

Week 2 Reading Assignment

1. Create a middle school warm-up sequence (of 5 exercises), selecting a vocal objective indicated in Figure 3.2 for each exercise. You may use the exercises in your textbook or other reference book but be sure to cite your sources (APA format), Script actual directions you will give to the students, and provide the information, including staff notation, vowel/ syllable used, range, minutes, as listed in Figure 3.2. (BT 3-2 p.50)

Relaxation and Alignment

Have students stand, bending forward at the waist and hanging loosely, with arms dangling. Rise to a slow count of eight, until students are standing tall. Maintain the relaxed feeling of a rag doll while stretching upward. Elevate the head by pulling on an imaginary string (as for a marionette). Drop the head and then lift it again into an elevated position without raising or tucking the chin. Shake the arms loose, maintaining perfect singing posture (Phillips, 2014, p. 305).

“Okay, class, I want everyone to pretend that they are a rag doll and just bend forward, hanging loosely.

Now, as I count to eight, I want you all to slowly rise back to an upright position, but keep having that relaxed feeling of a rag doll. Imagine that there’s imply a string on your head that is being pulled back.

Now, drop your head and lift it slowly, making sure you do not force the chin in or up. And now, keeping this relaxed and straight singing posture, shake the arms out! Great work, now you’re ready to sing beautifully.”

Minutes: 1

Respiration

Direct students to place one hand on the abdominal area and with the other hand hold up fiver fingers (candles). Exhale, inhale, and blow out each “candle” with a short puff of air. Each puff is felts as a slight abdominal crunch. As each candle is blown out, one finger or thumb is turned down. But wait! These are magic candles that spring back up (hand open). Blow them out again. They spring up again! Blow them all out with one strong power breath (crunch). Monitor for abdominal contraction upon exhalation (Phillips, 2014, p. 250).

“Put our your hand, and pretend each finger is a candle. We’re going to blow them out, one by one!

Breathe out, in, now blow each one out!

Oh, I forgot to mention that these are magic candles that come back after being blown out. Take another breath...and now blow each out again!

Oh no, it seems like they’ve popped up again! Take one final breath...and now blow all the candles out at once with a giant blow. Great work, everyone!”

Minutes: 2

Resonance



Have students hum the starting pitch with lips closed but slightly protruded, and with teeth slightly parted until a tingle in the lips is felt. Keeping that feeling, have students drop the jaw approximately one finger’s width and open up to an “oo.” Model the desired choral tone, which should be rather light and unforced. Instruct the students to then sing the “ee” vowel while the lips remain slightly rounded, and the tip of the tongue touches the bottom front teeth. There should be much space in the mouth for proper resonance, resulting in “maximum sound with minimal effort” (Collins, 1999, p. 217) (Ward-Steinman, 2010, pp. 44-45).

“Let’s hum starting on this pitch [demonstrate “mm”]. Keep the jaw open inside!

Now move to an “oo.” Make sure to keep the sound open!

Now to “ee” [demonstrate an open “ee”]. Take care to keep the “ee” tall and round.

Let’s try going from “mm” to “oo” to “ee.”

Vowel/Syllable Used: mm, oo, ee

Range: G to G

Minutes: 2

Range Extension



This exercise develops and extends the upper vocal range. Beginning softly on a staccato note, the voice shifts quickly from the lower register to the upper register, with a light vocal quality. Changed male voices sing an octave lower and will need to cultivate an upper male-alto quality as the exercise is repeated higher by a half step (Phillips, 2014, p. 324).

“Let’s work on getting that vocal range stretched! [play the exercise and demonstrate once on piano] Let’s since the first note softly and shortly, and then the rest of the line as smoothly as we can.”

Vowel Syllable Used: ah, uh
 Range: A to A
 Minutes: 2

Diction



Have students sing, focusing on making sure the beginning and ending consonants of each word are sounded and also done as shortly as possible. Make sure the extent of the note is the vowel sound. Go up a half step after each repetition (Ward-Steinman, 2010, p. 49).

“Now repeat after me, [demonstrate exercise].

Remember to sound each word clearly, but also as shortly as possible. Focus on getting the vowel sound out.”

Vowel Syllable Used: red, leather, yellow, leather
 Range: Bb to G
 Minutes: 2

2. Create a high school warm-up sequence (of 5 exercises) for grades 9-10 or 11-12, using the format provided in Figure 7.1. Follow the instructions of the above question. (BT 7-1 p.112)

For grades 11-12

Respiration:



Using the sound *ah*, pulse the rhythm pattern in lower, or chest, voice at a moderate tempo. The abdominal musculature should be consciously contracted for each accent. Care must be taken that the jaw be dropped sufficiently from the posterior of the jaw to free the vocal tract of tension. Repeat the pulsing in the middle voice and then the upper voices (Phillips, 2014, pp. 313-314).

“Everyone, take a deep breath, and let it out.

Now, repeat this rhythm in your normal speaking voice, and make sure you do the accents! [demonstrate first two bars]

Great! Now try this one: it’s a bit more tricky, but make sure your jaw is still relaxed and open. [demonstrate last two bars]

Now let’s try doing that entire line.

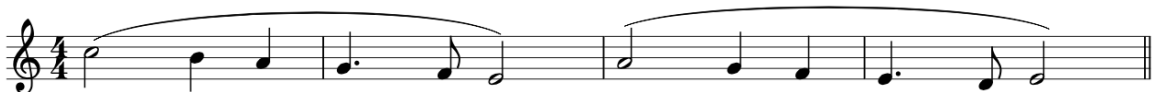
Can we try it in our high head voices now?”

Vowel Syllable Used: *ah*

Range: lower, middle, upper

Minutes: 2

Registration:



Have students sing the figure slowly, working to create one continuous vocal line by correctly balancing the lower and upper registers in the middle voice. A catch breath may be taken between phrases. Transpose the exercise upward by half steps. Changed voices should sing an octave lower. Vary the vowels in order to use all five primary vowel sounds (Phillips, 2014, p. 327).

“Let’s sing this line on an “ah” [play line for students].

Let’s try the first half on “eh,” and then the second on “ee.” Work on smoothing out the register shifts.

Now let’s go from “oo” in the first half to “oh” in the second.”

Vowel Syllable Used: ah, eh, ee, oh, oo

Range: A to G

Minutes: 3

Intonation:



Students sing ascending and descending perfect fourth intervals in the pattern shown. As this is a warm-up exercise, direct students to sing the pattern softly and slowly, breathing at the breath marks. Concentrate on making the ascending movement mentally bigger than the descending movement. Begin this exercise on any comfortable pitch in the mid-vocal range. Show on the music staff what the interval of the perfect fourth looks like using notation (Phillips, 2014, p. 321).

“[have the exercise written on staff on the board]

Can anyone tell me what intervals this exercise outlines?

I want us all to sing this line softly and slowly, making sure to focus on that interval of a fourth. Really pay attention and listen to one another! Sing with solfege—sol-do-sol-do and sol-re sol-re.

Try to imagine that the ascending fourth is slightly bigger than the descending one. This, believe it or not, helps a with getting the intonation!”

Vowel Syllable Used: do, re, sol

Range: F to G

Minutes: 2

Articulation:



Sing the pattern with the syllable “ha” and make sure to always have a light and relaxed sound, especially as the arpeggio reaches the top notes. Have students

place one hand on their diaphragm, so they can focus on using their diaphragm to sing the notes.

“Everyone say ‘ha’ with me. [demonstrate a short and crisp, but relaxed sound]

Put your hands on your diaphragm. Try saying ‘ha’ again, and see if you can feel your diaphragm moving. It should be!

Okay, let’s try this. [demonstrate the moving ‘ha’ line] Make sure you are singing from the diaphragm. Crisp and short!

Always keep it light and relaxed!”

Vowel Syllable Used: ha

Range: Bb to A

Minutes: 2

Expression:



Have students sing this vocalise, monitoring for breath support throughout the vocal line. Use a slow tempo, gradually building to the first note of the second measure before beginning the decrescendo. Direct students to relax the throat and drop the jaw as they increase breath pressure for the crescendo (Phillips, 2014, p. 346).

“Okay, this next exercise will focus on our dynamic expression. [demonstrate the short vocalise]

Try to exaggerate the dynamics as much as you can; keep up the support in the air, even when singing softly!

Make sure the volume is going up gradually, step by step.”

Vowel Syllable Used: oo, ah

Range: C

Minutes: 2

References

Phillips, K. (2014). *Teaching Kids to Sing* (2nd ed., p. 305). Boston, MA: Schirmer, Cengage Learning.

Ward-Steinman, P. (2010). *Becoming a Choral Music Teacher-A Field Experience Workbook*(p. 49). New York, NY: Routledge.