**Observation Schedule & Notes of Kearsney College rehearsal**

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| **Observation schedule** | **Descriptive notes** | **Reflective notes** |
| *Interactions of choristers before rehearsal. Describe the overall mood and atmosphere.* | **Before the second part of the rehearsal, the Gr. 8-10 boys all helped each other out by packing away the chairs in the school Hall. The senior boys of the choir were sitting on the stage on their phones. A few boys were standing in their friend groups and talking to one another.** | **It is expected that the younger boys in the choir have “choir jobs” and carry the responsibility to do their jobs.**  **The older boys enjoy socialising with each other. It is evident that the boys enjoy socialising with each other when they attend choir rehearsals which becomes a big motivating factor for them to join the choir from the onset.** |
| *Rehearsal venue. Where is the rehearsal taking place?* | **The rehearsal is taking place in the Kearsney College Chapel.**  **The second part of the rehearsal took place in the school hall. The conductor mentioned that the chapel is a bit cramped for the choir to learn the choreography of the pieces.** | **The choir takes choreography very seriously. The Kearsney College Choir sets aside separate rehearsals to allow boys to practice movements for the items on the programme. This evokes a great sense of creativity amongst the choristers as the senior members oversee teaching and illustrating the movements for the choir.** |
| *Rehearsal. What music is being rehearsed? Are the choristers disciplined and engaged? Is the conductor engaging effectively with the choir?* | **The choir rehearsal started with an arrangement medley that was made up of various indigenous South African music. During the rehearsal of this piece the choir seemed very engaged. The conductor had to ask the tenor section to sit up straight during the rehearsal. This specific work entailed a lot of concentration. The harmonies of the piece are very complex, and the choir had to pay close attention to what the conductor was instructing, and the choristers had to focus on engaging accurately with their notes. If the boys made mistakes, they had to indicate it by raising their hand, and quite a few choristers had to do this. The conductor had to frequently sing the notes, especially for the tenor section. One boy had to leave the rehearsal venue to go to the bathroom, but he stood up quietly and greeted with a smile as he walked by. The conductor commented that the choir suffered a few intonation problems. For the first few minutes of the rehearsal the boys were extremely disciplined. The boys were very quiet as the rehearsal progressed. The bass section of the choir blends very well with one another and approached the music with a great sense of musicality. The conductor asked one of the boys whether he was awake during the rehearsal. The boys did look very tired, and the conductor tried to fix this by asking the choir to give themselves a slap on their faces. The conductor was well prepared for the rehearsal and knew the music well and demonstrated the music well. I noticed that a lot of boys were leaving the venue to go to the bathroom, but the head chorister approached one of the boys and asked them that they should not walk around during a rehearsal as this was disrupting the rehearsal. Two boys were late for the rehearsal. They did not disrupt the choir as they quietly went to the front to fetch their choir files from the choir file box. While the conductor was working with the bass section on a certain part, there was little chit chat and fidgeting within the tenor section, another few tenors left the venue to go to the bathroom. I noticed that the conductor had to focus quite a bit on the notes of the tenor section, and some of the boys seemed confused when the conductor asked them what their notes were. Credit should go to the boys for taking on a very challenging piece. The boys show good adherence to the musicality levels which is expected of them for this medley. The medley is quite advanced in the sense of chromatic notes that need to be sung. Boys were unresponsive to the conductor’s gestures near the end of a part in the medley. The boys did suffer a few intonation problems during rehearsal. The conductor asked the boys to look at the music and not at him. He also asked them to stop singing like rugby players and more like singers, and immediately it provoked a positive response in the energy of the boys. The conductor also motivated the choir by mentioning that his previous Kearsney choir performed this challenging piece and won a golden medal at world choir games in 2012 and urged them to even be better than that group and that they could achieve this feat once again. He asked the choir whether they were feeling the music and demonstrated to the tenors that they should be like trumpets to bring out their notes more. As the rehearsal carried on the intonation of the choir started to suffer more frequently. During the later stages of the piece, and a more exciting part of the piece that requires a lot of energy, some of the boys enjoyed this part a lot and even started clapping their clap parts themselves without the conductor demonstrating. Some boys were enjoying the music a lot and started smiling while they were singing. While the conductor was working with the tenors, some basses started to chat and make jokes with their mates. Whenever the conductor made a funny example of the choir’s lazy singing, the boys started laughing and enjoyed the moment with their friends. There was a lot of chatting once the conductor asked the choir to sing through the medley from the beginning. The conductor asked the choir to concentrate and see how far they get from the beginning of the medley. The boys still made a lot of mistakes and still suffered from intonation problems when they were running through the piece from the beginning. I have noticed that there were boys who really enjoyed the rhythmical parts of the music and approached the music in these stages with a lot of enthusiasm.**  **Just before the rehearsal break the choir concluded this part of the rehearsal with a pop song “Sucker” from Jonas Brothers. The conductor put a halt to the song and told the choir that they must approach the music with more musicality and told them that they have sung this piece better before. The conductor asked the low basses that if the unison part is too high for them that they should mime their parts as no one would know if they were keeping quiet. The boys started showing a lot of tiredness and this did have an influence on their overall sound production. The fatigue of the boys influenced their phrasing of notes and overall support of higher notes. A lot of boys started slouching in their chairs and a few boys looked as if they were about to fall asleep. After a few takes and enthusiasm from the conductor, the song started coming together. I started noticing whenever the conductor asked the choir to look at him rather than the music the overall sound production started to improve, and the boys also started engaging more with the conductor and the music. One boy stopped singing and started looking around. The boys show good responsibility by asking the conductor if they experience any problems with the music.**  **As the rehearsal went on the discipline of the choir started to drag a bit. There were more chit chats in between instructions from the conductor.**  **In the second part of the rehearsal the boys were revising the choreography of “sucker” from Jonas Brothers. A group of five boys were standing on the stage with their faces to the wall. The rest of the choir stood on the floor where the audience usually sits. The movements were treated very strictly. On the one side a small group of boys were chatting to one another. On the other side of the venue, a boy was leaning with his back to the wall and seemed disinterested. Furthermore, the movements were rehearsed with a lot of concentration and accuracy. The conductor started joining in with the teaching of movements. There was a lot of gossiping in between the rehearsing of movements. Majority of the choir carried on singing while rehearsing the choreography of the piece. A group of boys were making jokes and started poking each other while the conductor was discussing something with the movement leaders. After a few minutes the boys were really engaged and focused on performing the new movements accurately. The conductor allows the movement leaders to demonstrate the movements verbally and respects their space. The boys move with a lot of energy. There is a sense of if you perform the wrong movement, it is sort of as if you are letting the group down. This was proven by the way the boys look at each other whenever someone makes a mistake. Most of the boys showed big lapses of concentration in this part of the rehearsal. One of the choir leaders stood at the back and checked the choir from behind their backs. He looked very stern and serious. This helped a lot with the boys that stood at the back of the choir since these boys were a bit ineffective with their movements. The moment the choir leader stood at the back and looked at the discipline of the boys from the back the movements seemed to be more accurate.** | **Boys engage internally when singing indigenous South African choral music. Engaging internally with music entails choristers to show and have good concentration on the music and conductor.**  **The boys take responsibility for their mistakes during rehearsals.**  **The conductor of the Kearsney College Choir displays great character and needs to show positive energy, especially during rehearsals that take up a lot of time.**  **The boys develop a lot of musical skills during the rehearsals. This allows the choristers to approach the music with a lot of musicality.**  **The choir can become a space for boys to develop leadership skills. If boys are elected as choir leaders, they need to take great responsibility for the actions of other boys.**  **It is evident that the boys must illustrate a great deal of musical knowledge and engagement during rehearsals. The conductor expects the boys to be attentive and focused.**  **The conductor motivates the choir by mentioning the choir’s previous successes at the choral competitions. This becomes a big motivating factor for the boys of this choir as it evokes “a winning mentality” amongst the singers at Kearsney College.**  **Internal engagement with choral music makes the high school boys feel happy and lifts their moods.**  **The boys enjoy socialising with their friends during the rehearsals. There is a real sense of togetherness whenever the conductor shares a joke with the choir. It makes the boys feel part of the team activity.**  **Boys enjoy singing music that entails a lot of rhythmical challenges. The boys are eager to live up to a challenge.**  **There is a constant expectation from the conductor that the choristers should approach the music with great musicality. This allows the boys to develop a great sense of musical skills.**  **The boys show good responsibility by admitting to their mistakes. This evokes a sense of determination on improving as an individual for the choir.**  **Allowing boys to move to music allows the choristers to improve concentration levels and engage with music more.**  **It is the responsibility of the choristers to teach the choir their own choreography. This can be beneficial for boys as it allows them to gain leadership skills.** |
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| *Leaders’ address. How is the choir responding to the conductor or committee member? What is being mentioned/addressed?* | **There was a fifteen-minute break, and the conductor asked the grade 8-10 boys to clear the chairs in the school hall where they will be rehearsing choreography for the last part of the rehearsal. Some boys were disruptive when the conductor addressed their arrangements for the evening.**  **I also had a chat with the conductor after the first part of the rehearsal and he commented that it is a lot of hard work to get the boys on the level where he wants them to be.**  **At the end of rehearsal, the conductor commented that the choir has restricted time left to finalise the movements. He also reminded the choristers that some of them will be leaving at 08:00 in the morning to get their visas. He also announced that the choir have got four pieces left to rehearse before they depart on their tour in the holiday. There was a lot of chatting in between the announcements of the conductor. The head chorister announced that the choir must pull together and work hard in their rehearsals and there was a serious silence when the head chorister spoke to the choir.** | **The conductor acknowledged that it takes a lot of hard work to get boys where they need to be in terms of learning their music. It is evident from the rehearsals that the concentration span and discipline from a male adolescent high school choir tend to lack during lengthy rehearsals. Rehearsals need to remain fun and engaging for young male teenagers.**  **The hierarchy in the Kearsney College Choir are highly respected in such a manner that the younger boys would take the senior students more serious than the conductor. It is evident that younger boys respond better to senior students.** |
| *Interaction of choristers after rehearsal. Describe the overall mood and atmosphere.* | **They boys quietly stood up and starting mingling with their friends. Some boys left early (on their phones) and some of them left the venue within their friend groups. It took the choir a minute to leave the rehearsal venue. There were a lot of smiling faces after the rehearsal. A group of five boys stayed behind after the rehearsal to discuss movements for their pop song “Sucker” with the conductor. One boy stayed behind in the rehearsal venue on his phone.**  **At the end of rehearsal most of the boys were helping to clean up the rehearsal venue. The senior boys remained behind and spoke to the conductor. Some boys were standing in their friend groups chatting to one another.** | **Teenage boys enjoy the socialising aspect of choral singing.**  **It is evident that choral rehearsals evokes a positive reaction in adolescent males’ moods and stimulates mental health.** |
| *Rehearsal venue. Is the venue neat and tidy at the end of rehearsal?* | **The rehearsal venue was left neat and tidy, and some boys helped the conductor by packing away their choir files.**  **The conductor asked all boys from Gr. 11 and down to tidy up the hall.** | **The boys of the Kearsney College Choir adhere and respects their rehearsing venues. This allows boys to take pride in what they do for the choir.** |
|  | **Date and time: 05/06** | **Signature of researcher: JL** |

**Additional Notes Taken During the Rehearsal:**

The rehearsal started earlier than 16:00. This was due to a Supper event happening at the school where the choir were asked to perform. The rehearsal ended at 18:00.