



By Rebecca O-G Eaddy | readdy@detroitopera.org

| www.rebeccaaddy.com | <https://www.linkedin.com/in/rebeccaaddy/>

The Choir Before the Choir — Key Concepts & Quick Wins

Why It Matters

Before students ever join a formal choir, they're learning whether their voice is **welcome, heard, and respected**. Your general music room sets the tone—literally—for future ensemble success.

“Belonging must come before blending.”



WHAT'S HAPPENING VOCALLY (AGES 8–12)

- ✓ **Range Expansion:** Students begin accessing more of their vocal register
- ✓ **Vocal Independence:** Growing pitch control, willingness to solo, lead, or echo
- ✓ **Ensemble Awareness:** Learning to listen across the room, follow phrasing & breath

This is the *entry point* for choral readiness—without the pressure of performance.



CHOIR MOMENTS IN GENERAL MUSIC

- ✓ Use **call-and-response** to build leadership + echo skills
- ✓ Incorporate **rounds, canons, partner songs** for part-singing prep
- ✓ Practice **“choral posture,” group breathing**, and non-verbal cue following
- ✓ Teach **emotion in phrasing** through movement + reflection

“A choir moment can be 5 minutes. It's not about time—it's about intention.”



QUICK WINS FOR TOMORROW

Use a **daily vocal affirmation** (posted or echoed)

Try a **“Movement Mirror”** warmup to teach phrasing

Ask students: *“What does this song want to tell us?”*