Title: “Hodie” from A Ceremony of Carols, Opus 28
   Treble voices, a cappella (harp or piano accompaniment to be used only if
   a processional is impossible)

Composer: Benjamin Britten

Text: traditional medieval liturgical text, Latin

Publisher: Boosey & Hawkes, 1943 Bk. 125

Background Information:
   From http://w3.rz-berlin.mpg.de/cmp/britten.html: The renowned twentieth century
   English composer, Benjamin Britten (1913-1976) composed major works in all mediums.
   His operas include Peter Grimes, The Rape of Lucretia, Albert Herring, The Beggar’s
   Opera, The Little Sweep, Death in Venice, Gloriana, and The Turn of the Screw. Many of
   his works were written for the Aldeburgh Festival, which he and his lifetime companion,
   Peter Pears, founded in 1948. These include St. Nicholas, The Young Person’s Guide to
   the Orchestra, Spring Symphony the War Requiem and his closing masterpiece, String
   Quartet no. 3.
   Recording: A Ceremony of Carols, Choir of King’s College, Cambridge, David
   Willcocks, conductor. Angel CDC-47709; SeraphimS-60217

Musical Elements:
   Meter: Unmetered, conduct in chant style

   Tempo: Senza misura (\( \bullet = 138 \))
   Form: A (a b a' c ) B (a b ) C (a b )

   Tonality: A Major

   Phrasing and Harmony: Marked in the score

   Dynamics f, ff
Vocal Technique Elements:

**Range:** e – F³

**Tessitura:** a- e¹

**Pitch set:** Melody - A do: S₁, L₁, T₁, D R M F Fi S L

**Rhythm:** ♩, ♩, ♩, ♩ Words are sung in chant style using natural rhythm

**Harmony:** Melody imitates medieval plainchant. Accompaniment provides traditional harmony.

**Text:** Latin liturgical text

Elements Related to Teaching:

**Appropriate Grade Level:** Advanced treble 5th- to adult women’s chorus

**Difficult Sections:** introduction of fi in sol-fa, sustaining a legato line in free chant style, keeping pure vowel sounds on melismatic passages, singing in tune a cappella.

**Possible Teaching sequence:**

Objective: To use plainchant style, conveying the sound of angels singing the news of Christ’s birth.

Motivation: Translate the Latin text then listen to a recording of the piece while following the score. Relate that Britten wrote this piece returning to England in 1942, risking his life, even though he was a pacifist. Why an uplifting joyous piece in such terrible times? Why the dynamic markings?

Procedure: Teacher leads sol-fa exercises using phrases from score with special emphasis on the phrase using fi and fa. Looking at prepared overhead, students sing the Hodie’s in sol-fa and teacher sings rest of phrase. Switch. Echo speak the Latin words in natural rhythm. Listen to teacher sing chant and echo.

The piece would take approximately four to six 15-minute lessons to learn.
A CEREMONY OF CAROLS

1. Procession

Senza misura (d=138 sembre)

TREBLES
(unis.)

Ho - di - e..... Chris - tus... na - tus... est:

HARP
(or Piano)
ad lib.


canunt an - ge - li:... laetan - tur arch - an - ge - li:

*Accompaniment to be played only when an actual procession is impossible.

Copyright 1943 in U.S.A. by Boosey & Co. Ltd.
Copyright for all countries
con moto

dicentes: gloria in excelsis... Deo. Alleluia!

Spiù lento

Alleluia! Alleluia!

*The last two bars to be repeated when the duration of procession necessitates.