

Does an Eleven Year Old Boy Sing?

by Sharla Dance

Here are some characteristics about 11 year old boys that relate to singing:

1 They look for challenges and variety to keep their growing minds occupied. If it is not offered in a classroom, often they will create their own!

What are challenges for this age boy?

- Mental puzzles that would even challenge an adult. (If it doesn't challenge you, it probably will not challenge them.) Often they like figuring out a code. Logical thinking to figure something out is a strong urge at this age.
- Physical challenges that use some large motor movements. Movements could be in a pattern challenge, or a strength or balance challenge. They enjoy challenges that deal with how long they can hold their breath out.
- Stories that pertain to their age and stage, with a challenge for the main character to overcome.
- Hand games with clapping (which girls of this age love) are not necessarily a favorite of this age boy.
- Discovering with their taste, smell, and feel are things that this age really enjoys. Find a way to add this type of challenge.

2 Their voice is starting into a change and does not cooperate like it used to. They are very conscious of their singing voice as something very private that can cause them some embarrassment.

Move the focus off of their voice...How?

- Use challenges!
- Consider lowering the key of the song so that most of the notes sit around a middle C. Singing a C above middle C can be difficult for a boy's changing voice, especially in a group setting, because the voice is so unreliable.
- Put the emphasis on starting and stopping precisely, on breathing deeply, on emphasizing a word (and other like things) rather than on the volume or sound of the voice.

3 This age boy wants to move on to another stage. They want to be treated older (even if they don't act like they are older!)

Treat this age as older, almost like a teen.