

## BARBERSHOP BASICS #2

### Learning Music

You have just been given a piece or more of new music to learn. We all love getting new music to sing, but what is the process to learn it?

One of the quickest ways for you to begin learning the music is by learning tape or CD. If you are not given one, you may simply create one of your own:

- ❑ Ask your Section Leader to meet with you so that she may sing your part into your tape recorder or mp3 player outfitted with a mic. (If she is unavailable, your director can identify who else can do this for you.)
- ❑ If you can read music and have a keyboard handy, without a learning tape, you can learn your words and music. You may also decide to create your own learning tape by recording yourself singing and/or playing your part.
- ❑ If you can read music and do not have a keyboard or learning tape, you may want to find a friend who does have a keyboard or again, go back to your section leader and ask her to sing into your tape recorder either on her own or during a run through so that you have something to start with.

Once you have your learning tracks on tape or CD:

- ❑ You will want to have a tape or CD player handy to play it. Be aware that some prepared learning tapes have all parts on them. If that is the case, make sure you are listening to the correct part to learn and not another part.
- ❑ You may first want to play the tape alone to hear what your part sounds like and not even look at the music.
- ❑ You will then want to make sure you know where your part is and follow along reading the music (lyrics) as the tape plays.
- ❑ If you can read music, you'll be looking at the notes as well as the lyrics. If you cannot read music, concentrate on the lyrics but do check out your note line. You'll want to look to see if your notes are going up or down, where the rests are (yay – you can breathe there) and if there are any jumps you need to look out for.
- ❑ Now it's time to sing along – I highly suggest doing this phrase by phrase and when you're comfortable with several, rewind and sing as many phrases through as you can with no errors. (notes or words). You will find your own best way to do this.
- ❑ Some find it helpful to sit down and, without looking, write all the lyrics out to help the memorizing of the words. It's easy, from this activity, to hone in on specific areas where your words are incorrect.
- ❑ Make sure that you have written down (in pencil) any breath marks that your director has identified and any changes to interpretation. For those of you who don't know what changes to interpretation could be – they are anything that changes the song from the way it is written on the page. This could be tempo changes, rhythm changes, note changes, word changes, etc. Your director will identify those for the chorus as you learn the song.
- ❑ Have fun! Learning new music is an exciting and rewarding process.