Chapter Two

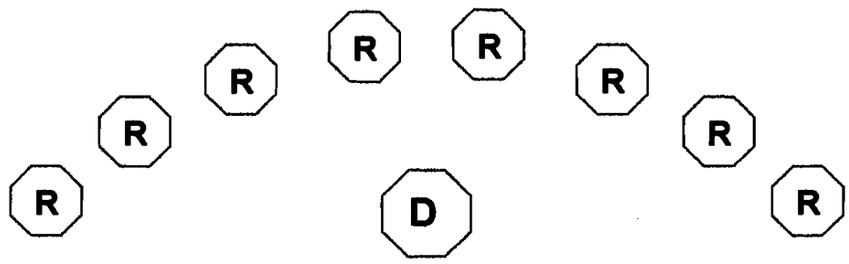
Direct cueing - an effective method
Direct cueing single line melodies
Direct cueing - two part harmony
Accompaniment options

++

Direct cueing - an effective method

The simplicity of direct cueing, a process in which the director points to the individual ringer at the time the bell is to be rung, is a very simple process, but it's effectiveness and value is sometimes underestimated. For the music therapist and special educator the challenge is to make this very simple method work in the context of various degrees of motor ability, attention span, and visual impairment.

For visual cues to be effective, the ideal arrangement is for the ringers (**R**) to be arranged in a semicircle around the director (**D**).



In most situations direct cues should be accompanied with eye contact with the intended ringer. When one ringer has visual impairment that gets in the way of a direct cue, it is usually possible to have neighboring ringer touch that person to indicate a cue.

Once a direct cue group is established, it is best to have them sit (or stand) in the same position for each rehearsal and performance. If each person can keep the same bell assignment, they will begin to anticipate the places in the

melody where each bell rings. In music therapy groups the stability of groups is not always possible due to transfers, illness, or the effects of aging.

Direct cueing single line melodies

Because the director cannot effectively make eye contact and/or point to more than one individual at a time, single line melodies (usually with some sort of accompaniment) are most effective for this method. The director should look for familiar tunes that move in slower note values (usually quarter notes and larger). It is also necessary to seek melodies with a melodic range that does not exceed the number of ringers available.

Sacred melodies that have been used effectively:

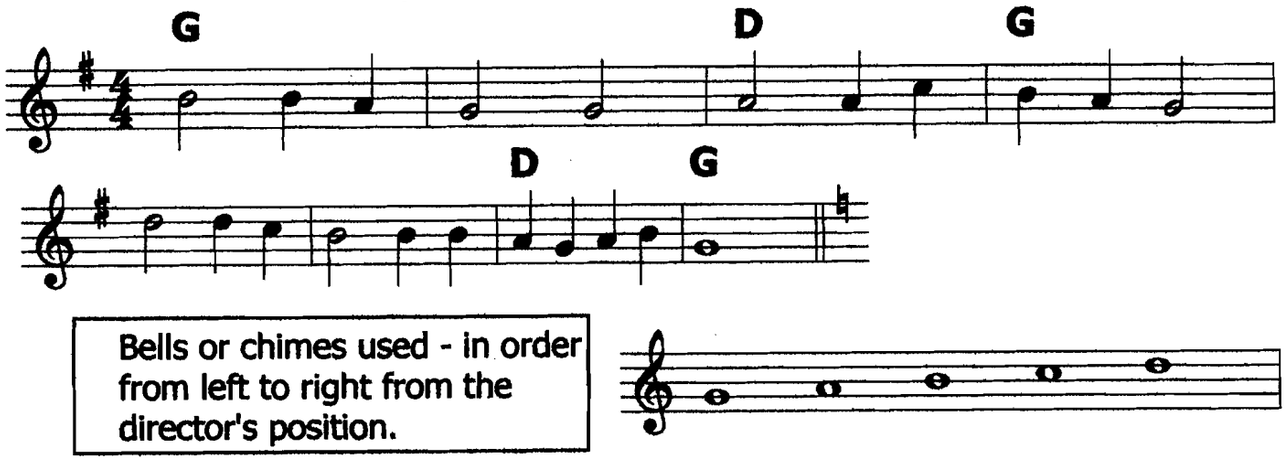
Song	Bells (#)
Kum-Ba-Ya	6
Precious Memories	6
O God, Our Help In Ages Past	7
Rock of Ages	7
Jesus Shall Reign	8
My Faith Look Up To Thee	8
Sweet Hour of Prayer	8
How Great Thou Art	9

Secular melodies that have been used effectively:

Song	Bells (#)
Go, Tell Aunt Rhodie	5
Bye, Bye Blues	7
Edelweiss	7
Now Is The Hour	7
Home On The Range	8
Shenandoah	8
Born Free	9
Country Roads	9
Way Down Upon The Swanee River	9

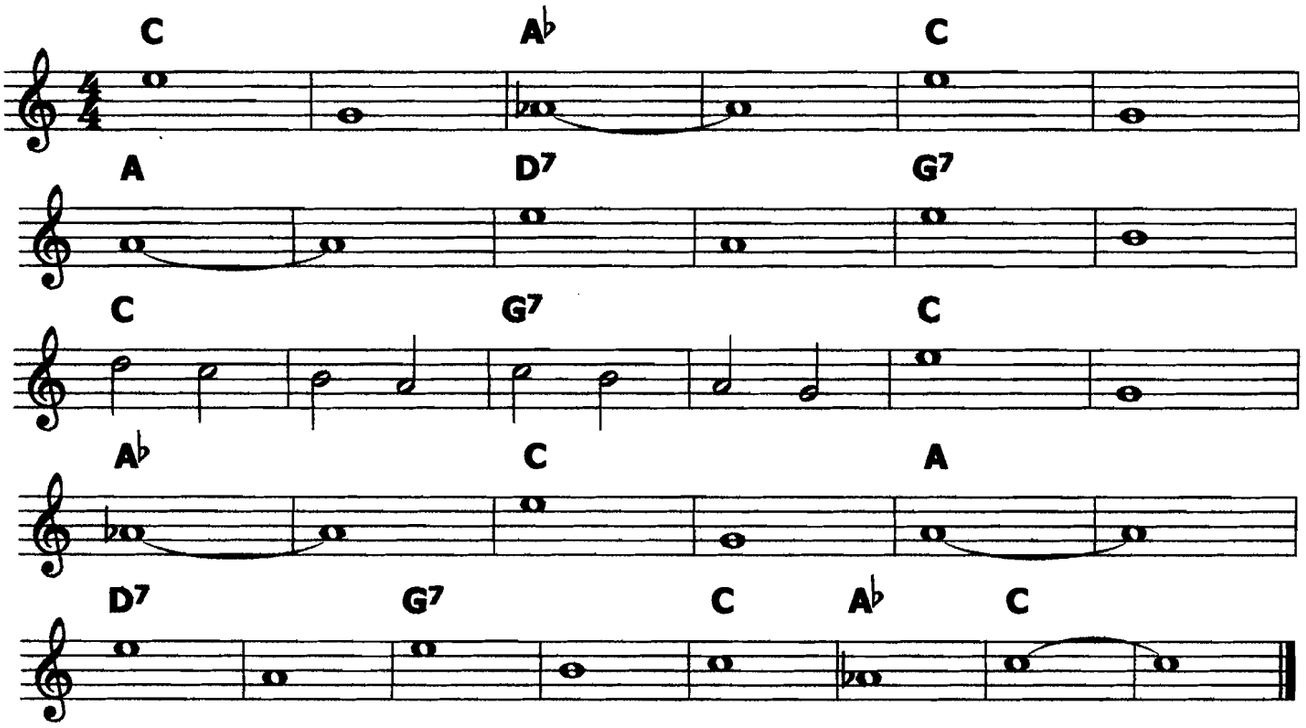
Below are two single line melodies for bells or chimes that may be used with direct cueing. Position of players in is given with each.

Go, Tell Aunt Rhodie

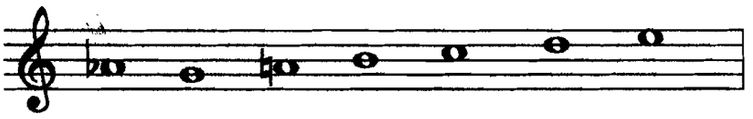


Bells or chimes used - in order from left to right from the director's position.

Bye, Bye Blues



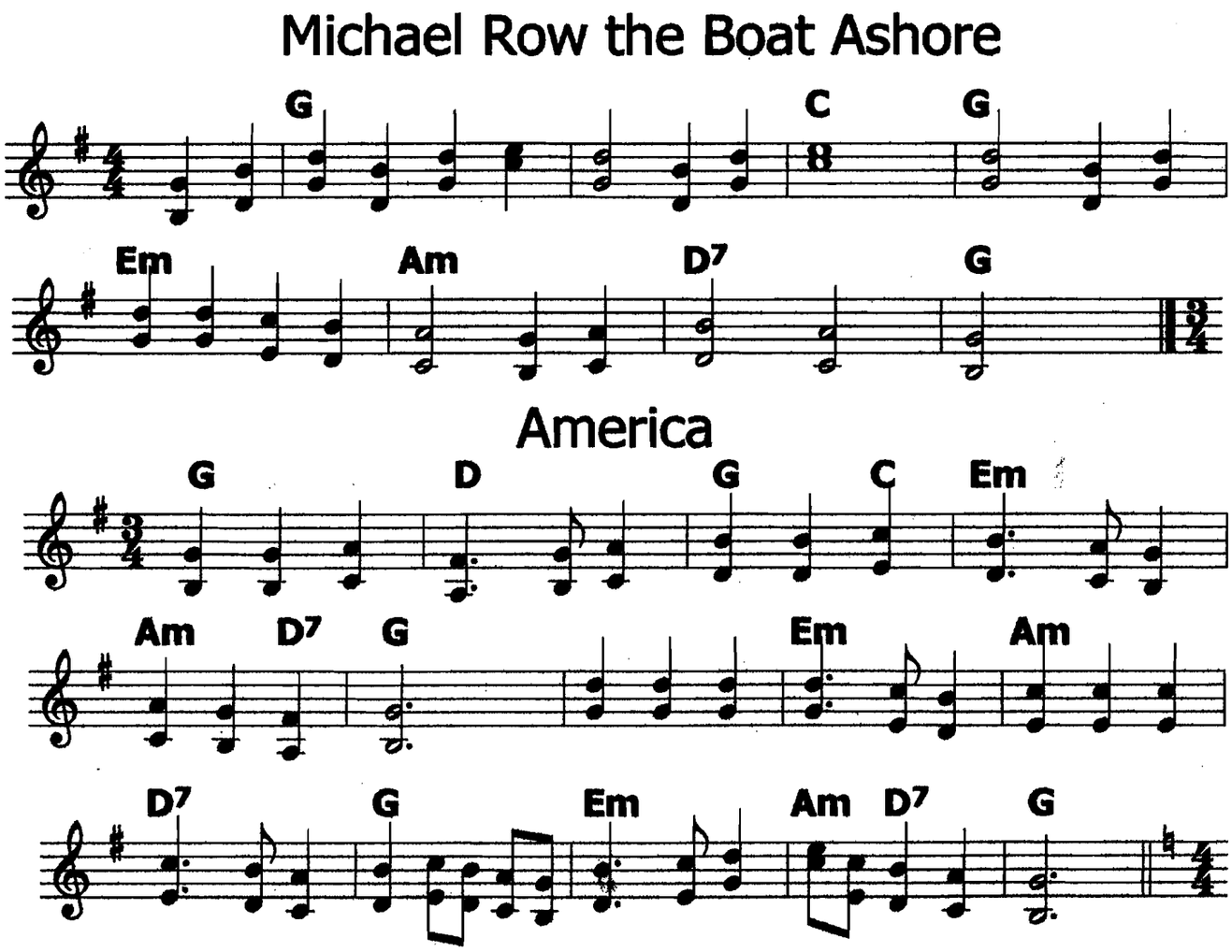
Bells or chimes used - in order from left to right from the director's position.



Direct cueing - two part harmony

If participants are able to play two bells or chimes simultaneously, a two part effect may be possible on some melodies. This **may require more than one two octave set of bells or chimes,** because some notes are used by more than one player.

In the examples below the melody is the highest pitch played by each ringer. You may combine bells and chimes, but one should be used for the melody and the other for harmony. You can experiment with different combinations to find the one that suits you best. Position melody notes from highest to lowest (left to right) for easier cueing. The arrangements may be played with or without accompaniment.

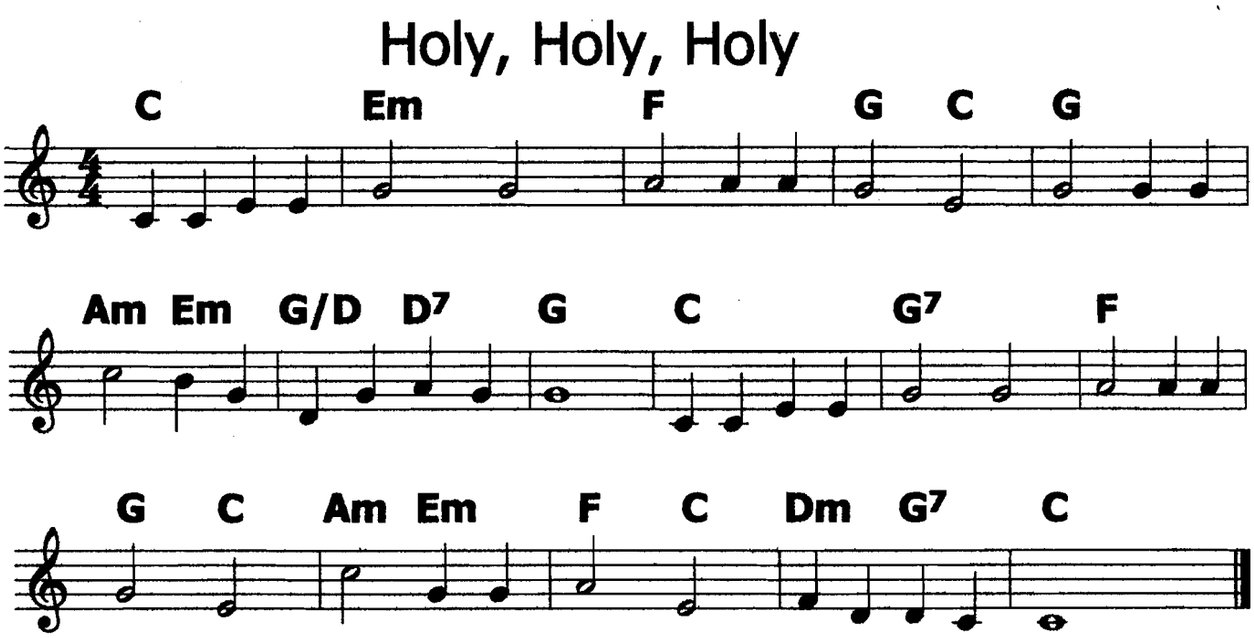


Accompaniment options

If a special needs choir uses single line (or even two part) melodies, the presence of an accompaniment is highly recommended, because:

(1) The accompaniment provides a more complete musical experience for the ringers.
(2) The accompaniment provides a **beat** that encourages the ringers to respond on time.
(3) It provides another bit of assistance in presenting ringers in the "best light possible".

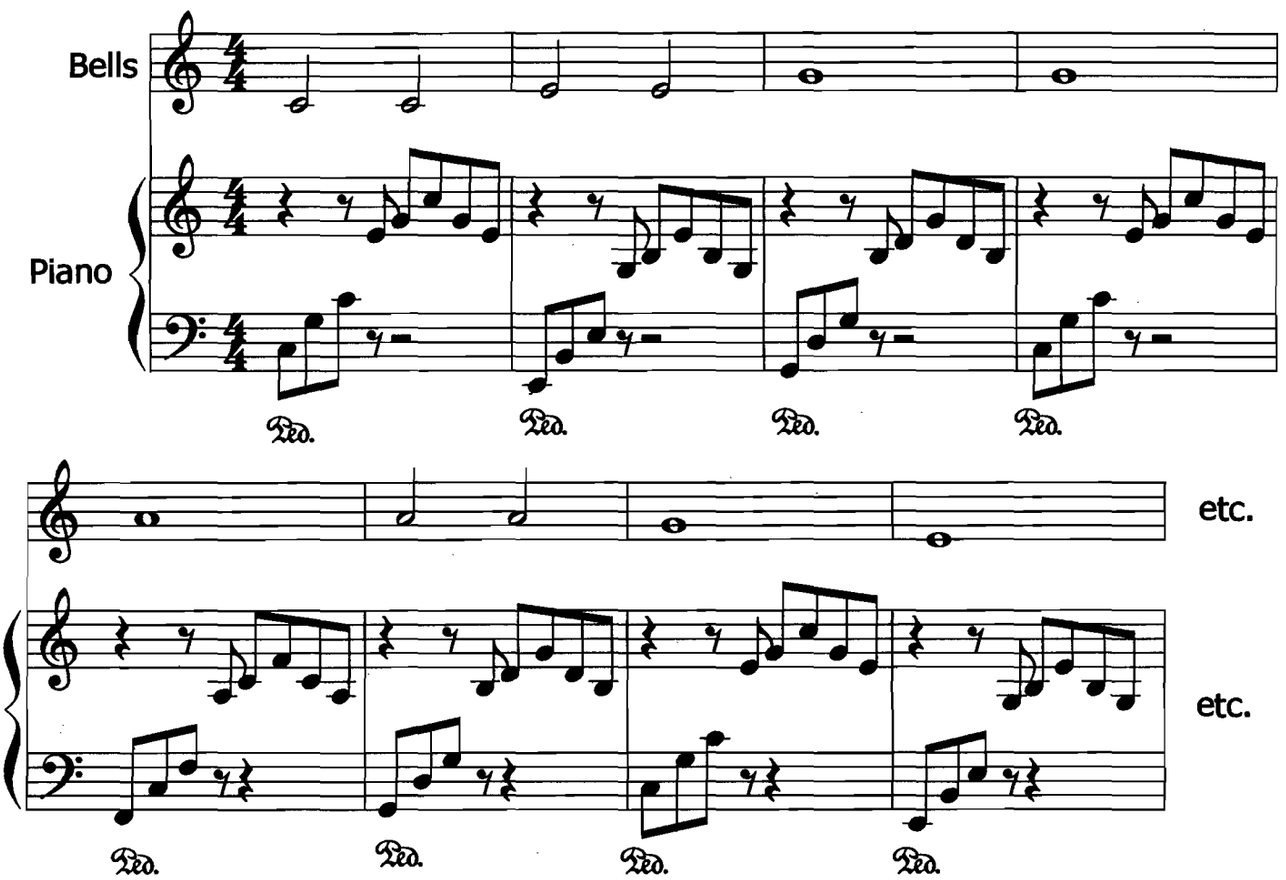
An accompaniment also creates the opportunity to tunes usually heard in faster note values in a slower medium that is acceptable. The familiar hymn "Holy, Holy, Holy" is usually sung or played with the quarter note as the basic rhythmic value, as in the example below:



With the addition of an accompaniment moving in eighth notes, the tune may be played in an "augmented" version with the half note as the basic rhythm. An example of this is shown on the next page.

Holy, Holy, Holy

arr. Pinson



Note that the harmony in the example above is not the same as that used on page 10. In this example I have used chords that allow the harmony to change on each measure. This makes the accompaniment more interesting than to have chords repeated. Repeating chords is not wrong, but this harmony has more motion in hopes of creating a more fulfilling experience for the ringers and the audience as well.

Most capable pianists can improvise an accompaniment similar to the one shown above. If the therapist works alone, there are electronic keyboards that allow the storage of accompaniments on a disk drive or sound card. If you have access to one of these, you can pre-program the accompaniment for your bell choir. This is not a complicated process. The keyboards are very user-friendly.