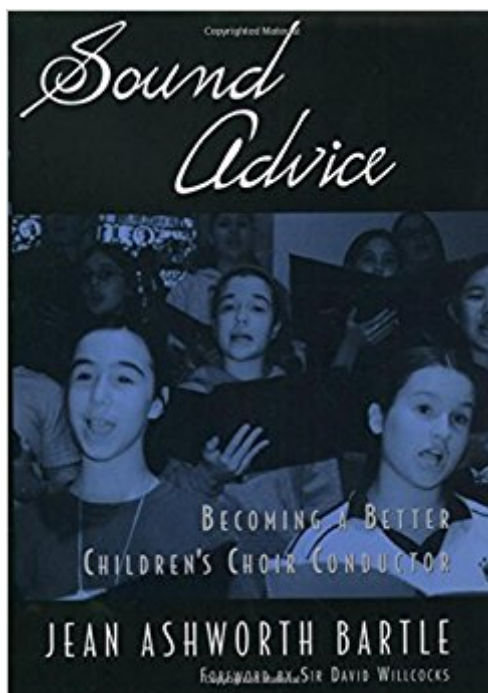


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Sound Advice: Becoming A Better Children's Choir Conductor



Synopsis

Sound Advice is a valuable resource for college students, beginning teachers, and experienced conductors of children's choirs. It covers the vast array of skills needed by today's conductor and will benefit all choir directors who want their choirs to reach a higher level of artistry. This book will be useful on many levels: for the college student studying the child voice and elementary teaching methods; for the teacher beginning to direct choirs in schools, synagogues, churches and communities; for experienced children's choir directors who wish to know more about orchestral repertoire for treble voices, conducting an orchestra, and preparing a children's choir to sing a major work with a professional orchestra. The underlying educational philosophy is sound; the author sees development of musicianship through singing as the primary goal of a children's choir program. This philosophy differs dramatically from the traditional concept of the conductor as all-knowing and the singers as receptacles. An outstanding aspect of the book is how the author leads the reader to an understanding of how to teach musicianship. Developing literacy in the choral setting is a mysterious, amorphous process to many conductors, but the author clearly outlines this important process with practical suggestions, well-documented examples, and a clear reading style which will reach readers on many levels. The comprehensive repertoire, skill-building sheets, and programs for all types of children's choirs will provide teachers with immediate and highly valuable resources.

Book Information

Hardcover: 288 pages

Publisher: Oxford University Press; 1 edition (March 6, 2003)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0195141784

ISBN-13: 978-0195141788

Product Dimensions: 9.2 x 1 x 6.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 4 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #925,746 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #125 in Books > Arts &

Photography > Music > Theory, Composition & Performance > Conducting #1393 in Books > Arts & Photography > Music > Instruments > Voice #5958 in Books > Arts & Photography > Music > Theory, Composition & Performance > Instruction & Study

Customer Reviews

"While Sound Advice clearly states that its intended audience is those who work with treble voice

choirs, the ideas in this excellent book would be a valuable resource...for those working with community, high school and university choirs as well. ... Sound Advice is a well-written, organized resource. ... This book should be recommended reading for any musician who has the responsibility and privilege of working with children's choirs.--The Recorder, the Journal for the Ontario Music Educators Association"

Bartle uses her words to elevate the teaching of choral music to an art; this facilitates her invitation for readers to manipulate the book's more practical information to fit the parameters of their own teaching situations. Some of the book's strengths are clarity of purpose, a lack of visual clutter, and a positive energy that gives readers confidence without telling them exactly what to do. . . . Jean Ashworth Bartle has produced a text that is filled with advice both accessible and applicable for children's choir directors everywhere. Directors in public schools will find as much helpful content as directors of community choruses. . . . This text should be recommended reading for all choral directors and music teachers, regardless of the types of ensembles they conduct. Sound Advice provides a rare opportunity to see how this master teacher's philosophy is reflected in her pedagogy."--Choral Journal

Jean Ashworth Bartle is the Founder/Music Director of the Toronto Children's Chorus.

Jean Ashworth Bartle is a genius. This and her "Lifeline" book are compelling and valuable, loaded with practical ideas. That said, there is some odd editing. Namely, her reprinted program information includes names of child participants. Still, buy this book. The extra information won't hurt you, though it might embarrass the former children.

Truly sound, in all aspects of the word advice.

This book had some helpful ideas, but is really for a beginning choir director, as it really deals with basic techniques. However, these techniques are sound and reliable.

Jean Ashworth Bartle is the director of the Toronto Children's Chorus, an excellent children's choir and one of the best in the world. This book is a wonderful addition to children's choir conductors around the world. The first few chapters are about teaching children to sing. They cover aspects such as teaching style and delivery, lesson content, and common problems found in children's singing. Following chapters cover a checklist for ideal rehearsals and performance preparation, developing music reading literacy, discipline, organization, auditions, conducting an orchestra,

touring and recording, and great appendices. As one can see, most of the book is dedicated to things which are NOT actually conducting, for very little of conducting is actually conducting. Bartle's writing style is densely packed, and the reader should take care not to gloss over important sections. One of Bartle's main theses is that children can achieve great artistic performances and don't need to sing "All I Want for Christmas is My Two Front Teeth" or Johnny Goodguy's latest arrangement of "Y.M.C.A." They can sing Bach, Leonard Bernstein, and folk songs/demanding music from cultures all over the world. Often a new choir director finds that their training has left them somewhat unprepared when it comes to the subjects of discipline, rehearsal pedagogy, auditions, conducting an orchestra, and various other administrative aspects of "running a program." This book seems designed to focus on those skills. Consequently, there is little in the book regarding vocal technique, conducting gesture, score study and analysis, and other related topics--there are other great books out there on those subjects. For other books on church choir directors, consult books by John Bertalot. Other related books are Directing the Choral Music Program by Kenneth Philips and Chorus Confidential by William Dehning. Great books on vocal technique include those by James McKinney, Oren Brown, and Clifton Ware. Though church conductors will also find great ideas, I think Bartle's book is an excellent resource to any children's choir or community choir conductor, especially beginners. Enjoy it!

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