

**MUSICAL DICTATION:
STUDY OF TONE AND
RHYTHM; MANUAL FOR
TEACHERS, BOOK TWO**

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Musical Dictation: Study of Tone and Rhythm; Manual for Teachers, Book Two by Hollis Dann

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STUDY OF
TONE AND RHYTHM

MANUAL FOR TEACHERS
BOOK TWO

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Manual for Teachers, Book Two
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MUSICAL DICTATION

BOOK TWO

INTRODUCTION

This book is a Manual for teachers and is intended primarily for use in the public schools. The course begins with the first and ends with the seventh grade. When used in schools where first grade music consists of Rote Singing only, the course outlined in the Manual would begin with the second and end with the eighth grade.

The Manual is in two parts:

Book One contains the material for the first three years in the study of tone and rhythm.

Book Two contains the material for the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh years in the study of tone and rhythm. Book Two also contains supplementary material for Advanced Dictation.

MUSIC WRITING BOOKS

Beginning with the third year, each pupil should be provided with a Music Writing Book in which to write the lessons outlined in the Manual.

Third year pupils use Music Writing Book No. I.

Fourth year pupils use Music Writing Book No. II.

Fifth year pupils use Music Writing Book No. III.

Sixth and Seventh year pupils use the Music Writing Tablet.

The following general suggestions are offered concerning the use of the Manual:



1. Look over the material for the entire month and begin all features of the work early in the month.
2. Keep all activities progressing throughout the month.
3. Have a plan for each lesson; work rapidly, and avoid wasting time by useless questions.

ABSOLUTE PITCH

Many children will acquire the ability to recognize any given pitch if given a fair opportunity. The capacity for acquiring this power should be fostered and developed rather than stunted and neglected. To develop this invaluable feature of a musical education, certain conditions are necessary:

1. The pupil should continually hear the correct pitch. Therefore, it is essential that the piano, the pitch pipe, the violin, etc., shall agree in pitch, both in the home and in the school.

2. All music which the pupil sings should be sung at the pitch in which it is written, or, if sung in a different key, the pupil should know the change.

Parents and teachers who are able to approximate these conditions may cultivate the sense of absolute pitch in children with surprising results by testing a given pitch daily:  or  for example.

THE PURE SCALE

Ability to think and to sing the pure scale as played by an artist on the violin, for example, is the best possible scale training and is invaluable to the pupil who is to make a serious study of music. This, however, can be acquired only with the constant assistance of expert teachers, and is obviously beyond the possibility of attainment in the public schools.

SINGING IN TUNE

Singing out of tune is evidence of wrong physical and mental conditions. Good tone production and correct intonation are evidences of normal conditions.

It is entirely feasible and practicable for classes in the public schools to sing true to the pitch. Nothing less should be accepted by the supervisor or the teacher.

Because of the low standard which prevails, faulty intonation is accepted in many communities as a necessary evil in school singing. The fault is not with the children. Their false intonation is evidence of wrong physical and mental conditions, and is the inevitable result of careless, inefficient teaching, and poor or inadequate supervision.

The ability to create and maintain normal vocal conditions is the first and most important qualification of the supervisor of music.

These conditions include:

1. Proper position of body and head, and flexibility of the lower jaw, tongue, and facial muscles.
2. Deep breathing, secured by correct position and by use of simple breathing exercises.
3. The use of the "thin, head" voice, and the avoidance of the lower "thick" quality.

With these habits formed, the singing voice is used quite as easily as the speaking voice.

Correct intonation demands correct thinking as well as normal physical habits. Certain other conditions are, therefore, essential:

1. Every teacher must use a chromatic pitch pipe, thereby detecting and correcting any tendency to "flat" or "sharp" the pitch. **Constant singing out of tune — "flattening the pitch," for example — causes the singer to think the wrong pitch; he then sings out of tune because he thinks out of tune.**

2. If a piano is used, it should be kept in tune, else the ear is constantly misguided by false and unmusical tones. A good piano is most desirable in the schoolroom. Incidentally, the piano may be used in place of the pitch pipe for taking and testing the pitch.

3. The songs and exercises used by children in the lower grades must be in the proper compass and favorable to good tone production. The use of unsuitable material encourages and develops bad vocal conditions and consequently results in faulty intonation.

Children who sing properly sing in tune, freely and easily, with light, clear, mellow, flutelike tone which increases in breadth and volume as the children develop physically.

THE USE OF SYLLABLE NAMES

The syllable names are indispensable to the pupil in gaining a mastery of the tonal problems in music. By their use the pupil is aided in identifying and differentiating each tone.

The primary object of all instruction in sight singing is to teach the pupil to hear the tones and sense the rhythm of a melody as he looks at the music. The pupil has many problems demanding instant solution in reading a melody. Accent, rhythm, tones, all require recognition, quickly followed by expression. The recognition and interpretation of musical symbols demand quick and accurate thought followed by action, which must be equally accurate and rapid.

All the power of concentration which the pupil possesses must be employed in reading music.

The reading of words and music demands the recognition and interpretation of two entirely different sets of symbols simultaneously.

This is beyond the power of the majority of children during the first two or three years in school, and their attempt to interpret two languages at once makes concentration on the tone language impossible, deprives them of the help of the syllable names, discourages the slower pupils, and places upon young children a task which most adult beginners are unable to accomplish. It is better to follow a vital pedagogical principle and attack one difficulty at a time. The interpretation of one language at a time is obviously enough for little children.

THE ABUSE OF SYLLABLE NAMES

While the Latin syllables are vitally essential in mastering the tonal problems, they are only a means to this end. Their constant use in the upper grades to the exclusion of words, is a serious error. When the pupil has formed the habit of hearing the tones and feeling the rhythm as he looks at the symbols, and has had sufficient practice in combining tone and rhythm, he is ready to begin reading without the syllable names.

Time is wasted and progress retarded, however, if this is attempted too soon. If individual singing is constantly practiced, as it should be, the teacher will know when the class is ready to begin the reading of words and music together.

The Music Readers, both the regular text book and the supplementary material, should furnish a large amount of music especially adapted for this practice. An abundance of suitable material, not too difficult, is a necessity.

Before the pupil reaches the High School, he should be able to read at sight, words and music, with facility.

CORRELATION OF READING AND SINGING

Oral reading and singing are very closely related. Poor results in either, seriously interfere with progress in the other; excellence in one, greatly accelerates improvement in the other. The right sort of singing makes speech more musical and more flexible; gives the voice a wider compass and greater sustaining and carrying power; develops the rhythmic and melodic sense; stimulates emotional expression; and, in many other ways, increases the pupil's capacity for oral expression in speech.

The course in Reading in the public schools should give to children not only the ability to read and understand, but should equip them to speak the English language clearly, distinctly and naturally. Mumbling, inarticulate, nasal speech, accompanied by distorted misuse of vowels and consonants, makes the teaching of singing tenfold more difficult. A thorough, systematic course in Phonetics is absolutely essential if American children are to speak the English language acceptably. Indistinct and inaccurate pronunciation and enunciation are alike fatal to acceptable reading and speaking, and to good singing.

To teach the correct use of the English language in speech is primarily the function of the course in Reading.