Conducting Your...  
Consonant Orchestra and  
Maintaining Top Vocal Health  

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About me...  
• Licensed Speech Pathologist – 34 years  
• Specializing in care of the professional and performing voice  
• Trained classical soprano  
• Practitioner for Lessac Voice & Body Kinisensics  
• Training in Estill Voice Technique  
• Articulation, Stuttering, Accent Reduction

Outline  
• The Body/The Voice  
• Resonant Voice/Voice Recipes  
• Breathing  
• Vocal Health  
• Troubleshooting  
• The Consonant Orchestra
The Body – The Voice

• THE VOICE IS THE BODY - respect
• Deepest expression of who we are
• You are a Vocal Athlete!
• Basics of voice – what can you change?
  dark  bright  nasal  resonance  pitch
  fry  twang  breathy  speechie  soft
  shout  sweet  tense  angry  loud

Resonant Voice

• Healthy – Why?
• Louder without effort
• Richer, warmer, confident
• ‘mee’, alternate ‘ee-er’, ‘yes’
• “Mmmonday, mmmeanie, yyyes”
  Marvin makes muffins on Monday
• Generalize to sounds that vibrate: v, z, n, ng
• The call: megaphone, hard palate

Voice Recipes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Less....More</th>
<th>Low-Mid-High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lips: spread..pursed</td>
<td>tongue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jaw: open...clenched</td>
<td>soft palate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nasal/twang:</td>
<td>larynx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n/m/ng...nya-nya or quack)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fvf closure: retract (laugh)...contract (harsh hee)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vf closure: breathy-fry-soft-speechie</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
*tvf=true vocal fold, fvf=false vocal fold |
Voice Recipes 2

- Dark
- Bright
- Nasal
- Twang
- Breathy

Especially hard on the voice

..optimum not maximum effort

- Monster voice, harsh throat noises
- Fight scenes, shouting, screaming
- Announcing
- Glottal shock
- Same intense voice quality over period of time
- Voice issues: breathing, voice in the throat, muscle tension, lack of hydration & vocal rest

Breathing

- Smell the flower
- Noisy vs. quiet
  Quick vs. slow
  Natural vs. too much
- When the air stops
- Using what you’ve got
- Power lung, party blower
Vocal Health 1

• Hydration
• Diet/exercise/sleep
• Steam
• Travel
• Medications
• Talking over noise, socializing, shouting
• No dairy, greasy, sugary, spicy, fatty foods, alcohol, caffeine drinks, sodas, don’t eat late, **don’t smoke**

Vocal Health 2

• Lifting weights
• The sinus blues
• Mucous city
• Away you cough!
• Numb-n-dumb
• Lozenges
• Lozenges: no menthol, glycerin ok, Thayer’s Slippery Elm, Fontus Green Apple

Troubleshooting

• Gauge voice use: overbooking
• Listen to your muscles not voice
• Don’t do what you can’t repeat
• Trying too hard
• Reset and neutral
• Body and Mic: saddle stool
Straw Trick
Reset, Unload, Stretch, Unpress
• Total time 2-5 minutes: feel vibration, no air escape at lips or nose
• Pitch glides low to higher for 1-2 min.
• Vary loudness & pitch like a hill, ‘accents’
• Should be belly accents, not throat accents
• Hum tune with variety of pitches
• Blow light bubbles in water, no volcanoes

Warm-up and Cool-down
• Warm-up: whole body, face massage, tongue, straw trick, hum, pitch glides on ‘v’ or ‘oo’, abbreviated rehearsal
• Cool-down: whole body, yawn, face, start at comfortable pitch and glide down, straw trick, rebalance, steam, hydrate
**Hum with space between back teeth

I’m sick. Can I still perform?
• Know your voice – baseline
• Allergies: s-z or f-v then (no pushing), slowly stretch v on notes, using ‘v’, or straw trick
• Fever – infection – inflammation - swelling
• Listen to your body.
When to see the doctor...

- Hoarseness persisting after 2 wks.
- Laryngitis that does not resolve
- Any change in the voice after 2 wks.
- Decrease in speaking/singing range
- Throat discomfort or pain
- Suspect reflux
- Vocal nodules

The Holistic Approach

- Left brain – right brain
- Planned vs. organic
- Work vs. play
- Feel, Taste, Smell
- More holistic...less complicated

The Consonant Orchestra

Benefits

- Clearer and more connected speech
- Energy, emphasis, emotional content
- Fast and intelligible
- Conversational roles
- Change rhythms, versions
- Mark first 10-20 words for audition
Playing the Instruments

Strings: Violins, Violas, Cello, Bass Fiddle
N M V Z

Woodwinds: Saxophone, Flute, Clarinet, Trumpet, Bassoon
L W NG TH ZH (as in 'beige')

Sound effects: Bellows, fan, radiator, wind machine
TH F H S SH

Percussion
Drums: D T G K B P
Cymbals, Tambourine: DG CH TS DZ
Woodblock: DL TL
Brass: F. horn, Trombone Y R

Play the sound-not the letter

• Begin consonant, consonant blend – no as in ‘mad’ or ‘tree’
• C next to C mid-word as in ‘electronic’ - yes
• C next to C end of word as in ‘disk’ – yes

• Strings, woodwinds, special effects – 2 lines
• Drums, cymbals, woodblock – 1 line
Words 1 – sustain 20
strings, woodwinds, sound effects
man hash gum is bug
bees force jungle cough after
bathe with beige belong flashlight

The thundering monsoon rains inundated the entire mountain range.
Bee$ plu$ fleas, in two$ and three$.

Words 2 – tap 21
Drumbeats/double drumbeats
bat rack dog hub absorbed
mad shape kept apt adverse
effect hoped ‘project management’

The captain looked through the periscope.
The shocked actor was docked part of his pay.

Words 3 – clash, crash, click 22
cymbals, tambourine, woodblock
bats hats cats hands friends
catch fetch watch watchman pledged
middle kettle perfectly

Hey diddle diddle . The cat and the fiddle.
The cow jumped over the moon.
Linking

• Direct Link: grab it
  Ex: besides a .... besides a
• Other links: ‘play and link’, ‘prepare and link’
• Purpose: to keep clarity and precision while keeping an easy flow of talking, minimizes hard glottal productions

Marking Text..making it easy

• Mark the drumbeats (one line), say text
• Mark the sounds that sustain (two lines). Say text once with just the strings, then add the woodwinds, then special effects.
• Read reg voice, gradually fade voice out – let consonants lead. Bring voice back in slowly. This brings your attention to the consonants.
• Your personal favorites? What works for you?

Marking

• Jack Sprat could eat no fat.
• His wife could eat no lean.
• And so betwixt them both you see
• They ate the platter clean

• Everything is on sale at Macys.
The Consonant Orchestra

- sustain: m, n, ng, l, v, s, f, th (voiced)
  th (voiceless), sh, z, zh
- tap: t, d, k, g, b, p
- crash/clang: ts, dg, ch, dz, dl, tl
- click
- do not play: r w h y

You Tube Videos

- 3-D view of the diaphragm
  www.youtube.com/watch?v=hp-gCvW8PRY
- Soprano, alto, tenor, bass vocal cords singing
  www.youtube.com/watch?v=km5ZccQsqE4
- Fun Articulation Exercises
  www.funknfun.com
- Straw Trick – Dr. Ingo Tizte, Tom Burke
  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0xYDvwvmBIM

References, etc.

- www.ncvs.com National Center for Voice and Speech – list of meds and natural remedies with effect on voice. Click on ‘check your meds’, click on ‘anti-inflammatory herbal’ on select medicine drop-down
- www.estillyvoice.com Voice Training Workbooks 1-2
- Bonnie Raphael, Theatre Arts: Master Class-Malibu 3/2014