

SINGING TECHNIQUE

Breathing and Posture - Grades 7-8

Know

- Stand with feet shoulder width apart, arms at your side, tall spine
- Sit with feet on the floor, back away from the chair, tall spine
- Diaphragm expands when inhaling
- Chest and shoulders should be relaxed and still when inhaling
- Release of air must be consistent throughout a music phrase

Understand

1. Good posture is needed when singing
2. Proper breathing impacts voice production and tone quality

Do

1. Students will demonstrate good posture while singing
2. Students will practice proper breathing techniques while singing

Tone Quality and Diction- Grades 7-8

Know

- The location and use of the soft palette
- The sense of vertical space in the back of the month
- Tongue is relaxed
- Consonants are pronounced crisp and clear
- Vowel sounds are formed with appropriate vertical shaping

Understand

1. What is needed to produce a good tone quality
2. Diction is pronunciation of the lyrics

Do

1. Sing with good tone quality
2. Sing using proper diction

Healthy Tone Production - Grades 9-12

Know

1. Forward vowel placement maximizes resonance. A forward tone is resonated by the cartilage and bone that is found in the front of the vocal tract, where the vowel ideally is placed.
2. Maintaining abdominal expansion (expansion that was created due to the inhaled air) is critical to connecting the vowel and the breath. This connection is known as “support.”

Understand

1. Vowel placement
2. Connection to air (“breath support”)

Do

1. Demonstrate the ability to produce a well-placed vowel.
2. Demonstrate command of the respiratory process by inhaling a breath that expands the abdomen and intercostals.
3. Integrate the production of a forward vowel and a breath that expands the lower torso by:
 - a. Inhaling and allowing the air to expand the lower abdomen and intercostals.
 - b. While maintaining abdominal expansion, produce a tone while placing the vowel (tone/pitch) at the front of the vocal tract.

Singing Posture - Grades 9-12

Know

1. One must sit or stand in such a way that the singer is free from excessive tension. Undue body tension negatively affects phonation.
2. The head, neck, and back must be aligned. The shoulders must be rolled back and relaxed down. Knees should be slightly bent, while the feet should be slightly staggered and toes pointed forward.

Understand

1. How posture affects vocal proficiency
2. How one demonstrates good posture

Do

1. Demonstrate proper singing posture as described above.

Proper Diction - Grades 9-12

Know

Articulators

- Lips
- Teeth
- Tongue

Consonants

- Voiced consonants
- Unvoiced consonants

Vowel Sounds

- International Phonetic Alphabet

Understand

1. Articulators
2. Consonants
3. Vowel Sounds

Do

1. Employ the use of articulators in order to execute fluent diction.
2. Appropriately demonstrate through the singing of literature the distinction between voiced and unvoiced consonants
3. Where needed and/or appropriate, employ the use of IPA

Breathing Technique - Grades 9-12

Know

1. Airflow is necessary for phonation because airflow through the vocal tract is required for vocal fold vibration. Phonation is the audible result of vocal fold vibration.
2. a. Clavicular breath - commonly known as a “high” breath. Noticeable rising of chest and shoulders with inhalation. Not optimal breathing technique due to tension associated with elevating the upper torso and lack of low “support.”
b. Diaphragmatic-costal breath - Preferred breathing technique. Noticeable expansion of lower torso, maximizing airflow to lungs, resulting increased vocal resonance and stamina.
3. The amount of air required to cause vocal fold vibration is referred to as the *phonation threshold*. Too little airflow through the vocal tract causes a weak, breathy sound while too much airflow may result in a brassy, forced sound. In order to achieve a universally pleasing sound, a singer must inhale using a diaphragmatic-costal breath and then manage the airflow back through the vocal tract in such a way that the produced tone is neither “breathy” nor “brassy.”

Understand

1. Why airflow is necessary for phonation
2. Two types of breaths
 - a. Clavicular
 - b. Diaphragmatic-costal
3. Correlation between respiratory process and phonation

Do

1. Explain why air and the respiratory process is required for phonation.
2. Demonstrate the ability to execute a diaphragmatic-costal breath.
3. Demonstrate an improvement of tone due to the execution of proper breathing technique.

ENSEMBLE SINGING

Blend, Balance and Texture - Grades 7-8

Know

- Voices must blend and sound as one
- Which vocal line has the melody/harmony
- Listen while singing is important

Understand

1. Difference between union and harmony
2. Each section must sing accurately to create proper blend within the section and the choir
3. Individual voices should not be distinguishable within the section

Do

1. Sing their vocal line accurately
2. Sing their vocal line while other lines are simultaneously performed
3. Listen and sing with others in their section matching pitch

Accurate Intonation - Grades 9-12

Know

- What singing techniques aid in producing good intonation
 1. Proper breath flow--the relationship between breath energy and intonation.
 2. Proper vowel formation--and vowel uniformity for ensemble singing.
 3. Proper posture, muscle engagement and muscle relaxation
- How does rhythm and rhythmic energy aid in good intonation
- What intervals need special attention when addressing intonation

Understand

1. The student will recognize the difference between accurate and faulty intonation.
2. The student will understand what proper singing techniques aid in producing good intonation
3. The student will know how to listen for and evaluate accurate intonation.

Do

- Recognize when their ensemble is singing with good or faulty intonation.
- Listen to recordings and evaluate the intonation of the performing ensemble.
- Sing with good intonation.

Proper Blend and Balance - Grades 9-12

Know

- How do proper singing techniques aid in the achieving proper balance and blend.
 1. Using proper breath energy
 2. Producing vowel uniformity
 3. Using proper posture in creating proper balance and blend.
- How does voice placement within and ensemble effect balance and blend.

Understand

1. Understand the difference between the meaning of balance and blend
2. Understand the importance of balance and blend in ensemble singing.
 - a. Blend within each voice part
 - b. Balance between sections
 - c. Balance between ensemble and any accompanying instruments
3. Understand what vocal techniques aid in achieving proper balance and blend.

Do

1. Recognize excellent balance and blend when listening to or performing in an ensemble.
2. Singing in an ensemble with a recognition of the importance of balance and blend.

Singing an Independant Vocal Line Within a Choral Texture - Grades 9-12

Know

- The student will understand that a choir is composed of people singing different vocal lines simultaneously.
- Performing this task requires concentration and advanced listening skills.

Understand

1. A student will be able to sing their vocal line independently (alone) while the other vocal lines are being played or sung simultaneously.

Do

1. The student will demonstrate their ability to sing their line independently in class and in lessons with the instructor.
2. The student will demonstrate their ability to sing their line independently while standing beside other singers singing different vocal lines in class and in concerts..

KNOWLEDGE OF MUSIC

History, Style and Genre - Grades 7-8

Know

- Names of genres ex. jazz, spiritual, swing, classical, pop
- Rhythms play a part in creating a certain style
- Vocabulary specific to a genre or style

Understand

1. Musical selections may have historical value
2. Different genres may come from specific time periods
3. Elements in the music create the style and genre of that piece

Do

1. Demonstrate singing techniques appropriate to the style of the work
2. Utilize descriptive stylistic vocabulary to describe a work

Historical Knowledge - Grades 9-12

Know

- Overarching musical concepts of the musical era
- Any major historical events that would have impacted the music
- Ways in which the composer breaks from conventional musical thought

Understand

1. Historical context for repertoire as well as ideas that impact music at the time
2. How historical context shapes a piece
3. Overarching concepts of musical eras that impact the construction of pieces

Do

1. Define and demonstrate the use of musical ideas from a particular era that impact a piece
2. Identify major historical events that may impact a particular piece
3. Understand impacts of a composer's life on his or her music

Style and Genre of Musical Selections - Grades 9-12

Know

- Articulation - legato, staccato, marcato, etc.
- Dynamics - how much they vary based on style
- The impact of style and genre on the items listed above

Understand

1. Students will understand that the genre or style of music they perform will impact the way they sing
2. Meter organizes pulse into strong and weak beats.
3. Concept of pulse and sub-division

Do

1. Use articulation and dynamics to present the pieces in a musically appropriate way.
2. Perform a variety of styles and genres throughout the school year.
3. List ways in which the style or genre of a piece impacts its presentation and interpretation.

MUSIC LITERACY

Vocabulary - Grades 7-8

Know

- Dynamics, pianissimo-fortissimo
- Ritardando
- A tempo
- Repeat signs
- DS, DC, Coda
- Accent
- Measure numbers

Understand- what are the big ideas to understand for this unit

1. Dynamics and their symbols
2. Tempo markings
3. Directional markings
4. Articulation markings

Do- what should students be able to do

1. Navigate through a score
2. Demonstrate through singing the knowledge of all markings in the score

Intervals and Pitch Reading - Grades 7-8

Know

- Notes on the staff are placed on lines and in spaces
- The order of solfege syllables in a scale

Understand

1. The major scale using solfege syllables
2. Movement of notes on the staff determines pitch
3. Reading intervals between a second and a third

Do

1. Sing a major scale using solfege syllables
2. Sight read intervals of a second and a third

Rhythm and the Staff - Grade 7-8

Know

- Staff have 5 lines
- Bar Lines
- Quarter notes, eighth notes, half notes, whole notes
- Quarter rests, eighth rests, half rests, whole rests
- Treble Clef is higher than Bass Clef
- What clef your part sings
- Placement of notes on the staff determines high/low pitch
- Simple rhythm patterns

Understand

1. The musical staff - Treble and/or Bass Clef
2. Values of individual notes and rests
3. Placement of notes on the staff

Do

1. Draw a staff with clef sign and bar lines
2. Draw notes on the staff on lines and in spaces
3. Count rhythms with quarter notes and rests, eighth notes, half note, whole note

Rhythm and Meter - Grades 9-12

Know

- Time Signatures
- Quarter notes, eighth notes, sixteenth notes, half notes, whole notes
- Quarter rests, eighth rests, sixteenth rests, half rests, whole rests
- Bar Lines
- Dotted rhythms
- Tied notes
- Syncopated rhythms

Understand

1. The value of a measure using time signatures
2. Values of individual notes and rests
3. The function of dots and ties, and their effects on notes and rests
4. Explain function of the meter
 - a. Bottom number tells the kind of note that gets the beat
 - b. Top number tells the number of beats per measure

Do

1. Identify the note that receives the beat, and the number of that note that comprise each measure using the time signature
2. Count rhythms using (1 e & a, 2 e & a, etc.)
3. Subdivide rhythms up to a sixteenth note
4. Speak/Sing Rhythms accurately
5. Tap a Steady Beat

Intervals and Pitch Reading - Grades 9-12

Know

- Key Signatures
- Accidentals (sharps, flats)
- Music staves
- Reading different clefs
- Pitch names and their relationship to the tonal center

Understand

1. The major scale utilizing solfege syllables
2. How to identify tonal centers using key signatures
3. Reading intervals between a second and a sixth, also octaves

Do

1. Identify the tonal center of a key using the key signature
2. Identify solfege syllables in each individual key
3. Navigate changes of pitch using solfege in up to four parts

DECORUM AND ETIQUETTE

Rehearsal and Performance, Listening - Grade 7-8

Know

- No talking during rehearsals
- Follow all musical directions given during rehearsal
- Expectations of respectful classroom behaviors
- Appropriate concert dress for concert setting
- No talking on risers during a performance
- Follow the conductor while performing
- Clap appropriately and at the correct time
- No talking or disruptive behaviors with listening
- Be an active listener

Understand

1. Appropriate behaviors and singing creates a productive rehearsal
2. Appropriate professional behaviors and sing creates a successful performance
3. Appropriate respectful behavior while listening to a performance

Do

1. Demonstrate appropriate behavior during rehearsals
2. Demonstrate appropriate professional behavior while performing
3. Demonstrate appropriate audience behaviors and can describe what they have heard

Rehearsal and Performance, Listening - Grade 9-12

Know

- Participate when asked to sing
- Sit with posture that allows for optimal singing
- Not chewing gum
- Not using cell phones
- Arrive on time to rehearsal
- Listening for instruction when students are not singing
- Not talking to neighbors unless asked to do so
- Watch the director when possible (especially in performance)
- Proper behavior in concerts (not talking to neighbor, not using cell phones, appropriate times to clap)

Understand

1. Talking during rehearsal is a distraction to students and instructor
2. Apply musical instructions given during class
3. Requirements to successfully participate in class (listed under “Know”)
4. Concert participation is an essential part of every performance

Do

1. Contribute to the success of the ensemble with proper participation
2. Participate in a concert using appropriate behavior