

Teaching Tips

Sight Reading Using Finale and SmartMusic



Subject Area: any type of music classes
Grade Range: any

Materials Needed: Finale 06, SmartMusic, PA system, SmartMusic microphone or other microphone
(Optional- method of projection in classroom-large TV or projector)

- The Exercise numbers in Finale’s Exercise Wizard correspond to the SmartMusic Exercise numbers. The instructor can choose an exercise and edit it to match the instrumentation or voicing of the class. (Tip: Save this as a default “ensemble” in the Exercise Wizard or the Set Up Wizard and it will be available every time a new exercise or sight reading selection is created!) Print your exercise for your class or SAVE SPECIAL in Finale and create a SmartMusic “Accompaniment” with or without On Screen notation. (General music and choirs can easily read On-Screen notation.) Sight read your selection in class with SmartMusic adding a metronome click, adding piano accompaniment, or SmartMusic’s accompaniments.
- Create short melodic sight reading examples with Finale for students to sight read in a manner similar to All District and All State auditions.
- Students may sight read individually in a practice room or other designated area of the classroom for assessment or to gain experience in a situation typical of important auditions.
- Save all instructor created sight reading on a jump drive or on a floppy disc. These pieces can be “re-invented” or used in the future with different students.
- Many state music conventions offer old selections which have been “retired” from sight reading rotations for large ensembles. Use these as a “study guide” to create new sight reading selections for large ensembles. If desired, obtain permission from the publisher/composer to use their piece for sight reading purposes with your ensemble. Instructors may want to scan the score, bring it into Finale, and edit or arrange the piece for a totally different selection.
- Use the state high school activity organization guidelines for sight reading for large ensembles to create comparable selections to sight read using Finale.
- Trade instructor created sight reading selections with another instructor who has Finale and teaches the same type of music ensembles. Send selections to trade as an attachment with an e-mail. Both instructors will benefit from additional examples for students sight read.
- For variety, ask your ensemble to sight sing a SmartMusic Exercise written for instruments, using some of the unique accompaniments.
- SmartMusic automatically re-opens to the last exercise opened; so on successive days, it is easy to begin where you stopped on the previous day.
- Create a SmartMusic Ensemble using Finale. (Tip: Watch Quick Start Video in Finale “Create a SmartMusic Accompaniment.”) Students may perform their part as other parts, or accompanying instruments are heard. This may be done as a section, small group, or as a soloist. This is comparable to Music Minus One, except that the instructor or student can adjust the tempo, add a metronome click or subdivided beat, transpose to a different key, record, and SAVE the sight reading effort.