

Sheep May Safely Graze

J. S. BACH

Sheep May Safely Graze

(from the Cantata *BWV 208*)

Arranged by Katherine K. Davis

Available for

SATB Chorus and Organ or Piano, with opt. Two Flutes	1.1278
SAB Chorus and Organ or Piano, with opt. Two Flutes	1.2297
SA Chorus and Organ or Piano, with opt. Two Flutes	1.1280
SSA Chorus and Organ or Piano, with opt. Two Flutes	1.1279
TTBB Chorus and Organ or Piano, with opt. Two Flutes	1.1320

Curriculum Guide

For Choir Teachers, By Choir Teachers

by: Colleen McNickle & Coty Raven Morris
www.ecspublishing.com/curriculum

Table of Contents

01

Teaching Objectives

Within every piece of choral music lies myriad teaching objectives. Here, we provide you with several teaching objectives that we have addressed within this curriculum guide.

02

Suggested Teaching Sequence

There are so many ways to approach teaching any piece of choral music. In this section, we share an outline of one way you might approach teaching *Sheep May Safely Graze* utilizing these curriculum materials.

03

Warm-Ups & Vocabulary

Visit this portion of the curriculum guide to find vocal warm-ups inspired by this piece of music as well as vocabulary that your singers should know when approaching this piece.

04

Learning Activities

Every curriculum guide comes with three interdisciplinary learning activities that challenge your singers to examine multiple aspects of their choral music.

05

About the Arranger

Get to know arranger Katherine K. Davis. Learn about her musical path, compositional work, and lasting impact in the choral world.

06

Classroom Quiz

Did your students learn what you want them to learn about *Sheep May Safely Graze*? Assess the effectiveness of your teaching with this quick classroom quiz.

07

About the Curriculum Creators and Similar Guides

Get to know Colleen and Coty, the creators behind this guide. Have you enjoyed this resource? Take a peek at several similar guides within the Galaxy Music Catalog.





WELCOME!

We are delighted that you have chosen to purchase this curricular resource for your choirs! We have worked hard to provide you with a comprehensive approach to teaching this piece, while leaving space for you to add your own brilliant ideas. From music theory to social issues to science and literature—we believe all of these topics and more not only belong in choir rooms, but also have the potential to lead to more intentional and empowered choral musicians. We encourage you to think outside the box and engage with your repertoire in mindful and meaningful ways!

Whether you follow this guide step-by-step or simply use the information to inform your instruction, we are confident that you will benefit from this resource. Happy singing!

Teachers are permitted to make copies of the quizzes and activities in this book for students' use.
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Teaching Objectives

Within every piece of choral music lies myriad teaching objectives. Here are a few teaching objectives for *Sheep May Safely Graze* that we have addressed within this curriculum guide:

- Students will be able to...
Describe and identify characteristics of Baroque composition within *Sheep May Safely Graze*, and apply their knowledge to sing this piece in a stylistically appropriate manner.
- Students will be able to...
Sing in three parts independently and in an appropriate balance.
- Students will be able to...
Articulate the function of and perform slurs, terraced dynamics, and sixteenth notes.
- Students will be able to...
Analyze the lyrics of *Sheep May Safely Graze* and articulate the meaning and intent of the piece.
- Students will be able to...
Create and perform original skits based on the lyrics of *Sheep May Safely Graze*.
- Students will be able to...
Compare and contrast *Sheep May Safely Graze* with other works by the composer J.S. Bach.

notes

Teaching Sequence

Just one way you might consider teaching *Sheep May Safely Graze* to your ensemble:

	Teaching Suggestion	Time	Measures
day 1	Introduce Warm-Up One . In sections, students determine and rehearse mm. 5-17 on solfege. Be prepared to sing independently at next rehearsal.	20 minutes	mm. 5-17
day 2	Introduce Warm-Up Two . Each section sings mm. 5-17 independently. Sections self-assess attention to dynamics and articulation. Combine and sing together.	20 minutes	mm. 5-17
day 3	Introduce Activity One . Small groups work independently. Share results in the last 10-20 minutes of class.	30-40 minutes	Full Piece
day 4	Introduce Warm-Up Three . Ask students to identify warm-up material within the piece. Introduce Activity Two . Basses learn and rehearse mm. 21-end while Sopranos & Altos work independently on Activity Two.	25 minutes	mm. 21-end
day 5	Review Warm-Up Three . Review mm. 5-17. Basses share mm. 21-end progress with Sopranos and Altos. Sopranos and Altos learn and rehearse mm. 21-end while Basses work independently on Activity Two .	30 minutes	Full Piece
day 6	Review Warm-Ups One and Three . Combine SAB mm. 21-end. Students self-evaluate effectiveness of dynamics and articulation. Share Activity Two presentations. Sing full piece, paying special attention to lyrics & story.	30 minutes	Full Piece
day 7 +	Students complete Activity Three before class. Class discusses Baroque music and Bach's style. Continue to encourage part independence, dynamics, articulation, pronunciation, etc.	20 minutes	Full Piece

Sheep May Safely Graze

Sheep May Safely Graze Warm-Ups

Teach concepts specific to *Sheep May Safely Graze* by using these original warm-ups:

Objective: Confidence in 3-Part Harmony

my warmups

Warm-up One

One do mi re re me fa la so mi
Two so do ti ti do re fa re do
Three mi so so do ti so do

Teach by rote or project for sight-reading. Raise and/or lower by half step. *Can students identify from where this exercise comes?*

Objective: Clear Dynamics & Slurs

Warm-up Two

mf Sheep may - safe - ly *p* graze and - pas - ture

Sing on solfege, neutral syllable, or words. Focus on slurs, dynamic shift, and pronunciation of words. Raise and/or lower by half step.

Objective: 16th Note Agility

Warm-up Three

1 2 & a 3 e & a 4 e & a *mf* 1 2 & 3

Sing slowly at first on numbers or with your counting system of choice. As singers become more comfortable with 16th note passage, transition to neutral syllables, then to the text "land with joy made bright."

Sheep May Safely Graze Vocabulary

Here are some terms and definitions that are handy when learning this piece:

Term	Definition
Cantata	A musical composition written for voices and instrumental accompaniment. Often is narrative and composed of a group of several songs.
Andante Pastorale	Slow, and with pastoral simplicity.
Slur	Indicates to sing the notes without separation (legato)
Dotted Slur	Used when there are two text options to show how to articulate each of the options.
Sixteenth Note	Sung for half the duration of an eighth note, or one quarter the duration of a quarter note. Indicated by a double beam between two notes or double flag on one note.
ppp	pianississimo; "triple piano;" very, very quiet
<i>poco rit.</i>	slow down a little bit
D. C.	Da capo: repeat to the top (the cap) of the piece.
<i>fine</i>	end
Fermata	Sing until conductor cuts off the choir
Your Term:	
Your Term:	

Baroque Styles

Small Group Inquiry Activity



LEARNING OUTCOME:

Students will describe and identify Baroque stylistic characteristics within *Sheep May Safely Graze*.

CLASS TIME:

20-30 MINUTES

MATERIALS

- *Sheep May Safely Graze* octavo
- Laptop/Tablet with internet access

INSTRUCTIONS

In small groups, answer the following questions:

1. What does the word "baroque" mean?
2. When was the Baroque period?
3. What composers are known for their Baroque music?
4. Define the following words and identify them within *Sheep May Safely Graze*:
 - ornamentation
 - terraced dynamics
 - homophonic texture
 - basso continuo
5. What are three characteristics of Baroque music?
6. How do you see these characteristics within this piece?

Act Out the Lyrics

Sectional Challenge

2 Plan Your Lyrics Skit

Decide within your group what the lyrics of this song mean. Then, create a 1-2 minute skit acting out the lyrics and their meaning. This is not a recitation but a story sharing. Who is speaking the lyrics? Build a back story. All group members should speak at least once in your skit.

4 Share Your Work

Present your lyrics skit to your class. Make sure to speak clearly and be expressive throughout your class presentation.

6 Compare & Contrast

Answer the following questions:

- How did your skit compare to your classmates'?
- Whose interpretation surprised you? Why?
- Who is the MVP of the lyrics skit? Let them know!

Group Up 1

Within your vocal section, form teams of 5-6 singers. All singers in the group should plan to participate in the creation and acting out of your lyrics skit.

Practice Your Skit 3

In your final 5 minutes together, run through your full skit without stopping. Discuss what went well and what can be improved in your remaining time. If time allows, practice small portions of the skit before your final share.

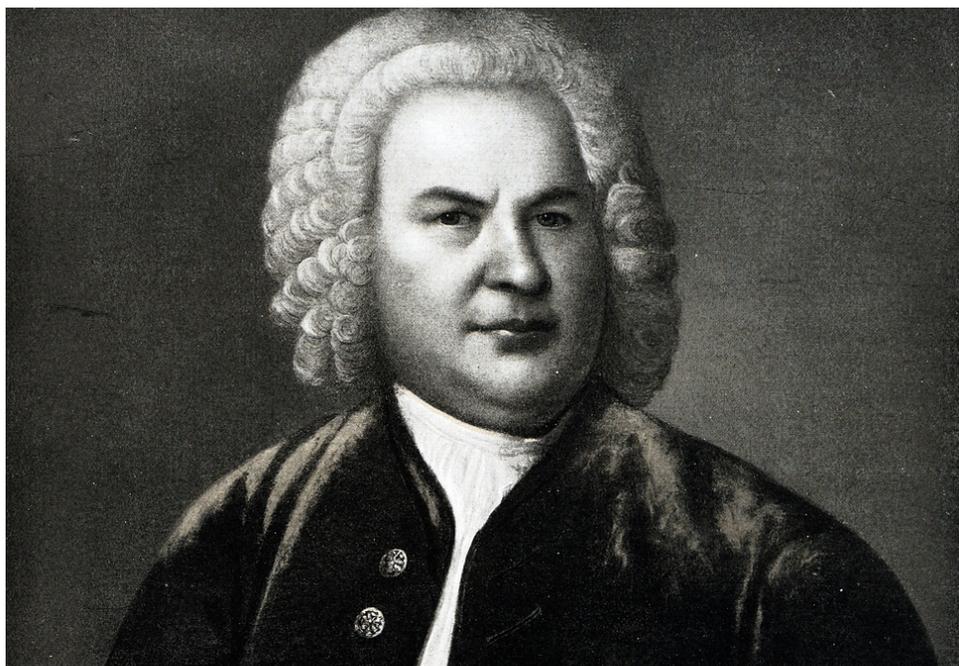
Support Your Classmates 5

As your choir colleagues present their skit, be a responsive audience member. Encourage them, respond to them, and give them positive feedback throughout.



important note:

Creative repetition is essential to retention.
Have fun, be silly, and enjoy yourself!



BACH LISTENING

listening examples:

- Cantata no. 80: *Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott*
- Cantata no. 206: *Schleicht, spielende Wellen*
- Magnificat: *Magnificat*

Listening to choral music is essential as we learn and sing music representing a variety of eras and cultures.

As you listen, evaluate the performance and consider what elements of the ensemble's interpretation you may want to borrow for your own performance of the piece.

instructions

1. Listen to each of the three examples of Bach's music provided above.
2. As you listen, answer the following questions:
 - What instruments do you hear? How do they compare to *Sheep May Safely Graze*?
 - Describe the expressive elements of the performance, including dynamics, articulation, and style. How are these elements representative of Baroque music?
 - What do you notice about the text of these pieces?
 - Are these compositions sacred or secular? Why might Bach have composed them?
 - What are the similarities and differences between these three works?
3. Following your listening, consider how your listening might inform your performance:
 - What did you like from these performances that you would like to consider for our performance of *Sheep May Safely Graze*?
 - What did you not like from these performances that you would like to avoid as we present *Sheep May Safely Graze*?

“

Sheep may safely
graze and pasture
in a watchful
shepherds sight.

J. S. Bach

About the Arranger

Katherine K. Davis was born in St. Joseph, Missouri and settled in Concord, Massachusetts, the famed colonial town of the Minutemen and the transcendental New England poets. Something of these two places—the American heartland and the cradle of the Republic—was very much a part of her music. She praised in song the virtues of simplicity and strong faith, the joys of childhood, the festive holidays of the church year; and throughout her career she was attracted to folksong, particularly to Early American folk elements.

Her music background as a child was, by her own account, fairly haphazard. Often she seemed to have transformed challenges into strengths. Difficulties with her vision from a very early age seemed to have helped sharpen an exceptional musical ear. At the age of 9 the young Katherine fell from a horse and the injury to her arm, which never healed well, effectively ended formal piano lessons. However, this left her free to do the thing she most loved, to play by ear for hours on end; and in all probability it was during this period that she developed the fluency for keyboard arrangement that would serve her so handsomely in later years.

Two musicians were of major influence when K. K. Davis was a student in her 20s. One was Thomas Whitney Surette of Concord, the English-born educator whose lifelong passion was to improve the quality of music in public schools. Through Surette, K. K. Davis developed her interest in music for treble choir and her concern with practicality in musical composition and arranging. ("Will it work?" she so often asked her music editors about her newest compositions.)

The other great influence was that of Nadia Boulanger, the famous French pedagogue whose emphasis on clear voice leadings, well-spaced sonorities and refinement of harmonic idiom helped Davis develop a personal musical language. There has always been a certain French overlay to Davis' harmonic palette; the use of 7ths and 9ths, for example, though mild enough, are modernisms which continually freshen a tonal idiom that, in the hands of others, can be quite routine.

Galaxy Music Corporation has always considered itself one of K. K. Davis' major publishers. She brought her first composition to us in 1937, an SSA arrangement of the folksong *Barbara Allen*. Over the years the company published 122 of her compositions and arrangements, most of these, to her (and our) credit, remain in print. Many of our K. K. Davis publications became enormously popular, such as her setting of the Missouri folksong *Deaf Old Woman*, with its comic punching; or her stirring arrangement of the English carol *As It Fell Upon a Night*; or the adroit transcriptions of Bach's *Sheep May Safely Graze*; the Easter processional *Riding to Jerusalem*; the sturdy anthem on the Old 124th *Thou Who Wast God*. She was at home in all genres secular to sacred, earthy to celestial.

For more about Katherine K. Davis, visit [this link](#).



Sheep May Safely Graze Quiz

Circle the best answer:

1. *Who composed Sheep May Safely Graze?*

- A. Claudio Monteverdi
- B. George Frideric Handel
- C. Johann Sebastian Bach
- D. Antonio Vivaldi

2. *What does the word "Baroque" mean?*

- A. rebirth
- B. oddly shaped pearl
- C. broken
- D. confidence

3. *Which of the following is a characteristic of Baroque music?*

- A. terraced dynamics
- B. basso continuo
- C. ornamentation
- D. all of the above

4. *What does "D.C." stand for in music?*

- A. da capo
- B. final
- C. very quiet
- D. slow down

5. *What is the texture of Sheep May Safely Graze?*

- A. monophonic
- B. homophonic
- C. polyphonic
- D. fugue



hey there!

We're Colleen & Coty

Coty Raven Morris is currently the Visiting Assistant Professor of Choir, Music Education, and Social Justice at Portland State University. Prior to this, she was the Director of Choirs at Crosby High School in the Houston area and has served as the Outreach Choir Director at the MSU Community Music School and Music Director at Grand Ledge United Methodist Church.

A newly published author and composer, Morris is a sought after clinician and speaker across the country. She has recently served as the Clinician and Headliner for Florida ACDA, Washington MEA, and Minnesota ACDA as well as the Keynote speaker for the city of Lake Oswego's Juneteenth festival.

Coty is the Founder of *Being Human Together*, a budding community rooted in music education striving to normalize difficult topics in our field through conversation and connection. BHT seeks to discuss traditionally taboo topics like mental health, systemic oppression, diversity, and inclusivity.

Music enthusiast, choral educator, and life-long learner, **Dr. Colleen McNickle** is Assistant Professor of Music Education at Arkansas State University, where she teaches undergraduate and graduate music education courses and conducts Scarlet Voices and the Singing Statesmen. With a PhD in Music Education and Choral Cognate from Michigan State University, Colleen's scholarly interests include music educator wellness and interdisciplinary choral education. Colleen previously taught middle school and high school choirs, piano, ukulele, and music theory in Illinois.

An active clinician, Colleen has conducted choirs and presented research and practice sessions regionally, nationally, and internationally. Colleen is the founder and author of *Inspired Choir*, a blog for choir leaders, singers, and enthusiasts.



Our paths first crossed as we pursued graduate degrees as Michigan State University. Through numerous choral literature classes, conducting lessons, and choir rehearsals, we bonded over our appreciation for choral music education with a purpose. Together, we have published an article in Choral Journal, presented at state and national conferences, and supported each other via our weekly Zoom work calls.

Now, we have paired up to bring you the resources that we wish we had when we taught elementary, middle school, and high school choral ensembles. We have personally selected each piece of music in this curriculum series and look forward to seeing you bring these curricula to life in your own classrooms!

Let us know how it goes by contacting us at the links below!

let's get social!



Similar Guides



RECONCILE

Examine the role of reconciliation with your choral communities via Kyle Pederson's *Reconcile*.

Objectives of this curriculum guide include arranging a narration to accompany performance, articulating the historical and cultural contexts of Swahili language and sing the language with appropriate vowel shapes, and conceptualizing choral creations.

[**CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE**](#)

WHEN THE EARTH STANDS STILL

Examine the relationships that root and shelter us with Don Macdonald's *When the Earth Stands Still*.

Objectives of this curriculum guide include singers making musical decisions regarding lyrics, mood, tempo, expression, learning process, etc., reflect on and make personal the lyrics of *When the Earth Stands Still*, and researching and presenting information about contemporary choral composers.

[**CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE**](#)



SOUND THE TRUMPET

Begin your set with a grand fanfare: Henry Purcell's *Sound the Trumpet* as arranged by Alfred Moffat and Rollo Dilworth.

Objectives of this curriculum guide include investigating Baroque characteristics within *Sound the Trumpet*, singing with a tone appropriate to the composition, interpreting lyrics and intent, explaining the difference between a composer and arranger, and creating a simple arrangement utilizing familiar musical materials.

[**CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE**](#)