

Love Never Fails

Love Never Fails

Reginal Wright

Curriculum Guide

For Choir Teachers, By Choir Teachers

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<https://www.ecspublishing.com/curriculum>



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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 *Love Never Fails* that we have addressed within this curriculum guide.

Students will be able to...

Describe and identify the scalar patterns present in *Love Never Fails*, comfortably and knowledgeably performing any moments of dissonance within the scalar patterns.

notes

Students will be able to...

Articulate and accurately perform the differences between eighth note triplets, quarter note triplets, and dotted rhythms.

Students will be able to...

Identify, define, and put into practice vocabulary terms and musical instructions from *Love Never Fails*.

Students will be able to...

Examine the role of “love” in the lyrics of *Love Never Fails* and create action plans to center love in every day interactions.

Students will be able to...

Analyze the lyrics of *Love Never Fails*, articulate the meaning and intent of the piece, and express that meaning using facial expressions.

Students will be able to...

Assume the role of a composer as they determine lyrics for a piece, arranging works by multiple authors from multiple sources.

Teaching Sequence

Just one way you might consider teaching *Love Never Fails* to your ensemble:

	Teaching Suggestion	Time	Measures
day 1	Introduce Warm-up One . Examine mm. 7-11 for the scalar pattern. Learn mm. 7-11, paying special attention to the dynamics and bringing out the scale.	15 minutes	mm. 7-11
day 2	Introduce Warm-Up Two . All sight read melody mm. 15-30. Then, read mm. 15-37 on own parts. Introduce Activity One .	25 minutes	mm. 15-37
day 3	Sight read mm. 41-48. Combine with mm. 7-37. Share outcomes of Activity One .	30 minutes	mm. 7-48
day 4	Introduce Warm-Up Two . Sight read mm. 49-55. Review mm. 7-55, rehearse transitions between keys. Complete Activity Two .	50 minutes	mm. 7-55
day 5	Review Warm-Up One in the key of E major. Sight read then rehearse mm. 71-end.	30 minutes	mm. 71-end
day 6	Review Warm-Up Three . Sight read mm. 57-71. Rehearse transitions between sections. Read full piece.	30 minutes	Full Piece
day 7 + beyond	Continue rehearsing full piece, paying special attention to scalar patterns, triplet accuracy, part independence, and facial expression. Complete and share Activity Three .	TBD	Full Piece

Love Never Fails Warm-Ups

Teach concepts specific to this piece by using these original warm-ups:

Scalar Exploration

warm-up 1



Sing a G major scale on solfege or a neutral syllable. Then, instruct small groups of singers to stop and hold different notes of the scale, creating cluster chords. Finally, instruct singers to sing the scale as far as they want then choose any note to hold. Try improvising with different tempos, vowels, and articulations.

Playing with Triplets

warm-up 2



Sightread on counting system of your choice. Step and sway every two beats. Distinguish the difference in feel between the triplets and the dotted notes. Once singers are comfortable with the rhythm, instruct them to find lyrics from *Love Never Fails* that utilize the rhythms from this warm-up. Sing through several versions.

Chromatic Key Changes

warm-up 3



Sight sing on solfege or neutral syllables. Ask singers to identify the relationship between their first and second pitches. Discuss the relationships between the keys and allow singers to dialogue about their approach to finding the second pitch in each example. Find each of these chord progressions in the piece, then rehearse the key changes.

Love Never Fails Vocabulary

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

Term	Definition
<i>cresc. poco a poco</i>	Italian for get louder "little by little" or "gradually."
Quarter Note Triplet	Three-quarter notes are sung during the same amount of time as two-quarter notes or a single half note.
Arpeggiated Chord	Also called a broken chord or rolled chord, this is a chord with notes played in rapid succession, with each note sustained as the others are played.
Slur	Indicates to sing the notes without separation (legato).
Tie	Indicated by a curved line connecting two notes of the same pitch. Sing the note for the combined rhythmic value of the notes as if they were one.
<i>rit.</i>	Gradually decrease the tempo.
<i>a tempo</i>	Return to the previous tempo.
Double flat	Lower the pitch by two half steps.
Accidental	A sign placed immediately next to a note to show that the note must be changed in pitch.
<i>rubato</i>	A tempo marking that indicates to sing with flexibility and freedom in tempo. Italian for "robbed time."
//	Caesura. Instructs the singer to pause or break in between phrases. It is an unmetered break, so could be as short as a breath or as long as a full pause.
<i>morendo</i>	Gradually decrescendo and ritardando. Italian for "dying away."

Love is a Verb: 6-Step Activity

Reflect on the lyrics of Reginal Wright's Love Never Fails, identify the message, and create actions based on the qualities described.

2 Focus In

Choose one or more qualities of love from the poem that resonate with you, such as patience, kindness, or humility.

4 Document the Love

Over the course of one week, document what it's like to practice these actions out loud. How do your peers react? How does your family react? How do you feel when you practice these steps?

6 Work Together

Design a collective poster with all of your classmates with all of the suggestion of how love can be shown as a verb!

Analyze 1

Read through the lyrics of *Love Never Fails*. Discuss how the lyrics share the qualities of love, such as patience, kindness, humility, and forgiveness.

Words to Action 3

For each quality selected, come up with three actions that could be immediately implemented and/or practiced over the next coming days by you and your peers to demonstrate love as a verb. Make a list of all of your possibilities.

Present Your Findings 5

Present your findings in poster, video, or presentation format to your classmates and discuss together how you feel and if you have felt a shift in your environment.

important note:

There are many types of love: familial, community, romantic, etc. Consider doing a deep dive on the different types of love!

Be Expressive

A Lyrics & Facial Expression Game



MATERIALS

- *Love Never Fails* octavo
- Space to move around
- Hat or bucket with four note cards with the following words: Accurate Expression; Opposite Expression; No Expression; Too Much Expression

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Read through the lyrics of *Love Never Fails* as a class. Discuss the overall emotions of the piece and singers feel their faces should convey said emotion. (5-10 minutes)
2. Singers split into four groups and choose a card out of the hat/bucket - keep it a secret. Once they have their instruction, they should work as a group to read through the lyrics and agree upon facial expressions. (5-10 minutes)
3. Each group performs their interpretation and the rest of the ensemble guesses what their expression was.
4. Speak as a group about what expressions worked, which were inappropriate, and how you want to approach expression within *Love Never Fails* as an ensemble.

LEARNING OUTCOME:

Students will utilize facial expressions to portray the emotions of *Love Never Fails*

CLASS TIME:

45 MINUTES



LYRICAL CRAFTING

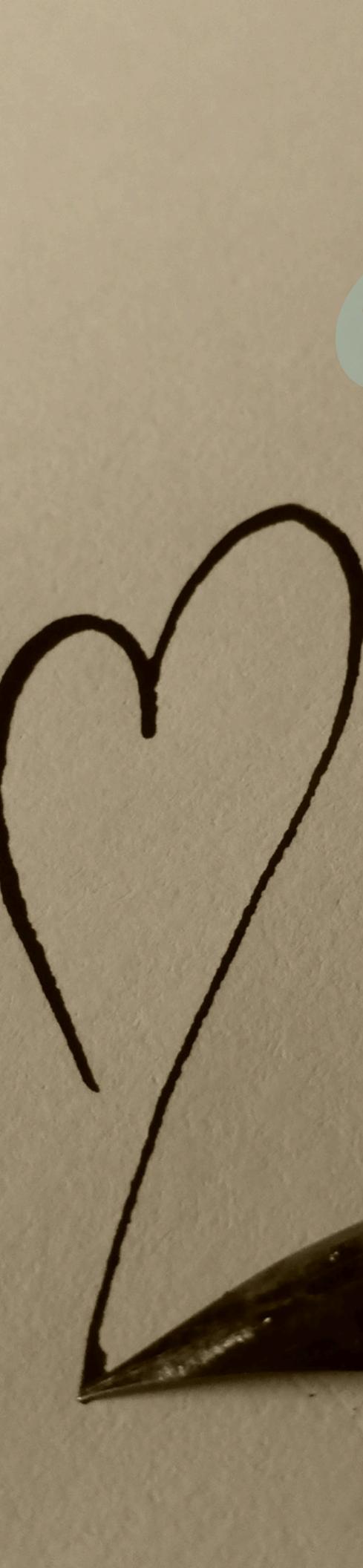
Materials

- *Love Never Fails* octavo
- Laptop/Tablet with internet access
- Paper, Google Doc, or Word Doc on/in which to craft lyrics
- If possible, access to poetry books in school library.

*To craft the lyrics for this piece, composer Reginal Wright utilized text from a sacred source. Your challenge with this assignment will be to first examine the text in *Love Never Fails* and then to find two complementary texts from another source that speak to you musically.*

instructions

1. Examine the original texts that Reginal Wright used to craft the text of *Love Never Fails*. Then answer the following questions:
 - What audiences does this text speak to? What kind of love is being portrayed?
 - What adaptations did the composer make to the texts in order to prepare the text for this piece?
2. Assume the role of a composer who is just starting to conceptualize a piece. What is a theme that you would want to explore with your composition?
3. Find five texts (poems, quotes, texts from short stories, or the news, etc.) that speak to your chosen theme. In 1-2 sentences, explain how each text plays to your theme.
4. Narrow down your selections to 2-3 source texts, and adapt them so they would be viable for a choral work. Aim for at least one verse and one chorus. Consider adding a second verse and a bridge.
5. When you have completed your text, reflect on the following:
 - Are you pleased with your final product? Why or why not?
 - How does this text address your theme?
 - Who would this text be appropriate for? What sort of choir?
 - What musical characteristics do you imagine your composition would feature?



“Protects,
trusts,
hopes,
perseveres.

—1 Corinthians 13

About the Composer

Reginal Wright is a distinguished educator, conductor, and composer with over 20 years of experience in public school education. His dedication to teaching has earned him numerous accolades, including the Outstanding Teacher Award, Who's Who Among America's Teachers, and the prestigious Secondary Educator of the Year Award.

Reginal's musical journey has taken him across Europe and the United States, where he has performed and conducted with great acclaim. He is a sought-after clinician for both middle and high school choirs, frequently leading honor choirs across the nation. As a conductor, his choirs consistently achieve top honors, including sweepstakes in concert and sight-reading contests, and are regularly recognized with "Outstanding in Class" awards at state and national music festivals.

As a composer, Reginal's works have resonated with choirs of all levels—from middle school to professional ensembles. His compositions have been showcased by All-State Choirs and at prestigious conventions. Notably, his piece "Invictus" was performed at the 2021 ACDA National Convention and by the 2022 Texas All-State Tenor-Bass Choir. His powerful compositions "Where are the Bodies" and "Opportunity" were both featured at Carnegie Hall, with "Where are the Bodies" performed in collaboration with the renowned Dallas-based Turtle Creek Chorale and "Opportunity" presented in 2023 by the Tomball Memorial High School Choir.

Reginal's compositions are published and distributed by leading music publishers, including BriLee, Carl Fisher, Graphite, Hal Leonard, Oxford University Press, Santa Barbara Music Publishing, MorningStar, Walton Choral Music, and his own Reginal Wright Music.

He holds both a Bachelor's and Master's of Music Education from Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, Texas. Recently, Reginal served as the head choral director at Mansfield High School, where his leadership led to significant achievements, including the Mansfield High School Varsity Treble Choir's selection as an invited choir for the SW-ACDA Convention in 2012 and 2022, and the ACDA National Convention in 2023. In 2018, the Varsity Tenor-Bass Choir was honored as a Texas Music Educators Association Invited Choir.

Currently, Reginal is part of the esteemed choral music faculty at Baylor University, where he continues to inspire and shape the next generation of musicians. He resides in Arlington, Texas, with his wife, Renetta, their son, Gabrien, daughter, Reece, and their beloved Yorkie, Cooper. For more information, visit ReginalWright.com.

Love Never Fails Quiz

Circle the best answer:

Who composed Love Never Fails?

- A. Brandon A. Boyd
- B. Christi Jones
- C. Johann Sebastian Bach
- D. Reginal Wright

According to the text, Love is ...

- A. easily angered
- B. boastful
- C. prideful
- D. kind

If the chord is arpeggiated, that means it is...

- A. in a different language
- B. broken and played in succession
- C. divided into parts
- D. held at a fermata

What does "rit" mean?

- A. increase in dynamic
- B. to slow down
- C. to speed up
- D. gradually decrease the tempo

A set of quarter note triplets occur over _____ in 4/4 time

- A. 1 whole note
- B. 1 quarter note
- C. 2 quarter notes
- D. 3 eighth notes



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!



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 a music educator living in Michigan. 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 undergraduate and graduate music education courses and choirs in Arkansas and middle school choirs, 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.

Similar Guides



WHEN OUR VOICES RISE

Explore the connections between music and advocacy with Stuart Chapman Hill's *When Our Voices Rise*.

Objectives of this curriculum guide include reading and performing pop-style rhythms, describing and demonstrating the difference between choral and pop vocal production, and conceptualizing and advocating for a collectively agreed upon goal as a community.

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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.

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HORIZON

Share hopes and dreams as you learn Emily Crocker and John Jacobson's *Horizon*.

Objectives of this curriculum guide include creating collages of words and images that inspire singers to reach for their hopes and dreams, reflecting on the individuals who help support singers as they attempt to accomplish their dreams, and sharing aspects of the composer's life and works, drawing connections to *Horizon*.

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