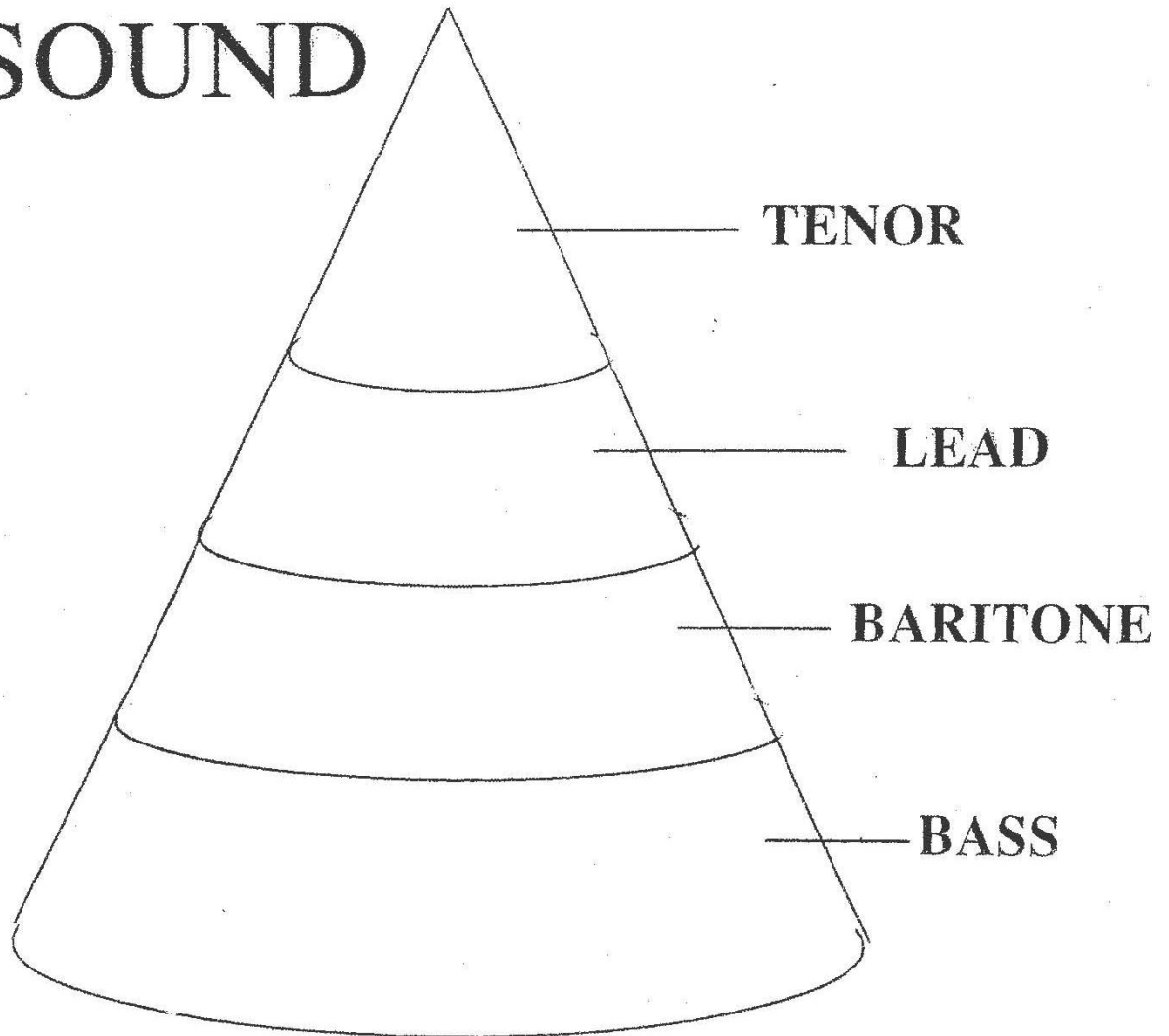
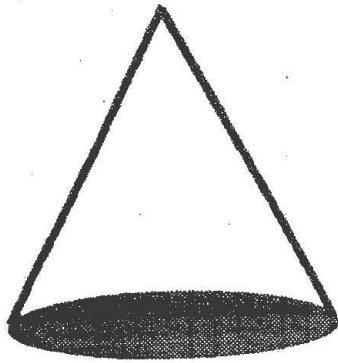


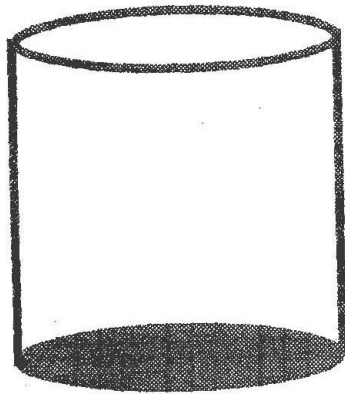
CONE SHAPED SOUND



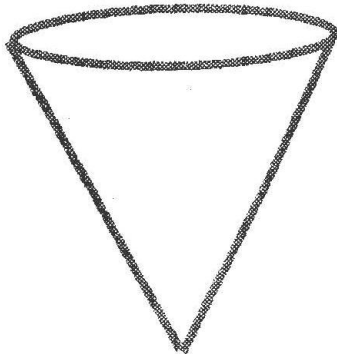
Shapes of Harmony



**Barbershop
Harmony**



**Choral (SATB)
Harmony**



**Jazz Vocal
Harmony**

Region 31 Education Class
 The Barbershop Style – Coning is More Than A Six Letter Word
 The Cone-Shaped Sound – Balance
 Nancy Field, CIF

May 2010
 Handout #2
 Page 1

DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS/CRITERIA OF BARBERSHOP HARMONY VOICE PARTS

Tenor Voice – Harmony Singer (Compares to Lyric Soprano)

- Light, clear, bell-like quality
- Vocal Range – E above Middle C to G in the second octave above Middle C
- Vocal Exercises – Middle C to A in the second octave above Middle C
- Little or no vibrato
- Absence of vocal strain in higher range
- Compliments the Lead (i.e. as opposed to singing melody in SATB music)
- Rarely sings at full dynamic capacity
- Voice part carries the easiest
- Utilizes little or no chest resonance
- May sing melody for a measure or two

Lead Voice – Melody Singer (Compares to SATB Mezzo Soprano)

- Clarity, brilliance, depth, maturity, and style
- Vocal Range – G below Middle C, to C above Middle C
- Vocal Exercises – E below Middle C, to E to E in the second octave above Middle C
- Good sense of pitch
- Sings with accuracy allowing other parts to tune
- Utilizes full dynamic range
- Utilizes both chest and head resonance
- Utilizes a smooth transition from one resonance quality to the another
- Usually sings melody

Baritone Voice – Harmony Singer (Compares to SATB Alto)

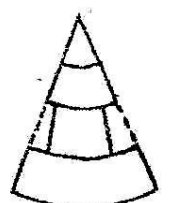
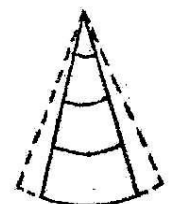
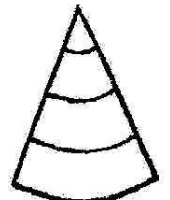
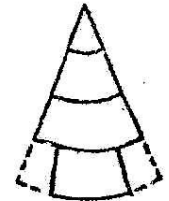
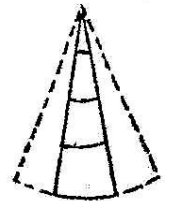
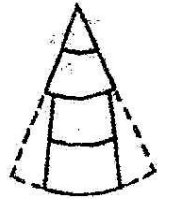
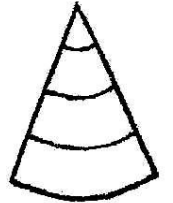
- Flexible vocal quality; adds and subtracts sound weight
- Vocal Range – G below Middle C to C above Middle C
- Vocal Exercises – E below Middle C, to E to E in the second octave above Middle C
- Sense of harmony – “ear” training to adjust pitch to help chords lock
- Utilizes full dynamic range
- Utilizes both chest and head resonance
- Sings with what appears to be two voices - more depth and weight when singing under the lead and a more a tenor-like quality when singing over the lead
- Awareness of relationship to leads and basses at all times

Bass Voice – Harmony Singer (Compares to SATB Contralto/Second Alto)

- Rocket fuel of barbershop
- Authority, mellow, melodic quality with sufficient weight to add the desirable bass timbre to the overall sound
- Second lead; Tall Vowel
- Vocal Range – C below Middle C to F above Middle C
- Vocal Exercises – A in the second octave below Middle C to A above Middle C
- Driven without muscle or tension
- Provides foundation for barbershop sound – Rhythm keepers; bass drum
- Sings forward
- Never as pianissimo as other parts
- Aware of lock and ring relationship with the leads
- May sing melody for short periods of time

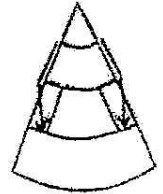
FREQUENT BARBERSHOP HARMONY BALANCE PROBLEMS

1. Barbershop harmony from other types of harmony is its balance. Barbershop harmony is sung with a CONE-SHAPED sound, (like the example on the right). That is, it *should be sung* with that shaped sound. (*Quartet demo Example #1*)
2. At first glance, the initial impression of our next example may be “too much Lead”. The problem is actually a lack of support from both the Baritone and Bass parts, and in fact we would hear too much Lead! Let’s hear how this ‘shape’ sounds. (*Quartet demo Example #2*)
3. Our third example may seem exaggerated, but the problem is surprisingly common. A Director or Coach, feeling that ‘too much Lead’ in Example #2 is the problem, might attempt to lighten the Leads. This will only result in a smaller sound. (*Quartet demo Example #3*)
4. Building on Example #2, if each voice part is brought out one at a time to hear the gradual difference – and Baritones sing up to the level of the Leads and the Basses do not, the result will look (and sound) like this. (*Quartet demo Example #4*)
5. Many choruses and quartets do not sing with enough bass. When Basses sing the foundation required, the balance would look and sound like the very first example. (*Quartet demo Example #1*)
6. Even on s-o-f-t passages, we still sing in balance. Frequently, lower parts back off too much on softs, which leaves the sound weak and unsupported. Relatively speaking, basses never need to back off as much as tenors and leads. This example illustrates all parts reducing vocal weights by the same per centage. (*Quartet demo Example #6*)
7. Lack of Baritone is encountered almost as frequently as lack of Bass. The real cause (lack of Baritone) may not be as apparent as the *result* of the problem. The listener often thinks he hears ‘too much Bass’, or ‘too much Tenor’, when not enough Baritone is the real problem. (*Quartet demo Example #7*)

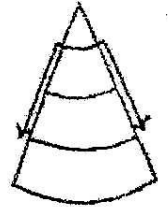


Sometimes consistent balance problems are caused by singers (generally Lead and/or Baritone) not knowing how or when to “Cone” – that is to broaden or lighten their tones (adding and subtracting weight in the voice) as they move up or down the scale.

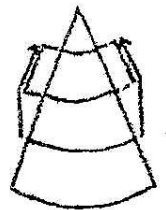
8. If Leads don't fill in the Cone by broadening on lower notes, below the Baritone, the listener will probably 'lose the melody' and the Baritone will become predominant. (*Quartet demo Example #8*)



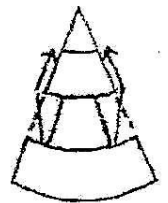
9. Here is how a properly balanced chord looks and sounds when Leads are singing under the Baritone. (*Quartet demo Example #9*)



10. A similar balance problem occurs when the Baritones don't lighten up over the Leads. This is a result with the Baritone singing with the same breadth of tone, and the ear follows the Baritone part. (*Quartet demo Example #10*)



11. Conversely, if Baritones sing with a light 'over the lead' type of quality throughout the range, the sound would look like this. (*Quartet demo Example #11*)



In the last two examples we discussed the same *result* – a predominance of Baritone. However the *cause* was different in each case. Chorus Directors/Coaches need to analyze whether (1) Leads are filling properly below the Baritone, or (2) Baritones are lightening above the Leads in order for the balance problem to be accurately remedied.

Baritones have more instances of actual sharing coning space, and marking vocal lines for Balance will be helpful: where to sing light, where to sing with more depth, and where to sing with normal intensity.