

It Works in Theory

This a sequential and comprehensive approach to teaching music theory in the performance classroom. This system will change the way you approach teaching in your choir, band, or music classroom. Your students will be doing college-level theory within a few months of consistent teaching using this approach.

- Standards-based and adaptable for ANY level or pace desired
- Formative and summative assessment on a weekly basis
- Removes ceiling on learning and allows students to move at own pace
- Differentiated instruction→easy break down to facilitate lower functioning students and individual needs
- Promotes teamwork and student interaction
- Develops student leadership skills and provides healthy competition
- Builds confidence and nurtures musicianship
- Extremely efficient and requires minimal class time for learning/teaching

Teacher “Testimonials”/What teachers are saying about this program.....

“I am in a high poverty/low achievement school with most of my students reading on a 2nd or 3rd grade levelI've been using your system as whole group instruction and love the order that you placed everything in. I have used the tests that you provided and my students understand the layout well. I supplement in between the tests with weekly quizzes on each section of each level (i.e.. I removed dynamic markings only from the other concepts.) We are moving VERY slowly through it but I have loved using your curriculum!” -Julia Baxter, 6th grade choirs, Huntsville City Schools

“I have been using this program for two years now, and it has really improved the way that my students learn theory. My students love being able to work at their own pace, whether their pace is average, slow, or super fast. My advanced students love knowing that they won't have to start over with the whole "this is a quarter note" speech every time we begin a new year, or wait for the whole class to grasp a concept before they can move on. Many students (especially the boys) are motivated by the competitive aspect. The student-led learning allows us to cover much more material in a short amount of time, because everyone is working at the same time. Also, even the most reluctant learners tend to listen if their peers are teaching. My administration is very supportive of the program as well. It falls right in line with student-centered approach that our district is working toward. I always suggest the program to all of my interns and recommend it to colleagues.” -Ginny Coleman, choir grades 9-12, Tuscaloosa County High School

“Implementing Margaret's system has completely changed the way I approach teaching theory, and I have seen results in my students' learning since the first year I have used her system. 8th graders leave my program every year able to write major and minor scales, identify and write key signatures, and spell major and minor triads and even seventh chords—all without any formal piano experience. It also allows the students who struggle with theory to progress at their own pace--giving all students a firm base for success in sight reading and theory at the high school level and beyond. I will never go back to teaching one-size fits all theory again!”

-Meredith DeVore, choir grades 6-8, Clay-Chalkville Middle School

“We have greatly benefitted from this teaching approach. I have seen students who seemed disinterested successfully progress through the levels and excel at theory. I have also seen student camaraderie between unlike students who otherwise would not associate as they collectively progress through the levels. In previous years of teaching, I have been surprised to realize at the end of the year how little theory the student understood. However this year, I have seen every student successfully progress through the fundamental levels, learning exponentially more than they ever did before. The approach itself differentiates instruction so that all students can be successful at their own pace. As a result of this system, my students are becoming comprehensive musicians rather than simply ignorant choir kids.” -Daniel Birdsong, choir grades 9-12, McAdory High School

“The development of “It Works in Theory” has been an ongoing process, developed and implemented in a classroom setting, to determine best practices for teaching music theory concepts in large groups of students with varying interests and abilities. From the early hand written notes, assessments and revisions, you will find the culmination of Ms. Heron's work effective, common sense and enjoyable for students. This process is a sequential approach that incorporates best practices typical of all good teaching and learning such as: differentiated instruction, scaffolding, higher order thinking skills, RTI, peer teaching, and technology integration. Formative assessments and the included benchmark assessments provide the teacher with the necessary data for individualized instruction. Students participating in the program are highly motivated and progress quickly. Successful mastery of “It Works in Theory” is, without a doubt, meeting and exceeding Alabama College and Career Standards!”

-Dianne Johnson, Jefferson County Arts Supervisor