Chapter 25

Solo Vocal Music

The first twenty-four chapters of this course have introduced you to the principles of braille music transcription in single-line instrumental format. Now you will study the line-by-line format for solo vocal music.

Printed music for voice includes the lyrics, the melody, and the keyboard accompaniment. In choral music, all the voice parts (SATB) and the accompaniment are aligned vertically. In braille, the vocal solo or choral part is transcribed separately from the accompaniment and the other voice parts. The accompaniment, if desired, is brailled separately in its own format, which will be presented in Part 2 of this course.

25.1 The Line-by-Line Parallel

In line-by-line format, each line of text is exactly paired with a line of music—each note representing a syllable of the text. This pair of lines is called a “parallel.” The line of words begins in cell 1. Below this is the line of music, beginning in cell 3. As in single-line instrumental format, the first note of every line of music must have an octave mark. No attempt is made to align the words and music within the parallel.

Uncontracted UEB is used for the words and will be used for all examples, drills and exercises in this course. Contracted UEB is permissible, however, at the request of an individual user, or in hymnals, chants, and elementary school materials.

Example 25.1.1

Are you going to Scarborough Fair? Parsley, sage, rosemary and thyme;

Download the full document for a better understanding of the content. If you have any questions or need further assistance, feel free to ask.
To facilitate memorization and understanding, the transcriber must carefully choose the point of division between parallels. When possible, conform the text line to a logical phrasing of the words. Always try to keep the number of words per line relatively short so that the braille reader can readily match the syllables to the music. As a result, the music line may frequently end with a partial measure.

Example 25.1.2

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If God will, thou shalt wake when morning is nigh: If God will, thou shalt wake when morning is nigh.
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When the text is difficult to divide into phrases, end the text at a place in the music that will be easy to follow, for example, at the end of a measure or after a whole beat.

Either text or music may be continued into a run-over line or lines, but run-overs of both text and music must not occur in the same parallel. Each run-over line begins in cell 5. Run-overs are exceptional—normally each parallel contains only one braille line of words and one braille line of music.
Example 25.2.1

The lines of the parallel must not be separated. If a parallel at the bottom of a braille page cannot be completed on that page, move the entire parallel to the top of the next braille page.

The parallel must include relevant indications of expression and execution, even if the printed score shows them in the accompaniment or at some other point outside the printed vocal staff.

25.2 More About the Lyrics

The hyphens that are used in print to separate the syllables of a word are not shown in braille, except for nonsense syllables or words which require unusual pronunciation. Occasionally, a word line may need to be divided between syllables if a new section of music or rehearsal letter begins on a partial word. In this case, the literary hyphen (dots 36) is used according to normal UEB practice.

In an English-language context, accented letters in foreign words are shown by the UEB symbols. In a foreign-language context, the accented letters and unique punctuation of that language are used. Any such characters that are used in the transcription must be listed on the Special Symbols page.
25.3 Page Turns

Wherever a print page turnover occurs, it is shown in the music line, separated by spaces on both sides. In vocal music, the print page turnover sign is always followed by the number of the new page, without a space. No attempt is made to show the page turn in the word line.

Example 25.3.1

```
\begin{music}
\textit{going to Scar-bor-ough Fair?}
\textbf{going to \textsc{scar}bor\textsc{ough} \textsc{fair}:}
\textit{parsley, sage, rose-mar-y and thyme;}
\textbf{parsley, sage, rosemary and thyme:}
\end{music}
```

25.4 Slurs and Phrasing

Slurs in vocal transcriptions are different from slurs in instrumental transcriptions. Bracket slurs are only used to indicate phrasing, even if the phrase consists of only two or three notes. Simple slurs, however, are used constantly, whenever two or more notes pertain to a single syllable. Sometimes such slurring is specifically marked in print; sometimes it is merely implied by the placement of the syllables. The syllabic slurring must always be shown in braille so that the braille reader can correctly match the syllables to the music. If a syllable has more than four notes, the simple slur is doubled after the first note and brailled once after the next-to-last note. When a syllabic slur coincides with a tie, the slur is brailled before the tie.

Example 25.4.1

```
\begin{music}
\textit{Amor \textit{vin-cit om-ni-a.}}
\end{music}
```
25.5 Repeated Words or Phrases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opening sign</th>
<th>Closing sign</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One repetition</td>
<td>:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two repetitions</td>
<td>: :</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three repetitions, etc.</td>
<td>: : :</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The text repeat sign for a word or phrase is brailled without intervening spaces, before and after the word or phrase to be repeated. All of the text and all of the associated music must be contained in the same parallel. If the beginning word of a repeated group of words is capitalized, show the capital letter after the opening text repeat sign and ignore all other differences within the repeated phrase. Punctuation differences are also ignored except for the final punctuation before the terminating text repeat sign.

When the text is repeated once, one repeat sign is used before it and one repeat sign is used after it.

Example 25.5.1

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Dance! Dance! Spin a-round. Dance a-round, dance a-round with me!___
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When the text is repeated twice, two successive repeat signs are placed before the text and one after it.

Example 25.5.2

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Dance, dance, dance a-round. Spin, spin, spin.
```
When the text is repeated more than twice, the text is preceded by a braille number and the text repeat sign to show the number of repetitions. A single repeat sign follows the text at the end. It is crucial to remember that the brailled number indicates the number of repetitions, not the total number of times the text is sung.

Example 25.5.3

If the lyrics are contracted for special transcriptions, the contracted word “in” or any word beginning or ending with “in” must not be used in a series of words, but may be used when the word “in” stands alone within the text.

25.6 Measure Numbers and Rehearsal References

Measure numbers are not routinely brailled in vocal transcriptions but can be very advantageous. They are particularly helpful when the words are repetitious, when the piece is long and complex, or when the singer is being assisted by a teacher or accompanist who is also using a braille score. A measure number at the beginning of a new section of music, or at the top of a new braille page, is also helpful.

Measure numbers are placed at the beginning of the word line. A single blank cell separates the measure number from the continuing text. As in single-line instrumental format, the measure number is followed by dot 3 if the measure is being continued from the previous parallel. It is not necessary to show a measure number for each parallel or to follow printed numbers that might occur at the beginning of each line.

A rehearsal reference marking that is an actual measure number is placed at the beginning of the word line and does not require word signs. A rehearsal marking that is either a letter or a sequential number must be placed in word signs at the margin above the word line of the parallel.
Example 25.6.1

\[\begin{align*}
\text{Of thee I sing!} & \quad \text{Land where my fathers died,} \\
\end{align*}\]

25.7 Braille and Print Repeat Devices

Part-measure and full-measure repeats and backward-numeral repeats may be used in the music lines of vocal music, as long as the original music and the repetition are contained in the same parallel. The repetitions of the music must of course be exact, including syllabic slurs. Measure-number repeats (forward-numeral repeats) are not used in vocal transcriptions.

The transcription must include the print repeat devices: forward-repeat and backward-repeat double bars, as well as da capo and dal segno repeats.

Example 25.7.1

\[\begin{align*}
\text{Hear the bells of old Town Hall ring: Bim, bom, bam, bom, bim, bom, bing.} \\
\end{align*}\]

25.8 Extracting a Voice Part from a Choral Score

Transcriptions of individual vocal parts are frequently requested for blind singers who are participating in church choirs, school choruses, community singing groups, or other ensembles. Such parts are transcribed in line-by-line format as if they were solos.

When extracting such a part from a choral score, the transcriber must meticulously include pagination, turnovers, rehearsal reference markings,
and details of expression and execution. The blind singer needs all this information, particularly because choral directors constantly refer to it in rehearsals.

When a tenor part is printed in the treble clef with or without a subscript "8," the music is transcribed according to the octave in which it is to be sung—transposed an octave lower than written.

Example 25.8.1
25.9 Proofreading Vocal Music Transcriptions

To effectively proofread (and transcribe) a vocal solo or extracted vocal part, think of the piece as if you were singing it. This strategy will help you to account for all the syllabic slurs, as well as logical divisions between parallels.

Edit both the text line and the music line carefully. Imagine that you are the braille-reading singer who is learning a completely new solo or choral part. Your transcription may well spell the difference between frustration and success!

25.10 Review of the Order of Signs

**Preceding the note:**
- forward-repeat sign
- first or second ending sign
- reminder tie
- simple word-sign expression or abbreviation
- line of continuation sign
- opening bracket slur
- music comma
- triplet or irregular-grouping sign
- larger or smaller value sign
- up-bow or down-bow
- mute sign
- accidental(s) for ornament (upper before lower)
- ornament
- signs of expression or execution that precede a note
  - (staccato or staccatissimo, accent, tenuto)
- accidental
- octave mark

**Following the note:**
- dot
- finger mark
- unmute (open sign)
- fractioning or tremolo sign
- fermata
- single slur, opening doubled slur
- closing bracket slur
- tie
- termination sign for line of continuation or "hairpin"
- breath mark
- terminal music comma
- double bar, backward-repeat sign, measure division, or in-accord
- music hyphen
Drills for Chapter 25
(Correct transcriptions of these drills are at the end of this chapter)

Drill 25.1

Moderato

I dream of Jean nie with the light brown hair,

Borne like a vapour on the summer air;

Drill 25.2

Baa, baa, black sheep, have you any wool? Yes, sir,

yes, sir, three bags full: One for my master and one for my
dame, and one for the naughty boy that lives in the lane.

Drill 25.3

Please transcribe the Alto part from the music in Example 25.8.1

Drill 25.4

With gusto

Scot land's burning! Scot land's burning! Look out! Look out!

Fire! Fire! Fire! Fire! Pour on water! Pour on water!

Drill 25.5

Christ the Lord is ris'n today, Alleluja!
Exercises for Chapter 25
(Submit the following exercises to your instructor in BRF file format)

Exercise 25.1

Joy to the world! The Lord is come; Let Earth receive her King; Let ev’ry heart prepare Him room.

Exercise 25.2

I am bound for the promised land, Bound for the promised land. Oh, who will come and go with me? I am bound for the promised land.

Exercise 25.3

Please transcribe the Soprano part from the music in Example 25.8.1

Exercise 25.4

Beautiful dreamer, wake unto me;
Starlight and dewdrops are waiting for thee.
Exercise 25.5

Are you sleeping, are you sleeping, Brother John,

Brother John? Morning bells are ringing,

Morning bells are ringing, Ding, dong, ding, ding, dong, ding.
Correct transcriptions of the Drills for Chapter 25

Drill No.1

Moderate: Um

I dream of Jeannie with the
green eyes,
Light brown hair, borne like a vapour
On the summer air.

Drill No.2

Black sheep, have you any wool?
Oh I do, I do.
Yes Sir! Sir! three bags full,
Oh I do, I do.
One for my master and one for my dame,
Oh I do, I do.
And one for the naughty boy that
Lives in the lane.

Drill No.3

With Ferrar, Luke

My country's skies are blue,
Emancipate me.
Sweet land of liberty:
Erected on High
Of thee I sing.
Pine and palm are

Land of the Pilgrims' pride:

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